

# CITY OF ANN ARBOR



**Parks & Recreation**  
CITY OF ANN ARBOR

## PARKS & RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN



### 2011 – 2015



The City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan 2010-2015 contained herein was adopted by Resolution R-11-058 of the Ann Arbor City Council on March 7, 2011

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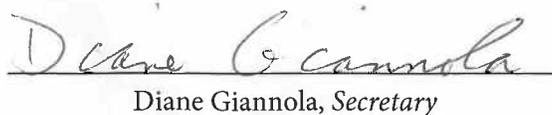
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# PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN 2011-2015

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# INTRODUCTION

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## **Parks and Recreation Open Space (PROS) Plan and City of Ann Arbor Master Plan**

A master plan is an official document adopted by a local government to establish long range, general policies for the physical development of the community. The City of Ann Arbor Master Plan is composed of six documents, or “elements,” that cover the City’s major geographical areas and its essential City-wide facilities. These supporting documents provide a framework for preserving the City’s unique character, ensuring its diversity, supporting investment, and promoting desired change. The Master Plan elements and a description of each are provided below:

- ◆ MASTER PLAN: LAND USE ELEMENT (2009) – Provides information and guidance to residents, decision-makers, developers, and property owners about land use issues facing the City, including goals, objectives, action statements, and site-specific land use recommendations.
- ◆ DOWNTOWN PLAN (2009) – Sets goals, objectives, and land use recommendations for Ann Arbor’s downtown area, including the boundaries of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Updated as part of the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) effort; a subarea of the master plan.
- ◆ TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE (2009) – Analyzes the opportunities and constraints for improving Ann Arbor’s major transportation corridors, such as Plymouth Road and Washtenaw Avenue, and provides design guidelines for aesthetic and transportation improvements.
- ◆ NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION PLAN (2007) – Outlines recommendations for improving non-motorized modes of travel in Ann Arbor.
- ◆ PARKS & RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN (2006) – Provides a comprehensive inventory of Ann Arbor’s park and recreation facilities and presents issues, needs, and opportunities for the City’s park and recreation system.

- ◆ NATURAL FEATURES MASTER PLAN (2004) – Provides a framework to guide the City and its citizens in their policy making and stewardship of natural features protection activities.

Each of the City's master plan elements has a significant relationship with the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan. Existing and future land use, transportation, and natural feature systems are essential components in assessing the parks and recreation needs and desires for any community.

## **Goals of the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan**

The Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan is the City's vision for parks and recreation in Ann Arbor. The PROS Plan provides an inventory of existing parks and facilities, describes the relationship between the park and recreation system and surrounding municipalities and recreation providers, identifies park and recreation needs and deficiencies, and proposes major capital park projects for existing and new parks.

The 2011-2015 PROS Plan is intended to facilitate discussion and evaluation of major issues, problems and potentials, the setting of priorities for the next five years, and the identification of goals and objectives that reach further into the future. The scope of the plan is to reflect tradition; to provide balance of parks, facilities, and programs; to respond to the needs of today; and to set a direction for the future. It also establishes background information while delineating system needs that may qualify for state and federal grant funding. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requires all municipalities applying for recreation grants to have a current plan on file with the MDNR and to update that plan every five years. This planning effort is directed towards the formal adoption of an updated PROS Plan by the Park Advisory Commission, the City Planning Commission, and the Ann Arbor City Council.

Ann Arbor has a long history of planning for parks, recreation, and open space, with plans in 1920, 1939, 1952, 1962, 1978, 1981, 1988, 1994, 2000, and 2006. Many factors necessitate the updating of the old plan, including the City's desire to retain the parks, open space, and recreational amenities that continue to attract people to Ann Arbor.

## **Focus of the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan**

The PROS Plan provides an overview of the Ann Arbor park system, including the physical description of the City, administrative structure and budget information, and an inventory of parks and programs provided by both Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services and by the Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Recreation program. It also describes goals and objectives for future planning guided by input gathered through an extensive public process.

The plan, by identifying valuable natural and cultural resources, is a tool for the preservation and improvement of amenities. Natural and cultural amenities are a necessary aspect of a balanced

community and are considered a legitimate land use along with housing, business, and industry. An evaluation of open space and natural features is essential in the planning process for optimum land use and potential parkland acquisition. The plan is also an opportunity to update relevant recreational services and facilities so they better meet the community's needs.

Other local, state, and regional agencies provide additional park and recreational planning and opportunities for the broader community. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation is a provider of parkland in various locations throughout the County, including County Farm Park in the City of Ann Arbor and Parker Mill just east of the City. The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Parks Authority provides parkland near Ann Arbor along the Huron River, including Delhi, Dexter-Huron, and Hudson Mills Metroparks. The State of Michigan owns and operates the Pinckney and Waterloo Recreation Areas and the Chelsea State Game Area in the western half of the County. While the PROS Plan does not address the recreational needs for other entities, it recognizes common goals and linkages, including shared open space, trails, and natural features, such as the Huron River.

### **Projects Completed During PROS Plan Cycle 2006-2010**

Many projects were completed during the five-year period starting in 2006. Those that were actually listed in the PROS Plan as a priority have an asterix (\*) next to them. Other projects were completed because of maintenance issues or changes in identified needs.

#### **Parks and Recreation Facility Improvements**

- Argo Park – woodchip trail from canoe livery north to Longshore Drive\*, boardwalk and wetland planting, restroom renovations\*, new sheds for camps and storage, kayak racks
- Bandemer Park – new disc golf course\*, new dirt bike jump course\*, renovations to parking and green space\*, and a new windmill to power light at north restroom
- Buhr Park – solar/windmill lighted sign at entrance, signage improvements through park
- Buhr Ice Arena – floor and refrigeration system replacement, sun shield installation to protect ice surface\*, constructed skate sharpening room, ADA access to facility\*
- Buhr Pool – pool resurfaced
- Burns Park – new Petanque Court
- Cobblestone Farm Barn – kitchen renovations\*, wood floor replacement including insulation\*, dumb waiter\*, interior and exterior lighting\*, customer service renovations, restroom renovations, landscape renovations, service drive replacement, porch repairs
- Farmers Market – painted sheds, replaced lighting\*, installed sound system, upgraded electrical\*, repaired gutters
- Fuller Pool – shade structure addition\*
- Gallup Canoe Livery – café renovated, constructed storage room\*, renovated restrooms, added drinking fountains
- Huron Hills Golf Course – pump station replacement\*

## Introduction

- Kempf House – restored windows\*, interior plaster repair\*, ADA walk, exterior painting, foundation replacement\*, porch restoration\*
- Leslie Science Center – raptor enclosures constructed\*, expanded critter room for three-season classroom space\*, landscaping, seat walls
- Leslie Park Golf Course – renovated shelters and clubhouse, new furniture, replaced maintenance equipment
- Mack Pool – roof renovations\*, LED pool deck lights
- Mary Beth Doyle Park – disc golf course reconstruction\*
- Olson Park – continued development, including soccer fields\*, parking lot completion, off-leash dog park\*, new restroom building\*
- Sculpture Plaza Renovations – replaced brick and furniture, reconfigured planting beds, renovated sculpture, landscaping
- Southeast Area Park – demolished house on property and restored area\*
- Swift Run – developed off-leash dog park\*
- Veterans Memorial Park Ice Arena – locker room renovations\*, dehumidification system\*, fire suppression system\*, new zamboni, new compressors
- West Park – design and implementation of stormwater and recreation master plan\*, including stormwater improvements\*, new pathways, entrance improvements, seatwalls at band shell, parking improvements, landscaping, boardwalk, relocated basketball court

## Park Acquisitions

- Bluffs Park – two additions to allow access at Huron View Boulevard and at Sunset\*
- Camp Hilltop – park along Huron River Drive adjacent to Kuebler Langford Park\*
- Narrow Gauge Property – high quality natural area in northeast part of City\*
- Scheffler to Redbud access along Malletts Creek\*
- South Pond – land along Huron River Drive at South Pond (life estate)\*
- West Park – property on Chapin

## Neighborhood Park and Playground Renovations

- Riverside\* - replaced play area
- Gallup\* - replaced play area by canoe livery
- Mary Beth Doyle\* - relocated and replaced play area
- Wheeler\* - replaced part of play area,
- Leslie\* - replaced south play area, and renovated north play area
- Sylvan – replaced play area
- South Maple\* - replaced play area
- Garden Homes\* - replaced play area
- Wellington\* - replaced play area
- Frisinger\* - replaced play area
- Lansdowne\* - replaced play area

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- Evergreen\* - new play area
- Brookside\* - new play area
- Redwood - constructed walk through park with landscaping and park furniture

## Stormwater Improvements and Rain Gardens

- Argo Nature Area – rain garden
- Belize Park – rain garden
- Bird Hills – rain garden
- Buhr Park – three stormwater basins/naturalized vegetation as part of stormwater master plan\*
- Burns Park – rain garden at Petanque Court
- Cobblestone Farm – rain garden at barn
- Hunt Park – rain garden
- Huron Hills – rain garden near Huron Parkway
- Fuller Park – stormwater feature adjacent to river
- Lansdowne Park – rain garden at play area
- Mary Beth Doyle Park – rain garden (in addition to Water Resources Commission work)
- Olson Park – stormwater vegetation management\*
- Veterans Park – rain garden at parking lot on Jackson Avenue
- West Park – extensive wetland creation and stormwater improvements\*

## Tree and Shrub Plantings

Major plantings completed in conjunction with volunteer groups at:

- Buhr
- Mary Beth Doyle
- Olson
- Sylvan

## Pathways, Parking Areas, and Bridge Renovations

- Allmendinger - replaced pathway through park\*
- Argo – constructed boardwalk from parking area to picnic area
- Bandemer - implemented vehicle bridge and parking lot renovations\*
- Bromley - constructed barrier free access walk from neighborhood to play area
- Buhr - completed pathway connection from Packard Road to play area and replaced pathways from Essex to Allen School and from Easy Street to entry drive, replaced service drive/walkway to Cobblestone Farm Barn
- Buhr Ice Arena and Pool – rebuilt entry stairs and ADA compliant walkway
- Huron River Trail – installed Border to Border trail signs throughout City
- Gallup – renovated vehicle bridge\*

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- Leslie Park Golf Course - replaced pedestrian bridges and renovated pathways, tunnel repair
- Mary Beth Doyle - replaced pathways throughout\*
- Olson - completed parking lot paving\*
- Pilgrim - replaced entry walk
- Scheffler - replaced pathway along Platt Road\*
- South Maple - replaced pathway around play area and connection to residential units\*
- Sugarbush - replaced portions of pathway in park\*
- Veterans - replaced pathway along South Maple and parking lot at Jackson Avenue and along parking lot on Jackson adjacent to tennis courts\*
- West - replaced pathways throughout and constructed new stair entry on Huron\*

## Restroom Renovations

### Renovated restrooms

- Southeast Area Park
- Argo Park
- Northside
- Island, Gallup
- Hunt

### New restrooms

- Olson Park\*
- Bandemer Park\*
- Leslie Park Golf Course

## Game Courts Renovations

### Tennis court renovations

- Burns\*
- Sugarbush
- Northside

### Basketball court renovations

- Ellsworth\*
- Leslie
- Mary Beth Doyle
- Southeast Area
- Northside
- West
- Wheeler
- Veterans Memorial

### **Athletic Field Renovations**

- Reconstructed soccer fields at Fuller Park\*, map of fields installed at Fuller\*
- Reconstructed soccer fields at Olson Park
- Reconstructed open field at West Park

### **Park Amenities**

- Replaced drinking fountains with barrier-free accessible fountains, including dog drinking bowls at ten parks
- Renovated benches and picnic tables throughout system where needed
- Replaced trash cans and bleachers

### **Adopt-a-Park and Stewardship Activities**

- Stewardship activities, including plant and animal inventories, native plant revegetation, ecological restoration, invasive species removals, flower planting, trash pickup, and other active volunteer coordination, in over 98 park areas

### **Studies, Task Forces, and Reports**

- Allen Creek Greenway Task Force Report\*
- Ann Arbor Senior Center Survey and Task Force Report and Recommendations
- Golf Task Force
- Golf Convergence Report
- Huron River Impoundment Management Plan\*
- Mack Pool Survey and Task Force Report and Recommendations
- Athletic Field Task Force

### **Summary of Changes from 2006 PROS Plan to 2011 PROS Plan**

This update to the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan has changed in format to align more closely with the City's Master Plan documents. One of the goals for this plan includes elimination of subjective statements when explaining City functions, such as administrative structure and budget. The later planning chapters fully describe the public input, needs, and future facilities that will be explored. Two chapters from the previous plan were eliminated and incorporated into other chapters that conveyed similar information and concepts. This list below summarizes the changes that were made to the plan.

#### Introduction

This section includes a description of the relationship of the PROS Plan to the City Master Plan, and a new section details projects completed during the current PROS Plan cycle (2006-2010).

Section I: Community Description (Formerly Section A)

This section includes most of the same information as the previous plan. Several maps were eliminated that were either duplicated in other sections of the City Master Plan (such as the Land Use and Zoning Maps), were very difficult to read (topography and hydrology), or were no longer required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment and considered less pertinent to the park planning document (monthly temperatures and precipitation). Still included is a short history of the City and park system, social and economic characteristics, transportation planning, and descriptions of the built and natural environment. Demographic information and development characteristics by planning area were added in text and chart form.

Section II: Administrative Structure (Formerly Section B)

This section was reorganized to explain the administrative structure of the City in a more logical sequence. Rather than starting with an explanation of Community Education and Recreation (a division of the public schools), it begins with City administration, and how the park and recreation system fits within the overall structure of the City. The section on funding was eliminated as this is covered in Section III, Budget and Funding.

Section III: Budget and Funding (Formerly Section C)

This section explains the budget process and funding sources, revenues, and expenditures in more detail, as well as the relationship between the millages and the General Fund. It explains, through charts and text, the percentages of funding that are utilized by each unit of the park system. Some of the more speculative alternatives for future funding were eliminated.

Section IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System (Formerly Section I or 9)

This section was moved towards the beginning of the document to group the factual/background section of the plan together. Some of the charts have been eliminated as they no longer are pertinent. For example, almost every park in the system has some involvement from Natural Area Preservation (NAP), especially with the growth of the Adopt-a-Park program; therefore, the chart detailing NAP activities by park was eliminated. Additionally, the chart providing acreage by planning area was eliminated to follow more closely with the City Master Plan, which no longer divides plans by planning area. The recreation program inventory was converted to a chart rather than lists to help understand the relationship between the school recreation programs and the City. The list of private recreation providers was eliminated as this information was already readily available to the public, and did not help with planning initiatives.

Section V: Land Use Planning and Acquisition (Formerly Section F)

This section was moved earlier in the document to provide information on existing programs and structure prior to discussing future planning. The text was reorganized to be clearer and flow more logically. The section also eliminates some of the more speculative ways in which land might be acquired that has never been implemented or are not viable options. The text describes the funding, summarizes land purchased, and details the criteria used to evaluate land.

Section G was eliminated as a separate chapter

This information was incorporated into the plan both in Section I, Community Description, and in Section VIII, Major Park and Recreation System Infrastructure Needs Assessment. For example, all of the census data that was formerly explained in text is now summarized in a chart in the Community Description Section, enabling comparisons between each planning area. Issues and evaluations for the City as a whole are incorporated into Section VIII of the current PROS Plan. These changes align the plan more closely with the City Master Plan format. The planning area maps were moved to the inventory section as they show the distribution of parks throughout the City.

Section VI: Planning Process for the PROS Plan (Formerly Section E)

This section provides in depth details of the input received. Rather than summary paragraphs, the survey is included in this section, as well as a summary of the comments received. Public input for this plan relied much more heavily on electronic media, and all of the ways in which outreach was accomplished are detailed. The major issues that were heard in the input phase were summarized, and the focus groups, public meetings, and email responses are included and paraphrased. Additionally, summaries of the task forces and study groups that met during the past few years were included as they provide significant input for future planning and were important sources of public input.

Section H: Trails and Greenways was eliminated as a separate chapter

This information was incorporated into Section VIII, Major Park and Recreation Infrastructure Needs Assessment. The maps formerly found in this chapter were relocated to Section VIII as well.

Section VII: Goals and Objectives

This section did not change substantially from the previous plan. This was because the overriding goals and objectives are still relevant and respond to the concerns of residents today.

VIII: Major Park and Recreation System Infrastructure Needs Assessment

The format of this section was changed slightly to reflect the manner in which the park system is evaluated for future planning. It is organized to better help prioritize needs. This chapter incorporates most of the Greenway section text as well as the maps from the current 2006 PROS Plan.

IX: Action Plan

This section was changed to reflect the manner in which capital projects are planned and prioritized. It details the criteria used to prioritize projects, and is much more closely tied to the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) process, which is being updated. The draft CIP is included; however, the CIP is updated on a yearly basis depending on current needs and priorities.



## SECTION I: COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

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The Community Description section of the PROS Plan describes the geographic boundaries, demographic composition, and physical characteristics, including the built and natural environments, to provide background and an overview for planning efforts.

### **A. Geographic Planning Boundaries**

The City of Ann Arbor is located in southeast Michigan, approximately 30 miles west of the Detroit metropolitan area and 50 miles north of Toledo, Ohio. Ann Arbor is bounded primarily by roads and freeways, including M-14 on the north, US-23 on the east, Interstate-94 and Ellsworth Road on the south, and Interstate-94, M-14, and Wagner Road on the west. Ann Arbor is centrally located in Washtenaw County and is the county seat.

Both the City's *Master Plan: Land Use Element* and the *Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan* examine geographic sub-areas of the City, referred to as the Central, South, Northeast, and West planning areas.

1. The Central Area is made up of the Central Business District of Ann Arbor, the South State Street and South University areas, and surrounding neighborhoods. This area contains the highest density of population. Its parks are characterized as urban plazas, catering to visitors and businesses. Several parks are within walking distance to the downtown core, such as West and Wheeler Parks, and green space is also provided by the University of Michigan Diag and the Community High School yard. Other types of recreational open space in the downtown include the Dean Promenade on Main Street and the Farmers Market. The Downtown Development Authority uses tax increment financing for public projects, including park projects and pedestrian improvements.

2. The Northeast Area consists of a wide variety of neighborhoods, including both the oldest and newest in the City. Commercial centers are primarily located along Plymouth Road, Washtenaw Avenue, and Broadway Street. This area contains the highest amount of park acreage, partially due to the location of both municipal golf courses and significant natural areas in this sector of the City. Gallup Park, the City's most popular park, is located along the Huron River. North Campus, Nichols Arboretum, and Mitchell Field, owned by the University of Michigan, also greatly contribute to the open space.
3. The West Area developed primarily from the 1920's to the 1960's, with historic homes typical of the 'Old West Side' historic district, to multi-family dwellings including larger apartment and condominium complexes. Commercial centers are located primarily along Stadium Boulevard, Maple Road, and Jackson Avenue. Parkland dedication with residential development provided many of the neighborhood parks resulting in most neighborhoods having some nearby parkland or school playground. The West Area includes a significant length of the Huron River as well as two of the three Sister Lakes.
4. The South Area developed primarily between the 1940's and mid 1970's, with at least 600 housing units added in the 1980's. This planning area contains the largest concentration of senior care and senior housing facilities in the City. The main commercial areas are along Packard and Eisenhower, and include Briarwood Mall. The larger parks include Mary Beth Doyle and Buhr, as well as the County Farm Park, managed by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission.

## **B. Economy of the City of Ann Arbor**

Ann Arbor's economy is dominated by the presence of the University of Michigan. The University is the City's largest employer, and its presence within the City has caused several other educational institutions and research and light manufacturing firms to locate in Ann Arbor. Because the City's economy is largely dependent on government employment and rooted in University and related enterprises, the cyclical variations of the regional manufacturing-based economy are felt less strongly in Ann Arbor than elsewhere.

In 2000, the City of Ann Arbor had 63,995 persons in the labor force. Of these, 61,291 were employed and 2,684 (2.8 percent) were unemployed. During the 1990's and early 2000's, Ann Arbor was characterized by an extremely tight employment market. Ann Arbor's unemployment rate rose from 1.3 percent in 1997 to 2.8 percent in 2000 and to 4.4 percent in June 2005 - still well below the State of Michigan's overall unemployment rate (6.9 percent in June 2005). The economic downturn in 2009 has had an impact on the local economy. In 2010, the unemployment rate in Michigan rose to 15%. While Ann Arbor's unemployment rate (approximately 10%) was still the lowest in Michigan, there was a substantial increase from 2005.

