

Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2024

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LYON, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN

DRAFT FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
NOVEMBER 20, 2023

Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2024

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LYON, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN

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Introduction

Welcome to the Lyon Township **2024**

Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

This plan reflects a vision for the future of Lyon Township's parks and recreation facilities: their operations, maintenance, and enhancements for the coming years. The plan also provides a vision for future programming opportunities for residents of all ages, as well as collaborations with area recreational providers.

The Plan also forms the basis for potential recreation grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and other agencies and foundations. Lyon Township’s Plan was prepared in accordance with MDNR’s Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Plans.

Most importantly, this Plan will serve as Lyon Township’s playbook for community building, as it relates to parks and recreation over the next five or more years.



Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2019

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF LYON, OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN

ADOPTED
JANUARY 7, 2019

Previous Parks and Recreation Plan

During the last five-year planning process, Lyon Township made strides in institutionalizing outstanding design and recreation provision, as well as achieving the goals and objectives identified in the previous plan.

Planning Process

The 2024 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared with technical assistance from McKenna, a planning and design consulting firm, and with active involvement of the Township’s administration and the Lyon Township Board of Trustees.

Citizen input through round-table discussions, public meetings, and a public hearing, played a critical role in the development of the plan. As a result, recommendations described within the action plan reflect the needs and ideas of those who use Lyon Township’s Parks and Recreation facilities. Following several discussions, the 2024 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was considered for adoption by the Lyon Board of Trustees. Throughout the process, all meetings were open to the public. Notices were posted beforehand, and where required, advertised in the newspaper, as provided by the Open Meetings Act. The planning process kicked off September 2023 and concluded with the adoption of the Plan in January 2024.

Figure 1: Planning Process



Importance of Parks and Recreation Systems

The demand for recreation facilities has grown at an accelerated pace, due to the influx of new residents and new home construction. Single-family residential developments now occupies a large percentage of land use within the Township and recreation amenities needs to be reviewed to ensure that the growing population has access to and is adequately serviced by the available facilities.

The benefits of creating and maintaining a quality parks and recreation system include:

- Greater opportunities for a healthy lifestyle;
- Rises in adjacent property values;
- Encouragement of economic development, which in turn, can further attract investment;
- Natural beauty;
- Environmental gains and benefits;
- Social and fun; and,
- Sense of place and identity.

The intent of this Plan is to afford all residents of Lyon Township the opportunity to participate and enjoy the Township's parks and recreation facilities and to act as gathering spaces for community building.

Community Description

The Charter Township of Lyon is located in the southwest corner of Oakland County, immediately west of the cities of Novi and Wixom and south of Milford Township. To the south of the Township is rural Salem Township, in Washtenaw County, and to the west is Green Oak Township, in Livingston County. The Township is not a full 36-square-mile square, as the City of South Lyon is located in the southwestern corner.

Located between suburban and rural communities, the population of Lyon Township has been growing and expanding in recent decades. The I-96 freeway cuts across the northern part of the Township from east to west, and allows easy access to destinations across the metro area and the state. Grand River Avenue is a significant thoroughfare with large industrial growth and employment centers, as well as serving as one of the two major axis roads in New Hudson, along with Milford Road. Around this intersection, major residential and commercial growth is present; in the past 5 years, a large apartment complex with 400 units has been completed and another 100 units of townhome development are underway. New commercial users in the Szott auto dealership, Taco Bell, Zeal Credit Union, Whole Hearted Winery, and many others have entered into the area.

The Township intends to remain low-density and suburban in character overall, with planned pockets and corridors of growth minimizing impacts to current residents.



Demographics

The Lyon Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan is updated and maintained to determine needs and opportunities that exist within the Township.

Data within this plan is sourced from the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates and Decennial Census.

POPULATION

Trends in the number of people residing in a community are an important indicator for parks and recreation planning. Growing communities have different parks and recreational concerns and needs than communities with stable or declining populations. Table 1 shows the relative populations of Lyon Township and surrounding communities.

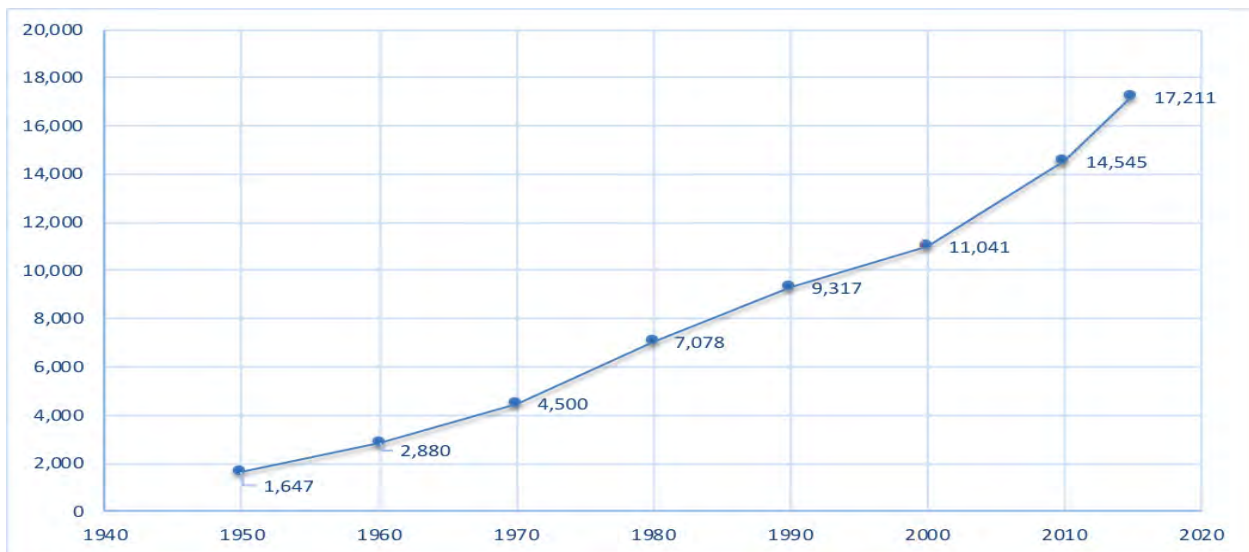
Table 1: Population, 2000-2020

LOCATION	2010	2015	2020	% CHANGE (2010-2020)
Milford Twp.	15,736		17,090	8.6%
South Lyon	11,327	11,263	11,746	3.7%
Lyon Twp.	14,545	17,211	23,271	60.0%
Wixom	13,498	14,369	17,193	27.4%
Novi	55,224	60,458	66,243	20.0%
Oakland County	1,202,362	1,242,788	1,274,395	6.0%

Source: US Census Bureau: 2016 ACS-5 Year Estimates, 2010 and 2020 U.S. Census

Lyon Township has experienced a significant and outstanding increase in population, 60 percent between 2010 and 2020. Even the fastest-growing neighbors have experienced growth rates less than half of Lyon Township's. The rate of growth is attributed to the fact that Lyon Township is a highly desired community to call home, which further highlights the need for the Township to carefully plan for expanded and diverse recreational facilities to support new growth.

Figure 2: Population, 1950 - 2020 – Lyon Township



Source: US Census Bureau: 2016 ACS-5 Year Estimates, SEMCOG (2015 Estimate)

To keep up with the growth rates, the Township has focused on infrastructure to support the growth. This plan anticipates prudent expansion of parks facilities, using land and resources already in the Township's possession to provide these amenities.

Households

This section analyzes the composition and characteristics of households in Lyon Township. Household growth has a different impact on demand for recreational services than population growth. If the population is growing faster than the number of households, this would suggest that more children are being born to existing households. If households are growing faster than population, this typically suggest that more singles or couples are moving into the community.

The number of total households in the Township increased by 18.8 percent since 2015. The percentage of married-couple family households with and without children under 18 increased by 49.4 percent and 25.1 percent, respectively. The increase in married-couple family households and increase in population indicates that existing residents are choosing to start families, either by marriage or having children, in the community. The age data below further indicates that the population increase is due to the rise in children under 18 years of age.

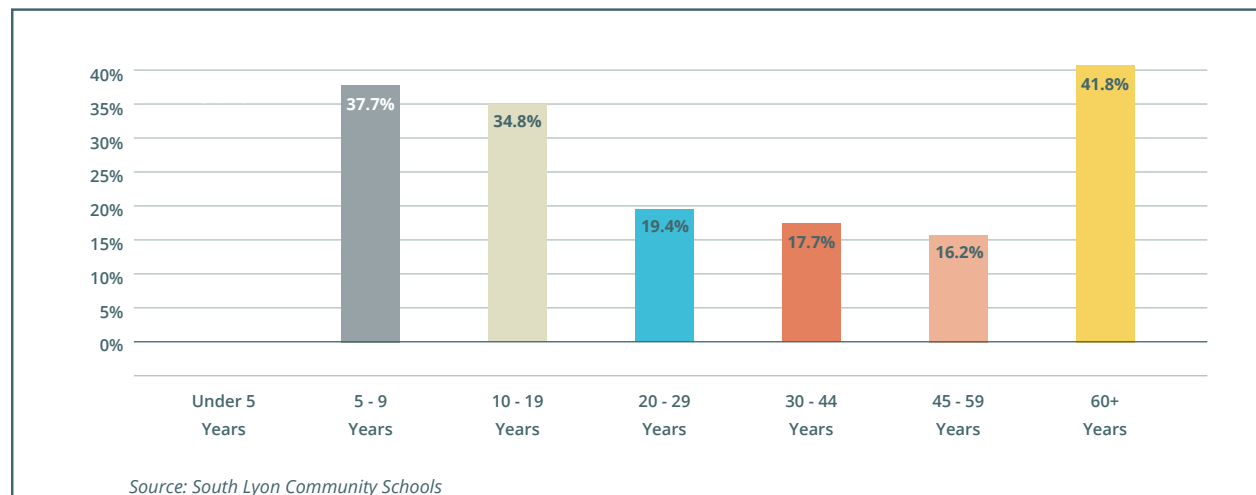
Table 2: Population by Age Group, 2015-2020

Age Group	POPULATION		
	2015	2020	% Change
Under 5 years	1,467	1,473	0.4%
5 - 9 Years	1,301	1,791	37.7%
10 - 19 Years	2,262	3,049	34.8%
20 - 29 Years	1,400	1,672	19.4%
30 - 44 Years	3,794	4,464	17.7%
45 - 59 Years	3,623	4,210	16.2%
60+ Years	2,619	3,714	41.8%

Source: SEMCOG

Contrary to national trends, Lyon Township’s average household size increased from 2.56 persons in 2015 to 2.95 persons in 2020. This substantial increase reflects the desire for family forming age groups to settle in Lyon Township for the quiet comforts of the rural countryside.

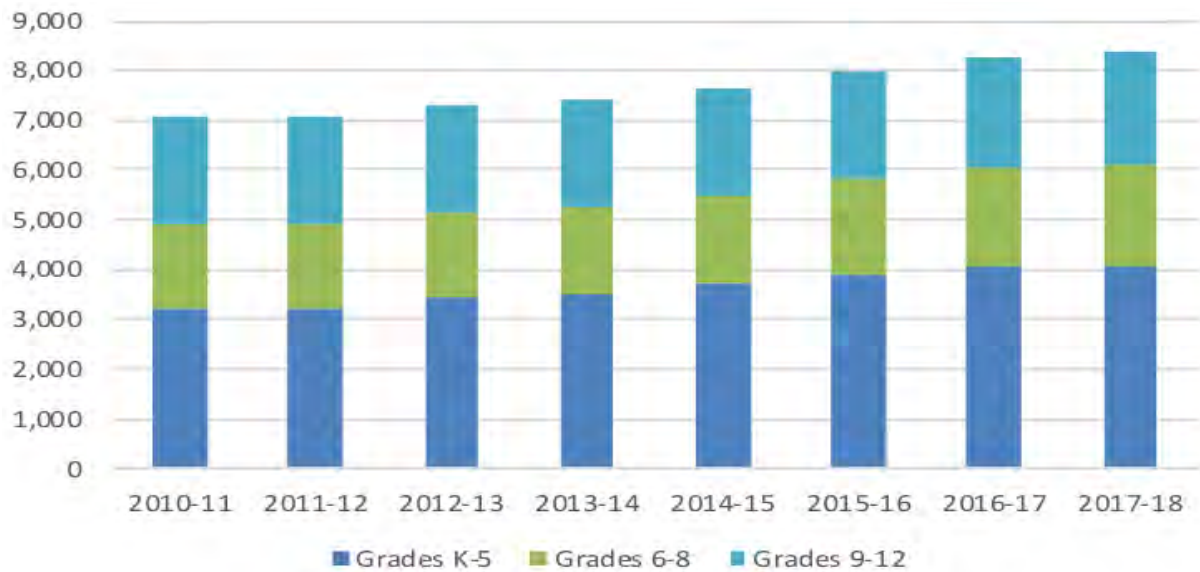
Figure 3: Age Groups Percentage Change – Lyon Township



School Enrollment

For a better understanding of the total number of schoolchildren within Lyon Township, McKenna contacted the South Lyon Community School District for enrollment data for the entire district. The historical enrollment data below reflects the established trend that young families are eagerly settling in Lyon Township.

Figure 4: School Enrollment



Source: South Lyon Community Schools

Disability

The type of disability and number of residents impacted will shape the design and accommodations made for them on the Township's Parks and Recreation Plan. The 2022 ACS estimates from the US Census Bureau reports that approximately 7.7 percent of Lyon Township residents have a disability of some sort, with the most impacted populations being the 65 and over subgroups. The most prevalent disabilities within the population are ambulatory and hearing difficulties, followed by independent living difficulties. Ambulatory difficulties encompass serious difficulties with walking or stairs, issues that limit physical activity, leading to steeper decline in health. Giving consideration to these difficulties in planning for parks and recreation activities could result in positive health outcomes for a population that already experiences great difficulty on a day-to-day basis. Accommodations could include ramps or pavement improvements in order to ease accessibility concerns for those who suffer from ambulatory difficulties, or by installing audible and visually assisted crosswalks that are conscious of those who may be visually or hearing impaired.



Physical Characteristics

Lyon Township contains approximately 32 square miles of residential, commercial, and industrial land uses. Land use and building department records indicate a pattern of conversion of agricultural and vacant land for use by single-family, suburban-type development.

Population in the Township has skyrocketed as new development occurred. The 2020 U.S. Census found a population of 23,271, up 60 percent from the 2010 population of 14,545 residents.

This incredibly rapid growth requires substantial land resources, and many development proposals have been submitted to the Township. While many are strictly single-family residential, there have been multi-family projects in the New Hudson area. Projects like Hudson Townes and The Crossings in New Hudson are poised with direct access to parks and trails in the Township.

EXISTING LAND USE	TOTAL ACRES
Single Family Residential	14488.8
Undeveloped	2495.57
Natural, Conservation, or Drainage	2217.42
Public or Quasi-Public	1941.97
Agricultural	1917.73
Industrial	1222.08
Commercial Recreation	1213.09
Commercial	363.61
Multi-Family Residential	169.9
Manufactured Homes	140.28
Utility	111.41
Office	40.5
Vacant	4.4

NATURAL AREAS

Natural areas consisting of native vegetation can provide critical ecological benefits, such as maintaining water quality, soil stabilization, pollination of cropland, wildlife corridors, stopover sites for migratory birds, sources of genetic diversity, and flood water detention. Such natural areas are largely located within protected wetlands or floodplains and will remain untouched, even as development continues surrounding them.

The Township has been focused on preserving natural areas and vegetation as development continues. In 2017, the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services updated the previous 2004 Potential Natural Area assessments in Oakland County. According to Oakland County, the initial project was intended to “improve natural resource-based decision-making by identifying places dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features.”

Potential natural areas were ranked based on five criteria: total size of the site, size of the core area, presence or absence of a stream corridor, landscape connectivity, and restorability of surrounding lands. Emphasis was placed on intactness, wetlands and wetlands complexes, riparian corridors, and forested tracts.

As illustrated on Map 1, Lyon Township contains one Priority One area, which is safely protected within the Oakland County Lyon Oaks County Park. The area bounded by Eight Mile, Griswold, Ten Mile and Currie Roads is occupied by a significant amount of Priority Two natural areas. The future park located at Eleven Mile and Milford Road contains about 40 acres of Priority Two natural area in the form of a wooded wetland. Due to tree cutting, a portion of the Priority Two natural areas in the south part of the Township have been removed. Priority Three natural areas are scattered fairly evenly throughout the Township.

SOILS

The Oakland County Soil Survey shows that Lyon Township has three major soil associations. The Marlette-Capac-Houston Association is nearly level to hills, well drained to very poorly drained; loamy and mucky soils. The Riddles-Marlette-Houghton Association is nearly level to steep, with some areas very well drained to very poorly drained; loamy and mucky soils. The Fox-Oshtemo-Houghton Association is nearly level to hills, with some areas very well drained to very poorly drained; sandy and mucky soils. The soil survey for Oakland County is general in nature, and the information it provides cannot be used as the basis for a construction project.

However, it does provide a good look at the main characteristics of the soils in the area. The inability of the soils in the area to drain well indicates that any proposed open fields for recreation must be developed with a well-designed drainage plan so that the surfaces are not occupied with standing water after a period of rain. The nature of the soils also requires that the analysis of existing facilities takes into account the ability of open fields to drain adequately ensuring that facilities will be used to the fullest extent.

WATER RESOURCES

Overall, most of the water features are spread throughout the Township. There is a small cluster of lakes on the east side of the community. The majority of Lyon is in the Huron River watershed (the river flows through the northwestern corner of the Township), but some parts of the southeastern corner flow into the Middle Branch of the Rouge River.

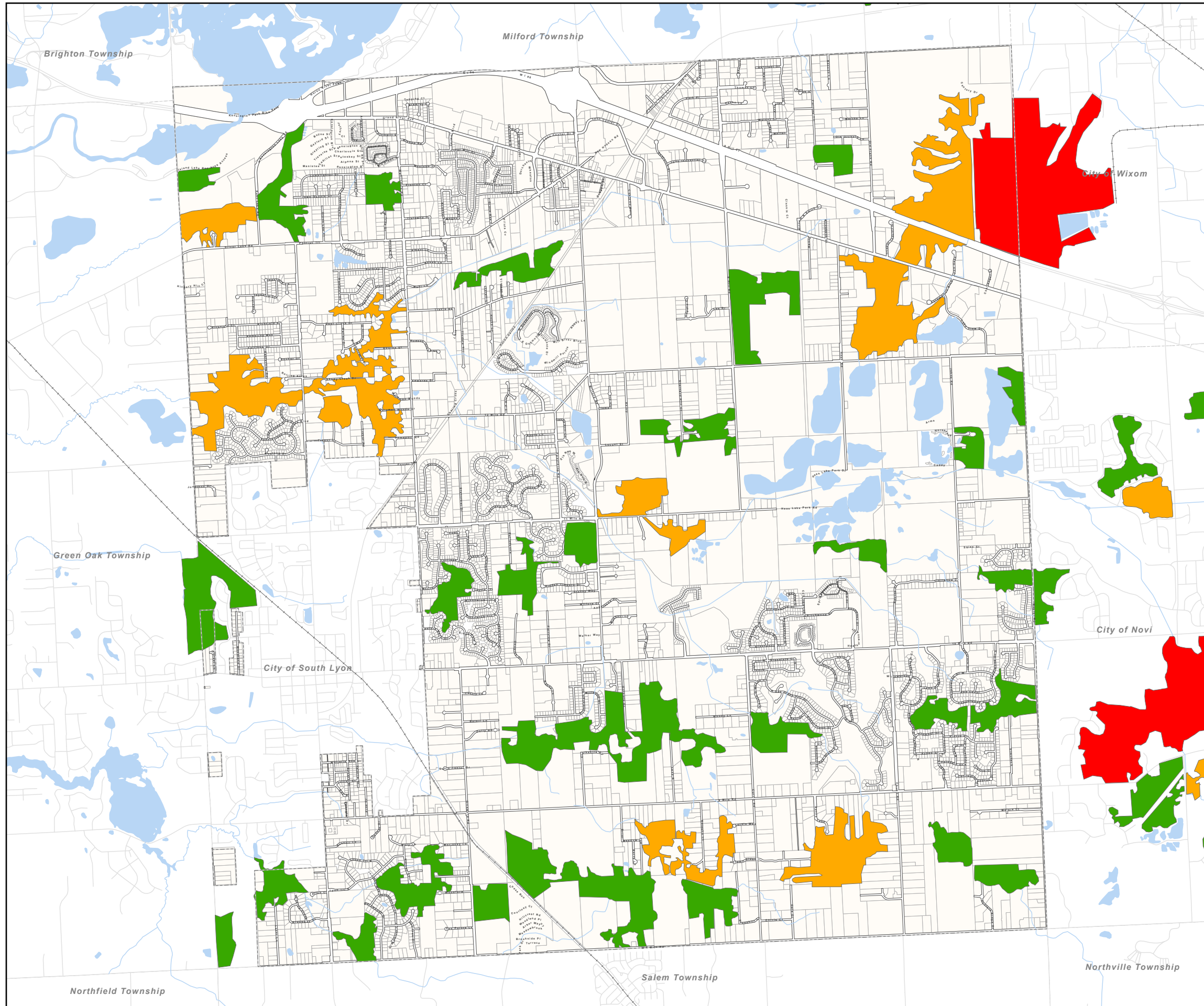
Large areas of the Township are located within regulated floodplains or wetlands, in which case most development must secure a permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that wetlands are secured or mitigated appropriately.