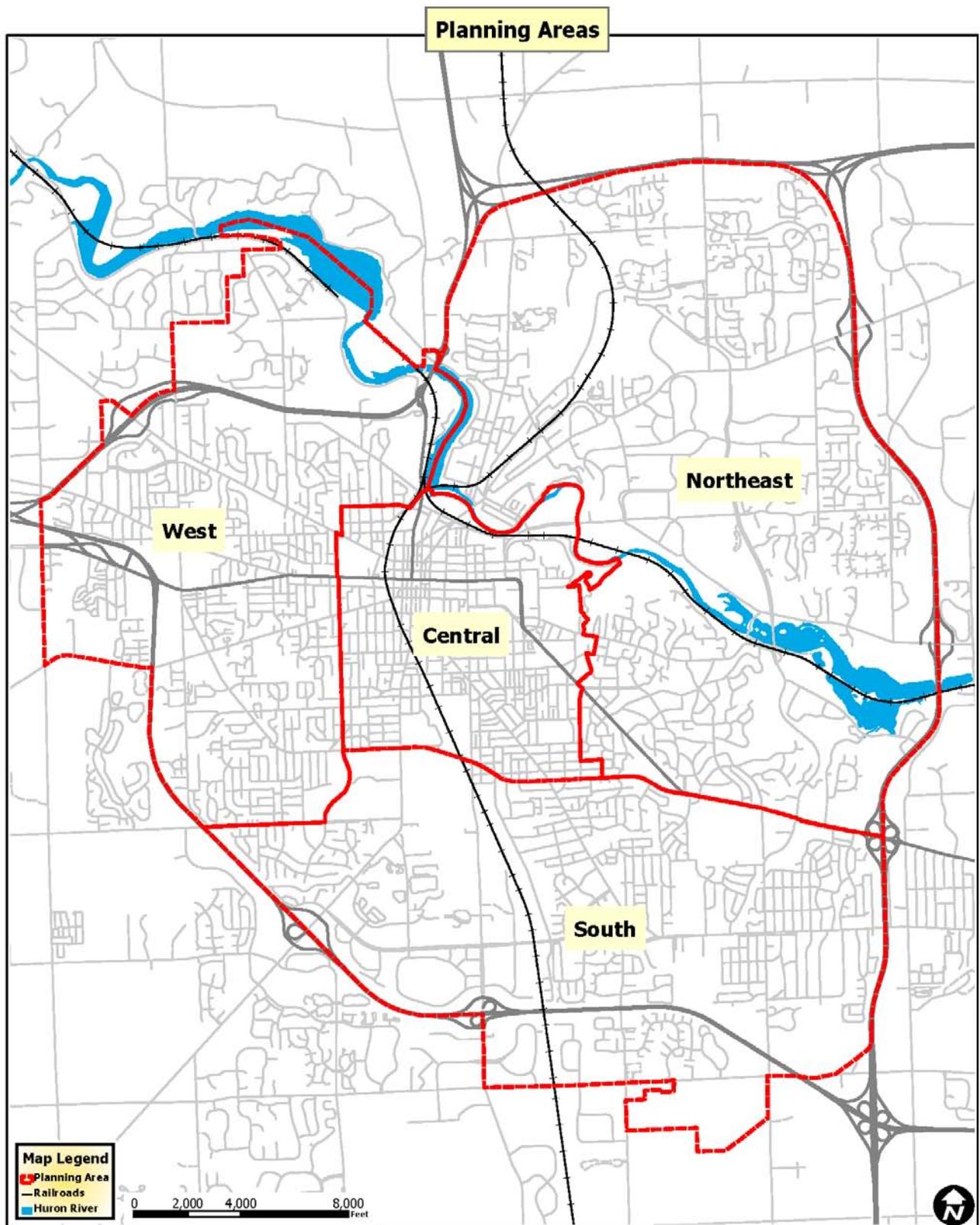
### C. Social Characteristics of Planning Areas

Understanding the demographic and socio-economic composition within each planning area contributes to assessing park and recreational needs within each subsection of the City. The total population of Washtenaw County in 2000 was 322,895. The City of Ann Arbor population (about 35 percent of the county population) was 114,024 in 2000. As of the writing of this plan, the 2010 census data was not yet published. The plan will be updated once the information is available.

#### STATISTICS FROM 2000 CENSUS

Planning Area	Central	Northeast	West	South	Outside City <sup>3</sup>	Citywide
Population	33,550	31,121	22,254	27,099		114,024
Number of dwelling units	11,237	12,971	10,050	12,446		46,704
Owner occupied	2,588	5,807	6,682	5,608		20,685
Renter	8,402	6,692	3,076	6,838		17,008
Average household size	2.21	2.27	2.26	2.15		2.22
Median income	30,627	57,898	59,939	51,447		46,299
Person density per acre	22	5	6	6		9.75
% of households with children	9%	30%	30%	27%		24%
Disability status - ages 5-64	8%	8%	10%	13%		9%
Disability status - ages 65 & up	37%	30%	32%	39%		34%
Minority comp. African American	6%	9%	6%	13%		9%
Minority composition - Asian	11%	21%	3.5%	9%		12%
Number of parks	23	54	36	38	6	157
Acreage of parks	125.67	885.40	605.63	341.43	130.41	2088.54
Acreage non-City open space <sup>1</sup>	35.00	302.00	328.00	434.00	602.26	1701.26
Acreage parkland/1000 residents	3.7	28.45	27.21	12.6		18.32
Ac. open space/1000 residents <sup>2</sup>	4.7	38	42	29		33
Percent student population						33%

1. Includes public schools, University property and Washtenaw County property and are approximate figures
2. Includes both City parks and non-City open space
3. Outside City refers to parks such as Marshall and Dolph which are outside of the official City limits of Ann Arbor, but are still part of the park system



## D. Physical Characteristics

This section describes the physical characteristics, including both the built and natural environment, found throughout the City of Ann Arbor and discusses their relevance to parks and recreation programming.



### 1. The Built Environment

- a. **LAND USE.** The built environment includes constructed systems or structures such as homes and businesses, factories and public buildings, and roads and utilities. Ann Arbor serves as the business/economic, cultural, entertainment, and recreation center for the greater Washtenaw County area. Approximately 50% of the land within the City is used for residential purposes. The center of the City contains a mixture of commercial, office, residential, and public land uses, including the University of Michigan Central Campus. The Briarwood Shopping Center and surrounding area south of the central business district also accounts for a large share of commercial and office uses. The combined office, commercial, and industrial land accounts for 8.5% of the land in Ann Arbor. The remainder of similar land uses are scattered throughout the City but are generally concentrated along major thoroughfares and freeway interchanges. There is no heavy manufacturing in the City and most light industry is located along the railroad tracks that bisect the City north to south. Research uses, important to Ann Arbor, are divided between the south area, just south of the I-94 freeway, and the northeast area, south of Plymouth Road near the University's North Campus.

The University of Michigan was established in 1841 in downtown Ann Arbor. The University owns approximately 1,700 acres of land within the City limits and an additional 1,440 acres if the Botanical Gardens and Golf Course are included. Roughly 485 acres are used for indoor and outdoor recreational purposes, including parkland (portions of Nichols Arboretum) and sports complexes (football stadium, Crisler Arena, etc.).

The public library system is incorporating more public space, both inside and out, of their new facilities. As their mission evolves from being a place solely to borrow books to more of a community gathering space, more open space for community use is becoming prevalent.

The Ann Arbor park system contributes to the built environment, including pools and sport complexes such as Fuller, Veterans Memorial and Buhr Parks, as well as numerous athletic fields, recreational facilities such as Cobblestone Farm, the Farmers Market, golf courses, and community centers. Land utilized for parks in Ann Arbor is an integral part of the City with more than 2,000 acres that are part of the park system.

- b. **TRANSPORTATION.** Transportation has been an important factor in the shaping of the physical form of Ann Arbor. The walking distance scale of the downtown with the adjacent older neighborhoods is one example of transportation shaping the form of the urban environment. Today, transportation in the Ann Arbor area is heavily dependent on the automobile. The road network is a radial pattern oriented toward the downtown, with the interstate freeways forming an outer ring. The major routes radiating from downtown are Plymouth, Washtenaw, Packard, State, Liberty, Huron, Miller, and Main. The Fuller/Glen/Geddes route is also a major carrier of traffic related to North Campus and the medical center. Within the freeway ring, Huron Parkway and Eisenhower Parkway form a partial ring serving the south and northeast areas.

Public transit and non-motorized transportation are important means of transportation in the City, with approximately 30% of the workers who live in Ann Arbor choosing non-motorized or public transportation for their commute. Bus service is provided by three major public agencies: the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA), the University of Michigan, and the Ann Arbor Public Schools. The AATA provides transit service in the cities of Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti, and the townships of Pittsfield, Ypsilanti, and Superior. AATA provides bus transportation to the general public, including paratransit services for people with disabilities and senior citizens, Night Ride and Holiday Ride services for times when there is not regular bus service. The University of Michigan bus service functions primarily as a link from the North Campus to the Central Campus and is also open to the public. The Ann Arbor Public Schools provides bus service to children attending public schools located in the district. As of 2010/2011, the district has participated in a regional system provided by the Washtenaw Intermediate School District. Bicycle lanes are planned or built along numerous arterial roadways. There are currently 33 miles of bike lanes, 9 of which were added between 2007 and 2010, and nearly 3.5 miles of 'sharrow' segments (share the road symbols). The City's sidewalk system is relatively complete, with the exception of some gaps which occur along park frontages, some major roads, and neighborhood streets. A City-wide Non-Motorized Plan was completed in 2007. This comprehensive plan addresses the infrastructure deficits of the pedestrian and bicycling system. The park system contains over 52 miles of paved non-motorized pathway.

In June 2006, Major John Hieftje introduced a “Model for Mobility,” a transportation vision for the City of Ann Arbor. Key elements of this vision include alternative forms of transportation such as walking and bicycling. The vision expands on the City’s bus, rail, and train systems to support a more regional mode of mobility and reduce Ann Arbor’s reliance on auto travel. Three components of this vision include an east-west regional transit route that would link the central core of Ann Arbor, including the downtown, University of Michigan Central Campus, and the University of Michigan Medical Center, with communities in southeast Michigan, a possible north-south connection that would use existing railways between Ann Arbor, Milan, and Howell, including portions of the Ann Arbor Railroad and the TSB Railway’s operating territory, and a local connector system that would link the two regional railroads with a local streetcar system running from west to east through the downtown, across the Central, Medical, and North campuses of the University of Michigan.

In May, 2009 the Transportation Plan Update (TPU) was adopted. The TPU provides a Master Plan level of policy support to the Model of Mobility that was only a ‘vision’ statement prior to its adoption.

In 2009, an intermodal transportation center, named Fuller Road Station, was proposed for Fuller Park on the south side of Fuller Road where the existing surface parking lot is located. The Fuller Road Station would be used for parking for University of Michigan hospital system employees as well as the public and would include a bicycle station and plaza, improvements to the Border to Border (B2B) trail along the Fuller Road frontage and a bus area. A future phase could include a train station. This project was approved by the City Planning Commission in September 2010. Future phases of this project propose additional improvements to the B2B trail and connections to the Huron River.

Two railways traverse the City, including the Ann Arbor Railroad, running north/south, and the Norfolk Southern Railroad, running east/west. An Amtrak station is located on the north side of downtown, adjacent to the Huron River. Throughout the City, the railroad tracks cut off access to the river parks. At two locations, Gallup Park and Argo Pond, the City has procured easements from the railroad to construct non-motorized trails; however, access to these trails is limited as the railroad will not allow additional at-grade crossings. Challenges associated with accessing the river and parkland safely are ongoing as the desire to connect trails along greenways adjacent to the railroads and the popularity of these trails continues to increase. As discussion of a high speed rail gains momentum, safe railroad crossings will become more important for park access.



## 2. The Natural Environment

The City contains a variety of landforms, the most prominent being the Huron River valley. Other natural features include steep slopes, woodlands, wetlands, meadows, fens, and seven creeksheds that flow to the Huron River.

- a. **NATURAL FEATURES PLAN.** The City's Natural Features Plan, adopted in June 2004, identifies significant natural features located within the City, including the Huron River, wetlands, floodplains and floodways, woodlands, landmark trees, native plants, and greenway linkages. The plan provides a general description of each natural feature and identifies protection measures through goals and implementation strategies.

Natural features in the City of Ann Arbor are regulated under an array of federal, state, and local laws. Nonetheless, the City currently does not have local ordinances to help protect groundwater, groundwater recharge areas, savannas, prairies, native plants, or animal ecosystems. For certain natural features (watercourses, wetlands, woodlands, landmark trees, 100-year floodplain, steep slopes, and endangered species habitats) there is limited local protection through Chapter 60 - Wetlands Preservation Ordinance; Chapter 63 - Storm Water Management and Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control; and Chapter 57 - Subdivision and Land Use Control, the Land Development Regulations and Attachment A: Guidelines for the Protection and Mitigation of Natural Features. These regulations do not apply to single or two-family homes or lots; therefore, a large part of the City's natural features depend upon the stewardship of its citizens for protection.

Within the park system, as well as other City-owned land, the Natural Area Preservation Division works as stewards of the natural areas. They maintain and improve natural areas by removing invasive species, landscaping with native vegetation, and inventorying flora and fauna.

- b. **WATER RESOURCES.** The Huron River is the central natural feature of the City. It transports water and sediment, it stores and moves floodwaters, and it is the major source of drinking water for the City (Barton Pond). Associated with the river are tributaries, wetlands and meadows, and the City's most significant topography. The Huron River Watershed is made up of all land that drains either directly into the Huron River or into the streams, or tributaries, that feed into the Huron River, including Allen Creek, Mallets Creek, Honey Creek, Traver Creek, Millers Creek, Fleming Creek, and Swift Run. The tributaries create vital wildlife corridors and natural habitat.

The river within the Ann Arbor area has been impounded by the construction of four dams: Barton, Argo, Geddes, and Superior. The dams have resulted in the alteration of the river, creating impoundments used for drinking water as well as recreational pond activities. Much community discussion has taken place regarding whether to remove or retain Argo Dam, which is used for recreational purposes.

Green space dominates the shores of the river through much of the City, with ownership either by the City or the University, although both single-family and multi-family developments back up to the river in several locations.

Pedestrian and visual access to the Huron River is limited throughout the City due in part to the railroad corridor blocking access and industrial development that was a part of the history of the river.

Over time, watersheds and their tributaries have been altered as a result of farming, urbanization, and other forms of development. Many of these changes threaten local and downstream water quality and quantity. As development occurs, impervious surfaces deliver pollutants to waterways. Furthermore, these tributaries in urban areas are often overwhelmed by volumes of stormwater running at speeds the streams cannot sustain without erosion and habitat damage. In some parts of the City, development has taken priority over the natural landscape, so that streams have "disappeared" into storm sewer pipes beneath the surface. The Allen Creek is one such example, whereby the stream was buried during the 1920's through much of the west and south branches.

An additional problem associated with land development is the proliferation of invasive weeds filling in open water areas, such as near the Gallup Canoe Livery, the backwater at Furstenberg Park, and South Pond.

Sewage and erosion ordinances of the City and the County are being reviewed for their compatibility with respect to recreation and open space uses, and several joint projects have been accomplished. River and creekshed issues have evolved to include state of the art functions in stormwater management through the introduction of soil bioengineering and the creation of water gardens and bioswales.

- c. **ELEVATION AND STEEP SLOPES.** Elevation and slopes are the physical characteristics that contribute to the generally rolling land character considered one of Ann Arbor's most visible natural assets. Elevations of the City range from approximately 749 feet above sea level near the Huron River to about approximately 1,000 feet above sea level in areas near the water treatment plant (Sunset and Newport Roads) and near Maple Road and Liberty Street. Higher elevations within the City provide opportunities for dramatic views of the City's river valley. These areas of the City are represented as parkland at several locations, such as the capped landfill at the Swift Run Service Center in the southeast area, Leslie Park in the northeast area, Cedar Bend Nature Area in the central area, Ruthven Nature Area and Huron Hills Golf Course in the northeast area, and Wurster, Hunt, and Bluffs Parks and Bird Hills Nature Area in the west area.
  
- d. **VEGETATION AND TREE COVER.** Vegetation, especially tree cover, is one of Ann Arbor's most significant features. The City contains over 40,000 street trees, 6,600 in mowed areas of parks as well as hundreds of thousands of trees in forested urban parks. Many of those trees are large landmark trees that contribute to the City's image as "Tree Town." Existing high quality woodlands and landmark trees have some protection by City ordinance.

The City's tree cover varies geographically: in the downtown, large buildings, streets, and parking lots dominate with mostly younger trees. Trees in the downtown area grow in disturbed soils under harsh conditions so that healthy growth, let alone tree survival, is difficult. In residential areas of the City, especially the older neighborhoods, tree cover is more prominent.

Between 2002 and 2008, the Emerald Ash Borer decimated thousands of Ash trees. Since that time, a massive effort to remove and replant both street and park trees has helped to mitigate the loss; however, it will take many years to regenerate the urban forest. Because of this issue, a greater emphasis has been placed on diversifying the urban forest to prevent massive loss of single tree species.

There has also been an effort to convert lawn areas to native species, and to create and maintain prairies as well as wetlands and rain gardens. The change is a result of a growing awareness of the ecological benefits of deep-rooted plants that result in increased stormwater filtration, as well as a desire to preserve the cultural heritage of the region by restoring plant communities that were common when Ann Arbor was settled. These restoration efforts include removal of invasive species as well as collection of seeds from native species.

- e. **OPEN SPACE, GREENWAYS, AND LINKAGES.** Open space is commonly characterized as the natural landscape, including scenic vistas, parkland, vacant land,

farmland, and linkages and greenways connecting natural areas. The City of Ann Arbor has always prided itself in maintaining a green image through the preservation of open space, parkland, and natural features. The Huron River provides scenic views from both the water and from areas throughout the valley. The preservation of open space along some transportation corridors has contributed to the sense of openness, including Huron Parkway, Geddes Road, Fuller Road, and Glazier Way.

The City's parks play a significant role in providing open spaces through parkland acquisition and preservation. Parks also provide natural and recreational linkages. These linkages help to protect wildlife and preserve a variety of ecological systems, while recreational linkages provide greater opportunities for alternative transportation, accessibility to parks, neighborhood connections, and enhanced community participation. The availability of private open space in certain neighborhoods of the City plays a role in the evaluation of park needs as well as what residents desire as public open space.

Over the years, the development of land near the City's fringe and in the surrounding townships has altered the perception of Ann Arbor's open space. Changes include development of vacant land along major transportation corridors leading into the City, such as South State Street, Washtenaw Avenue, and Jackson Avenue. Furthermore, much of the rural landscape surrounding the City has changed to suburban uses, such as housing and commercial development, permanently changing the scenic viewsheds and sense of open space within the City, at its borders, and surrounding the City.

In response to the changing landscape, the Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage was passed in 2003 to protect and preserve open space outside and within the City. The millage, discussed in detail in the chapter on Land Acquisition, has so far resulted in the protection 1,863 acres of farms and natural areas.

## **E. History of the Park and Recreation System**

The City of Ann Arbor's park and recreation system originated soon after the City's settlement in 1824. According to City records, the first park was Hanover Square, dedicated in 1836 and located at Division and Madison Streets, now bisected by Packard Street. By 1905, when the first Board of Park Commissioners was appointed, the park system had grown to approximately ten acres with the additions of Felch Park (now the University of Michigan's Power Center), Cedar Bend/Island Park, Fairview Cemetery, the City's first garden cemetery, and several scattered small triangular areas like "The Rock" at Washington Park located at Washtenaw Avenue and Hill Street.

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In 1910, the City purchased the County Fairgrounds to create Burns Park. By 1918, the system had expanded to 122 acres and included Douglas Park, Argo Bathing Beach, the Glen (the City-owned portion of Nichols Arboretum), Riverside Park, and West Park.

The parks and recreation system became actively involved with historical considerations in 1928, when markers were erected to indicate the old Native American trail through West Park and the

site of the City's original settlement on Huron Street, west of Ashley. Federal-funded work programs in the 1930's resulted in improvements to West, Fuller, and Riverside Parks, Plymouth Parkway, lawn extensions, and several smaller projects. Demand for outdoor recreation facilities greatly increased after World War II, especially ball diamonds. Substantial acquisitions in the 1950s included Buhr Park and Veterans Memorial Park (the former County Fairgrounds). The City established a tree nursery on the airport property for park and street plantings.



*1915 Boat Livery on Argo Pond*

In 1957, the City of Ann Arbor and the Ann Arbor Public Schools Board of Education collaborated to provide a summer recreation program. They jointly established the Recreation Board, which was charged with advising all City and school recreation programming issues. The Recreation Advisory Commission has functioned continuously since its inception to advise both the City Council and the Board of Education regarding public recreational concerns.

The 1960's saw continued City growth, further major expansion of the park and recreation system, and several particularly significant events. In 1962, the City Planning Commission published Ann Arbor's first Parks and Open Space Plan. The plan envisioned a program of acquisition and development to meet a 20-year need for parks and open space. It recommended acquiring approximately 710 additional acres of parkland, including a third golf course. The Leslie Golf Course, Park and Woods, and the Detroit Edison properties along the Huron River were purchased pursuant to this plan.

In April 1966, City voters approved a \$2,500,000 bond issue for park acquisition and development. With over \$800,000 in federal matching grants, about 400 acres of new park properties were obtained, three outdoor swimming pools and three artificial ice rinks were constructed, eight major parks underwent new development, and 15 more parks were improved.

In April 1971, voters approved another \$3,500,000 bond issue for parks and recreation. Of these funds, \$400,000 was spent for the Mack Swimming Pool, \$1,000,000 was anticipated for land acquisition, and \$2,100,000 for park improvements and development with emphasis on public access

to undeveloped parks along the Huron River valley (e.g., Geddes, Argo, and Barton Pond areas) in addition to neighborhood parks and playgrounds (e.g., Huron Highlands, Glacier Highlands, Lansdowne, Esch, and Sugarbush). Several parks were improved or renovated through bond funds.

Since the 1962 plan, there has been a concerted effort to complete the pattern of recreational open space along the Huron River from Barton Pond to Geddes Pond. Other significant natural areas, such as Bird Hills and Marshall Woods, have been acquired. Although Ann Arbor lacks a completed system of connected natural areas, City residents take pride in the preservation of substantial open space along the Huron River (now a State-designated Country Scenic Natural River over most of its length upstream from the City).

In 1981, the Parks and Open Space Plan was updated, laying the groundwork for a 1983 millage for Park Rehabilitation and Development. This plan also established the Citizens' Park Advisory Commission.

The 1988 Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan recommended acquisition of key parcels to enhance existing parks and serve areas that were lacking in parkland. In 1988, a ½ mil for parkland acquisition was approved by City voters. Over 306 acres of parkland were acquired through this millage. Subsequent acquisition millages were approved in 1993 and 1998. Additional parkland has been acquired through the development process and via developer dedication.

In 1989, voters approved renewal of the ½ mil for park rehabilitation and development. The ½ mil that was approved for six years by the voters has allowed rehabilitation and development of neighborhood parks, as well as facilities such as the Veterans Memorial Park Arena and Pool, Cobblestone Farm, Buhr Ice Arena, and Furstenberg Park. In 1993, a .4725 mil for park maintenance and repair was approved to repair park features and facilities, catch up on deferred maintenance, protect natural areas, and increase accessibility to park and recreation resources. Voters approved a renewal of the Park Rehabilitation and Development Millage in 1995 for six more years. A major feature of the millage program was the renovation of Fuller and Buhr Park Pools.

The 1993 millage included the addition of the Natural Area Preservation Program, tasked with developing a systematic manner in which to manage natural areas. The program has evolved over the years to include a devoted following of volunteers and park stewards, and has expanded its reach to incorporate other City-owned land.

In 2002, a four-year Park Repair and Restoration Millage was approved to address natural area preservation, forestry and horticulture in parks, and non-routine repair and restoration for the park system. The inclusion of these activities marked a recognition that the park system had grown and evolved to the point where funding for maintenance was no longer sufficient and restoring natural areas and the urban forest was given greater emphasis. In 2006, a new 1.25 mil, six-year Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements millage was approved which combined the functions of the two expiring millages. Some of the major accomplishments to date of this millage include renovation

## SECTION I: Community Description

of Cobblestone Farm Barn, replacement of the refrigeration floor system at Buhr Ice Arena, implementation of the West Park master plan, and the development of Bandemer Park.