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Map 1 Natural Areas

Charter Township of Lyon,
Oakland County, Michigan

January 7, 2019



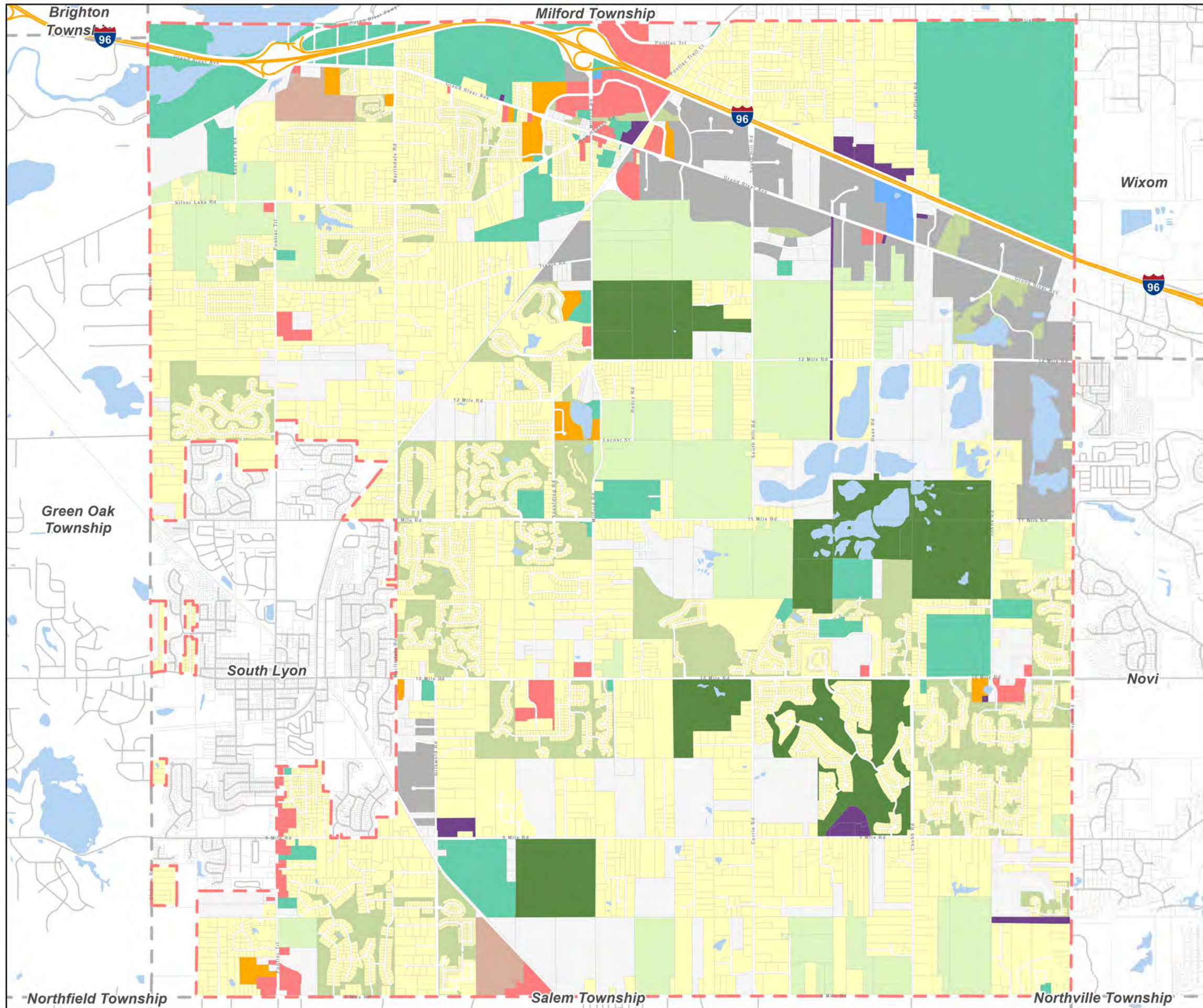
- Lyon Twp Boundary
- Priority One MNFI Potential Natural Areas (2017)
- Priority Two MNFI Potential Natural Areas (2017)
- Priority Three MNFI Potential Natural Areas (2017)
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, and Drains



Basemap Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, 2019.
Data Source: Oakland County Natural Areas 2017 update



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Existing Land Use Map

Charter Township of Lyon,
Oakland County, Michigan

DRAFT - August 24, 2023

LEGEND

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Commercial Recreation
- Industrial
- Multiple Family Residential
- Manufactured Housing Park
- Mixed Use
- Office
- Public/Quasi-Public
- Single Family Residential
- Utility
- Undeveloped
- Natural, Conservation, or Drainage
- Water Bodies
- Lyon Township Boundary
- Other Municipal Boundaries



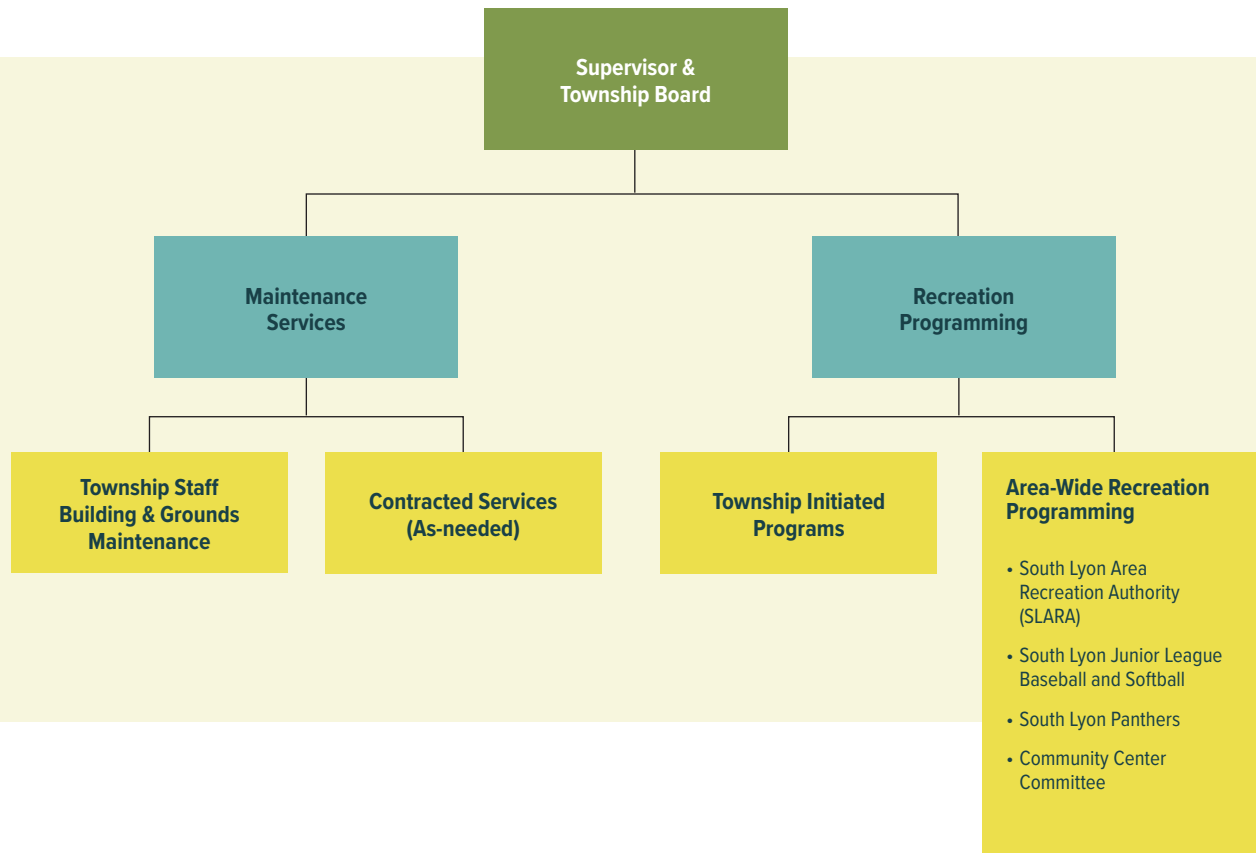
Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Oakland County 2023. Data Source: McKenna 2023

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Administrative Structure

The following section describes the administrative structure designed to provide adequate resources for public recreation and parks facilities in the Township. In the time since the 2019 plan was adopted, the Township Board has assumed the role once filled by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. This means that all parks and recreational facility decisions are directly in the hands of the elected officials and Township Board, and any staff members needed to provide services.

Figure 5: Parks and Recreation Organizational Structure – Charter Township of Lyon, 2023



Parks and Recreation Budget

The Township’s Park Fund Budget deals with revenues and costs associated with the Township’s only developed park, the James F. Atchison Memorial Park, and beginning this year the Huron Valley Trail that was acquired. Most expenditures in the park have gone to repairs and seasonal maintenance. Development of the 11 Mile Park will require cooperation with the Library Board, but Lyon’s Township Board allocated \$2.5 million for the recreation portion of the park.

The 2023 adopted budget anticipates \$135,500 in expenses for Recreation and Parks line items (not including the \$2.5 million for 11 Mile Park). This includes \$95,000 for mowing and maintenance of the various facilities, \$25,000 to the recreation authority (SLARA), and other miscellaneous expenses.

The Goals and Objectives of this plan describe methods to potentially minimize the amount of time and resources spent performing ongoing maintenance items using smart design decisions, updated equipment to minimize downtime and increase performance, and better allocated labor hours.

Partnerships

SLARA

The South Lyon Area Recreation Authority runs a wide variety of recreational programs for residents of the greater South Lyon area (Lyon Township, the City of South Lyon, and Green Oak Township combine to provide the funding for the organization). SLARA offers a full slate of sports leagues, youth programs, special events, educational programs, and senior activities. In 2023, Lyon Township contributed \$25,000 to help fund SLARA.



SOUTH LYON COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The grounds of schools operated by the South Lyon Community School District provide a variety of recreation opportunities for Township residents. Their facilities are used by SLARA for recreational programming and sports leagues. However, because they are primarily designed to be used for educational and other school-related purposes, they are not always open to the wider community.

NEIGHBORING COMMUNITIES

Lyon Township's neighboring communities, particularly Novi, Wixom, and South Lyon, have mature and well developed parks systems. Lyon Township residents use and enjoy parks in those communities. However, formal partnerships between the communities and Lyon Township have been rare.



COUNTY, STATE, AND REGIONAL PARKS AUTHORITIES

Lyon Township contains one County Park (Lyon Oaks) and parts of a Metro Park (Kensington) and a State Recreation Area (Island Lake). In the past, Oakland County, Huron-Clinton Metroparks, and the State of Michigan have partnered with Lyon Township and SLARA on special events and the use of various facilities.

Successful development of the Huron Valley Trail was achieved through partnership and cooperation between the Huron-Clinton Metroparks and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Volunteers are crucial to most recreational programming, serving in many different capacities. Often, volunteers for recreational activities are organized by SLARA, although the Township has successfully recruited huge volunteer forces for major events.

Special seasonal events such as the Kite Festival, summer carnival, and Winterfest attract large crowds to Lyon Township.

LYON TOWNSHIP DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA)

The DDA has provided initial financing for recreation-oriented activities that promote the New Hudson downtown, including the "On The Grand" series of activities and events. The goal with all of these events is that they become self-sustaining so that no expenditure of DDA funds will be necessary. The DDA's Development Plan anticipates funding a park in the heart of New Hudson, consistent with the Lyon Center Vision Plan.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants

By updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, a community is eligible for recreations grants through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Such funding options are only available for communities that have an up-to-date recreation plan.



MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND (MNRTF)

Eligible projects include acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, including additions to existing parks, forest lands or wildlife areas. Development of public outdoor-recreation facilities is eligible (such as picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ballfields, tennis courts, and trails). Funds are provided through sale of oil and mineral leases on State land. Local contributions equal to at least 25 percent of the project cost are required. There is no minimum or maximum amount for acquisition projects. The minimum allowable grant for development is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$300,000.



LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)

Administered eligible projects include community recreation and trailway improvements. These grant of \$30,000 to \$300,000 to local units of government for development of facilities such as ballfields, tennis courts, playgrounds, trails and picnic areas. Funds are provided through federal appropriations from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.



RECREATION PASSPORT

The Recreation Passport program is funding through proceeds of park passes purchased for admission to State Parks in Michigan. Grants of \$7,500 to \$150,000 are awarded for projects that emphasize renovations to existing facilities that have outlived their useful life expectancy.

Grant History

Lyon Township does not regularly receive grant funding for maintenance or improvements to its parks, it has been a recipient of grant funds for specific capital projects in the past. Table 3 provides a description of the projects for which the Township received grant funding.

Table 3: MDNR Parks and Recreation Grant History – Charter Township of Lyon

Project Title	Project Year (Project No.)	Grant Amount	Site Elements
Lyon Community Park / I-96	1986 (TF86-182)	\$150,000	Two ballfields, one soccer field, parking areas, driveway, landscaping.
Lyon Community Park	1991 (TF91-043)	\$375,000	Ballfields, tennis courts, restrooms facilities, bleachers, goal posts, parking, landscaping.
Lyon Community Park – Phase III	1993 (BF93-138)	\$314,800	Playgrounds, picnic tables, benches, bike racks, basketball and volleyball courts.

Source: Grants Management, Department of Natural Resources

Recreation Inventory and Evaluation

McKenna inventoried existing Township, local, and regional recreation facilities in September 2018 and again in 2023 to update the facility counts, conditions, and improvements. The physical inventory of local facilities consisted of site inspections of Township and specified neighboring parks and recreation sites. An inventory of playground equipment and park facilities was recorded and reviewed with regard to location, acreage, quantity, quality, accessibility, and condition. The regional inventory consisted of review and compilation of regional park facilities and brochures.

Lyon Township Park Facilities

Currently, Lyon Township owns and operates one developed park and its portion of the Huron Valley Trail and is in the conceptual stage for constructing three new parks.

JAMES F. ATCHISON MEMORIAL PARK

The James F. Atchison Memorial Park is located near the Township offices in the north central part of the Township. The 120-acre park features active and passive recreation and is open to the public.

Recreation amenities include baseball fields, a playground area, swings, picnic tables, covered pavilions, public restrooms, a disc-golf course, bike path, tot lot, and spring riders. One of the unique features of the memorial park is the views overlooking the New Hudson district and I-96. Metal benches have been provided along the perimeter for residents to sit back and take in the views.

Based on the description of universal access on page 42, this park would fall under the Level 2 category. While there are some roads paved throughout the park, there are many inaccessible paths, and some of the roads are in need of repair. Existing play equipment is also not considered to be accessible.

HURON VALLEY TRAIL (LYON SECTION)

A new acquisition in 2023, the portions of the Trail within the Township's boundaries were acquired by the Township. The ownership change is notable but will not negatively impact access or use of the trail.

The Huron Valley Trail implements the state's plan for the Lakeland Trail State Park, with construction of a 12-foot wide asphalt trail along the East Unit of the Lakelands Trail, a former Grand Trunk Railroad right-of-way. In addition, an east-west spur connects to Island Lake Recreation Area and Kensington Metropark. The 12-mile Huron Valley Trail is a part of the system that will eventually extend from Lake St. Clair to Jackson and beyond. The plan for the Huron Valley Trail was drafted by the Western Oakland County Trailway Management Council, which is composed of Lyon and Milford Townships, the City of South Lyon, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA).



Parks coming soon...

11 MILE ROAD PARK

The Township owns 52 acres of vacant land (20 of which are developable) at the northeast corner of Eleven Mile Road and Milford Road. While originally slated as a recreational park only, a recent decision by the Township Board will allow the property to be shared with a new site for the Township's library. When completed, the complex will include the library, parking, a baseball field, multi-use fields, basketball and volleyball courts, a playground, a pavilion, and other amenities

TRAILHEAD PARK FOR THE HURON VALLEY TRAIL

A trailhead park is proposed to be located south of New Hudson along a new section of the Township's Ring Road (southeast portion) that is currently in design. The trailhead would improve local access in the downtown area for the trail.

LYON CENTER DRIVE MINI-PARK

The DDA owns 3 small parcels immediately adjacent to the Huron Valley Trail, and recent discussions and DDA direction indicate the space may be used for a veteran's memorial or a dog park, but the use has not been finalized yet.

Regional Facilities within Lyon Township

In addition to the existing and planned facilities under the Township's jurisdiction, there are several regional or state parks located completely or partially within Lyon Township:

LYON OAKS COUNTY PARK

Lyon Oaks County Park and Golf Course is a 1,041-acre park with 800 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands. Located in the northeast corner of Lyon Township, residents are able to enjoy playgrounds, volleyball and soccer fields, nature trails and a 13-acre, fenced dog park.

KENSINGTON METROPARK

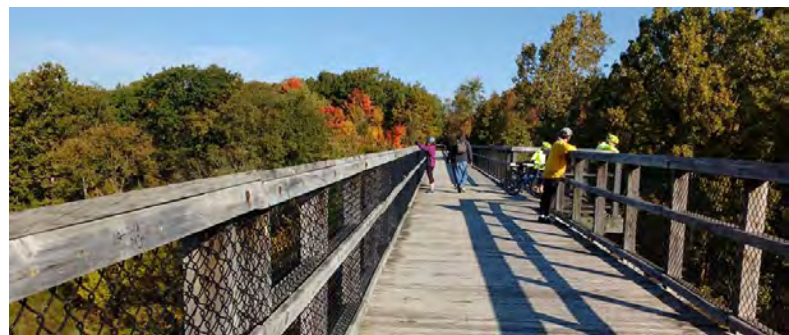
Kensington Metropark spans 4,486 acres and provides year-round recreational amenities. Located in northwestern Lyon Township, Kensington surrounds Kent Lake. The metropark provides amenities such as water slides, boating, swimming, nature trails, disc golf, skiing and snowboarding, and an 18-hole, par 71 public golf course.

ISLAND LAKE STATE RECREATION AREA

Island Lake State Recreation Area is 4,000-acre park located in northwestern Lyon Township that provides a rural and quiet retreat to nature. The park provides swimming beaches, wildlife view posts, hiking, fishing, and snowmobiling.

HURON VALLEY TRAIL (NON-LYON SECTIONS)

The bike and pedestrian pathway runs from the South Lyon boundary into Milford Township, then re-enters Lyon Township near Lyon Oaks County Park. As more trail connections are made, the Huron Valley Trail offers one opportunity to connect the more densely populated areas of the Township and the City of South Lyon with recreational facilities to the north.





Coyote Golf Club

Golf Courses

Due to Lyon Township’s semi-rural nature, it is a popular location for golf courses. One private and four public golf courses are located within the Township and provide recreation for community residents.

- Coyote Golf Club
- Walnut Creek Country Club
- Riverbank Golf Course
- Tanglewood Golf Course
- Cattails Golf Club

The high demand for new housing within Lyon Township causes an increasing pressure on golf course owners to sell to single family residential developers. The Township is in the process of reviewing development proposals on both the Coyote and Cattails golf courses. While not approved at this time, these proposals illustrate the development pressures experienced by these desirable properties.



Walnut Creek Country Club



Riverbank Golf Club



Tanglewood Golf Club



Cattails Golf Club

Facilities in Neighboring Communities

There are several major parks and recreation facilities close to Lyon Township (i.e., within a 10-mile radius) including four State parks, two Metroparks, and two County parks. Residents in the southwest quadrant of the Township are served by the parks in the City of South Lyon, including McHattie Park and Volunteer Park, and school playgrounds located within and around the City. Golf courses and driving ranges comprise many of the recreation facilities on the east and south sides of the Township, as this area has become a regional center for golf. Other recreational opportunities on the east and south sides of the Township are offered by the various schools.

The following recreational facilities are located in adjacent communities and within short distance to Lyon Township boundary:

MCHATTIE PARK

McHattie Park is located in the City of South Lyon, just off Lafayette Street. The 15-acre park has playground, tot lot, volleyball courts, baseball fields, sledding hill, and open space for picnics and passive recreation. McHattie Park also contains a Little Free Library with books for both children and adults.

McHattie Park is also home to the historic Witch's Hat Depot Museum, Little Village Chapel, the Freight House and the Victorian Gazebo.

VOLUNTEER PARK

Volunteer Park is located in the City of South Lyon, off Dixboro Road between Eight and Nine Mile Roads. This 130-acre park features baseball diamonds, soccer fields, basketball courts, a pavilion and a multi-use trail.



McHattie Park



Volunteer Park



ITC Sports Park



Maybury State Park

ITC SPORTS PARK

The ITC Sports Park is located in Novi, just east of Lyon Township on Eight Mile Road. The expansive sports park includes soccer fields, baseball fields, playgrounds, public restrooms, and tennis and basketball courts. The complex is known throughout the region and frequently hosts tournaments throughout the year.

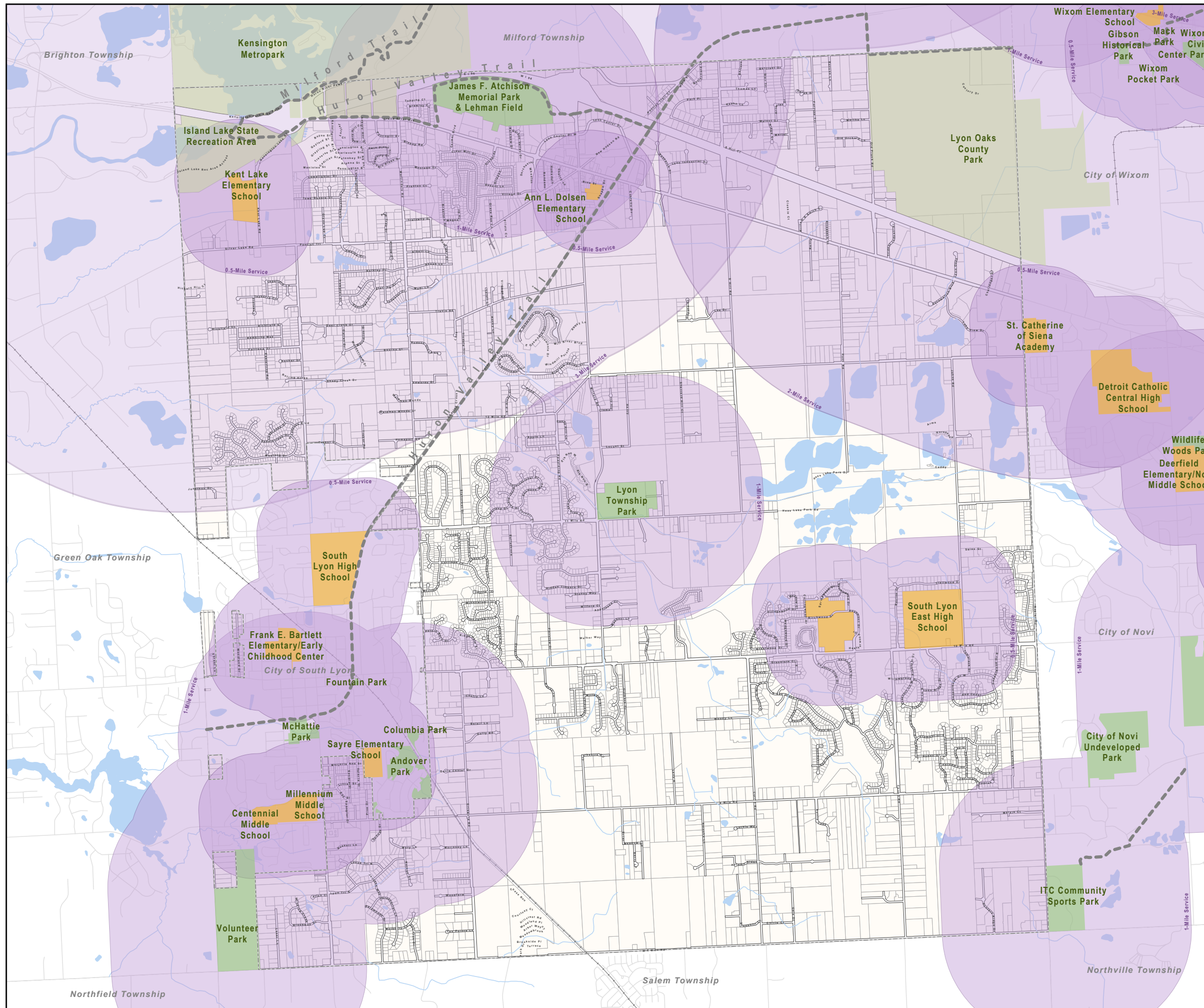
MAYBURY STATE PARK

Maybury State Park is almost 1,000 acres of open meadows, forest, and wildlife. The working farm may be visited all year round and the park can be explored on foot, bicycle, horseback, or cross-country skis. Visitors are also able to enjoy biking and hiking trails, fishing, and kids attractions.