Between 2002 and 2004, the City staff was reorganized into administrative areas instead of departments. As part of this reorganization, the Parks Department was split into two service areas, with the planning and recreation functions being part of the Community Services Area and the maintenance functions being part of the Public Services Area.

In 2007, the Park Ranger system was eliminated due to budget reductions, and the Police Department took over the role of providing security for the park system. Although controversial at the time, the change was accepted by the public and a cooperative relationship developed between service areas.

In 2008, the volunteer program was expanded into a formal Adopt-a-Park program, and included neighborhood parks and community parks in addition to natural areas. The change resulted in many more residents becoming involved with community projects. In 2010, a second position was created to foster the volunteer program at the recreation facilities.



Some of the more significant issues that arose during the period between 2006 and 2011 included the community debate surrounding the future disposition of Argo Dam as well as the Huron River Impoundment Management Plan; the viability of certain recreation facilities, including the Senior Center and Mack Pool; the appropriateness of use of parkland for the Fuller Road Station and for a proposed private/public partnership at Huron Hills Golf Course; the debate concerning allocation of resources to the care of existing versus proposed facilities, including a skate park proposal for Veterans Memorial Park; a City charter amendment requiring that any proposed sale of parkland be placed on a ballot for a general vote by City residents; and discussions as to whether parkland is protected adequately and whether the zoning should include more restrictive language for parks. Lastly, concerns over managing budget reductions while maintaining programming and facilities to a standard expected by the community will continue to be one of the more challenging issues facing the Parks and Recreation system.



## SECTION II: ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

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The provision of parks and recreation services in Ann Arbor is a collaborative effort between the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services Unit, the Field Operations Services Unit, and the Community Education and Recreation Department of the Ann Arbor Public Schools. This chapter outlines the structure of each unit as well as how these divisions fit into the City as a whole.

### **A. City Administration**

The City of Ann Arbor administrative structure includes five service areas covering the broad range of services provided by the City. They include the City Administration Services Area, overseeing executive management of the City; the Community Services Area, which includes Parks and Recreation, Planning and Development, and Community Development; the Financial and Administrative Services Area, overseeing the financial functions of the City; the Public Services Area, covering the infrastructure functions of the City, such as solid waste and street maintenance; and the Safety Services Area, which includes fire and police. Within each service area are a number of service units which carry out specific administrative and community duties. Parks is located within two service areas: Community Services Area, which houses the Recreation Facilities, Parks Customer Service, and Planning and Administration; and the Public Services Area, which houses Forestry, Park Operations, and Natural Area Preservation.

#### **1. Parks and Recreation Services Unit**

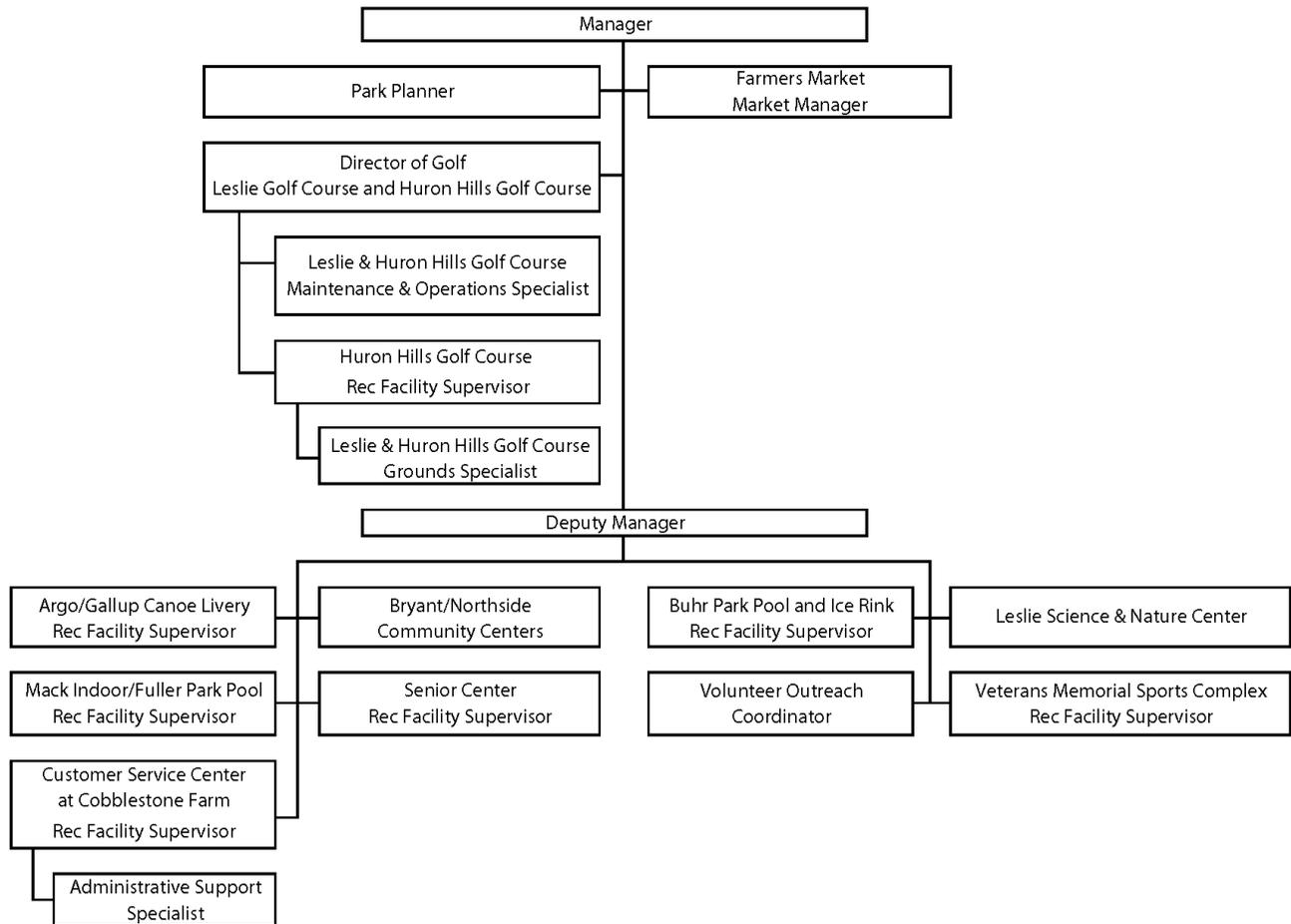
The Parks and Recreation Services Unit operates under provisions established in the Ann Arbor City Charter, amended and adopted by the electorate in April 1956. The Charter establishes a department as a General Tax Fund entity, administered by the Community Services Administrator reporting to the City Administrator and, ultimately, the City Council.

SECTION II: Administrative Structure

The mission of the Parks and Recreation Services Unit and the park-related units within the Field Operations Services Unit focuses on several key elements: quality, efficiency, stewardship of natural resources, accessibility and affordability of programming, customer service and cooperation with other City service units and public and private organizations, volunteers, and the general public. The Parks and Recreation Services Unit includes both Parks Administration and Recreation Facilities and consists of 18 full-time employees and approximately 300 part-time and seasonal employees. Parks Administration is responsible for the development of park policy, park planning and improvements, park shelter reservations, special events, and the Parks and Recreation boards and commissions, including the Park Advisory Commission and Land Advisory Committee. The Administration staff coordinates and manages the service unit while overseeing short and long-term planning, capital projects, infrastructure improvements, and budget.

The recreation facilities, which include four pools, two ice rinks, two golf courses, two canoe liveries, two community centers, a farmers market, a senior center, an historic house, and a farm site, are managed by Parks and Recreation Services staff.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: PARKS AND RECREATION UNIT**

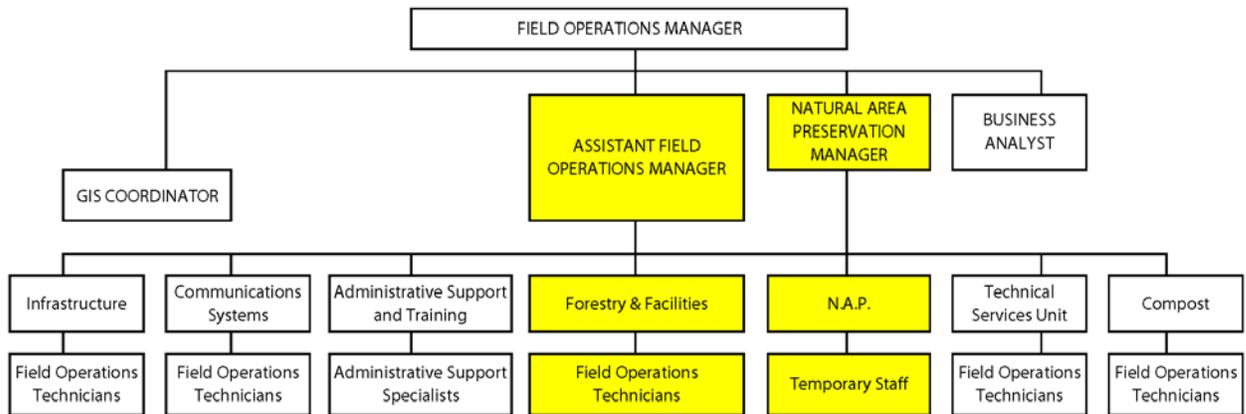


**2. Field Operations Services Unit**

Field Operations is the combination of maintenance and operational divisions from across the organization. Within the Public Services Area, two are directly involved with park maintenance: Forestry and Park Operations, and Natural Area Preservation (NAP). There are 27 full-time employees and approximately 20-30 temporary employees responsible for park maintenance, forestry, and natural area preservation.

- a. FORESTRY is responsible for public tree care in Ann Arbor's 'Urban Forest' represented by more than 50,000 street trees and trees located in City parks. Forestry's work includes trimming and other care to maintain health of trees, removing hazardous trees, and planting street and park trees.
- b. PARK OPERATIONS cares for and maintains the City parks. Park Operations is responsible for play equipment, trails and pathways, park security, snow and litter removal, turf mowing, restrooms and shelter care, athletic field maintenance, and facility maintenance.
- c. NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION works to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and to foster an environmental ethic among its citizens through education, stewardship activities, and volunteer work days. Their mission involves conducting plant and animal inventories, ecological monitoring, and stewardship projects in Ann Arbor parks. These tasks are performed by full-time and seasonal staff, with over one-third of the work performed by volunteers.

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: FIELD OPERATIONS**



*Yellow indicates staff who work directly with the park system*

## **B. Boards and Commissions**

Citizen participation occurs at many levels, ranging from individual to organized group participation. The Parks and Recreation Services Unit engages several advisory panels to assist in decision-making that is representative of all citizens. It seeks informal advice from the public through daily contact and meetings with individual citizens, neighborhood associations, service clubs, and special interest groups. Hundreds of other citizens are involved in volunteer activities throughout the system, including performing prairie burns, acting as docents for Cobblestone Farm, cleaning up debris from the Huron River, removing invasive species, and sprucing up the downtown parks.

Officially, four formal mechanisms exist for citizen input, including the Ann Arbor City Council, the Ann Arbor City Planning Commission, the Park Advisory Commission, and the Recreation Advisory Commission. Additionally, several boards and task forces provide guidance to Parks and Recreation for specific facilities and programs.

### **1. Ann Arbor City Council**

As the policy-setting authority for the Parks and Recreation Services Unit, the Ann Arbor City Council makes all operational, development, and financial decisions after providing opportunities for public comment and hearings.

### **2. Ann Arbor City Planning Commission**

The City Planning Commission is a group of citizens appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council that reviews the Capital Improvements Plan, including improvements of the Parks and Recreation Services Unit, as well as proposed development projects that involve public parkland and private recreation facilities.

### **3. Park Advisory Commission**

The Park Advisory Commission was created by a resolution of City Council on August 17, 1981. The purpose of the Park Advisory Commission is to provide a consistent and formal opportunity for public involvement and perspective regarding community park and recreation services. The commission makes advisory recommendations to the City Council and to the Parks and Recreation Services Unit regarding park administration and development.

The Park Advisory Commission is composed of nine members; eight members to be appointed by the Mayor with the approval of City Council. The Commission is responsible directly to the Mayor and City Council. Members must be residents of the City of Ann Arbor. One member of the Recreation Advisory Commission serves on the Commission as an official member. Two members of City Council (to be appointed by the Mayor), the Manager of Parks and Recreation, and the Assistant Superintendent for Community Services of the Ann Arbor Public Schools or the Assistant Superintendent's designee, shall serve as ex-

## SECTION II: Administrative Structure

officio members without vote. The membership should consist of representative citizens who have demonstrated their interest in Ann Arbor's park and recreation services and have a time commitment to serve.

The Park Advisory Commission provides advisory recommendations regarding the following issues:

- a. Park rules and regulations.
- b. Community park and recreation services philosophy.
- c. Park and recreation facility policies, including, but not limited to, fees and charges, hours of operation, and scheduling.
- d. Park maintenance and forestry standards.
- e. Annual operating budget.
- f. Annual capital improvement budget.
- g. Parkland acquisitions and parkland easements or controls. A separate Land Acquisition Committee, which is a subcommittee of the whole, advises on purchases within the City.
- h. Park development/rehabilitation projects.
- i. Capital improvement and acquisition funding, including millages, bond issues, park foundation, or related programs.
- j. Major new development projects (residential, transportation, commercial, etc.) which significantly impact park and recreation services.
- k. Public information and interpretation of the total park and recreation program to the community.
- l. Any other item which may be referred to the Park Advisory Commission by City Council or the City Administrator, or any park policy matter of concern to a commission member or community citizen.

In 2009, the Park Advisory Commission revised its bylaws to include a standing Budget and Finance Committee to facilitate communications between staff and the commission on important aspects of the parks budget and financial accounting systems. The committee makes recommendations regarding the annual operating budget, the annual capital improvement budget, and special millages for capital improvements and acquisitions. The

chair of the Budget and Finance Committee is to be nominated by the chair of PAC, and approved by a two-thirds majority of the full Commission.

#### **4. Recreation Advisory Commission**

The Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Recreation (Rec & Ed) program is an integral component of recreation planning within the City. It is governed and administered by the Board of Education. The Rec & Ed program offers a number of recreational and educational opportunities to the Ann Arbor community, including team sports, camps, pre-school and childcare programs, and life-long learning and enrichment classes for youths and adults. Many of these programs take place in City parks and facilities.

The program serves community members who reside in the Ann Arbor Public School district. The Ann Arbor school district includes all of Ann Arbor Township, the City of Ann Arbor, the Village of Barton Hills, and portions of seven other townships including the Charter Townships of Pittsfield, Scio, and Superior, and the Townships of Lodi, Webster, Northfield, and Salem.

The Recreation Advisory Commission was established and modified by City Council and Board of Education resolutions of 1957. Six members are appointed by the City Council and six by the Board of Education. The purpose of the RAC is to provide a consistent forum for citizen input regarding recreation services. The commission provides advisory recommendations and serves the following roles:

- a. Assume positive leadership in formulating a philosophy of recreation suitable to this community.
- b. Consider Ann Arbor's year-round recreation needs, both immediate and long term.
- c. Serve as an advisory body to the Parks and Recreation Services Unit, the Community Education and Recreation Department, and their staff in developing a program to meet such needs.
- d. Implement the recreation plan by recommending a budget showing the amounts financed by the City, the School Board, and by the income from fee-based programs.
- e. Communicate the findings relative to needs, program, and implementation to the City Council and Board of Education.
- f. Inform the City Council and Board of Education of essential and desirable expansion of recreational facilities involving the expenditure of capital funds.

- g. Consult and cooperate with private agencies and local sports clubs in their development of recreational programs and activities.
- h. Interpret the entire recreation program to the citizens of Ann Arbor and the Ann Arbor School District.

**5. Park and Facility Advisory Boards and Commissions**

Several recreation facilities have boards and associations dedicated to overseeing the mission of each particular facility. These consist of the following:

- a. COBBLESTONE FARM ASSOCIATION was formed over 30 years ago and coordinates the programming and restoration efforts of the historic Cobblestone Farm property. The association integrates authentic artifacts, stories, and lives which capture the spirit of mid-nineteenth century living, and hosts educational historic programs for children and adults.
- b. DEAN FUND COMMITTEE was established in 1964 to oversee the donation from Elizabeth Dean, who willed nearly two million dollars to the City. The interest income from this bequest is used to repair, maintain, and replace trees on City property.
- c. PUBLIC MARKET ADVISORY COMMISSION exists to cultivate relationships among vendors, the public, local and national governmental agencies, and the Kerrytown area businesses and residential neighborhood. The Commission advises the Market Manager in advertising and promotion of the market, offers input on musical, educational, and other special events at the market, engages in strategic planning for the market, and reviews market policy.
- d. KEMPF HOUSE BOARD OF DIRECTORS is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, interpreting, and celebrating the Bennett-Kempf house, its garden and collections. The 1853 Greek Revival house is a unique resource because of its national architectural significance, downtown location, and the contributions of the Kempf family to the musical culture of Ann Arbor. By making the house accessible to the public, the board seeks to promote understanding and appreciation of local history.

Three park facilities are owned by the City but run by private nonprofits. These organizations have boards that shape policy and direction for the organization as well as solicit input from residents.

- a. BRYANT COMMUNITY CENTER NEIGHBORHOOD ADVISORY GROUP AND NORTHSIDE COMMUNITY CENTER – Community Action Network (CAN)

programs the two parks community centers while involving the neighborhood through meetings to solicit input for programs that they oversee. CAN, which runs a total of four community centers in Ann Arbor, also has a separate advisory council to oversee the organization as a whole.

- b. LESLIE SCIENCE AND NATURE CENTER ADVISORY BOARD provides oversight and works in partnership with the staff to achieve its mission of providing environmental education and experiences for children, families, and other individuals to honor and perpetuate the legacy of Dr. and Mrs. Eugene Leslie by fostering understanding, appreciation, stewardship, and respect for the natural world.

### **C. Public Input Opportunities**

Public input is considered an integral part of planning in Parks and Recreation Services. These forums are a standard part of the planning of projects involving changes to a park or facility.

1. Surveys are conducted intermittently to evaluate the entire park system, as well as specific facilities and issues. This tool has become much more widely used by Parks and Recreation Services with the availability and popularity of electronic media.
2. Public meetings are held for any capital improvement involving change of an existing facility or park. Meetings allow citizens to voice opinions and concerns directly to staff and provide an opportunity to have dialog with residents.
3. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, and GoogleBuzz, are used to advertise meetings, share information, and survey users about particular issues. These sites allow real time updates for programs and activities and facilitate citizen interaction with staff, providing forums for comments and opinions about park projects and programs. An added advantage is that the tools are free of charge and they eliminate the use of paper.



## SECTION III: BUDGET AND FUNDING

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### A. Budget Process

The Parks budget is one of the more complex within the City. The diversity of services and operations, the fact that the Parks system is budgeted in two distinct service areas, and the mixture of funding sources and revenues, makes the task of preparing the Parks budget a significant endeavor.

The budget process consists of an examination of operations to determine any new initiatives, modifications, or service level changes projected to impact the budget.

### B. Budget Calendar

The City operates on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year and a two-year budget cycle; the first year is adopted by City Council, and the second year is an adopted plan. The budget process begins in the winter, with extensive staff time spent on budget preparation in January, February, and March. The City Administrator submits a recommended budget to the City Council in April and the Council is required to adopt the budget by its second meeting in May.

<i>July 1, 2010</i>	Fiscal Year 2011 Begins
<i>January – March 2011</i>	Budget Preparation – Budget is entered in financial system, impact sheets and scenarios are created, and fees are evaluated. Impact sheets are shared at a working session of City Council for feedback and direction.
<i>March 2011</i>	Staff meets with members of the Budget and Finance Committee,

a standing committee of the Park Advisory Commission to review budget information.

<i>April 2011</i>	City Administrator's Budget submitted to City Council for review.
<i>April 2011</i>	PAC makes recommendation to City Council on proposed City Administrator's Budget. Opportunity for public commentary on proposed budget.
<i>May 2011</i>	City Council adopts Fiscal Year 2012 Budget and Fiscal Year 2013 Plan
<i>June 30, 2011</i>	Fiscal Year 2011 Ends
<i>July 1, 2012</i>	Fiscal Year 2012 Begins

### **C. Annual Budgets**

Over the past decade, the City of Ann Arbor's General Fund has been faced with decreasing revenues and increasing costs. In fiscal year 2011, the City was tasked with eliminating \$5.2 million from projected expenses to balance the budget. As a result, all units within the General Fund were assigned targets to assist in bridging that gap. Consequently, there was much discussion about the elimination or reduction of services across the City, and parks was no exception.

In Parks and Recreation Services, the approved plan for FY2011 included the closure of Mack Indoor Pool and the Senior Center. Task forces consisting of staff, user groups, PAC members, and Council members were created by Council to examine the operations of both facilities. Ultimately, recommendations were provided and implemented that helped to bridge the net operating costs of both facilities and saw them restored in the approved budget for FY2011.

In Field Operations, mowing is the single largest budget expense funded by the General Fund. Mowing cycles were extended from 14 to 19 days to help achieve necessary budget reductions. For detail of FY2011 budget, see Appendix.

#### **1. Parks and Recreation Services Funding Sources**

The Parks and Recreation Services Unit consists of Parks Administration, Park Planning, and Recreation Facilities, and consists of 18 full-time employees and approximately 300 part-time and seasonal employees. Parks Administration is responsible for the development of park policy, park planning and improvements, park shelter reservations, special events, and the Parks and Recreation boards and commissions, including the Park Advisory Commission and

Land Advisory Committee. The Administration staff coordinates and manages the service unit while overseeing short and long-term planning, capital projects, infrastructure improvements, and budget.

The recreation facilities, which include four pools, two ice rinks, two golf courses, two canoe liveries, two community centers, a farmers market, a senior center, an historic house, and a farm site, are managed by Parks and Recreation Services staff.

The Parks and Recreation Services budget includes seven funding sources:

- Fund 10 – General Fund: the General Fund supports Parks Administration, along with the majority of the recreation facilities. In totality, revenues that the park facilities generate are exceeded by the cost to operate them.
- Fund 24 – Land Acquisition Funds: Revenue results from the Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage and is used to purchase new parkland within the City limits.
- Fund 25 – Bandemer Park Fund: this fund is designated for use specifically at Bandemer Park.
- Fund 34 – Gifts and Memorials Fund: this fund constitutes donations and developer contributions. Expenses cannot exceed revenue recognized through donations and gifts.
- Fund 46 – Market Enterprise Fund: an enterprise fund for Farmers Market Operations. As an enterprise fund, revenues are expected to offset operating expenditures if not exceed.
- Fund 47 – Golf Enterprise Fund: an enterprise fund for Golf Course Operations.
- Fund 71 – Parks Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage: Revenue is generated through a millage levy that is then used to support capital projects, park planning functions, and volunteer outreach.