Map 3 Recreation Facilities Service Radii

Charter Township of Lyon,
Oakland County, Michigan

January 7, 2019



- Lyon Township
- Trails
- County Parks
- Educational Facility
- State Parks
- Municipal Parks
- Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Parks
- 0.5-Mile Service - Schools and Mini Parks
- 1-Mile Service - Municipal Parks
- 2-Mile Service - County Parks
- 3-Mile Service - Regional and State Parks
- Lakes, Rivers, Streams, and Drains



Basemap Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, 2019.
Data Source: McKenna, 2018.

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Parks and Recreation Facilities Evaluation

Developing a complete inventory of recreation facilities is an essential component of a five-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as it provides a base of information to use in developing the Action Plan. Understanding what facilities are available to Lyon Township residents will assist decision-making in the future.

The following inventory and the adjoining Parks and Recreation Inventory Map details the amenities currently available at each of the public facilities located within or near Lyon Township.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is a national, non-profit service organization dedicated to advancing parks, recreation and environmental efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people. NRPA works closely with national, state and local recreation and park agencies, corporations and citizens' groups in carrying out its objectives. As part of its activities, NRPA has created a hierarchy of park types which recognizes open space services at differing levels based on a number of characteristics including community need, park function, park location, and community size. NRPA provides a number of criteria that help communities establish a smaller hierarchy for their communities, all of which are suggested but not required to be followed without modification by each community.



Lyon Township currently has one developed park that is owned and operated by the Township, James F. Atchison Memorial Park. The Township now also owns the right-of-way on which the Huron Valley Trail is situated. And while currently undeveloped, land at the northeast corner of 11 Mile Road and Milford Road is planned to be developed in the near future in conjunction with the Township Library (a library millage passed and the Board agreed to allocate funding for the park portion).

Lyon Township residents often frequent park and recreation facilities located in adjacent communities. For the purpose of evaluating available amenities to Township residents, we have included the parks and recreation facilities in adjacent communities, as they are frequented and enjoyed by Township residents.

PARK CLASSIFICATIONS

For planning and management purposes, recreation professionals often classify park and recreation facilities based on the type of facility and expected usage. Frequently, a six-tier classification system is used, as follows (see Map 4):

Mini-Parks

Mini-parks are characterized as small, specialized parks that usually serve the needs of residents in the immediate neighborhood. These parks usually serve a limited population or specific demographic group. For detailed information about accessibility rankings, see page 42.

There are no publicly owned/operated mini-parks in Lyon Township at this time. The need for mini-parks is addressed by subdivision, condominium, and apartment common areas. The majority of residential projects currently in development within Lyon Township are being proposed as Planned Developments. The Zoning Ordinance requires planned developments containing a residential component shall provide and maintain contiguous usable open space that is accessible to all residents. Many such designated open space areas will be developed with paved walkways and benches for passive recreation, and playgrounds for active recreation.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks are typically multi-purpose facilities that serve as the recreational and social focus of a neighborhood. They provide areas for both passive and active recreation activities such as field games, court games, playgrounds, picnicking, etc. Neighborhood parks generally serve residents within on-half mile.

McHattie Park, located in the City of South Lyon, is classified as a neighborhood park. In addition, schools (Dolsen, Sayre, Bartlett, Kent Lake, Brummer, Salem and Hardy Elementary Schools, Millennium and Centennial Middle Schools) provide some recreation opportunities normally found in neighborhood parks.

Community Parks

Community parks typically contain a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents within the community. Community parks may include areas for intense active recreation as well as passive recreation opportunities not commonly found in mini or neighborhood parks. Community parks generally serve residents within a three-mile radius. Community parks also include smaller parks that are specialized in nature and are meant to serve the entire community.

The James F. Atchison Memorial Park, located atop and adjoining a former landfill overlooking I-96, is an example of a typical community park. It contains major sports facilities, a segment of the Huron Valley Trail, picnic facilities, tot lots and playgrounds, sports fields, and public restrooms.

Regional / Metropolitan Parks

Regional parks are located on sites with unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitats, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail use. Many also include active play areas.

The Township is served by several regional parks located nearby, including: Island Lake State Recreation Area, Kensington Metropark, and Lyon Oaks County Park (see Map 5).



Linear Parks

A linear park is an area developed for one or more modes of recreation travel, such as hiking, bicycling, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, canoeing, horseback riding, and pleasure driving. Linear parks are often built along utility rights-of-way, abandoned railroad lines, bluff lines, vegetation patterns, and roads. The Huron Valley Trail, for example, was developed on a former GTW railroad right-of-way. Linear parks often link other parks or components of the recreation system, community facilities, commercial areas, and other focal points.

The 12-mile Huron Valley Trail is the backbone of the linear park system in Lyon Township, providing non-motorized access to Island Lake Recreation Area, Kensington Metropark, Lyon Township Community Park, Lyon Oaks County Park, and other points of interest. Of note, the Trail properties within the Township boundaries were purchased in 2023 by the Township from MDNR; no changes to the facility are anticipated other than ownership.

Private and Special Use Facilities

Special use recreation facilities are typically single-purpose recreation facilities, such as golf courses, nature centers, outdoor theaters, interpretative centers, or facilities for the preservation or maintenance of the natural or cultural environment.

Several special use recreation facilities are located in or near Lyon Township including Witch's Hat Depot State Historic Site, six golf courses, and one bowling establishment.

Tables 4 and 5 provide a summary of the parks and recreation facilities currently available to Township residents.

School Facilities

Lyon Township maintains a working relationship with the South Lyon Community Public School District. The school district provides much of the recreation programming, in addition to the South Lyon Area Recreation Authority programming.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITIES

A total of nine (9) public school properties were inventories for available recreation facilities. While school facilities are not accessible at all times and are not maintained or upgraded by Lyon Township, they do play an important role in the provision of recreation opportunities and facilities to residents.

Bartlett Elementary School

Bartlett Elementary School is located in the City of South Lyon north of 10 Mile Road and west of Lafayette St. The school houses 450 students in grades K-5. The school is located on a large piece of property which includes ball fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, and a gymnasium.

Dolsen Elementary School

Dolsen Elementary School is located on Rice Street near the intersection of Grand River, Pontiac Trail and Milford Road. The school has over 500 students in grades K-5 and has undergone remodeling in recent years. The school has basketball courts, ball fields, playgrounds, and gymnasium.

Hardy Elementary School

Hardy Elementary School is located north of 10 Mile Road, west of Johns Road. The school serves 650 students across the district and supports basketball courts, ball fields, running track, playground, tot lot, and a gymnasium.

Kent Elementary School

Kent Elementary School is located on Kent Lake Road, north of Silver Lake Road. The school serves 500 students in grades K-5. The school provides basketball courts, ball fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, and a gymnasium.

Sayre Elementary School

Sayre Elementary School is located on Marjorie Ann St and Valerie St. The school serves more than 600 students and includes basketball courts, ball fields, soccer fields, playgrounds, and a gymnasium.

Centennial Middle School

Centennial Middle School is located in the City of South Lyon north of Nine Mile Road and east of Dixboro Road. Centennial is the second middle school in South Lyon, located down the road from its sister school, Millennium Middle School. The school provides softball fields, soccer fields, and gymnasium.

Millennium Middle School

Millennium Middle School is located in the City of South Lyon on Nine Mile Road, west of Pontiac Trail. The school provides softball fields, a football field, soccer fields, a running track, and a gymnasium.

South Lyon High School

South Lyon High School is located on Pontiac Trail and Eleven Mile Rd. The school provides tennis courts, ball fields, softball fields, a football field, a soccer field, an indoor swimming pool, a running track, and gymnasiums.

South Lyon East High School

South Lyon East High School is located on 10 Mile Road and Johns Road. The school provides tennis courts, ball fields, softball fields, a football field, an indoor swimming pool, a running track, and a gymnasium.

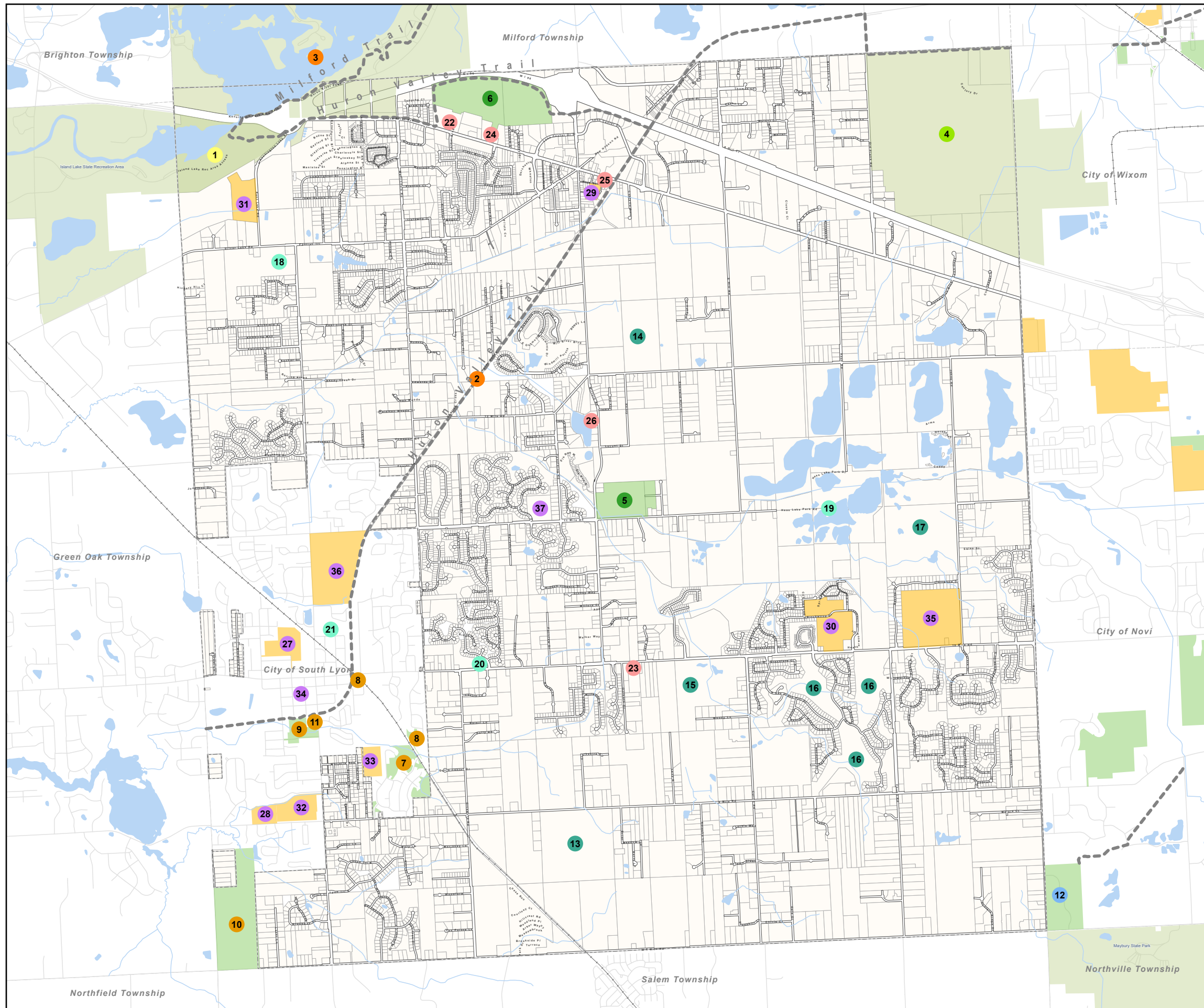
William A. Pearson Elementary School

William A. Pearson Elementary School is located on 11 Mile Road, west of Milford Rd. The facility was completed in August 2017 and serves students grades K – 5. The innovative design incorporates a residential design layout to encourage a healthy creative environment for students. The school provides play structures, basketball courts, swings, and wide open space for various modes of play.

Map 4 Existing Recreation and Community Resources

Charter Township of Lyon,
Oakland County, Michigan

January 7, 2019



- City of Novi Parks
- City of South Lyon Parks
- Golf Facilities
- Lyon Township Parks
- Municipal Service Facilities
- Oakland County Metroparks
- Private Recreation Facilities
- Regional Facilities
- South Lyon Community Schools
- State of Michigan Facilities

Map Number	Facility Name	Map Number	Facility Name
1	Island Lake State Recreation Area	19	Haas Lake Park
2	Huron Valley Trail	20	Peter's Farm
3	Kensington Metropark	21	Pinz Bowling Facility
4	Lyon Oaks County Park and Golf Course	22	Fire Station No. 1
5	11 Mile Park	23	Fire Station No. 2
6	James F. Atchison Memorial Park	24	Township Hall
7	Andover Park	25	U.S. Post Office
8	Columbia Park	26	William K. Smith Community Center and Township Library
8	Fountain Park	27	Bartlett Elementary
9	McHattie Park	28	Centennial Middle
10	Volunteer Park	29	Dolsen Elementary
11	Witch's Hat Depot State Historic Site	30	Hardy Elementary
12	ITC Community Sports	31	Kent Lake Elementary School
13	Cattails Golf Course	32	Millennium Middle
14	Coyote Golf Course	33	Sayre Elementary
15	Riverbank Golf Course	34	Schools Administrative Office and South Lyon City Hall
16	Tanglewood Golf Community	35	South Lyon East High School
17	Walnut Creek Country	36	South Lyon High School
18	Erwin Orchards	37	William A. Pearson Elementary School



Basemap Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, 2019.
Data Source: McKenna, 2018.

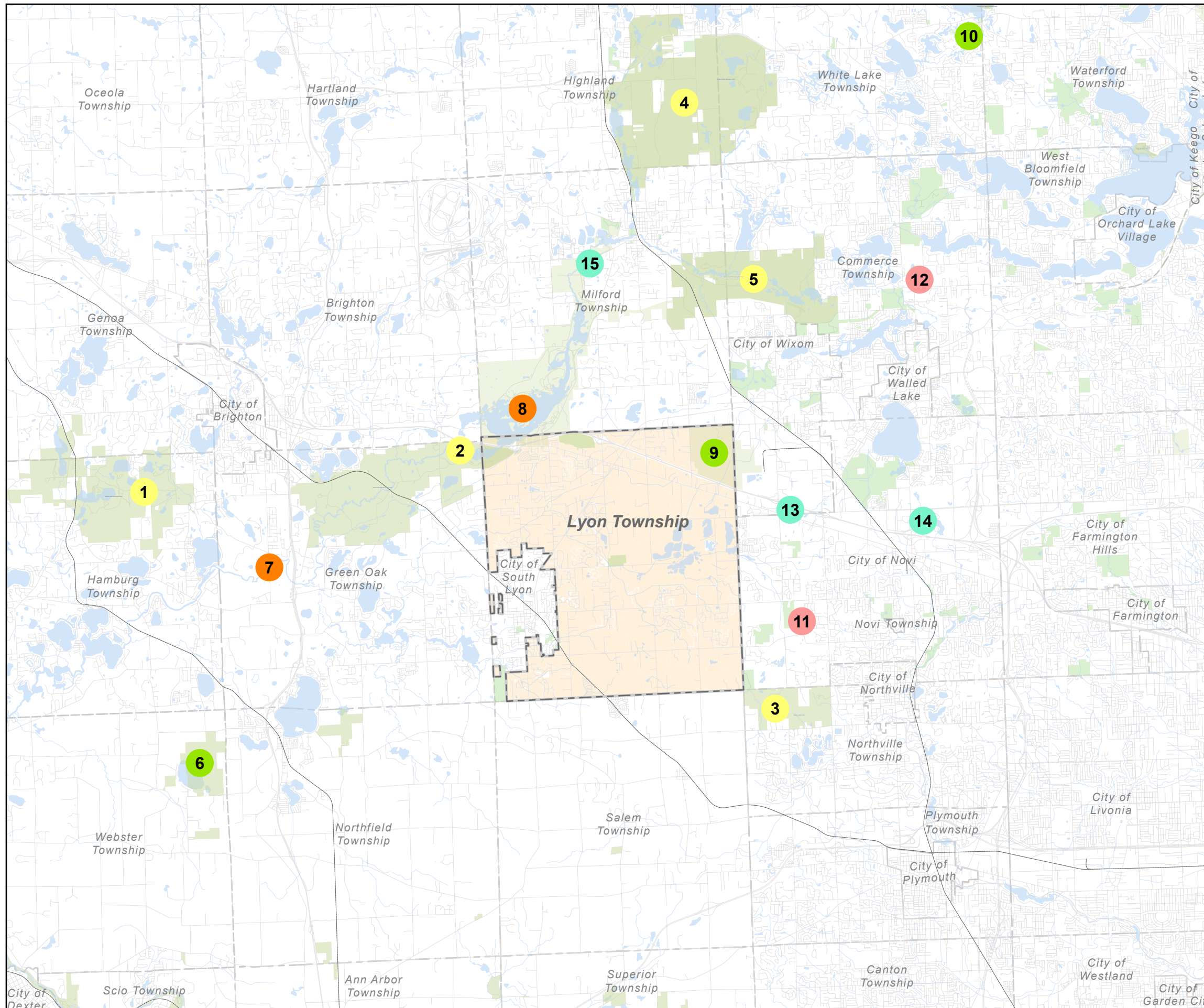


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Map 5 Regional Recreation Resources

Charter Township of Lyon,
Oakland County, Michigan

January 7, 2019



- County Parks
- Private Recreation Facilities
- Regional Facilities
- Municipal Service Facilities
- State of Michigan Facilities

Map Number	Facility Name
1	Brighton State Recreation Area
2	Island Lake State Recreation Area
3	Maybury State Park
4	Highland State Recreation Area
5	Proud Lake State Recreation Area
6	Independence Lake County Park
7	Huron Meadows Metropark
8	Kensington Metropark
9	Lyon Oaks County Park
10	White Lake Oaks County Park
11	Novi Civic Center
12	Hickory Glen Park
13	Rock Financial Show Place
14	Twelve Oaks Mall
15	Camp Dearborn



Basemap Source: Michigan Geographic Framework, 2019; Washtenaw County GIS 2019.
Data Source: McKenna, 2018.



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Table 4: Community Recreation Facilities Inventory

FACILITY	Lyon Twp		South Lyon School District													South Lyon		Novi	Total
	Atchison Park	Huron Valley Trail	South Lyon Community High	South Lyon East High School	Millennium Middle School	Centennial Middle School	Bartlett Elementary	Hardy Elementary	William A. Pearson Elementary	Kent Lake Elementary	Salem Elementary	Brummer Elem.	Sayre Elem.	Dolsen Elem.	McHattie Park	Volunteer Park	ITC Community Sports Park		
Basketball Courts	1							1	4	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	2	17	
Tennis Courts			8	8	4												2	22	
Volleyball Courts															4	1		5	
Ball Fields	4		2	2			1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2		10	29	
Softball			3	2	2	1										2		10	
Multi-purpose field			5	2			1						1					9	
Football Fields			1	1	1													3	
Soccer Fields			1		3	3	3		1	1	1	1	3			2	8	27	
Golf Courses - 18 hole																		-	
Driving Range																		-	
Swimming Pool – Indoor			1	1														2	
– Outdoor															1			1	
Handball Courts																		-	
Ice Rinks – Indoor																		-	
– Outdoor																		-	
Archery Range																		-	
Running Track (1/4 mile)			1	1	1			1			1							5	
Playgrounds	1						2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1			12	
Field Hockey																		-	
Disc Golf	1																	1	
Picnic Areas	3														1			4	
Cross-Country Ski Trails																		-	
Nature Trails		1									1							2	
Sledding Hills															1			1	
Tot Lots	1						1	1				1						4	
Metal Play Structures	1								2									3	
Swings	4						12	6	10	12	6	12	8	11	9		8	98	
Jungle Gyms	1						1	2		3	1		1				1	10	
Spring Riders	4																	4	
Bike Paths				1												1	1	3	
Pavilions	3														1	1	2	7	
Shuffleboard															3			3	
Gymnasium			1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				14	

Sources: Lyon Township Inventory, South Lyon Schools, City of South Lyon

Table 5: Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

	Kensington Metropark	Island Lake State Recreation Area	Huron Valley Trail	Lyon Oaks County Park	Maybury State Park
Size	4,543 ac	4,000 ac	13 miles (8 purchased by Township)	1,041 ac	944 ac
Picnicking	●	●		●	●
Drinking Water	●	●		●	●
Toilets	●	●		●	●
Shelters	●	●		●	●
Play Areas	●	●		●	●
Tot Lot					
Swimming Beach	●	●			
Bathhouse-Food Services	●	●			
Boat Launch	●	●			
Boat or Canoe Rental	●	●			
Boat Launch	●	●			
Excursion Boat	●				
Canoeing	●	●			
Group Rental Facility				●	
Farm Learning Center	●				
Fishing	●	●			●
Golf (Regulation) or Driving Range	●			●	
Bike Trail	●	●	●	●	●
Hiking or Fitness Trail	●	●		●	●
Scenic Views	●	●		●	
Nature Trails	●	●		●	
Nature Center	●			●	
Interpretive Program	●			●	
X-Country Skiing	●	●		●	●
X-Country Ski Rental-Food	●				
Ice Skating	●				
Sledding	●				
Group Camp/Camping	●	●			
Hunting		●		●	
Snowmobiling		●			
Equestrian Trail	●				●
Shooting/Archery Range		●			
Riding Stable					●
Dog Park				●	
Disk Golf	●				
Mountain Biking		●			●

Sources: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Oakland County Parks, Huron-Clinton Metroparks

Facilities Analysis

In addition to parkland, existing facilities were compared against the recommended guidelines set by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to determine if they are adequate to meet the needs of residents based on national averages. The analysis takes into account a variety of factors including specific needs and existing conditions in Lyon Township. Information obtained during the public input opportunities, site conditions, as well as national averages. Table 6 indicates the recommended guidelines of facilities, the number of facilities in the Township and nearby (including McHattie Park, Volunteer Park, and ITC Sports Park), and the surplus or deficiency of facilities.

Table 6: Facilities Analysis

Park Classification	NRPA Guideline ¹	Recommended Facilities ²	Township / Non-School Facilities	Public School Facilities	Total Facilities	Surplus / Deficiency
Baseball / Softball Field	1 / 5,033	3	18	21	39	36
Basketball Court	1 / 7,117	5	5	12	17	12
Football Field	1 / 18,785	1	0	3	3	2
Golf Course (18-Hole)	1 / 32,990	1	5	0	5	4
Playground	1 / 3,028	8	2	10	12	4
Soccer Field	1 / 4,947	5	10	17	29	24
Swimming pool (outdoor)	1 / 25,191	1	0	2	2	1
Tennis Court (outdoor)	1 / 5,815	4	2	20	22	18
Trails	1 system per region	1	2	0	1	1
Volleyball Court	1 / 14,800	2	5	0	5	3

Sources: 1: Lancaster, R.A., ED. *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*. Alexandria, VA: NRPA, 1983; Mertes, J.D. and J.R. Hall. *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*. Alexandria, VA: NRPA, 1995, *NRPA Agency Performance Review*. Ashburn, VA: NRPA, 2023.