## **2. Parks – Field Operations Funding Sources**

Field Operations, Forestry, and Natural Area Preservation, all parts of the Public Services Area, are responsible for maintenance in the parks, playgrounds, shelters, and recreation facilities, along with the management of the Natural Area Preservation and Adopt-a-Park programs and parks forestry functions. There are 27 full-time employees responsible for these tasks and seasonal staff as needed.

The Field Operations budget includes two funding sources:

- Fund 10 – General Fund: the General Fund supports core parks maintenance functions such as mowing and snow removal. Field operation activities are generally not revenue producing.
- Fund 71 – Parks Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage: this fund supports parks, playground, and recreational facility maintenance functions, parks forestry functions, and the Natural Area Preservation program.

#### **D. Sources of Funding for the Parks and Recreation Budget**

The park and recreation system is funded through a combination of general fund dollars, millages, and revenues from recreation facility programs, grants, and donations.

##### **1. General Fund**

The General Fund in Fiscal Year 2011 provides 22% of all parks funding. The General Fund is the major source for financing the City's routine operations. The largest source of revenue for the General Fund is property tax. A small portion of the overall City General Fund revenue is from sources other than local property taxes.

Parks and Recreation Services generates over \$2,000,000 in revenue annually through admissions, program fees, and other revenue generating activities. No General Fund support is available for capital improvements for park rehabilitation, development, or acquisition. Functions and activities funded from the General Fund within Parks and Recreation Services have remained fairly consistent over the years. With the passage of the current Parks Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage, more Field Operation functions and activities have become eligible for millage funding. With more routine maintenance activities eligible for millage funding, administrative guidelines that protect the total general fund contribution that Parks receives were approved by City Council. The guidelines state that “if future reductions are necessary in the City’s general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, during any of the six years of this millage, beginning in the fiscal year of 2007-2008, the general fund budget supporting the Parks and Recreation System, after subtracting the revenue obtained from fees for parks and recreation, will be reduced no greater than the average percentage reduction, for each particular year, of the rest of the City general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, for each of the applicable six years of this millage.”

Even with this provision, Parks General Fund support has decreased over the last four fiscal years, as fixed operating costs have increased, presenting a challenge maintaining on-going operations.

SECTION III: Budget and Funding

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011
General Fund: Parks and Recreation Services	\$3,756,836	\$3,844,286	\$3,747,138	\$3,641,584
General Fund: Parks Field Operations	\$2,919,456	\$3,492,419*	\$2,872,857	\$2,732,375

*\*In FY2009, Field Operations saw an increase in its expenditure budget as a result of prior year unspent funds being carried forward for a capital project.*

*FY2012 and FY2013 are forecast to see 2.5% reductions to operating budgets for both Parks & Recreation Services and Park Operations.*

**2. Property Tax Millages**

The park and recreation system currently has two millages; the Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage and the Open Space and Parkland Preservation Millage.

a. PARK MAINTENANCE AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS MILLAGE

In November 2006, Ann Arbor voters approved the six-year (2007-2012) Park Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage. The millage annually levies a tax of 1.25 mills on all taxable real and personal property within the City for the purpose of financing park maintenance activities in the following categories: forestry, natural area preservation, park operations, park security, and recreational facilities, and for the purpose of financing park capital improvement projects throughout the park system. The annual cost to a homeowner based on a median home valuation of \$250,000 is approximated to be \$156.25 for fiscal year 2011 (or \$13.02/month).

Millages are based on assessed valuation of properties in the City. Consequently, revenues increase or decrease as the total valuation of property changes. As a result, revenues have decreased over the life of the millage, while fixed operating costs have risen.

	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	EST FY2012	EST FY2013
MILLAGE REVENUE	\$5,300,799	\$5,399,185	\$5,233,431	\$5,038,522	\$4,965,203	\$4,936,712

Ann Arbor City Council approved guidelines for the administration of the Parks Maintenance and Capital Improvements Millage for the duration of the 6-year period, including the following:

- Annual allocation for maintenance is to be between 60% and 80% and for capital improvements between 20% and 40%, with a total annual allocation being 100%.
- Originally, the Natural Area Preservation Program budget received a minimum 3% annual increase to enhance the stewardship of increased acreage of natural park areas. As part of the FY2011 budget process, and as recognition that the revenue generated by the millage was decreasing, this guideline was amended to provide equality between all City units receiving funding from this millage.
- If future reductions are necessary in the City's general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, during any of the six years of this millage, beginning in the fiscal year of 2007-2008, the general fund budget supporting the Parks and Recreation System, after subtracting the revenue obtained from fees for parks and recreation, will be reduced no greater than the average percentage reduction, for each particular year, of the rest of the City general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, for each of the applicable six years of this millage.
- If future increases occur in the City's general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, during any of the six years of this millage, beginning in the fiscal year of 2007-2008, the general fund budget supporting the parks and recreation system, after subtracting the revenue obtained from fees for parks and recreation, will be increased at the same rate as the average percentage increase, for each particular year, of the rest of the City general fund budget, not including the budget for Safety Services, for each of the applicable six years of this millage.
- The millage is not subject to a municipal service charge, but is subject to appropriate information technology and fleet charges.

b. OPEN SPACE AND PARKLAND PRESERVATION MILLAGE

In November 2003, the City of Ann Arbor voters approved a ballot proposal commonly known as the Greenbelt Millage that authorized a .5 mil tax for 30 years. The millage provides funds for preservation and protection of parkland within City limits and farmland, open space, natural habitats, and City source waters by the acquisition of conservation easements or purchase of development rights within the designated

Greenbelt District. Approximately one-third of the money raised by the millage is apportioned to purchasing parkland within the City limits, and approximately two-thirds are appointed to the acquisition of land outside the City limits.

The Greenbelt Program focuses on three areas: the purchase of development rights on farmland, building 1,000-acre blocks of protected land, and protecting natural areas and open space throughout the Greenbelt District in partnership with other local agencies. While it is difficult to assign a percentage of focus of the greenbelt acquisitions as the program is dependent upon applications, the Greenbelt Program will strive to have approximately 90 percent of the funds focused on preserving blocks of land to include farmland purchase of development rights, as well as natural areas and open space within those blocks. The remaining funds will be used to focus on open space and natural areas of other value as they fit into a broader regional plan.

On May 3, 2004, the Ann Arbor City Council adopted Chapter 42 of the Ann Arbor City Code, titled “Open Space and Parkland Preservation.” The Chapter establishes and defines a Greenbelt District and the criteria and selection process for purchase of development rights and other property rights within the district.

Chapter 42 of the City Code also established a nine-member Greenbelt Advisory Commission, their duties, and the relationship between the role of the Greenbelt Advisory Commission and the previously established Parks Advisory Commission. The Land Acquisition Committee of the Park Advisory Commission recommends purchasing parkland within the City limits, while the Greenbelt Advisory Commission recommends purchasing land outside the City limits.

### **3. Other Funding Sources**

- a. Parks and Recreation Services charges fees for entrance to recreation facilities, rental of equipment, memberships, and programs, along with other activities, rentals, and special events. Revenue is also generated from concession sales, merchandise sales, and contract agreements. User and Permit Fees will continue to be evaluated as part of the budget process to make sure competitive fees are being charged, but that they also remain affordable for residents.
- b. State and federal grants have accounted for several million dollars to match local millage funds for projects. Grant programs administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE) have included the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, which derives income from oil and gas leases and matches local funds for parkland acquisitions and park improvements, and the state income tax-supported Clean Michigan Initiative Recreation Bond, which provides grant opportunities. Federal programs such as the Transportation

Enhancement Act, the Clean Lakes Program, Urban Forests, and Small Business Administration have contributed to several projects in recent years. Major acquisitions assisted by grants include Dolph Nature Area and Traverwood Woods. Major park improvements assisted by grants in recent years include Olson Park, the Argo Pond Trail, and the Barton Boardwalk.

- c. Gifts, donations, and bequests also provide funding resources. Large bequests have helped with the purchase of Bandemer Park, the construction of the Nature House at the Leslie Science and Nature Center, a playground at Gallup Park, and strategic planning at the Senior Center. Gifts and memorials for specific tree plantings, park benches, playgrounds, picnic shelters, picnic tables, bridges, trails, etc., have allowed improvements that could not otherwise be funded. Gifts from businesses help to fund a scholarship program that provides access to recreation programs to Ann Arbor residents who are income eligible. Gifts and donations also contribute to publication of special brochures, maps, and presentation of special events. In 2009, a special donation was made to place a Petanque court in Burns Park.
- d. Developer parkland dedications and cash in lieu of dedication have provided much of the neighborhood parkland and improvements for over 40 years. The policy of requesting that developers provide parkland as part of the infrastructure to support new neighborhoods has helped the park and recreation system keep pace with development in the City. Examples include Cranbrook, Ward, and Foxfire Parks.
- e. Volunteers assist through natural area stewardship by adopting flower beds in parks and throughout the City; helping with clean-up activities in the downtown, along the river, and elsewhere; by serving on committees and commissions such as the Park Advisory Commission; and serving as docents and instructors. Thousands of hours per year are graciously provided for various projects throughout the park and recreation system.
- f. Public/private partnerships can help defray operating expenses and increase visibility of programs and events throughout the community as well as create potential new sources of revenue.

Examples of commercial ventures include the coffee shop in the Gallup Park livery and a recent partnership with Stoneyfield Yogurt that benefits park programs and promotes healthy living. Other examples of public/private partnerships include the Leslie Science and Nature Center, which is run by a private non-profit, and Bryant and Northside Community Centers, which are programmed by Community Action Network.

With the exploration of partnerships, however, there is an awareness of potential associated issues. For example, cell tower companies have approached the City to discuss the feasibility of placing cell towers on parkland. The proposals were reviewed

by staff and shared with PAC, but it was decided that although it would have provided a source of revenue, this was not something that the City was interested in pursuing as the visual impact on the parks was undesirable.

- g. Local matching funds continue to benefit the park system. The Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority works with the City to accomplish a range of goals, including the enhancement of the downtown area for pedestrians. The DDA has contributed funding for design, construction, and maintenance for park properties within the DDA area including renovations to both Liberty Plaza and Sculpture Plaza. Parks and Recreation Services continues to work with the DDA to identify and develop parks, open spaces, and streetscapes within the downtown area as well as to maintain existing downtown park facilities.

## **E. FUTURE FUNDING**

The continuing growth of the area surrounding Ann Arbor has resulted in an increased demand for parks and recreation facilities and services at a time when operating budgets are being reduced, millage revenue is decreasing, and fixed operating costs are increasing. Through the dedicated park acquisition millage, the City has been able to acquire land for dedicated park, recreation, and open space uses. However, the cost of developing and maintaining parkland and recreational facilities has reached a point where traditional funding means (i.e., property taxes, millages/bond issues, fees, etc.) are potentially no longer able to completely support the current and future needs of the park and recreation system.

Since 2006, conversations have taken place regarding the possibility of recreational facility closures and service reductions in Parks. The mowing cycle has been extended from 14 days to as many as 21 days to achieve budget targets, with the result of parks looking unkempt. To date, no facilities have closed, but the annual evaluation of potential service reductions needed to achieve the necessary budget cuts highlights that the overall Parks budget is at a crucial juncture. The current millage expires at the end of Fiscal Year 2013 and the development of a future millage will need to carefully consider the needs of the Parks system and community expectations. In addition to future millage conversations, Parks will continue to explore all funding options to insure the continuing vitality of the parks system and provision of services, facilities, and programming for the entire community.



## SECTION IV: INVENTORY OF THE PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

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The City's park, recreation, and open space inventory includes City-owned parks, natural areas, and recreational facilities. In addition to City-owned parks and open space, Ann Arbor residents have access to open space owned by the Ann Arbor Public Schools, the University of Michigan, neighboring townships, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, and State of Michigan land. Some of these facilities are located within the City's boundaries; others are located throughout Washtenaw County. Non-City-owned park and recreational resources accessible to the greater Ann Arbor community are important to understanding the extent of park and recreational opportunities for Ann Arbor residents; therefore, they are listed as separate inventories within this section of the PROS Plan.

### **A. Park Inventory Overview**

As of 2011, the City's parks, recreation, and open space holdings were comprised of 157 parks and facilities (two of which portions are leased – Olson Park and Mary Beth Doyle Park), totaling approximately 2,088 acres of land. The properties include approximately 492 turf acres, 48 buildings, 34 ball diamonds, 31 tennis courts, 10 soccer fields, 75 playground areas, 87 picnic areas, approximately 52 miles of multi-use paths, four swimming pools, two artificial ice rinks, hiking and nature trails, two 18-hole golf courses, and two canoe liveries. Approximately 72 percent of the land is unstructured and serves as open space, with approximately 697 acres of woodlands, 478 acres of green

space, 200 acres of shrub land, as well as wetlands, savannas, prairies, and bogs, while some 800 acres of Huron River water surface are accessible with strategically located boat launching sites. Special facilities include a senior center, two community centers, historic houses, a farm, and a cemetery.

## **B. Park and Open Space Classification**

The PROS Plan classifies park holdings by size, level of use, type of recreation experience, degree of naturalness, and location within the City. These classifications aid Parks and Recreation in determining land acquisitions, levels of maintenance, planning for amenities in the various parks, and balancing the recreation needs throughout the City.

These classifications, however, are not always clear cut, and overlap in several instances. Several community-wide parks, for example, also serve as neighborhood parks for the residents who live in close proximity. The classifications are meant as a guide for staff and the public to understand the breadth and scope of the park system.

The classification system includes the following:

### **1. Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks provide open space areas within approximately one-quarter mile of each resident. These areas are generally smaller in size and designed to attract a limited population. Parking is generally along the street. Typical amenities include a playground, basketball or tennis court, open grassy play areas, park benches and picnic tables, and a walk to access the park amenities. Examples of neighborhood parks include Meadowbrook, Windemere, Esch, Hollywood, and Waterworks.

### **2. Urban Parks/Plazas**

Urban parks and plazas provide open space and pedestrian-oriented amenities in the downtown area where the surrounding population includes high-density residential and commercial districts. These areas are defined by the presence of a significant infrastructure, a greater formality, and furniture to serve a greater density of people at peak times. The plazas are generally the smallest type of park in the system and are designed to integrate with the urban setting. Plazas are characterized by harder materials such as concrete, contained flower beds, and a lack of open grassy areas and play equipment. Residents and downtown employees utilize these areas as a gathering space for eating and work breaks and often serve as a location for public art and performances. They ideally function in concert with the surrounding businesses, especially restaurants and cafes, where a cooperative effort energizes the physical space. Examples of urban plazas include Liberty Plaza, Sculpture Plaza, and Forsythe Park.

### **3. Recreation Facilities**

Recreation facilities serve a defined use or program which may be more specific or serve a limited segment of the population. Their use and access are generally more tightly controlled. These facilities vary in size and character depending on the intended use. Examples of these facilities include the Leslie Park and Huron Hills golf courses, the Farmers Market, Fairview Cemetery, pools and ice rinks, senior center, and canoe liveries.

### **4. Historic Sites**

The purpose of labeling an area as an historic site is both to protect it and to describe its significance for interpretive programming. These facilities may be located within parks, such as the West Park Bandshell, or encompass the entire facility, such as the Kempf House. Although the facilities are historic, they often serve multiple purposes. Cobblestone Farm, for example, has both an historic house and a newly constructed barn. Although the house is used purely as an historic showcase, the barn, which was built as part of the farm, is used as a multipurpose facility for parties, meetings, and weddings. The older facilities require special care in their maintenance and daily use. The facilities are open to the public; however, some limitations are placed on their use due to their fragile nature. Additional examples of historic sites include the Leslie Homestead and the Greek Revival Shelter at Island Park.

### **5. Community-wide Parks**

Community open space serves the recreational needs of the greater Ann Arbor community by offering diverse opportunities in a more natural setting. These spaces are often much larger than neighborhood parks and can accommodate greater numbers of people for a wide variety of uses. The goal is for these spaces to be accessible by non-motorized transportation and by public transportation and also provide parking facilities and other amenities such as restrooms and shelters. These open spaces are distributed as evenly as possible throughout the City. Typical amenities include scheduled softball or soccer fields, picnic shelters, playground areas, and recreation facilities within the park. Examples of this type of open space include Fuller Park, Buhr Park, and Veterans Memorial Park.

### **6. Natural Areas**

The classification of natural area provides for protection of the City's most significant natural resources. Natural areas are managed by the Natural Area Preservation division to improve their ecological integrity. Typical activities for this purpose include invasive plant removal, prescribed burning, and seeding or planting of native species. These activities may be performed by the City or by volunteers acting under the guidance of City staff. Wildlife inventory information about birds, butterflies, frogs, and salamanders are collected to help guide land management decisions.

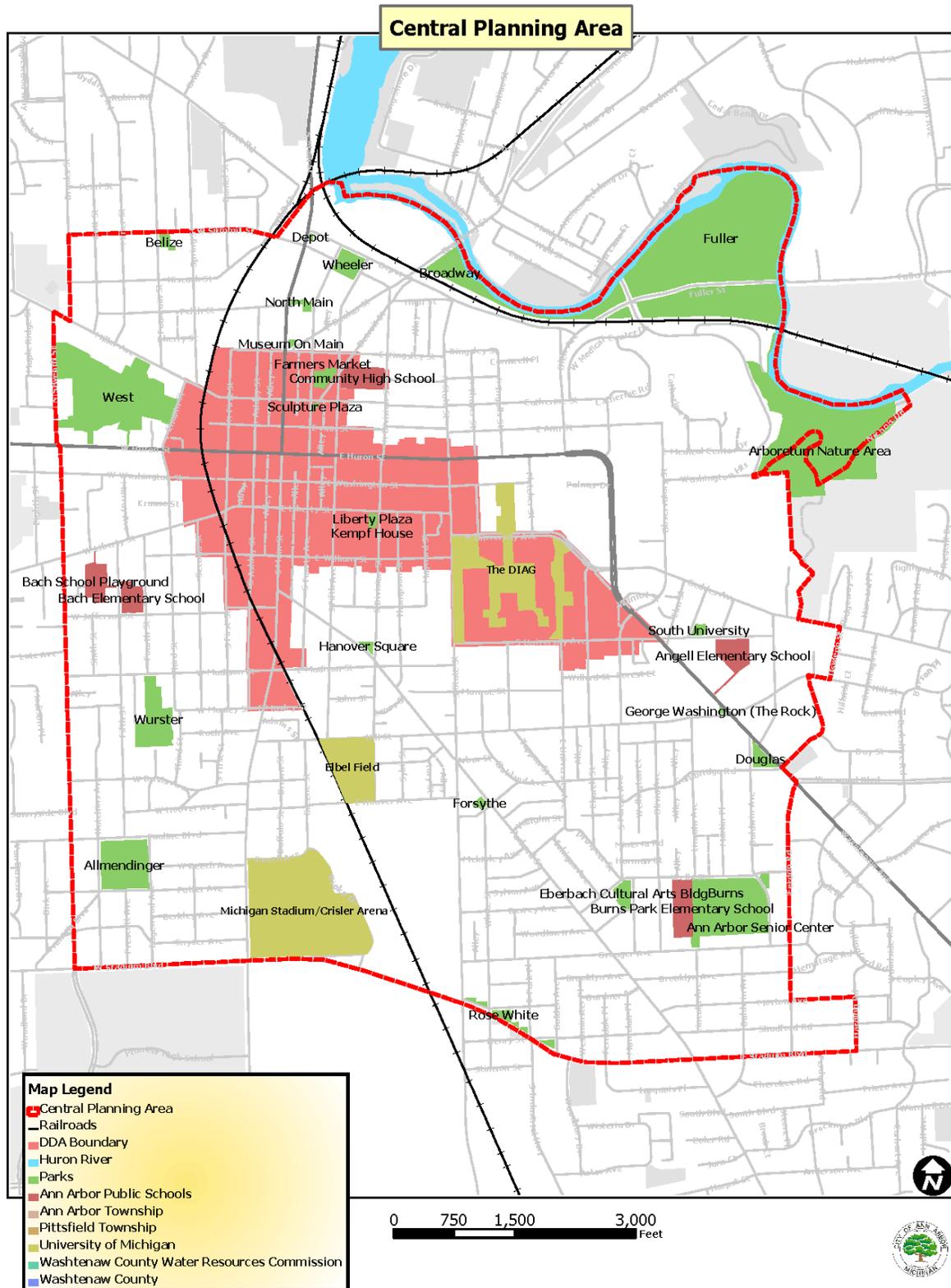
#### SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

Some of the natural areas that are of higher floristic quality or have sensitive ecological qualities, such as steep slopes or a rare species of plant or animals, have limitations on use. Bicycles, for example, are prohibited in several natural areas. Examples include Bird Hills, Furstenberg, and Black Pond Nature Areas.