2: Lyon Township Population based on 2020 Decennial Census Estimates; 23,271

The table shows a surplus above recommended levels in common recreational amenities when considering the facilities available in the Township and those maintained by the school system. Volleyball courts are the exception; in the approved site plan for 11 Mile Road Park, two (2) courts are proposed to help address this deficiency. The school facilities owned by the South Lyon School District are a major contributor to the availability of recreation facilities in the Township. Though schools provide limited hours and access to the general public, they often act to subsidize the need for parks and recreation facilities within a community. Residents in Lyon Township often frequent the parks and facilities available through the school system. The management of the majority of the recreation facilities within the Township remains the responsibility of the South Lyon School District.

Newly-Acquired Facility

In 2023, Lyon Township finalized the acquisition of all of the right-of-way within the Township's jurisdiction of the Huron Valley Trail from MDNR. While no changes to the trail itself are anticipated, the ownership gives the Township bit more control over the complimentary amenities that can be provided and a better ability to make necessary trail improvements in short time-frames, among other benefits. Residents may not notice immediate impacts to this change in ownership, but it is a notable acquisition for the Township.

Barrier Free Accessibility

The passage of the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires all areas of public service, including parks and other recreation facilities, to have barrier-free accessibility.

Accessibility Ratings

An evaluation of Lyon Township's parks and recreation facilities has been conducted as part of the inventory. In accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) standards, facilities were evaluated to determine if a person with any of the following criteria can safely and independently access and use the park or facility:

- Has limited sight or is blind
- Uses a wheelchair
- Has a hearing impairment or is deaf
- Uses a walking aid
- Has a mental impairment

A five-point evaluation was used to rank each facility's accessibility. The system is described below and the accessibility rankings can be found in the Accessibility Assessment table.

- Level 1:** The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
- Level 2:** The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.
- Level 3:** The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.
- Level 4:** The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved, and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.
- Level 5:** The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.



Inclusive play

For children with and without disabilities, the community playground can facilitate a positive environment for physical activity and inclusion.

The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), signed into law in 2010, detail enforceable standards for physical accessibility. However, these standards do not include elements designed for children with Down syndrome, sensory disorders, and visual and hearing impairments.

New attention has been focused on inclusive playgrounds and universal design that can serve a diverse population, including children with physical, cognitive, emotional and sensory disabilities.

The following elements are considered essential activities for inclusive play:

- » Sensory play
- » Music
- » Swinging
- » Spinning
- » Sliding
- » Socialization/imaginative
- » Safety, comfort and access

Table 7: Accessibility Assessments

Facility Type	Facility Name	Communities	Size (acres)	Accessibility Assessment
School	South Lyon High School	City of South Lyon	50	4
School	Centennial and Millenium Middle Schools	City of South Lyon	44	4
School	Sayre Elementary School	City of South Lyon	16	4
School	Bartlett Elementary School	City of South Lyon	23	4
School	South Lyon East High School	Lyon Township	106	4
School	Kent Lake Elementary School	Lyon Township	14	4
School	Dolsen Elementary School	Lyon Township	4	4
School	Hardy Elementary School	Lyon Township	10	4
School	William A. Pearson Elementary School	Lyon Township	17	4
Park	Atchison Memorial Park	Lyon Township	120	2
Park	11 Mile Road Park	Lyon Township	20	1
Trail	Huron Valley Trail	Lyon Township	8 miles	4
Park	Volunteer Park	City of South Lyon	137	3
Park	McHattie Park	City of South Lyon	22	3
Park	ITC Community Sports Park	City of Novi	71	3
Regional / Metropolitan Park	Lyon Oaks Park / Golf Course	Lyon Township	1,401	3
Regional / Metropolitan Park	Kensington Metropark	Lyon Township / Milford Township / Brighton Township / Green Oak Township	4,481	3
Regional / Metropolitan Park	Island Lake State Recreation Area	Green Oak Township	4,000	3
Regional / Metropolitan Park	Mayberry State Park	Northville Township	1,000	3
Regional / Metropolitan Park	Huron Valley Trail	City of Wixom / Milford Township / City of South Lyon Portions	5 miles	4

Public Engagement Process

Community participation brings vitality to a Parks and Recreation Plan and aims to help the Township meet the needs of its residents in an impactful, personal way. In addition to the engaged citizens who regularly attend and participate in Township Board and Planning Commission meetings, additional opportunities to contribute to this update were available to residents and stakeholders.

Community participation brings vitality to a Parks and Recreation Plan and aims to help the Township meet the needs of its residents in an impactful, personal way. As part of Lyon Township’s engagement efforts, several different events and discussions have taken place and are planned for the future. The following paragraphs describe the public participation events that have already occurred, the public hearing that will be held, and expected outcomes of the concurrent plans being developed.

Previous public participation efforts in the 2014 Plan aimed to engage local parks and recreation service providers, sports group leaders, and subdivision association leaders. The focus group rated the existing facilities on adequacy and quality, finding that development of the trail system, an operating plan for park maintenance, and build-out of underdeveloped Township properties were of highest priority.

For the 2019 Plan, the Township conducted a visioning session for the currently-vacant 11 Mile Park property owned by the Township and a round-table discussion with Township residents in one of the community’s largest Retirement Living community. Staff also conducted a telephone interview with the Disability Network of Michigan to better understand the accessibility challenges that may be able to be addressed in future parks facility planning efforts.

For this plan update, the Township utilized two forms of engagement: an online map-based comments forum and a hosted Trail Ride for the Huron Valley Trail.

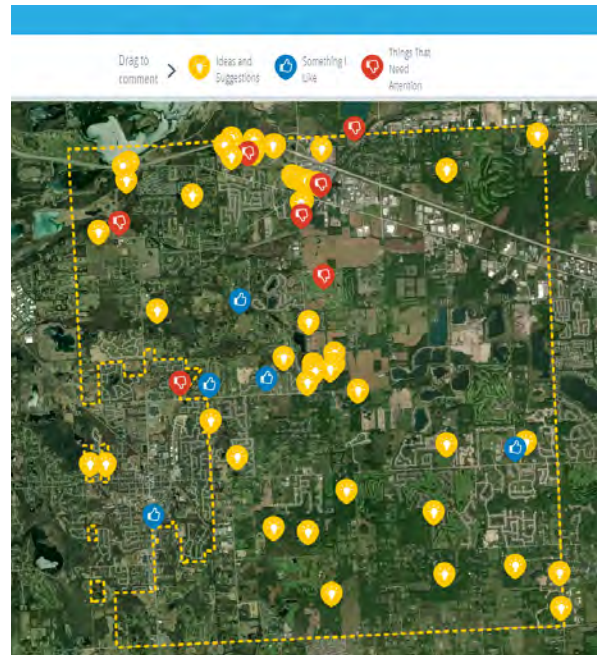
Online Map-based Comment Forum Submission period of over 2 months

For this engagement activity, the Township utilized a platform called Social Pinpoint to allow residents and commenters an opportunity to place comments on a map, up- and down-vote others comments, and identify “Ideas and Suggestions,” “Something I Like,” and “Things That Need Attention.” As of the time of this draft’s publication, the site had nearly 170 unique visitors who left 60 comments. A small sampling of the comments include:

- » “Build a nice nature walk with a natural walking path. Use it for schools to show kids about nature and the creatures that live in it..”
- » “Build the library we approved, and the park!”
- » “Unused land can be used as park with multiple play structures, water features, etc.” (in reference to vacant land south of Hardy Elementary School)
- » “Golf course use changing to homes creates a loss and gap in recreational land use. This will need to be made up elsewhere in the Township.”
- » “Create a Trailhead and connection to the Huron Valley Trail.”
- » “Promote and create access to Island Lake State Recreation Area.”
- » “Add a variety of amenities that fit all age groups: Pickleball, Walking Trail, Outdoor Workout Equipment, mid-level or older child playscape, amphitheater, artwork, boardwalk at wetlands, outdoor reading area, etc.”
- » “Complete sidewalk/pathway gap along Kent Lake Road to get to Kensington Metropark.”
- » “Protect Priority Natural Areas per the Township Master Plan. These can be used for passive recreation.”

- » “Create a dog park near the Township Offices or elsewhere in the Township.”
- » “The play ground area needs an EXTREME makeover. The equipment is faulty and needs replacing. There is plenty of space to expand the play area. There should be areas geared to different age levels.”

The full list of comments is available in the appendix of the plan. Many of these comments and suggestions align with the goals and objectives of this plan - complete pathway gaps to improve connectivity, improve the variety and number of recreational amenities, and coordinate with other recreational providers.



Huron Valley Trail Ride October 27, 2023

In an effort to coordinate planning efforts with other ongoing Township projects, staff conducted a Trail Safety Audit to evaluate the road crossings of the Huron Valley Trail. The Township was the recipient of a SEMCOG Planning Assistance grant to evaluate and make recommendations for the trail/road crossings. This ride took place at the end of October and included staff from Oakland County, the Township, and several rider groups who frequently use the Trail.

The safety audit document has not yet been completed, but the feedback provided by the riders will be incorporated into a design recommendations document, complete with specific direction on improvements to signage, signaling, pavement markings, surface improvements, pathway connections and gap-filling, general maintenance, and other modifications to the Huron Valley Trail at road crossings. This exercise allowed for the more focused trail-related goals and objectives found later in the plan.



Public Hearing

Lyon Township Board

At its January 2, 2024 meeting, the Lyon Township Board will hold the required public hearing to collect feedback relating to this Plan’s recommendations and findings. The results of that hearing will be summarized in this section.

Goals and Objectives

Goals address general needs and establish the basis for setting specific programmed objectives. Objectives are measurable results that the community works toward accomplishing. Priority is not implied.

Goal 1: Provide facilities that expand the reach of recreation. Increase recreation opportunities that meet the needs of all segments of the population, including persons with disabilities.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Continue, and where appropriate expand, special events in the Township, such as the Kite Festival and the color run.
- b. Acquire equipment and facilities to keep pace with current design and regulatory standards, as well as the recreation needs of the community.
- c. Implement plans for the development of 11 Mile Road Park in coordination with the Library planning efforts from the recently-passed millage. Planning efforts for the Park are to include elements of universally accessible design in playscapes and pedestrian circulation, in addition to elements identified as opportunities to fill recreation gaps during public engagement efforts.
- d. Identify, acquire, and develop land for additional sports fields (little league, football, lacrosse, etc.) where there is a demonstrated need and financial viability is determined to be a net positive for the Township.

Goal 2: Plan for sustainable services. Develop a plan to guide the maintenance and replacement operations of parks and recreation facilities based on sound fiscal policy.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Develop a five-year operations plan that includes year-to-year development goals, a maintenance program, and an annual budget.
- b. Prepare a budget that addresses day-to-day operations, capital improvements, and maintenance.
- c. Prepare plans for funding long-term maintenance costs associated with park acquisitions and improvements. Strategies may include, for example, annual sponsorships, endowments, or general fund budgeting.
- d. Seek grants, donations, and public benefit contributions for infrastructure and programming. Potential sources for the funding of capital improvements include private donors, grant opportunities at the regional, state, and federal levels, and corporate sponsorships.
- e. Review each capital improvement with an eye for continuing maintenance requirements. Update short-term and long-term budgets as appropriate.
- f. Include pathways and connections to a facility in the maintenance and replacement budget.
- g. Utilize new DPW staff and equipment to better maintain Township recreational facilities to enhance their longevity and safety.

Goal 3: Provide natural beauty and aesthetic qualities in parks. Strive to provide parks that complement natural features and contribute to the aesthetic quality of the community.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Allocate adequate resources for expert design assistance so that natural features are sensitively incorporated into park design.
- b. Thoroughly assess existing site conditions to become knowledgeable of important natural features that should be retained.
- c. Collaborate with conservancy groups, such as Six Rivers Nature Conservancy, within the community to create mutually beneficial relationships that provide Township residents with unique opportunities to interact with natural resources.
- d. Plan for a high-impact, low-maintenance approach to designed landscaping at Township-owned recreational facilities that results in high aesthetic quality without negatively impacting maintenance budgets . Native plantings, natural stormwater management, and high-quality site furnishings should be a priority.