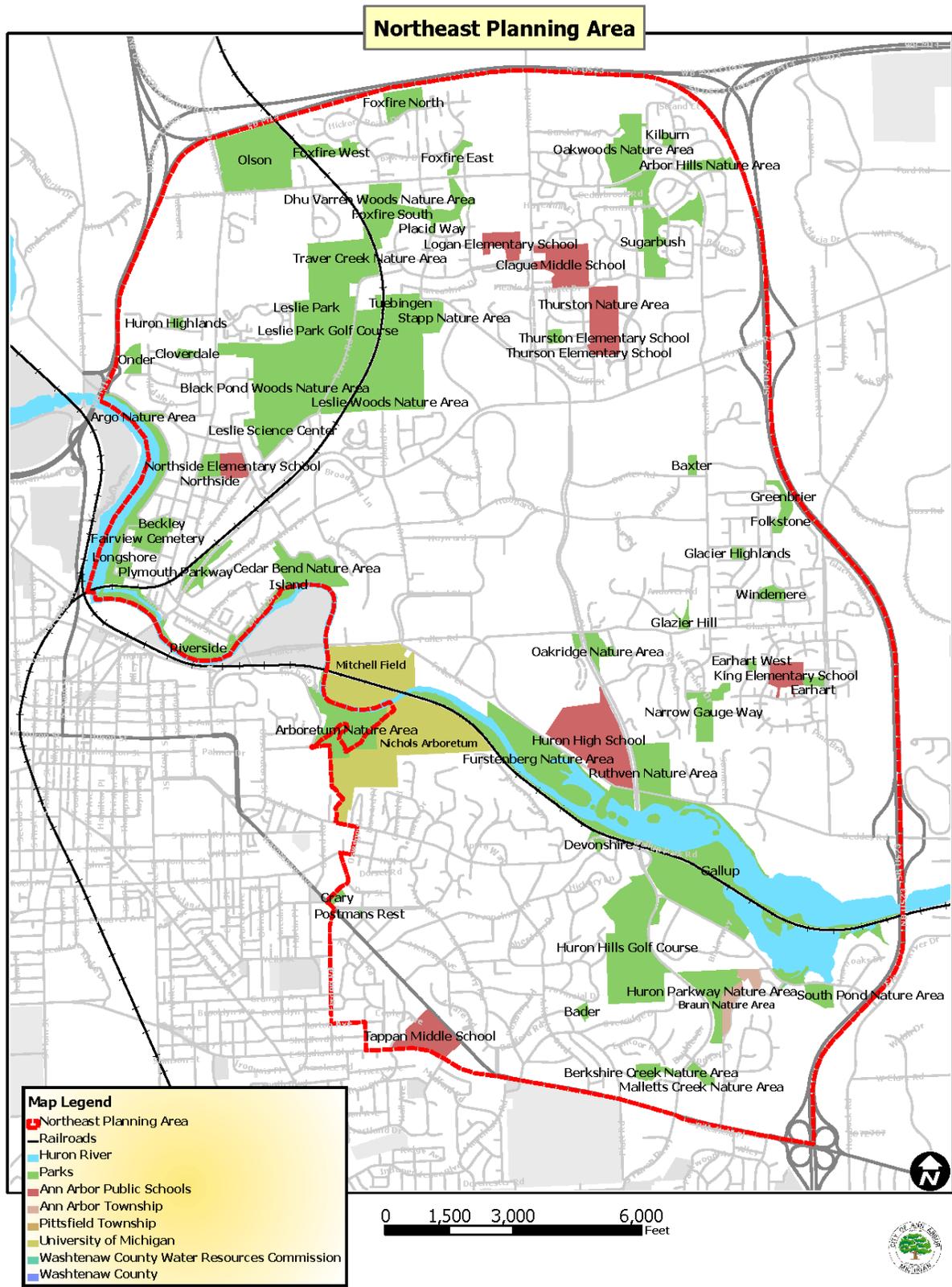
#### **C. Planning Area Maps**

The following series of maps show the park system and other open space, including public schools, university property, and county park property in the City by planning area.

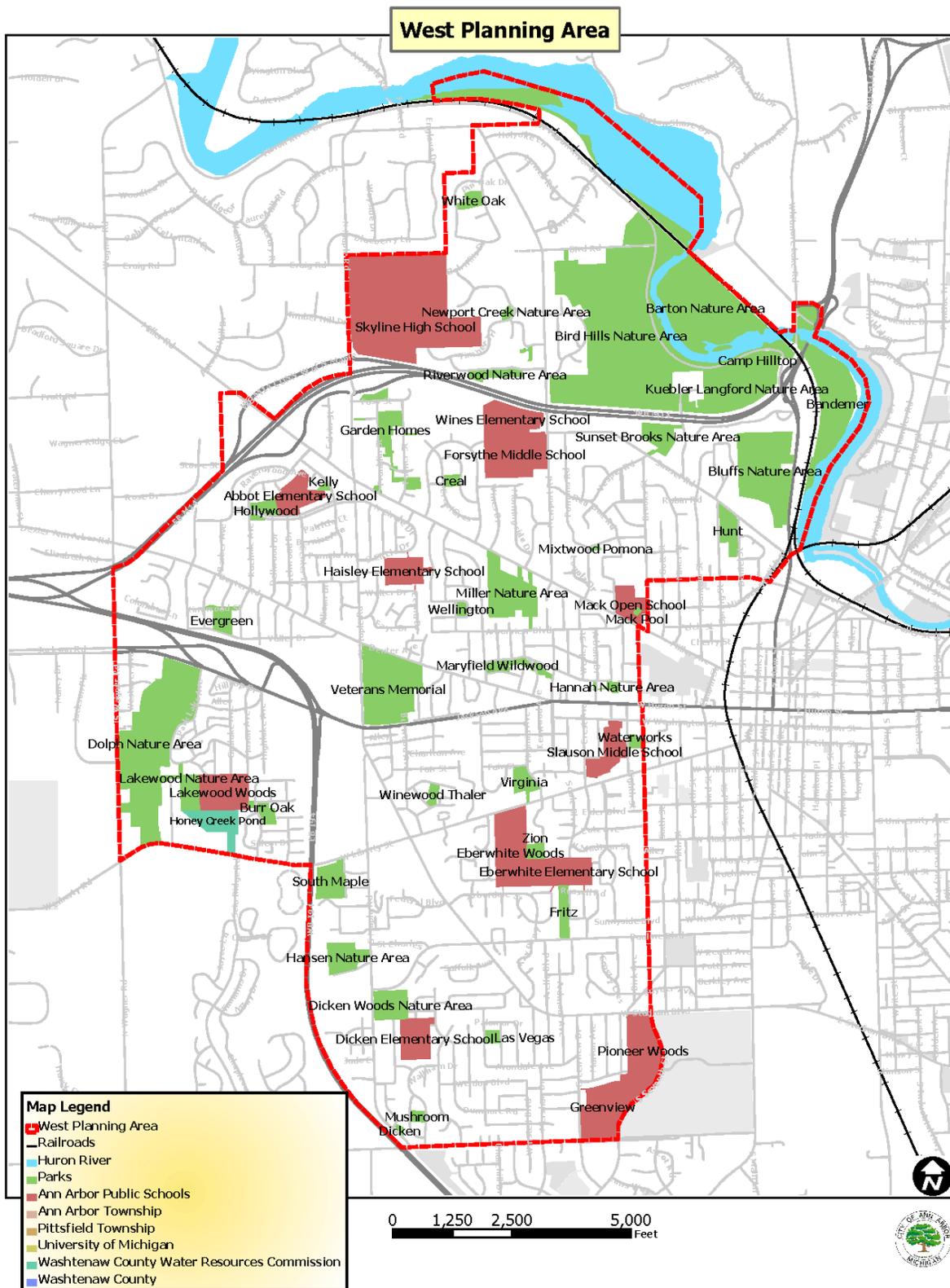
SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System



SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System



SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System





## **D. Facility Listing**

### Ann Arbor Senior Center 1320 Baldwin Avenue

The Ann Arbor Senior Center is located in the Burns Park neighborhood and provides meeting space for programming that includes enrichment and educational classes, fitness programs, social programs, entertainment and special events.

### Argo Canoe Livery 1055 Longshore Drive

The facility provides canoe and kayak rentals and consists of a livery building, storage yard, and picnic shelter. Day camps are also run out of the livery and focus on river activities for teens.

### Bryant Community Center 3 West Eden Court

The Bryant Community Center is a multi-use building that provides space for youth and adult programs, community meetings, health clinics, and day camps. It is managed by the Community Action Network.

### Buhr Pool and Ice Arena 2751 Packard Road

Buhr Pool includes a zero depth tot pool with spray toys and a 25-yard lap pool. The facility offers day camps, swim classes and swim teams, as well as public swim time. The ice arena is an NHL regulation size, covered outdoor facility whose activities include public ice skating, drop-in hockey, league play, and rental hours. There are four separate locker rooms, a heated lobby, and vending.

### Cobblestone Farm 2781 Packard Road

The farm includes an 1845 classic revival style cobblestone farmhouse and a replica barn used for special events, weddings, and rentals. The site houses farm animals and provides interpretive programming. The Parks and Recreation Customer Service center is located within the barn.

### Farmers Market 315 Detroit Street

The market facilities include an office and meeting room as well as restrooms. There are 144 vendor stalls under the market shed structure. The market operates Saturdays the entire year, and Wednesdays from May 1 to December 31. Parking is leased to the Downtown Development Authority when the market is not in operation.

### Fuller Pool 1519 Fuller Road

Fuller Pool consists of a 50-meter lap pool, a zero depth tot pool, and a water slide. There are locker rooms, a picnic shelter, and restrooms. The facility runs day camps, Masters Swimming, swim teams, swim classes, as well as public swim time.

### Gallup Canoe Livery 3000 Fuller Road

The Gallup Canoe Livery rents canoes, kayaks, and pedal boats. A café and meeting room are located in the livery building. Camps, special events, and open hours for the public are offered at this facility.

#### SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

##### Huron Hills Golf Course 3465 East Huron River Drive

Huron Hills is an 18-hole, par 67 course located along the Huron River. The facility includes adult and junior golf instruction, special events, league play, and open golfing.

##### Kempf House 312 South Division Street

The Kempf House is a local history museum with a focus on the Victorian era (1850-1910) and Ann Arbor History. The museum offers guided tours for individuals and groups and is used for special events and monthly lectures.

##### Leslie Park Golf Course 2120 Traver Road

Leslie Golf Course is a championship 18-hole, par 72 golf course and was recently ranked as the Golf Digest best municipal golf course in the State of Michigan. It is located along Traver Creek, in the northern part of Ann Arbor. The facility includes adult and junior golf instruction, special events, league play, and open golfing.

##### Leslie Science and Nature Center (LSNC) 1831 Traver Road

The center contains 50 acres of fields, woodlands, and prairie, as well as the Leslie Homestead, Critter House, office space, and Nature House. The LSNC became a 501c3 to afford better fundraising opportunities. Parks maintains the grounds and buildings. The Leslie Homestead was donated to the City in 1976, and runs camps and events, including a raptor center and programs focusing on environmental education.

##### Mack Pool 715 Brooks Street

Mack Pool is connected to the Ann Arbor Open School at Mack and contains a six-lane, 25-yard pool for adults, a 30-foot by 40-foot children's pool, locker rooms, and pool office. The school uses the pool for students during school operating hours. Programs include Master's, swimming lessons, aquatic exercise classes, and public swim.

##### Northside Community Center 809 Taylor Street

The center is managed by Community Action Network and runs programs for youth and adults. The facility contains meeting rooms, offices, and restrooms.

##### Veterans Pool and Ice Arena 2150 Jackson Avenue

Veterans Ice Arena contains a regulation 85-foot by 200-foot ice rink with spectator seating for 2,000, locker rooms, skate rental, concession area, and fitness room. Programs include ice hockey leagues and skating instruction, open skating, and special events. The 25-yard pool contains a waterslide and zero depth tot pool area with spray toys. Programs include swimming lessons, lap swim, and swim teams.

### E. Ann Arbor Parks Inventory Chart

The following chart shows the vast array of parks and activities offered by the City of Ann Arbor. It also summarizes the degree to which the parks are barrier free.

<b>Park Inventory</b>	Acreage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Disc Golf Course	BMX Course	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Barrier Free Accessibility	Other		
Allmendinger	7.89	•	•	•	2					•	•			•	•					•	2			
Ann Arbor Senior Center	0.58													•	•						•	3		
Arbor Hills Nature Area	5.95									•						•						1		
Arbor Oaks	3.23	•	•								•	•	•		•							3		
Arboretum Nature Area	33.46									•					•	•						4		
Argo Nature Area	22.34									•	BW	•	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	2	BL	
Bader	1.64	•	•		•		•					•										3		
Bandemer	40.89							•	•	•	•	•	•	p	•	•					•	3	CD	
Barton Nature Area	99.10									•		•		p		•						•	3	
Baxter	1.99	•	•									•											3	
Beckley	3.20	•									•	•											2	
Belize	0.51	•										•			•								2	
Berkshire Creek Nature Area	5.32															•							1	
Bird Hills Nature Area	146.05									•						•						•	2	
Black Pond Woods Nature Area	32.21									•						•						•	2	
Bluffs Nature Area	41.02									•						•							1	MB
Broadway	3.78										•	•											4	
Bromley	2.32	•										•											5	
Brookside	0.70	•										•											3	
Bryant Community Center	0.23	•										•		•	•								5	
Buhr	42.25	•		2	4		•					•		•	•		•	•			•	•	3	SP
Burns	14.24	•	•	4	2		•					•	•	•	•							•	3	
Burr Oak	3.29	•										•											3	
Cedar Bend Nature Area	19.03									•						•						•	2	
Churchill Downs	1.18	•	•				•					•			•								3	
Clinton	4.82	•	•	2	•							•			•							•	3	
Cloverdale	1.72	•	•									•											3	
Cobblestone Farm	3.69													•								•	5	
Cranbrook	18.05	•	•	•							•	•				•							4	
Crary	1.30																						2	
Creal	1.71	•	•		•							•			•								5	
Depot	0.07																						2	
Devonshire	1.16										•					•							2	
Dhu Varren Woods Nature Area	13.58									•						•							1	
Dicken	0.42																						1	
Dicken Woods Nature Area	9.76									•						•							2	
Dolph Nature Area	56.70									•		•		p		•					•	•	2	
Douglas	1.07											•											3	
Earhart	2.22															•							1	
Earhart West	0.90											•				•							1	

SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

	Acree	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Disc Golf Course	BMX Course	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Barrier Free Accessibility	Other
<b>Park Inventory</b>																						
Eberbach Cultural Arts Bldg	1.20													•	•					•	4	
Eberwhite Nature Area	2.25								•												1	
Eisenhower	10.22															•					1	
Ellsworth	4.20	•	•									•	•		•						4	
Esch	4.49	•	•		•							•			•						3	
Evergreen	4.90	•								•						•					4	
Fairview Cemetery	8.65																				1	
Farmers Market	1.06													•	•					•	4	
Folkstone	3.17									•	•					•					1	
Forest Nature Area	18.99									•	BW					•				•	1	
Forsythe	0.31		•									•			•						4	
Foxfire East	3.14									•						•					1	
Foxfire North	10.64	•	•				•					•									3	
Foxfire South	19.13															•					1	
Foxfire West	7.67															•					1	
Frisinger	3.60	•			•							•									4	
Fritz	4.98	•								•		•				•					3	
Fuller	57.03	•					7					•		•	•	•	•			•	5	
Furstenberg Nature Area	37.64									•	BW	•		•	•	•				•	5	
Gallup	51.39	2								•	•	•	2	•	2	•			•	•	4	BL
Garden Homes	11.45	•									•	•				•					4	
George Washington (The Rock)	0.08																				4	
Glacier Highlands	1.66	•	•									•									4	
Glazier Hill	1.72														•						2	
Greenbrier	3.18	•								•	•	•			•	•					3	
Hannah Nature Area	1.14															•					1	
Hanover Square	0.28																				3	
Hansen Nature Area	9.55	•								•	•					•					2	
Hilltop Nature Area	7.75									•	•					•					1	
Hollywood	3.55															•					1	
Hunt	6.75	•	•	•	•							•	•	•	•						2	
Huron Highlands	1.59	•										•									4	
Huron Hills Golf Course	116.23													•	•					•	3	
Huron Parkway Nature Area	19.32									•						•					1	
Iroquois	0.19											•									1	
Island	5.63	•									•	•	3	•	•					•	3	
Kelly	0.55	•																			3	
Kempf House	0.13													•							4	
Kilburn	1.52	•										•									3	
Kuebler Langford Nature Area	29.97									•						•				•	1	
Lakewood Nature Area	7.20									•						•					1	
Lansdowne	2.48	•	•				•					•									4	
Las Vegas	1.75	•	•									•			•						3	
Lawton	5.27						•														3	
Leslie Park	38.96	2	2	3	2		•		•	•	•			p						•	3	

SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

<b>Park Inventory</b>	Acreage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Disc Golf Course	BMX Course	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Barrier Free Accessibility	Other		
Leslie Park Golf Course	149.65													•	•					•	3			
Leslie Science Center	14.69									•	•			•	•	•					•	2		
Leslie Woods Nature Area	23.17									•						•						1		
Liberty Plaza	0.26										•				•							3		
Longshore	2.27	•										•										2		
Mack Pool	0.31													•	•		•				•	3		
Malletts Creek Nature Area	3.20															•						1		
Manchester	1.17																					2		
Marshall Nature Area	84.49									•						•					•	1		
Mary Beth Doyle	80.86	•	•							•	•	•				•					•	3	•	
Maryfield Wildwood	4.74	•	•		•							•			•	•						3		
Meadowbrook	2.17	•	•									•										3		
Mill Creek	0.95																					1		
Miller Nature Area	22.53									•						•						1		
Mixtwood Pomona	0.34	•									•											3		
Molin Nature Area	7.11									•						•						1		
Museum On Main	0.15																				•	3		
Mushroom	1.54	•										•										3		
Narrow Gauge Nature Area	13.50									•						•						1		
Newport Creek Nature Area	0.99									•						•						1		
North Main	0.47	•										•										3		
Northside	5.21	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	•	•	•							3		
Oakridge Nature Area	7.90									•						•						1		
Oakwoods Nature Area	22.54									•						•						1		
Olson	53.76	•	•				•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	3	MB	
Pilgrim	1.35	•	•									•			•							3		
Pittsview	0.58																					2		
Placid Way	1.31	•									•	•									•	3		
Plymouth Parkway	6.02	•									•	•										3		
Postmans Rest	0.23											•										3		
Redbud Nature Area	5.11									•						•						1		
Redwood	0.54										•											4		
Riverside	9.48	•			•						•	•		p							•	4		
Riverwood Nature Area	4.82															•						1		
Rose	2.35	•									•	•										4		
Rose White	1.17	•										•			•							3		
Ruthven Nature Area	20.57									•						•						1		
Scarlett Mitchell Nature Area	49.11									•						•						2		
Scheffler	5.82	•	•		•							•		p	•						•	3	RH	
Sculpture Plaza	0.09											•										4		
South Maple	10.25	•		2	•							•			•							•	3	
South Pond Nature Area	15.75									•						•						1		
South University	0.44		•									•										2		
Southeast Area	28.02	2	•		2	2				•	•	•	•	•	•	•					•	4		
Stapp Nature Area	8.11									•						•						1		

SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

<b>Park Inventory</b>	Acreage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Disc Golf Course	BMX Course	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Barrier Free Accessibility	Other	
Stone School	4.62									•					•						1		
Sugarbush	30.12	2	•	2	•		•					•			•							4	
Sunset Brooks Nature Area	7.82									•					•							1	
Sylvan	12.00	•		•						•		•			•							3	
Terhune Pioneer Cemetery	0.90																					1	
The Ponds	2.26	•										•			•							2	
Traver Creek Nature Area	5.09									•					•							1	
Tuebingen	7.08														•							1	
Turnberry	8.25	•										•			•							3	
Veterans Memorial	36.77	•		3	4	•				•		•	•	•	•		•	•		•		4	
Virginia	4.97	•	•		•		•					•			•							3	
Ward	5.81	•	•							•		•										2	
Waterworks	1.48	•										•										3	
Waymarket	2.93	•										•										3	
Wellington	1.19	•									•	•										4	
West	23.13	•	•	2		•				•	•	•		•	•	•				•		5	BS
Wheeler	1.93	•	•								t	•		•	•							3	
White Oak	3.12	•								•		•			•							3	
Winchell	3.56	•			•		•					•										3	
Windemere	3.96	•		2	•		•				•	•										3	
Winewood Thaler	1.75	•	•									•			•	•						3	
Woodbury	2.11	•	•	2								•			•							3	
Wurster	5.91	•					•				•	•			•							3	
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>2088.37</b>																						

Other Items Key: SP - swimming pool, MB - mountain bike, BL - boat launch, P - portable restroom, BS - band shell, RH - roller hockey, BW - boardwalk

**Barrier Free Access Key:**

- 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using principles of universal design

## F. Ann Arbor Public Schools Inventory

The Ann Arbor Public Schools have 32 sites, including elementary, middle, and high schools. The school grounds contain open spaces used by the public, including ball fields, play areas, and nature areas with trails.

<b>Public School Facilities</b>	Acreeage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Parking	Artificial Turf Field	Other
<b>ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SITES</b>												
Abbot School	12.00	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		•
Allen School	10.50	•	•				•			•		•
Angell School	3.00	•	•				•			•	•	•
Ann Arbor Open School at Mack	7.00	•	•	•			•		•	•		•
Bach School	7.80	•			•	•				•		•
Bryant School	7.40	•	•				•			•		•
Burns Park School	4.00	•	•				•			•		•
Carpenter School	11.00	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•
Dicken School	10.00	•			•	•	•			•		•
Eberwhite School	42.20	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•
Haisley Elementary School	10.00	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•
Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School	9.96	•	•							•		•
Lakewood Elementary School	18.00	•			•	•		•				•
Lawton Elementary School	7.70	•	•				•			•		•
Logan Elementary School	9.75	•	•				•			•		•
Mitchell Elementary School	10.00	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•
Northside Elementary School	7.76	•	•		•	•	•			•		•
Pattengill Elementary School	11.33	•	•				•			•		•
Pittsfield Elementary School	4.00	•	•		•	•	•			•		•
Thurston Elementary School	24.75	•	•		•	•	•	•		•		•
Wines Elementary School	10.00	•	•		•	•	•			•		•
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL SITES</b>												
Clague Middle School	23.50	•			•	•	•	•		•		•
Forsythe Middle School	26.00	•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•
Scarlett Middle School	69.70			•	•	•	•	•		•		•
Slauson Middle School	12.00				•		•		•	•		•
Tappan Middle School	20.00			•	•	•	•			•		•
<b>HIGH SCHOOL SITES</b>												
Community High School	3.20	•								•		•
Huron High School	55.50		•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•
Pioneer High School (includes Greenview)*	177.00		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Skyline High School	110.00		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Stone High School	6.50	•					•			•		•
<b>OTHER FACILITIES</b>												
Pre-School & Family Center		•						•	•			

\*The City historically maintains walking trails and other portions of Greenview

## 1. Adjacent School and Public Park Properties

Both the City park system and the Public Schools system share several sites that are utilized by both the community and the students. Sites contain active recreation, such as softball fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, and natural areas.

### ***Adjacent Public School and Park Properties***

<b>Park Name</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Buhr	39	Allen Elementary	10.5
Burns	15	Burns Park Elementary	4
Dicken Woods Nature Area	10	Dicken Elementary	12.4
Earhart	2	King Elementary	10
Foxfire North	4	Future School	6
Hollywood	3.6	Abbot Elementary	12
Lakewood Nature Area	7	Lakewood Elementary	18
Lawton	5.3	Lawton Elementary	7.7
Mack Indoor Pool	N/A	Ann Arbor Open at Mack	7
Northside	5.5	Northside Elementary	2.2
Scarlett/Mitchell	25.2	Scarlet Middle/Mitchell Elementary	79.7
Stone School	5	Stone High School	6.5
Stoneybrook	3.1	Bryant Elementary	10.4
Waterworks	2	Slauson	12

**2. Recreation Inventory of School and City Program Offerings**

Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services and the Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Recreation Program jointly offer the following activities to City residents and to families and individuals residing within the Ann Arbor Public School District:

<b>Recreation Program Inventory</b>	Day Camps	Athletic Leagues for Adults	Cultural Arts Programs	Instructional Programs	Adapted Recreation Programs	Special Events	Athletic Activities for Youth	Exercise Classes	Senior Adult Programs	Swim Teams	Environmental Education	Historic Programs
<b>Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation</b>												
Ann Arbor Senior Center			•	•		•		•	•			
Argo Canoe Livery	•			•	•	•	•				•	
Bandemer Park			•			•	•					
Bryant Community Center	•			•		•		•				
Buhr Pool and Ice Rink	•	•		•		•	•	•		•		
Cobblestone Farm			•	•		•						•
Farmers Market				•		•						
Fuller Park Pool	•			•		•	•	•				
Gallup Canoe Livery	•			•	•	•					•	
Huron Hills Golf Course		•		•		•	•		•			
Kempf House			•			•						•
Leslie Golf Course		•		•		•			•			
Leslie Science and Nature Center	•			•		•	•				•	
Mack Indoor Pool				•	•	•				•		
Northside Community Center	•			•		•						
Veterans Pool and Ice Rink	•	•		•		•	•			•		
<b>Community Education &amp; Recreation</b>												
Eberbach Cultural Arts			•	•	•			•				
Public School Buildings	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	

### G. Other Agency Open Space Inventory

Other public and semi-public agencies provide a significant amount of public space used by the community as they are within close enough proximity that Ann Arbor residents consider them part of the open space/recreation landscape.

Four public agencies that provide recreation and open space opportunities in and around Ann Arbor include the University of Michigan, which owns significant acreage of open space within the City; the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, which oversees 13 parks, including natural areas, water parks, golf courses, and parks within the City limits; Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA), which provides large-scale, regional recreation facilities; and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment, which provides a system of state parks, forests, and recreation and game areas.

<b>Other Agency Parks and Open Space</b>	Acreage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Undeveloped	Other
<b>Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission</b>																				
Cavanaugh Lake Park	3.00	•							•	•	•							•		•
County Farm Park	127.00							•		•	•			•				•		•
Independence Lake	312.00							•			•			•	•					•
Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center	*														•					•
Park Lyndon	335.00	•						•		•	•			•						•
Park Northfield	12.00	•						•		•	•	•								•
Parker Mill County Park	26.00							•	•	•	•									•
Pierce Lake Golf Course and Park	232.00							•		•	•									•
Osborn Mill	39.00													•						•
Rolling Hill County Park	151.00							•	•		•									•
Sharon Mills	12.00									•	•									•
Staebler Farm	114.00	NOT OPEN TO THE PUBLIC																		
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>1,363.00</b>																			
<b>Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority</b>																				
Delhi Metropark	50.00	•				•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•
Dexter-Huron Metropark	125.00	•				•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•
Hudson Mills Metropark	1,624.00	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>1,799.00</b>																			
<b>Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)</b>																				
Pinckney Recreation Area	11,000.00	•						•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•	•	•
Waterloo Recreation Area	20,500.00	•						•	•	•	•	•	•	•				•		•
Chelsea Game Area	654.00							•												•
Gregory Game Area	3,400.00							•												•
Sharonville Game Area	3,015.00							•												•
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>38,569.00</b>																			

\* Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center is located within County Farm Park.

SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

**Other Agency Parks and Open Space**

	Acreage	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Undeveloped	Other
<b>University of Michigan Properties</b>																				
Baits Field	1.20																			
Baits Recreation Area	2.10		•	•																
Base Lake Farms	206.00																			
Diagonal Green	3.70								•											
Dow Field	36.00							•						•						
Elbel Field	7.00		•		•															•
Gordon Hall	70.00																			
Horner-McLaughlin	100.00													•						
Hubbard Woods	6.90													•						
Matthaei Botanical Gardens	377.00							•	•	•		•	•	•				•		•
Mitchell Field	36.00				•		•													
Mud Lake	258.00							•						•						
Murfin Playfield	2.80																			
Nichols Arboretum	58.50							•				•		•						
Palmer Field	9.20		•	•					•											
Portage Lake Observatory	147.00																			
Radrick Farms	380.00								•			•	•	•				•		•
Saginaw Forest	80.00							•						•						
Stinchfield Woods	664.00							•						•						•
University Golf Course	183.80																			•
<b>TOTAL ACREAGE</b>	<b>2,629.20</b>																			
<b>TOTAL OTHER AGENCY ACREAGE</b>	<b>44,360.20</b>																			

## H. Neighboring Townships and Cities

Communities adjacent to and within the proximity of Ann Arbor provide open space for their residents that are also used by the local community. Trail systems connect some of these park spaces to Ann Arbor, including the Border to Border trail, which aims to link park systems along the Huron River.

<b>Neighboring Townships and Cities</b>	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Undeveloped	Other
<b>Ann Arbor Township</b>																			
Braun Park																			•
<b>Pittsfield Township</b>																			
Lillie Park							•		•			•							•
Montibeller Park	•		•		•		•		•		•						•		•
P.G Palmer Park																		•	
Pittsfield Preserve	•						•		•	•			•						
Firehall Park/Township Hall																			•
Township Park & Community Center	•				•				•	•							•		•
<b>Scio Township</b>																			
NO FACILITIES																			
<b>Ypsilanti Township</b>																			
Appleridge	•	•			•				•										
North Hydro Park									•										•
Big Island Park													•						
Ford Lake Park	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•			•		•		•
North Bay Park	•						•		•	•	•								•
Bud and Blossom	•				•				•										
Burns	•		•		•				•										
CC Complex	•		•		•				•	•	•								•
Clubview	•		•		•		•												•
Fairway Hills																			
Ford Heritage																			
Harris Road	•				•				•	•	•								
Lakeside	•								•	•	•								•
Lakeview	•				•				•										
Loon Feather Park	•								•	•	•						•		•
Nancy	•				•				•										
Pines	•				•				•										•
Rambling Road	•	•			•				•										
South Hydro Park									•										•
Sugarbush	•	•			•				•										
Tot Lot	•								•										
Water Tower	•								•										
Southwest Park																		•	

SECTION IV: Inventory of the Park, Recreation and Open Space System

**Neighboring Townships  
and Cities (con't.)**

	Play Area	Basketball	Tennis	Softball	Baseball	Soccer	Trails	Paved Multi-use Path	Picnic Tables	Shelters	Restrooms	Drinking Fountain	Natural Area	Swimming Pool	Ice Rink	Canoe Rental	Parking	Undeveloped	Other
<b>City of Saline</b>																			
Brecon Park	•	•	•				•		•								•		
Curtiss Park	•		•		•		•		•	•			•						
Mill Pond Park	•					•	•		•	•			•				•		
Peoples Park		•	•						•				•				•		
Canterbury Park	•								•										
Marlpool Tot Lot	•	•																	
Colony Park	•								•				•						
Stonecliff Park																			•
Tefft Park	•	•	•	•					•				•	•			•		•
<b>City of Ypsilanti</b>																			
Candy Cane Park	•			•	•					•									
Carrie Mattingly Lot	•																		
Charles Street Tot Lot	•								•										
Edith Hefley Park	•								•										
Frog Island Park						•													•
Gilbert Park	•				•														
Parkridge Park/Community Center	•	•	•	•					•	•									•
Peninsular Park									•	•									•
Prospect Park	•	•	•	•	•				•	•									
Riverside Park	•								•	•									•
Waterworks Park				•					•	•									

**I. Private and Nonprofit Recreation Service Providers**

The Ann Arbor area has a wealth of private recreation, arts, and fitness providers. In some cases, they offer the community a more advanced level and more intensive or frequent opportunities to participate in recreational outlets, as well as offer facilities and programs that municipal agencies do not, such as bowling. In many cases the City and/or schools provide spaces for these groups. They also tend to be more expensive than the programs offered by Community Education and Recreation and Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation. The PROS Plan does not include an inventory of these private facilities.

## J. Grant Inventory

Below is a list of grants that have been received by the Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation system from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Clean Michigan Initiative Recreation Bond Fund, and the 1988 Recreation Bond Fund.

### GRANT INVENTORY: MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Project	Project Number	Application Year	Grant Amount	Project Description
Geddes Pond Development	26-00499	1973	\$150,000.00	Development of Gallup Park, including pathways, docks, park furniture
Gallup Park Pathway	26-00870	1977	\$25,191.18	Development of pathway along Huron River
Leslie Park Development	26-01023 A4	1977	\$39,247.08	Tennis courts, sidewalk, landscaping, picnic equipment, parking lot delineations
Riverside Park Redevelopment	26-01080	1978	\$22,609.79	Shoreline stabilization and restoration, play area, pathway, park furniture
Hunt Park Redevelopment	26-01060 G2	1978	\$12,501.87	Play area, picnic area, pathway, drinking fountain, benches, relocate ball diamond, picnic equipment
Green/Baxter Park Development	26-01107	1980	\$15,086.00	Walkway, landscaping, game court, playground, picnic area
Johnson-Greene Parkland	TF624	1982	\$250,000.00	Acquisition of 32 acres for first phase of Bandemer Park
Gallup Park Improvements	26-01257	1983	\$58,312.00	Construction of canoe livery, interpretive displays, docks, play area, landscaping, park furniture
Island Park Improvements	26-01385	1985	\$134,556.47	Play equipment, river stabilization, walkway, shelter renovations, barrier free modifications to restroom, pedestrian bridge, park furniture
Bandemer Park Development	BF89-411	1989	\$380,000.00	Development of Bandemer Park, including pathways, picnic shelter, docks, parking area, park furniture
Veterans Park Ice Arena	BF90-371	1990	\$700,000.00	Replace ice arena slab, upgrade sound system, renovate pool and filtration system, barrier free access improvements, locker room and fitness area renovations
Hawkins Property	TF88-132	1990	\$281,250.00	Addition of 8 acres to Bandemer Park
Black Pond Woods Acquisition	TF90-373	1990	\$875,000.00	Acquisition of 32.21 acres of natural area adjacent to Leslie Science Center
Sias Parcels A and B	TF91-274	1991	\$321,000.00	Acquisition of 13.5 acres for Dhu Varren Woods Natural Area
Gunn Property Acquisition	TF91-275	1991	\$517,600.00	Acquisition of 13.11 acres for Huron Parkway Nature Area
West Park Bandshell Renovations	26-01500	1991	\$93,276.00	Renovation of historic bandshell, included rebuilding arch, resurfacing stucco
Ganzhorn Sub. Lots	TF92-115	1992	\$87,300.00	Acquisition of 29.97 acres for Kuebler Langford Park
Evergreen Sub. Lots	TF92-116	1992	\$37,400.00	Acquisition of 3.14 acres of land for Evergreen neighborhood park

**GRANT INVENTORY (con't)**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Application Year</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
Furstenberg Park	TF92-117	1992	\$375,000.00	Development of Phase II of Furstenberg Park, including restroom building, boardwalk, interpretive signage, and landscaping
Southeast Area Park Improvements	26-01554	1994	\$266,476.00	Development of Southeast Area Park including game courts, playgrounds, ball fields, picnic shelter, pathways
Traverwood Woods Acquisition	TF94-226	1994	\$280,000.00	Acquisition of 8.1 acres of natural area
Renovate Neighborhood Parks	TF95-225	1995	\$70,000.00	Renovations to play areas and park amenities at Winewood Thaler, Bromley, Clinton and Wurster Parks
Main Street Property Acquisition	TF95-227	1995	\$726,000.00	Addition of 17.77 acres of natural area to Bluffs Park
Southeast Area Park Addition	TF96-130	1996	\$293,250.00	Addition of 25.69 acres to Southeast Area Park for active recreation
Leslie Environmental Center	TF96-132	1996	\$500,000.00	Construction of Nature House - state-of-the-art sustainable construction for programs and functions
Scarlett-Mitchell Addition	TF98-089	1998	\$675,500.00	Addition of 25.07 acres of natural areas to Scarlett-Mitchell Nature Area
Northeast Area Park (Olson Park) Development	CM00-142	2000	\$380,000.00	Development of Olson Park, including pathways, picnic shelter, play area, parking, fishing dock, soccer fields
Bluffs Park Addition	TF00-350	2000	\$550,000.00	Withdrawn
Dolph Park Addition	TF02-113	2002	\$688,000.00	Addition of 18.2 acres to provide access from south and for neighborhood adjacent to park

**GRANT INVENTORY: OTHER SOURCES**

Project	Application Year	Grant Amount	Project Description
Transportation Enhancement Program	1993	\$98,000.00	Construction of non-motorized path through Bandemer Park
Transportation Enhancement Program	1996	\$20,000.00	Water quality improvements under M-14 bridge at Bandemer Park
Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan	2001	\$25,375.00	Engineering and construction documentation for Argo Dam crossing and pathway
Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan	2003	\$31,000.00	Development of trail over Argo Dam and bicycle path to Lakeshore Drive
Detroit Edison Foundation	2003	\$4,500.00	Huron River Day Festival
Detroit Edison Foundation	2004	\$4,500.00	Huron River Day Festival
State of Michigan	2005	\$2,252.00	Volunteer river, stream and creek cleanup
Ann Arbor Community Foundation	2005	\$1,500.00	Provided Ann Arbor area nonprofit youth groups canoe instructional program
Detroit Edison Foundation	2005	\$4,500.00	Huron River Day Festival
Detroit Edison Foundation	2006	\$4,500.00	Huron River Day Festival
Michigan Section of Public Waterworks	2006	\$1,000.00	Design and implementation of river education curriculum form Ann Arbor Public Schools middle school students
Detroit Edison Foundation	2007	\$4,500.00	Huron River Day Festival
State of Michigan	2007	\$3,896.00	Volunteer river, Stream and creek cleanup
Downtown Development Authority	2007	\$30,000.00	Historic Kempf House foundation replaced
Helen McCulla Trust	2010	\$18,000.00	Equipment for Senior Center
Ann Arbor Community Foundation	2010	\$16,979.00	Funds for a consultant to develop a long-term strategic plan for the Senior Center

**GRANT INVENTORY: CUSTOMER SERVICE GRANTS**

<b>City of Ann Arbor Customer Service Grant Recipient</b>	<b>Application Year</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Project Description</b>
Ann Arbor Senior Center	2008	\$3,120.00	Piano
Farmers Market	2008	\$1,086.00	Signage
Mack and Fuller Pools	2008	\$405.00	Swim teaching tools and life jacket equipment
Cobblestone Farm	2009	\$210.00	Customer service event signage
Farmers Market	2009	\$425.00	Brochure
Fuller Park	2009	\$485.00	Day cam private eye book
Buhr Park	2010	\$400.00	Outdoor speakers for ice arena
Mack Pool	2010	\$415.00	Splash Day equipment
Cobblestone Farm	2010	\$630.00	Display board and podium
Ann Arbor Senior Center	2010	\$240.00	Wii Game
Volunteer Outreach	2010	\$2,000.00	Software registration and ball field maintenance equipment
Leslie Park Golf Course	2010	\$880.00	Speed play equipment
Veterans Memorial Park	2010	\$780.00	Skating aids
West Park	2010	\$880.00	Grand opening ceremony materials



## SECTION V: LAND USE PLANNING AND ACQUISITION

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### A. Philosophy and Guiding Principles

The City's park system has evolved over more than a century, with acquisition of park parcels gradually building a system known for its diversity, preservation of green space, and recreation opportunities. This chapter outlines the philosophy and guiding principles as well as the methods used to acquire land.

Acquisition is a term that describes the various methods of bringing parcels of land under public control, including outright purchase, lease, easement, swap, or other methods. Many factors are considered when evaluating potential acquisitions, such as economic and health benefits provided by green space, consideration of when the City has enough parkland, what types of land would complement existing parks, when the loss of tax base might outweigh the benefits, and how much funding should be allocated as part of the City budget.

National standards exist for the ideal amount of park acreage per resident, although there are wide variations in their application. The National Park and Recreation Association standard for park acreage is approximately 10 acres per 1,000 people. Ann Arbor's park system ratio is much higher, at over 18 acres per 1,000 people, as Ann Arbor residents recognize parks as an important priority for the community. If non-park open space is counted, such as the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Public Schools, and Washtenaw County, then the total rises to nearly 51 acres per 1,000 people. Having a neighborhood park within a  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile of every resident is a goal that is nearly achieved. This is considered a reasonable distance for pedestrian access, although there are a myriad of factors that influence that distance, including major streets that need to be crossed, other public open space, such as public schools with play areas, and amount of private green space available to residents.

In order to evaluate and prioritize how parkland is acquired, a series of criteria have been developed. These criteria are revisited according to the public input received during each PROS Plan update to reflect trends, current conditions, and park system needs.

## B. History of Parkland Acquisition

Between 1988 and 2010, Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation acquired just over 347 acres. The land was valued at \$18 million, with just over \$13 million coming from acquisition millages. The remaining \$5 million was generated through grants, donations, and other funding sources. The table below summarizes the parcels that were acquired during this period.

Use Group	Total Acres	% of Total Acres	Total Value	% of Total Value
Natural	254.59	73.21	\$15,019,291	81.27
Active	51.37	14.77	\$ 750,978	4.06
Neighborhood	13.08	3.77	\$ 1,329,224	7.19
Museum	0.15	<.01	\$ 75,622	.40
Linkage/Access	28.58	8.23	\$ 1,308,769	7.08
<b>Total</b>	<b>347.77</b>		<b>\$18,483,884</b>	

The chart below is a summary of land acquired since 1988.

Completed Land Acquisition Millage Purchases

Acquired Property	Acres	Total Costs	Planning Area	Use	Amount From Millage	FY
Krause (Dolph Addition)	0.98	\$24,105	West	Access	\$24,105	88-89
Kimberly-Colony (Molin Nature Area)	7.2	\$85,113	South	Natural Area	\$45,000	88-89
Bird Hills Addition	31.25	\$622,000	West	Natural Area	\$622,000	89-90
Redwood Park	0.54	\$32,734	Southeast	Neighborhood	\$32,734	89-90
Bird Hills Addition	4.3	\$86,839	West	Natural Area	\$86,839	89-90
North Main @ Beakes (WCHS)	0.15	\$75,622	Central	Museum	\$0	90-91
Katz (Southeast Area Park)	25.69	\$313,600	Southeast	Active	\$156,800	91-92
Black Pond Woods	26.76	\$1,211,127	Northeast	Natural Area	\$336,127	91-92
Worden (Stone School Park)	5.06	\$148,528	South	Neighborhood	\$148,528	91-92
Westover Lots (Dolph Addition)	0.55	\$32,104	West	Linkage	\$32,104	91-92
Belize Addition	0.37	\$71,000	Central	Neighborhood	\$33,401	91-92
Sias A&B (DhuVarren Woods/Traver Creek)	20.03	\$646,200	Northeast	Natural Area	\$354,514	92-93
Gunn (Huron Parkway Nature Area)	18.68	\$941,000	Northeast	Natural Area	\$464,005	93-94
Hawkins (Bandemer Addition)	8	\$675,000	River	River Access	\$393,725	93-94
Bader	1.7	\$174,570	Northeast	Neighborhood	\$174,570	94-95
WCRC Pit (Northeast Area Park)	24	\$150,000	Northeast	Active	\$150,000	95-96
Verle (Mary Beth Doyle Park)	10	\$216,000	South	Natural/Access	\$216,000	95-96
S. Main (Cranbrook Addition)	1.14	\$20,000	South	Natural/Neighbor.	\$20,000	95-96
Evergreens Lots (10 Lots)	1.65	\$80,254	West	Neighborhood	\$53,540	95-96
Beechwood Lots (Kuebler-Langford)	0.89	\$70,636	West	Linkage	\$36,304	96-97
St Thomas (Bluffs)	20.01	\$1,100,000	West	Natural/Neighbor.	\$363,000	96-97
Sotheast Area Park Additions *	1.68	\$287,378	Southeast	Active	\$81,103	98-99

Continued next page

SECTION V: Land Use Planning and Acquisition

Acquired Property	Acres	Total Costs	Planning Area	Use	Amount From Millage	FY
Hearthstone III addition to Ponds Park	0.2	\$124,839	South	Neighborhood	\$124,839	98-99
Audubon Woods (Redbud Nature Area)	4.98	\$346,722	South	Natural	\$346,722	00-01
Scarlett-Mitchell Addition	25.07	\$1,111,253	Southeast	Natural	\$486,253	00-01
Bluffs Park Addition	17.77	\$1,507,037	West	Natural/Linkage	\$1,507,037	00-01
Huron Parkway Right-of-Way	13.11	\$26,924	Northeast	Linkage	\$26,924	01-02
Sunset Brooks	7.6	\$410,000	West	Natural/Linkage	\$410,000	03-04
Stapp (Traverwod)	8.1	\$550,000	Northeast	Natural/Linkage	\$550,000	03-04
Dicken Woods Nature Area	10	\$550,000	West	Natural	\$550,000	03-04
Dolph Addition	18.2	\$1,274,000	West	Natural/Linkage	\$586,040	04-05
Brookside (4 lots)	0.96	\$151,084	South	Neighborhood	\$151,084	05-06
Evergreens Lot 108	0.2	\$39,300	West	Neighborhood	\$39,300	04-05
Evergreen Lot 118	0.2	\$57,247	West	Neighborhood	\$57,247	04-05
Evergreen Lot 120	0.2	\$49,668	West	Neighborhood	\$49,668	04-05
Onder	4.75	\$480,000	Northeast	Linkage	\$480,000	06-07
Andres (Evergreen Addition)	0.5	\$150,000	West	Neighborhood	\$150,000	06-07
Girl Scouts (Hilltop Nature Area)	7.75	\$2,200,000	West	Natural Area	\$2,200,000	06-07
Zion Lutheran (Eberwhite Nature Area)	2.25	\$580,000	West	Natural Area	\$580,000	07-08
Narrow Gauge Way (Narrow Gauge Nature Area)	13.5	\$1,800,000	Northeast	Natural Area	\$1,800,000	07-08
Crary (Crary Park)	1.3	donation	Northeast	Neighborhood	\$0	07-08
Botsford (Conservation Easement)	10	\$312,000	West / Scio	Natural Area	\$156,000	08-09
219 Chapin (West Park Addition)	0.2	\$250,000	West	Neighborhood	\$250,000	09-10
Linkner (Scheffler Park Addition)	0.3	\$0		Natural/Linkage	\$0	09-10
<b>Total</b>	<b>357.8</b>	<b>\$19,033,884</b>			<b>\$14,325,513</b>	

**C. Proposing Land for Acquisition**

Potential parkland acquisitions are identified in various ways, with a process that has been developed through staff and public input. In each scenario, land owners submit applications, after which a team of staff reviews the merits of the parcel. PAC is then provided the property information and the staff summary review and recommendations. If the land is seen as meeting the criteria developed to evaluate land for public benefit, PAC may recommend the purchase to City Council. Three ways in which land may be brought before PAC include the following:

1. Staff periodically researches land parcels to identify sites that meet particular objectives, such as floristic quality, connectivity, or balancing needs within the system. Staff may contact landowners to provide information to them regarding the City’s program if they are interested in selling their land. This is a strictly voluntary process.
2. Property owners may nominate their land to be considered for purchase.
3. Occasionally, through the City development review process, land is identified as potential parkland. Land then may be acquired through developer contribution, purchase, or a combination of several methods.