Goal 4: Upgrade existing facilities. Maximize the use of parks and recreation facilities by upgrading them so they can accommodate a broad range of activities and address regional deficiencies for recreation. Experiment to provide the most recreational value.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Upgrade the James F. Atchison Memorial Park in areas that are undeveloped so it can accommodate such activities as Safety Town, field sports, new playgrounds, and other identified amenities and programs.
- b. Identify shortfalls in recreational opportunities through the facilities inventory in this plan, and fill the need, where appropriate and feasible.
- c. Collaborate and engage special interest groups in active planning to provide amenities that are scarce or unavailable in the region. For example, sensory gardens for the visually impaired, outdoor exercise equipment for senior citizens, etc.
- d. Where investment costs are minimal and potential utilization is high, the Township aims to experiment with unique recreational amenities. For example, where inventory and public input suggest a bocce ball court is desired, the Township can take underutilized park land and mow it into a bocce court. If this court doesn't get utilized, the Township is willing to accept the failure and try another option.
- e. Study options for the recreational use of the water tower parcel near the corner of 9 Mile and Griswold. Passive recreation (low-maintenance trails and similar) may be suitable for this lowland property.
- f. Begin development of the 11 Mile Road Park in accordance with the plans that were recently updated to accommodate the library building on the property per the approved millage.
- g. Consider unique recreation opportunities, such as pocket parks or innovative streetscape play options, in Township-initiated development projects.

Goal 5: Coordinate with other recreation providers. Promote cooperation with recreation providers in the area, in recreation planning and programming.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Continue to support and coordinate with the South Lyon Area Recreation Authority (SLARA), Junior League, Panthers, and other recreational providers in the area to provide recreation services locally.
- b. Where appropriate, seek input in the planning and programming of County, regional (Metropark) and State-owned park and recreation facilities in the Township and immediately adjacent.
- c. Avoid duplication of facilities and programs offered in adjacent communities and other agencies if such facilities and programs can serve Township residents.

Goal 6: Improve accessibility and inclusion. Improve accessibility to parks, and recreation facilities and programs.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Develop a network of trails throughout the community to provide access to recreation facilities and other points of interest in the Township and surrounding communities. Utilize the pathway requirements of the Zoning Ordinance to fill gaps in the trail network where development occurs in accordance with the Township's Pathway Plan.
- b. Design parks and playgrounds to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the principles of universal access. This applies to site elements ranging from pathways to playground equipment, picnic tables to pavilions.
- c. Encourage the Road Commission of Oakland County to construct five-foot paved shoulders to accommodate bicyclists in conjunction with road paving projects, consistent with Complete Streets legislation.
- d. Continue the momentum of recent substantial investments by the Township into the Huron Valley Trail, working with the Western Oakland County Trailway Management Council. The Western Oakland County Trailway Management Council is the legal multi-jurisdictional entity established to oversee the maintenance and operation of the Huron Valley Trail. The Council is composed of representatives from Lyon Township, Milford Township, City of South Lyon, and Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority .
- e. Complete pathway connections where appropriate; utilize nodes and paths as the guide. Nodes (parks, schools, library, etc.) should always be connected to other nodes by a non-motorized pathway, aided by intersection improvements and traffic calming measures, as appropriate.
- f. Prioritize projects that reach underserved areas of the Township. If we can shrink the distance to recreational amenities, they will be more likely to be utilized by residents.

Goal 7: Continue the planning process. Maintain the ongoing parks and recreation planning process.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Review and update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan every five years (or more frequently, if identified needs arise), not only to maintain eligibility for grants, but to have a guidebook for parks and recreation improvement efforts.
- b. Implement plans that contain a park component, such as the Lyon Center Plan, which calls for a small park in downtown New Hudson.

Goal 8: Promote recreation. Promote activities and special events sponsored by Lyon Township and other organizations in the area.

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Make use of the Township’s website, news releases, flyers, and publications to make people mindful of Township activities.
- b. Encourage local businesses to make use of Township facilities for events such as, but not limited to, company picnics and promotional opportunities.
- c. Promote Township facilities for use by special interest groups such as Veterans, scout troops, and other related groups.

Action Plan

The Goals and Objectives defined in this plan have been developed to answer the question “Where do we want to be in the provision of facilities and services for recreational use?” The Action Plan includes strategic actions organized around the Goals and Objectives. Priority Projects and Success Indicators may be duplicated between Goals in this section – all facets of providing recreational facilities and programming are intertwined.

The Success Indicators introduced in the 2019 Plan have been reevaluated based on the updated goals and objectives so that Township Administration, the Planning Commission, the Township Board, and community stakeholders can assess how incremental activities contribute to the implementation of the Plan. As each project is considered, the Township should have a clear idea of what success looks like, and this format aims to define achievement of an objective.

As the Township begins to utilize this format and becomes more comfortable with it, Success Indicators may be further defined with metrics, benchmarks, and targets.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 1: Provide facilities that expand the reach of recreation

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Utilize vacant land in James F. Atchison Park to fill recreational voids.
- » Support Development of 11 Mile Road Park.
- » Upgrade water tower site near 9 Mile Road and Griswold with recreational uses.
- » Develop trailside facilities adjacent to Huron Valley Trail.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Success of recreational outreach depends on coordination with the Township Board, Planning Commission, DDA, and staff to continue to promote lifestyle as a selling point during project reviews, engagement efforts, and public meetings.
- » Careful planning with developers to provide support for public facilities in the Township is key. Additionally, private recreation facilities, like neighborhood parks, should be linked to public amenities – the Township should help define connections to public infrastructure where applicable.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » New low-cost recreational opportunities are attempted at existing facilities, i.e. bocce ball courts, foot golf holes shared with the disc golf course, etc. Even failures are successes here – implemented innovation, even if use is underwhelming, is success.
- » Public benefits from PDs are provided in the way of monetary contributions to existing and future parks.
- » Trailside facilities are constructed along the Huron Valley Trail.
- » Physical construction begins for 11 Mile Park.
- » Funding for the development of Township parks is obtained through donations, grants, or other means.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 2: Plan for sustainable services

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Recreational facilities are included for consideration in the Capital Improvement Program.
- » Develop operations checklist to highlight long-term maintenance implications of recreational facilities.
- » Identify sources of grant funding and donations for park improvements.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Work with a landscape architect and maintenance staff to develop best practices in facility design.
- » Utilize DPW staff and equipment to prolong the useful life of trails, play equipment, and other recreational amenities.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » Development of a maintenance and/or operations checklist for recreational facilities in the Township; if possible, a unique maintenance checklist should be prepared for each park.
- » Native plantings, natural stormwater management, pervious pavements, provision of on-site recycling options or other sustainable building methods are utilized as facilities are upgraded.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 3: Provide natural beauty and aesthetic quality in parks

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Develop “Best Practices” guidelines for parks development, which documents plant selection, stormwater management, human impact assessments, etc.
- » Utilize existing conservation easements that adjoin/abut Township properties as an opportunity to expand learning experiences into passive recreation.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Landscape Architects, planners, Conservancy groups, naturalists, etc. engage to prepare a comprehensive checklist of best practices for park design in the Township.
- » Collaboration with Six Rivers and other land conservancies in the Township to ensure mutual goals can be achieved.
- » Work with local and regional interest groups (scouts, birdwatchers, etc.) to capitalize on unique assets available in Township parks.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » “Best Practices” document published and implemented in Township parks and private subdivision parks.
- » Zoning Ordinance amendments adopted to reference best practices.
- » Installation of birdhouses, scout projects, or other community member-driven amenities at Township parks facilities.

Goal 4: Upgrade existing township facilities

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Provide missing amenities identified in the public engagement efforts.
- » Study potential uses for the Township’s water tower parcel at 9 Mile and Griswold.
- » Installation of upgraded play and exercise equipment and other amenities as budget permits.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Planning Commission and Township Board buy-in is key for the long-term success of existing Township recreational facilities. Continued support through budgeting and long-range planning efforts identified in the CIP will be essential.
- » Where appropriate and mutually beneficial, public benefits offered by developers associated with Planned Developments can support upgrading facilities.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » New low-cost recreational opportunities are attempted at existing facilities, i.e. bocce ball courts, foot golf holes shared with the disc golf course, etc. Even failures are successes here – implemented innovation, even if use is underwhelming, is success.
- » Public benefits from PDs are provided in the way of monetary contributions to existing and future parks.
- » Trailside facilities are constructed along the Huron Valley Trail.
- » Physical construction begins for 11 Mile Park.
- » Funding for the development of Township parks is obtained through donations, grants, or other means.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 5: Coordinate with other recreation providers

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Utilize vacant land in Township parks to fill recreational voids.
- » Utilize existing conservation easements that adjoin/abut Township properties as an opportunity to expand learning experiences into passive recreation.
- » Make efforts to Township Board members with recreation providers to continue dialogue on the needs of the Township’s residents.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Invitation to recreation providers to meet with staff and elected officials in-office at provider-sponsored events.
- » Investigate collaborative funding mechanisms aimed to support specific recreational services/facilities.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » Fundraising efforts planned.
- » Needs of recreational providers discussed with staff and officials, with potential proposals brought to the Township Board by staff for consideration.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 6: Improve accessibility and inclusion

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Complete pathway connection between Huron Valley Trail and 11 Mile Road Park
- » Create amenities that are unavailable or in limited supply for an underserved Township demographic – think senior citizens, people with physical impairments, etc.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » Active engagement with the senior demographic, special education programmers from the school district, local chapters of the Special Olympics programs, etc.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » Implementation of identified “missing” facilities, such as sensory gardens for the visually impaired, outdoor exercise equipment targeted towards seniors, etc.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 7: Continue the planning process.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Review the Parks and Recreation Master Plan annually for actionable objectives that can be accomplished by the DDA, Planning Commission, and Township Board.
- » Prepare the required 5-year update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to remain qualified for grant programs and funding available from the State.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » DDA, the Planning Commission, and the Township Board must communicate about the planning process and where the Goals and Objectives of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan can be implemented.
- » The Township Board is encouraged to continue to fund updates to the Plan, as appropriate, to ensure the Township remains at-the-ready to engage in projects.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » Township Board continues to receive updates of activity and progress by staff and officials participating in organizations like the Western Oakland County Trailway Management Council.
- » Objectives of this Plan are accomplished.

ACTION PLAN

Goal 8: Promote Recreation

PRIORITY PROJECTS

- » Provide recreational providers an opportunity to describe their programs in a public forum, such as updates to the Township Board.
- » Provide links on the Township website to local recreational providers, including but not limited to SLARA, Matcats, Junior League, Panthers, Lyon FC, and the South Lyon Lacrosse Club.

COORDINATION AND FUNDING

- » This goal can be accomplished through the donation of time by dedicated volunteers, and active engagement in the community by members of the DDA, Planning Commission, and the Township Board.

SUCCESS INDICATORS

- » Visibility and engagement by Township representatives at events, recreation functions, and regular use of the Township’s facilities.
- » Continued engagement with recreational providers locally and regionally.

Appendix

Post-Completion Self – Certification Reports

Township Board Resolution of Adoption

Minutes of the Township Board Meeting at which Plan was Adopted

Township Website notice of Public Viewing Period

Public Meeting Notice

Township Board Resolution of Adoption

Minutes of Township Board Recommending Adoption of Plan

Complete Public Engagement Comment Results

Transmittal Letter to Oakland County Planning and Economic Development

Transmittal Letter to SEMCOG

Plan Certification Checklist



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