Land transfers may be at no cost or may be for considerations other than cash.

All land acquisition must have both an independent real estate appraisal report to establish fair market value and an environmental assessment before land can be purchased per City Council resolution. The City often applies for grant funding to offset the purchase price, in which case there generally additional review requirements. All purchases and acquisition of land rights require City Council approval.

#### **D. Acquisition Criteria for Parkland Property within the City Limits**

The following criteria are considered for all potential acquisitions. They are not weighted or listed in any order of priority.

##### **1. City-wide System Balance/Geographic Distribution as well as Open Space Convenient to Each Neighborhood**

Acquisition of sites for facilities to serve area-wide current or future demand for activities like basketball, ice and in-line skating, soccer, swimming, softball, and tennis must be considered as well as providing parks convenient to each neighborhood. The current standard is provision of neighborhood parks within ¼ mile of each residence. Opportunities in areas considered to be deficient (in terms of parkland) are considered as the City attempts to meet access and availability standards.

##### **2. Natural Resource Protection**

Decisions such as whether to preserve undeveloped or "natural" parkland and how to manage it by assessing its environmental integrity and potential to support a well-functioning ecosystem are considered. Natural Area Preservation staff evaluates how each natural area compares with others in terms of ecological significance, including such measures as biological diversity, presence of rare or unusual species, presence of invasive exotic species, and other factors.

##### **3. Open Space and Green Space Imagery/Aesthetics**

Acquisition evaluations include a consideration of vistas of trees, the river, and parks to provide visual relief from urban infrastructure.

##### **4. Enhance Access and Linkage**

Land that facilitates non-motorized transportation from urban areas and neighborhoods to other parks, connectivity along the Huron River and creeks, including wildlife corridors, and land that links other community destinations is considered. Parcels that would improve access or that contain unique natural or historic features adjacent to an existing park are a consideration.

**5. Protection of the Huron River, Watersheds, and Water Quality**

Protecting watersheds by incorporating fragile or important watershed features into the park system helps protect the overall health of the Huron River watershed and can help ameliorate flooding potential. Acquisitions along the Huron River and its tributaries that protect or enable better public use of this asset are a high priority.

**6. Recreation Value and Suitability for Intended Use**

When a specific need is identified to enhance recreation opportunities or provide better balance of park or recreation facilities, sites well-suited to satisfy that need are considered. A flat, well-drained field is a good example of site suitability for athletic fields, and having land that is buildable is crucial for certain types of amenities.

**7. Method of Acquisition/Direct Costs**

This criterion provides the opportunity to rate a site's value relative to how it will be acquired. Acquisition opportunities with grants, donations from neighborhood associations, gifts, and bargain purchases would rate higher than market rate purchases. Dedications, easements, and leases may also be preferable to outright purchase. Certain parcels of land may require a faster decision-making process because there is a high potential for development or purchase by another agency for non-public use that would lead to a loss of desirable land.

**8. Provides for Future Needs/Anticipates Growth**

As the City is growing, future needs for residents must be anticipated and accommodated. A site that addresses future City growth and recognizes other agency plans and impacts would rate highest in this category.

**9. Long-Term Development and Maintenance Costs**

Excessive development and maintenance costs that a potential acquisition site requires would be a factor in the perceived value of the acquisition. Sites requiring minimal anticipated development and/or maintenance costs would rate higher in this category.

**E. Property Acquisition Options for Parkland and Greenbelt Properties**

There are many tools available to secure land for public park and open space use. The following are the most common. Any single acquisition may involve more than one of these methods.

**1. Outright Acquisition of Parcels**

In many cases, the City may opt to purchase property outright and maintain full ownership and rights of a piece of land. Bluffs Park is an example of an outright acquisition (this criterion is for parkland acquired in the City only).

**2. Bargain or Charitable Sale (Less Than Fair Market Sale)**

A landowner may choose to sell to the City at a price less than the full market value of the property. Marshall Park is an example of land that was sold to the City for park use at less than market value.

**3. Outright Donation (Fee Simple Transfer)**

Outright donation involves the provision of public land at no cost to the City. The donor may receive tax benefits in the form of federal income tax deductions, potential estate tax benefits, and relief from property taxes. Many neighborhood parks in Ann Arbor were donated as a part of the development review and approval process. Crary Park and parts of Scheffler Park are examples of park donations by individuals.

**4. Donation by Will (Bequest)**

A gift of land made through a will entitles the donor to retain full use of the land during his or her lifetime. The donor is responsible for real estate and income taxes for the property during his or her lifetime. The Leslie Science Center site was bequeathed to the City in the Leslies' will.

**5. Installment Sale**

An installment sale allows an agency or organization to purchase property over a period of years. The use of the land and the responsibility for payment of property taxes until the sale is complete are negotiable terms of the agreement. The seller benefits financially by spreading the income and the taxable gains over several years.

**6. Purchase of Development Rights/Conservation Easement**

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) is primarily used to protect farmland and allows owners of farmland or open space to retain their land for agricultural or open space purposes while receiving payment equal to the difference between that land's value if sold for development and if sold for agriculture. This technique has frequently been used in Michigan and is a major tool in the preservation of agricultural land and open space around Ann Arbor.

Protecting land through easements or deed restrictions may not necessarily include public access or other public uses. The landowner retains title to the property, but retains certain development rights in the property. Easements typically restrict dumping, mining, paving, and development of residential houses, while allowing traditional agriculture or open space uses of the property. The restricted land can be sold, gifted, or bequeathed to the next generation of landowners, but the restriction remains with the land to the new owner. An example of this type of purchase is the Botsford Property, located just outside the City limits, which was acquired in partnership with Scio Township.

**7. Life Estate**

A life estate is where a property is purchased but the seller retains the right to occupy the property (usually a residence) as long as he or she is living and able to occupy the property. The drawbacks include the limited use of the property and the unknown duration of the life estate. Responsibility for maintenance, insurance, taxes, and utilities are negotiated as a part of the agreement. A life estate agreement was a part of the purchase of the Leslie Science Center site and portions of the Farmers Market site.

**8. Scenic Easement**

A scenic easement is the acquisition by purchase, dedication, or other means of the right to an unhindered view at a particular location or over a certain area of land. This may include purchasing development rights restricting advertising signs or other obstacles at strategic locations to protect views. Scenic easements can be considered for floodplains along major rivers where the combination with flood protection reinforces their benefit to the public. Scenic easements may also be used to preserve aesthetic values of wetlands, promote recreation, preserve natural areas, and protect water quality. The Michigan Natural Rivers and Scenic Roads designations are examples where views are protected in a form of scenic easement.

**F. Alternative Methods of Acquiring Property**

**1. Transfers of Property from Other Public Agencies**

On occasion, public agencies will declare land they control to be excess and can offer it to another agency at a bargain price if it remains in public use. In other cases the agency may decide to sell their property on the open market.

**2. Exchanges of Property with Other Agencies or Individuals**

The City has use agreements with other agencies to utilize underused or excess land. Examples include Mary Beth Doyle and Olson Parks, leased from the Water Resources Commission, and Forest Park, leased by the City to the Washtenaw County Park and Recreation Commission.

**3. Multiple, Alternating, or Sequential Uses of City and/or Other Public Properties**

Examples are playgrounds on subsurface water storage sites or on County Drain Commission lands, game courts on school parking lots, street closings and relocations (as in Wheeler Park and in Sugarbush Park at Lexington), and unbuilt street right-of-way (as in Placid Way Park or Tuebingen Park).

#### **4. Tax Foreclosures**

Property where the owner has defaulted on taxes may become available; however, in the Ann Arbor market, tax sale parcels that would make desirable parks are rare.

#### **G. Parcels Donated through Dedication for Parkland within the City**

The City of Ann Arbor provides park and recreation resources to enhance the quality of life and its environment for its residents. In order to achieve this mission, numerous financial and administrative "tools" are employed. One of these tools is the identification of guidelines for parkland dedication designed to help provide new neighborhoods with sufficient recreation space close to home. Dedication does not necessarily meet all neighborhood parkland needs; however, the parkland guidelines aid in providing park spaces in an equitable manner by all developers of residential property.

During the City's review of residential development plans - a final plat of a subdivision, a planned unit development, or a site condominium - each developer is asked to dedicate land for parks and recreation purposes to serve the immediate and future needs of the residents of the development in question. These donations are not mandatory in the absence of state enabling legislation but rather are a discretionary contribution by the petitioners.

The 1981 PROS Plan established a rationale for dedication of land in new residential developments based on the ratio of households in the City to acres of neighborhood-scale parkland. The ratio then was 4.9 acres of neighborhood parkland for every 408 households or 1,000 new residents or .012 acres of neighborhood park per household. This amount of new parkland was felt to be the minimum amount to maintain the existing level of service for neighborhood parks. With each subsequent update of the PROS Plan, the formula for neighborhood parkland was adjusted to reflect changes in demographic and land acquisition patterns. The current formula was updated based on 2000 Census data and an average of current land values.

In December 1985, City Council adopted an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance that allowed developers to donate land for parks and still receive the dwelling unit density that would be allowed before the dedication in terms of gross lot area. This amendment effectively reduced the cost of parkland dedication to developers. Large-acreage developments could accommodate an on-site park and still achieve a density of dwelling units as though the park did not exist. The parkland is counted as part of the open space required by the Zoning Ordinance. The amendment has made negotiating for parkland much easier as a part of larger developments. Smaller developments of under 15 acres have less flexibility in site layout and often have difficulty providing an adequate park site while still building the maximum permitted number of dwelling units. There have been some instances where the dedication of land or cash in lieu of land has been inadequate, but generally the new developments are provided parkland through this process.

## 1. Formula for Land Dedication through Development

The process used to devise the goal for neighborhood park acreage was to inventory the neighborhood parkland that exists in Ann Arbor and project that ratio forward to new development. The rationale is that future residents should be as well served in their neighborhoods as current residents, and current residents should not bear the full cost of providing neighborhood parks for future residents.

The current formula is composed of the following variables:

- 18.3 acres of parkland exist per 1,000 residents (based upon 2,088.37 total park acres divided by a population of 114,024 from the 2000 US Census)
- 639 acres is considered neighborhood parkland
- Divide 639 acres by 114,024 residents to equal 5.60 acres per 1,000 residents.
- Based on a household size of 2.2 people per dwelling unit, 450 households generate 1,000 residents
- Total neighborhood park acreage per 1,000 population, or 450 households, is 5.60
- The current total acreage of neighborhood parkland per dwelling unit is .0124 (5.60 acres divided by 450 dwelling units)

Therefore, to maintain the existing amount of neighborhood parkland, .0124 acres of neighborhood park/dwelling unit is needed to keep pace with the existing amount of land available.

An example of how this calculation is applied based on a hypothetical development of 120 new dwelling units would look like this:

$$\mathbf{120\ dwelling\ units\ x\ .0124\ acres\ =\ 1.49\ acres}$$

*of neighborhood parkland needed to maintain ratio*

The parkland calculation for group quarters such as fraternities, sororities, cooperatives, and senior citizen housing is calculated similarly: The total number of new beds will be divided by the 2.2 persons per household to figure an equivalent number of dwelling units. Day care centers and private schools may be asked to contribute cash in lieu of land if on-site facilities and open space are not sufficient for the recreational needs of the students. Because each of these proposals is unique, they need to be evaluated case-by-case with on-site facilities and special needs of the residents considered.

Proposed park dedication sites are conveyed to the City either by warranty or trustee's deed. The subdivider or developer is responsible for conveying good merchantable title to such sites, along with a complete legal description for the recording of said deed with the Washtenaw County Register of Deeds. The subdivider or developer is responsible for payment of all real estate taxes to the date of conveyance including any agricultural roll back taxes that might be extended or levied against such sites for any tax years or periods prior to the time of conveyance. The developer is also responsible for furnishing title insurance.

## 2. Contributions in Lieu of Land - Justification for Land Cost

Land costs vary considerably. Whether they are located in the central business district or outlying neighborhoods, the suitability of the land for development, the proximity to utilities, and the quality of natural features play a role in the cost of land. In order to derive a fair land value for the purposes of cash contributions, the land costs from appraisals performed on land both in and outside of the City were averaged so that center city land cost would not unfairly raise the cost for all developers. The average over the past five years has been approximately \$12,000 per acre for greenbelt purchases, and for in-City parkland has been \$200,000 per acre. If combined, the average cost for parkland purchase is \$50,000. This number is used to calculate contributions in lieu of land. The formula then would be as follows using the example above:

$$\begin{aligned} & 120 \text{ dwelling units} \times .0124 \text{ acres} = 1.49 \text{ acres} \\ & \text{of neighborhood parkland needed to maintain ratio} \\ & 1.49 \text{ acres} \times \$50,000/\text{acre} = \$74,500 \end{aligned}$$

## 3. Criteria for Requesting Dedication and a Cash Contribution

There will be situations in site plan subdivisions or planned unit developments (PUDs) when a combination of land dedication and a cash contribution in lieu of land are both desirable.

These occasions will arise when:

- a. Only a portion of the land desired as parkland is proposed by the developer for a park. The balance can be made up through a cash contribution equal to the value of the additional amount of land that would have otherwise been dedicated.
- b. A major part of the local park or recreation site has already been acquired and only a small portion of land is needed from the development to complete the site. The remaining portions should be requested by dedication, and a cash contribution in lieu of the developer's remaining contribution should be requested.

The amount of land and cash contribution would be derived by applying the formula above to the amount of land that is available for donation, with the balance being paid through a cash contribution.

## 4. Development Contributions within the Urban Core

Parks and open spaces in downtown Ann Arbor are difficult to acquire because of high land cost and fewer available open spaces. Additionally, providing large open space areas in the downtown is not necessarily appropriate given that density is a goal of downtown planning efforts, as outlined in the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan, 2009 Downtown Plan.

Traditionally, downtown parks have taken the shape of smaller plazas that serve employees and visitors and provide outdoor eating and resting spots. Streetscapes also serve as downtown passive recreational spaces, where both private and public entities provide sitting

areas in the form of street furniture, planters, and café tables. For these reasons, the central area park acreage is lower than the rest of the planning areas of the City, and the formula for population/park acre should be adjusted to reflect the differences in planning goals.

Several larger parks are located in or within walking distance to the downtown core, including Wheeler and West Parks, which provides a neighborhood park within a ¼ mile radius – one of the goals of the park planning for the City. The University of Michigan Diag is approximately 9 acres and is open to the public. This space is also located in the downtown core and provides opportunities for unstructured games and passive recreation.

Development contributions have traditionally funded improvements to downtown parks such as Liberty Plaza and Sculpture Plaza. However, there are few existing parks to which contributions may be directed. Consequently, streetscape and plaza projects that will benefit both new and existing residents are being considered as an alternative way to provide passive recreational amenities for downtown residents and visitors.

The Downtown Development Authority has opted to participate in the development and execution of several park projects, including renovations to Liberty and Sculpture Plaza and the Farmers Market. They also participate in non-parkland developments, such as the Forest Street Plaza in the South University area, which would provide open space amenities for residents in the immediate vicinity. With more residential projects coming on line in the downtown, the ability to negotiate with developers for both park and non-park amenities will aid in determining what improvements would provide the greatest benefit to downtown residents.

##### **5. Credit for Private Open Space and Recreation Areas**

When subdivisions or developers provide their own open space for recreation areas and facilities, it has the effect of reducing the demand for local public recreational services. Depending on the size of the development, a portion of the park and recreation area in subdivisions or planned unit developments may, at the option of the City Council, be provided in the form of "private" open space in lieu of dedicated "public" open space. The extent of the private recreation space to be credited should be based upon the needs of the projected residents and in conformance to the total park and recreation land for all citizens in the general area. Open space which may be required due to zoning setback and building separation regulations may not be "counted" as fulfilling parkland needs, but parkland dedicated to the City may be included in the required open space for a development.

In general, a substitution of private open space for dedicated parks will imply a substantially higher degree of improvement and the installation of recreational facilities, including equipment, by the developer as part of the contribution. Detailed plans of such areas, including specifications of facilities to be installed, must be approved by the City, and before credit is given for private recreation areas, the subdivider or developer must guarantee that these private recreation areas will be permanently maintained for such use by the execution of the appropriate legal documents.

## 6. Dedicated Park Site Preparation

The City may ask that the parkland site be rough graded per plans prepared by Parks and Recreation. The City reserves the right to deny parkland gifts which are not satisfactory for development of active recreational facilities, based upon needs or facility deficiencies identified in the PROS Plan.

Where appropriate, sites are requested to be dedicated in a condition ready for full service of electrical, water, sewer, and streets (including enclosed drainage and curb and gutter) as applicable to the location of the site and its proposed use.

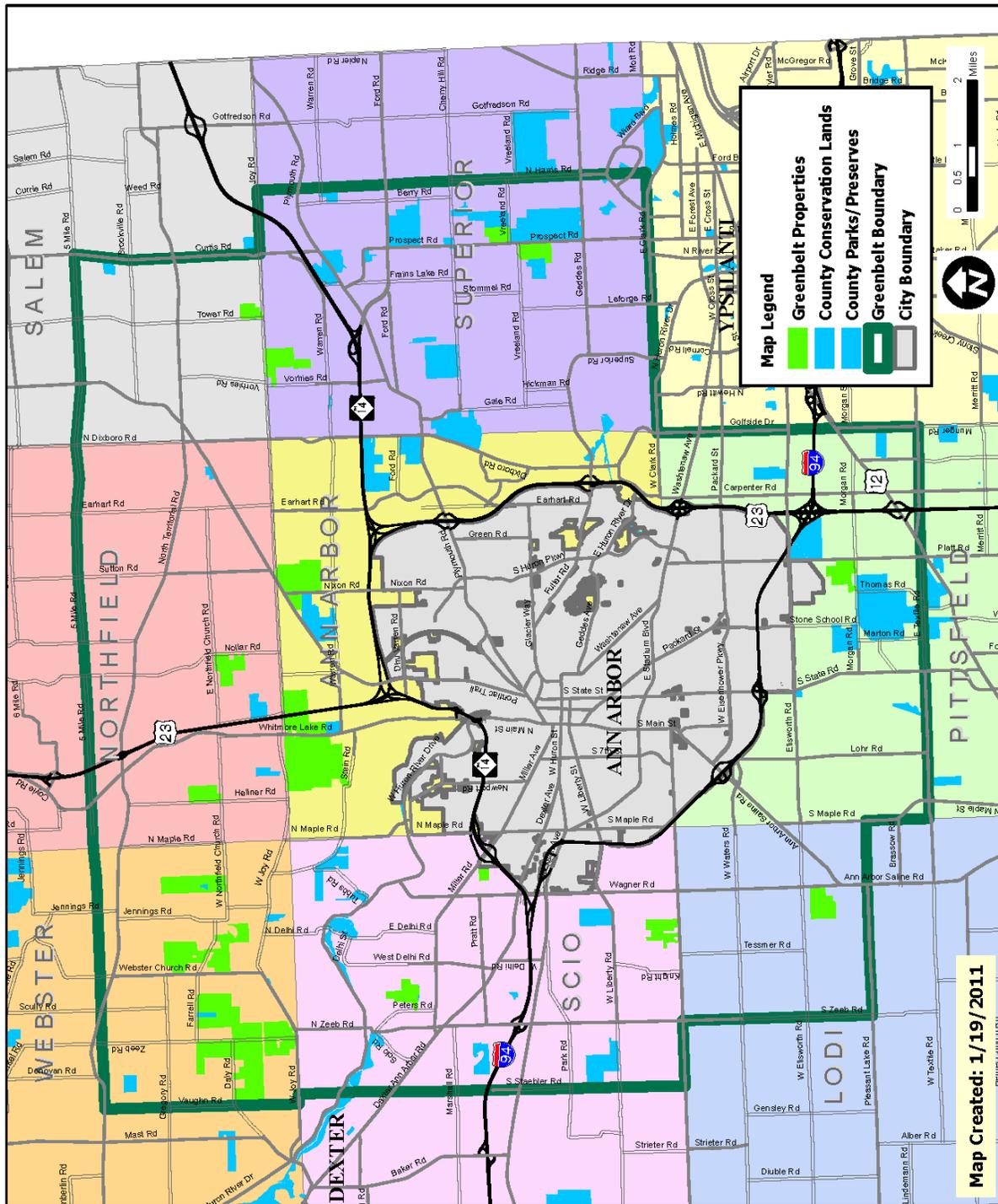
Design considerations for dedicated neighborhood parkland shall follow the criteria developed to assess any acquisition. Generally, the idea behind requesting the dedication of land is to provide neighborhood park opportunities for residents of the new development so that they are served to a comparable level as existing neighborhoods.



## H. Land Acquisition Outside Ann Arbor City Limits: The Ann Arbor Greenbelt

In November 2003, residents of Ann Arbor approved a ballot proposal commonly known as the Parks and Greenbelt Millage. The purpose of this millage is to provide funds to preserve and protect open space, farmland, natural habitats, and the City’s source waters inside and outside the City limits. In May 2004, the Ann Arbor City Council adopted Chapter 42, “Open Space and Parkland Preservation,” of the Ann Arbor City Code, providing a framework for the purchase of conservation easements and fee simple properties within the Greenbelt District (see following map).

SECTION V: Land Use Planning and Acquisition



## 1. Acquisition Criteria for Greenbelt Properties

The Greenbelt Advisory Commission developed scoring criteria to rank the applications received. The scoring criterion focuses the selection of applications based on the following parameters:

- **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LAND:** type of agricultural land or mature forests, parcel size, road frontage, wetlands and/or floodplain, groundwater recharge and natural features.
- **CONTEXT:** proximity to City limits and other protected land, adjacent zoning and land use, scenic and/or historical value, proximity to Huron River or tributary.
- **ACQUISITION CONSIDERATIONS:** matching funds, landowner contribution, recreation potential.

The Greenbelt's priorities for land preservation are broken down into three major priority areas which are discussed in more detail below: 1) creating large blocks (1,000 acres or greater) of protected farmland, 2) protection of Huron River Watershed, and 3) leveraging City dollars through grants and partnerships.

**FARMLAND PRESERVATION:** Agricultural land traditionally has been the most threatened land by development within the Greenbelt District. This has been due not only to the sale of individual parcels for development, but also by a need for large blocks of land to sustain agricultural production. Although there is currently little development pressure in the area, due to the real estate market and overall economic conditions, the Greenbelt Program continues to focus on forming 1,000-acre blocks (or larger) of protected farmland in order to make agriculture viable for future producers in the Ann Arbor area. In addition, recognizing that the Greenbelt's mission and direction is solely the protection of land, the Greenbelt has identified the protection of farms that are producing foods for local markets as a priority.

**HURON RIVER WATERSHED:** The protection of the Huron River is another top priority for the Greenbelt Program. The Huron River is an important recreational and natural resource in the Ann Arbor area. Over the last decade, the City has focused on protection of the land along the Huron River within the City limits. The Huron River is also part of a larger effort with Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation to establish a Border-to-Border Trail through the county.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** The Greenbelt Advisory Commission acknowledges that Washtenaw County programs and some townships within the Greenbelt that have passed millages or dedicated funds to land preservation will play a critical role in maximizing the Greenbelt impact on the land preservation. The Greenbelt Advisory Commission recognizes that these partnerships are also key to providing management for lands outside the City limits and to continuing the goal of developing a regional park, open space, and farmland system throughout Washtenaw County.

The City of Ann Arbor's Greenbelt program is a charter member of "Preserve Washtenaw," a consortium of Washtenaw County programs focused on land preservation. Preserve Washtenaw includes all private (land conservancies) and public agencies actively protecting land in the county, through purchase (or donation) of conservation easements, or through the outright purchase of land. Active participation in Preserve Washtenaw meetings will be a key vehicle for identification of partnership opportunities to implement the objectives of the Greenbelt.

## **I. Charter Amendment Concerning Sale of City Parkland**

The sale of parkland continues to be an important topic for the community. In August of 2008, City Council passed a resolution placing an amendment of the City Charter on the November election ballot. The ballot language asked, "shall section 14.3(b) of the Ann Arbor City Charter be amended to require voter approval for the sale of any land within the City purchased, acquired or used for park land, while retaining the Section's current requirement for voter approval of the sale of any park land in the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan at the time of the proposed sale?" The City Charter amendment passed in November 2008 and section 14.3(b) now reads, "The City shall not sell without the approval, by a majority vote of the electors of the City voting on the question at a regular or special election, any City park, or land in the City acquired for park, cemetery, or any part thereof."

This charter amendment provides significant protection for parkland. Not only would parkland require a majority vote in order to be sold, but a public process would need to take place prior to any parkland being placed on an election ballot, including a Park Advisory Commission public hearing and recommendation, a Planning Commission public hearing and action, and a City Council public hearing and majority vote.

The community has also had conversations regarding the zoning of parkland and has questioned if parks should have a unique zoning designation. The current zoning of 'PL' (public land) allows for multiple public uses not necessarily associated with parks, such as transportation and airports. The question of zoning is primarily in response to community concerns over the appropriate use of parkland.



## SECTION VI: PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE PROS PLAN

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The planning process for the PROS Plan incorporated various methods to assist the community in assessing the park, recreation, and open space system. The process relied on both 1) a systems approach, and 2) the use of comparison standards to analyze inventories, assets, needs, and deficiencies. The systems approach is defined in the 1995 publication entitled *Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines*, by James D. Mertes and James R. Hall, which described the systems approach to planning as “... the process of assessing the park, recreation, and open space needs of a community and translating that information into a framework for meeting the physical, spatial and facility requirements to satisfy those needs.” The systems approach to planning incorporates information received from the public, including public meetings, comments, and surveys, in addition to recreation and open space inventories to determine recreational needs of the community. Recreational standards compare the existing park and recreational facilities to recreational standards. This is often done in conjunction with an analysis of existing facilities, neighborhood structure, recreation interests, and population demographics (e.g., age and income distribution) to determine community needs and deficiencies.

There are no set standards to determine the amount of open space needed for every community. Rather, information exists to determine the value of conserving and preserving biodiversity, such as the variety of plant and animal life that make up an environment. Such biodiversity often contributes to perceived quality of life. In addition to ecological biodiversity, the physical and functional features of open space (e.g., landforms, water, farmland, gardens) also can increase quality of life factors and provide elements of environmental sustainability.

## **A. The PROS Plan Steering Committee**

A steering committee was created to draft the citizen survey, review goals and objectives, and develop an action plan. Members included a representative from the Recreation Advisory Committee, the City Planning Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, City Council, and two representatives from the Park Advisory Commission, in addition to staff from Planning and Development Services, Park Operations, Natural Area Preservation, Parks Administration, and Rec & Ed. The steering committee met monthly to determine the course of the PROS Plan planning effort from January through September 2010.

## **B. Public Notification and Involvement**

Public input is essential to help determine priorities for park and recreation programs, services, capital improvements, infrastructure improvements, and land acquisitions. The public was notified of the PROS Plan planning process in a number of ways, including approximately 60 press releases to local media outlets; postings on Parks and Recreation Facebook page and Twitter; email notifications through e-Gov Delivery (a voluntary email subscription for citizens, which sends notifications about City events and news); postcards, flyers and posters at all recreation facilities and other City facilities; a special website set up for the PROS Plan; and notifications on the Parks and Recreation website.

### PROS PLAN MEDIA SITES:

- Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation’s Facebook ([www.a2gov.org/annarborparks](http://www.a2gov.org/annarborparks)), Twitter ([www.twitter.com/a2parks](http://www.twitter.com/a2parks)) and GoogleBuzz (<http://google.com/profiles/annarborparks>) accounts.
- City of Ann Arbor’s Facebook ([www.facebook.com/cityofannarbor](http://www.facebook.com/cityofannarbor)) and Twitter ([www.twitter.com/cityofannarbor](http://www.twitter.com/cityofannarbor)) accounts.
- City of Ann Arbor’s email subscription service ([www.GovDelivery.com](http://www.GovDelivery.com)) to send out general bulletins to thousands of people who voluntarily sign up to receive information about City and, more specific, parks and recreation news.
- An online survey tool, Survey Monkey ([www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com)), for people to share their opinion of the parks and provide suggestions.
- Local newspaper’s website to post community news updates ([www.annarbor.com](http://www.annarbor.com)).
- City of Ann Arbor’s website ([www.a2gov.org](http://www.a2gov.org)).
- Created a web page on the Parks & Recreation homepage ([www.a2gov.org/parks](http://www.a2gov.org/parks)) specifically related to the PROS Plan ([www.a2gov.org/prosplan](http://www.a2gov.org/prosplan)).
- Created a project-specific mailbox for people to submit comments/provide feedback ([prosplan@a2gov.org](mailto:prosplan@a2gov.org)).

The PROS Plan planning process engaged residents, park users, City staff, advisory groups, and various stakeholders through public meetings, focus groups, individual comments, and an online survey. The findings provided significant understanding and direction necessary to evaluate and prioritize the future direction of the park and recreation system. Major findings are identified below:

- **MAINTENANCE.** The public provided clear feedback indicating that the extended mowing cycle, especially at athletic fields, generated a negative impression on park users. Athletic field users perceived long grass as both a safety hazard and causing adverse functionality of athletic play. Others perceived it as aesthetically displeasing. General maintenance of athletic field facilities were frequently identified as a concern, in addition to facility cleanliness relating to restrooms.
- **TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE.** Placing an emphasis on maintaining our current park property and facilities instead of purchasing new property or creating new facilities was a recurring theme. Carefully evaluating merits of proposed acquisitions while weighing the cost of maintenance associated with any purchase should be emphasized.
- **EXISTING FACILITIES:** Much public feedback has been received regarding the importance of keeping open existing facilities, such as Mack Pool and the Senior Center, and retaining all current park property as parkland, such as Huron Hills Golf Course.
- **PARK ACCESSIBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY.** Improving connectivity between parks was important to many individuals, including walking and biking paths between parks and to major destination points. For example, a number of individuals suggested a connection between river parks (i.e., Gallup Park) and downtown. Completion of the Border-to-Border Trail was a recurring comment from the public.
- **COMMUNITY OUTREACH/PROGRAMMING/PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT.** Ensuring the emphasis on public relations, especially without a daily printed newspaper, was a concern voiced by City staff and various committee members. Many individuals noted park events and programming were being advertised through “word of mouth,” indicating strong community social networking; however, other populations with limited social networks may not be receiving all available information on park programming.
- **LEADERSHIP FOR VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES.** Many people expressed a willingness to volunteer, but were unaware of volunteer opportunities. Need for more leadership in this area in addition to what is offered by NAP may be well received.
- **AFFORDABILITY AND FEES.** Ensuring that fees are affordable for team sports as well as all park facilities was important. Complaints about the state of field maintenance versus the fees teams pay was considered out of balance. Many residents felt that fees were quite reasonable, and should stay that way as a public entity.

- **FUTURE FACILITIES.** In the citizen questionnaire, a question was asked about park initiatives that should be prioritized for future implementation. Examples were provided of an in-ground concrete skate park that would be free and open to the public, development of a downtown greenway along the alignment of the Allen Creek, and an additional off-leash dog park facility, especially one more centrally located in the downtown area. The majority of respondents commented favorably to these potential amenities.

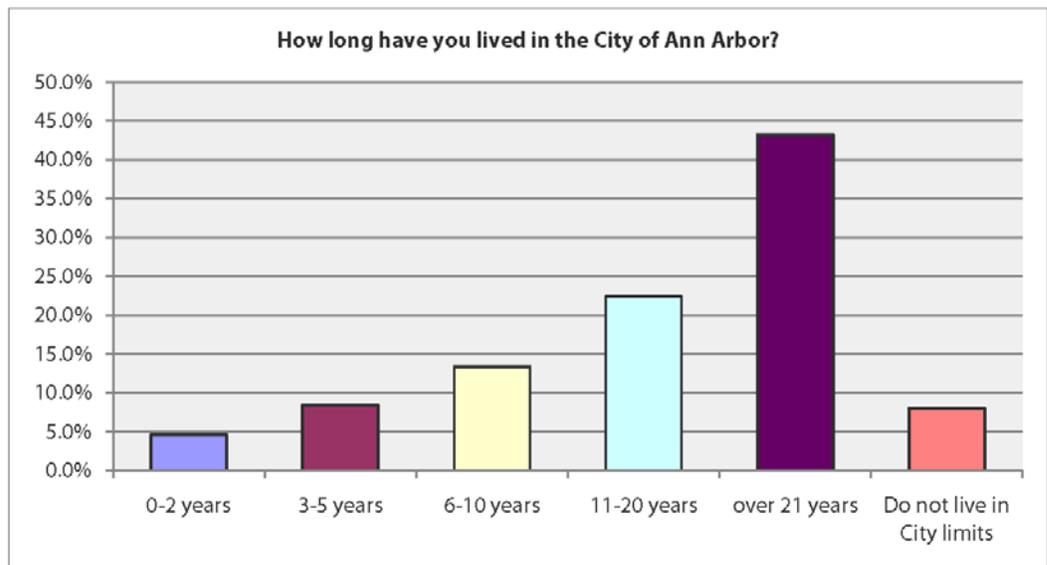
**1. Online Survey**

The online survey was the primary tool used to gain feedback from residents and park users. It was posted online from May 1, 2010 through July 1, 2010. A total of 822 surveys were completed. Survey results and additional comments from the survey will support the direction of park programs, amenities, and future initiatives. Below is a summary of the findings.

- a. **RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS/ACTIVITY LEVEL.** Questions #1 through #4 collected information regarding age, household size, identification of health problems or disabilities, and regular participation in recreational activities.

The majority of respondents reside in a one- or two-person household. The greatest number of household members (452) fell between the ages of 41-60, and 558 children under the age of 18 lived within all households.

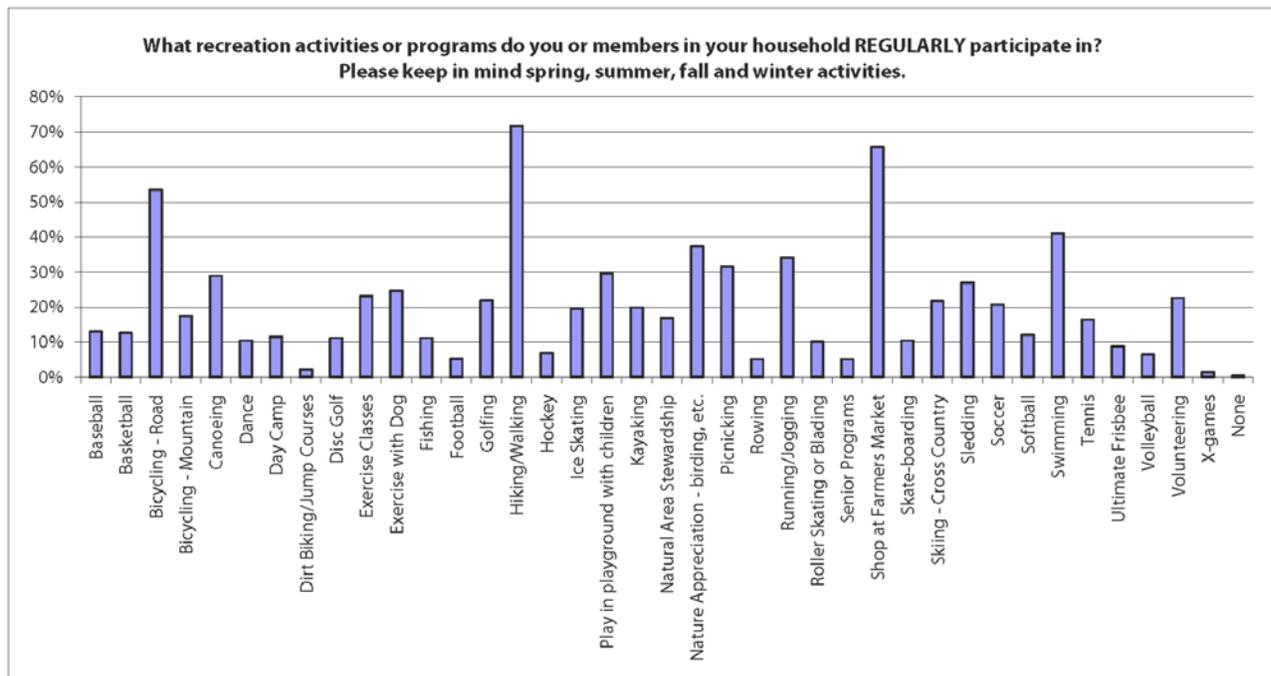
Almost 66% of the respondents resided in Ann Arbor for over ten years, including 350 that have lived in the City for over 21 years. Fewer than five percent of the respondents have resided in the City for two years or less.



Only 8% said they had a health problem or disability that limited their activity level.

A number of accessibility improvements were suggested relating to health problems and disabilities, including improved wheelchair access, banisters at steps and docks, park entrance improvements, accessible bus stops, and additional ramps and benches. Some recommended pathway improvements, such as firmer surfaces for walking and wheelchairs, and handicapped accessible play structures.

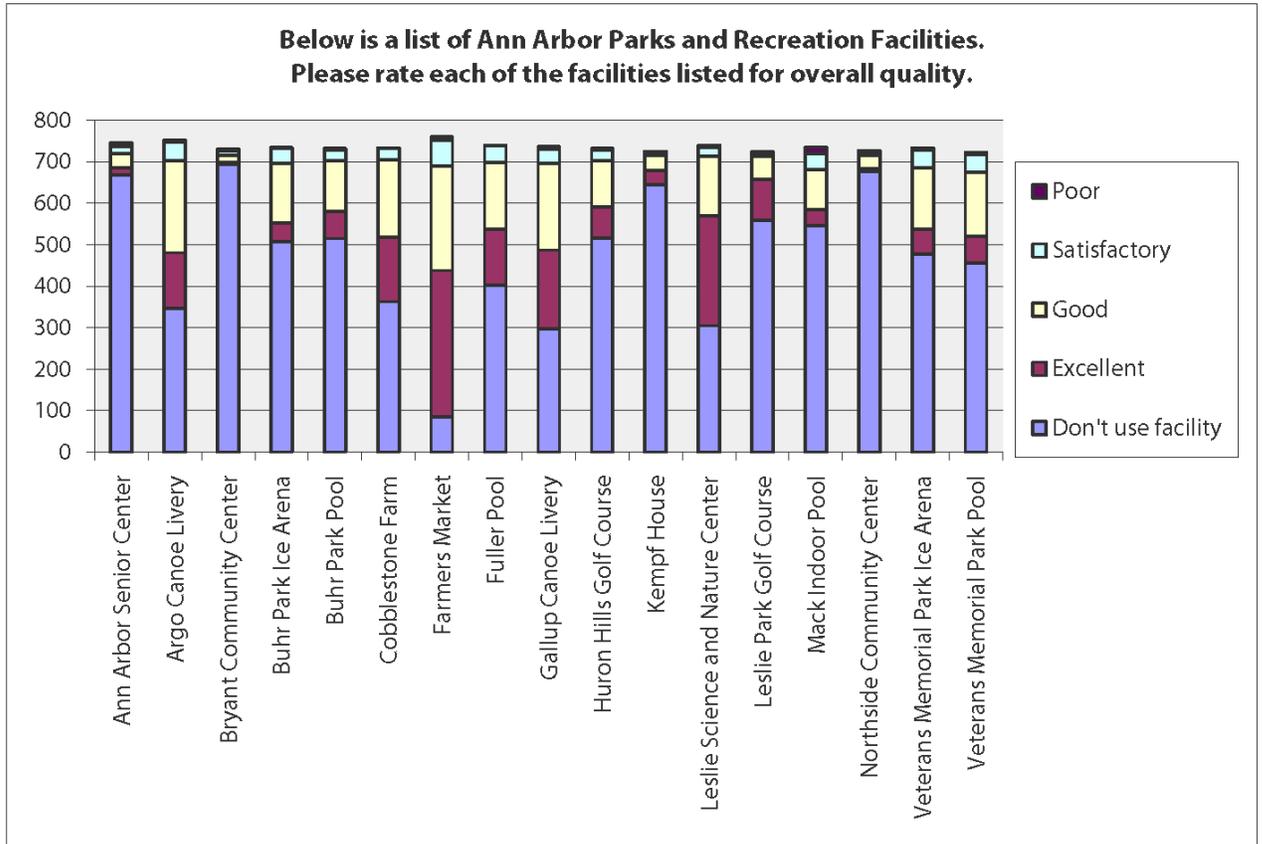
Respondents and members of their household regularly participated in various activities such as hiking/walking (72%), shopping at the Farmers Market (66%), bicycling-roads (53%), and swimming (41%).



When asked which type of activity lacked adequate facilities, the majority of respondents to this question identified the lack of a skateboarding facility. Athletic field facilities, including adequate maintenance, were identified, specifically baseball, softball, and soccer fields. Maintenance was the number one concern regarding athletic fields. Additional facilities were suggested for kickball, tennis, kayaking, disc golf, walking, dog walking, hiking, ice skating, rollerblading, pool (more variety), and cross-country skiing.

SECTION VI: Planning Process for the PROS Plan

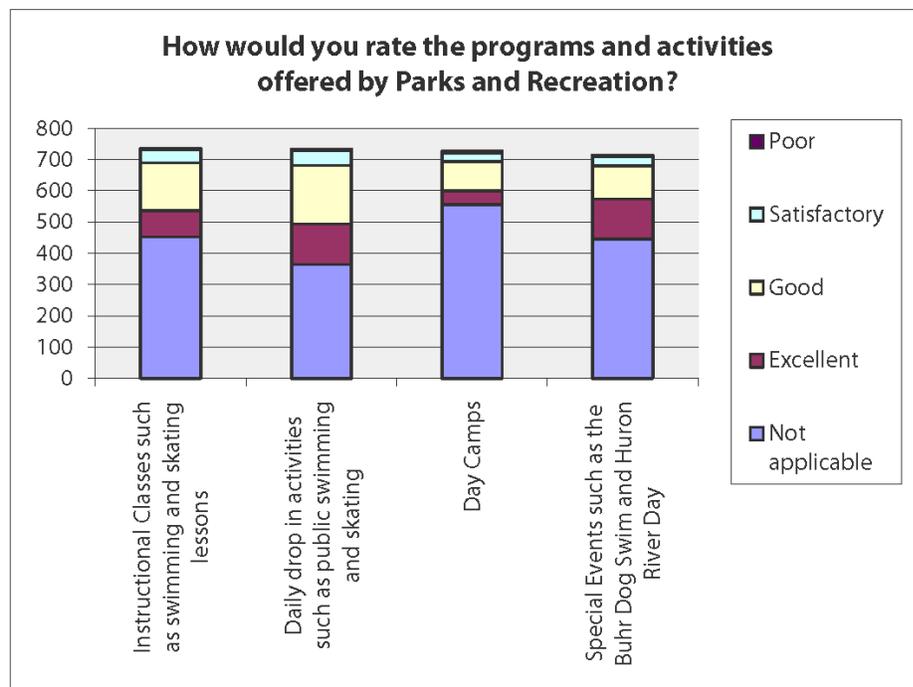
- b. **QUALITY OF FACILITIES.** A total of 17 park facilities were rated for overall quality. The majority of individuals who use a specific facility rated it either good or excellent. Of the 17 facilities listed in the survey, the Farmers Market had the greatest number of individuals rating it “excellent” (353), while Mack Indoor Pool had the most “poor” ratings, which included only 11 responses.



Survey respondents also were asked to identify their favorite facility and any facility concerns. Buhr Park and Buhr Pool were highly ranked, along with the Farmers Market, Gallup Park, Huron Hills Golf Course, Leslie Science and Nature Center, and Veterans Memorial Park. Concerns included poor ball field conditions, restroom and facility cleanliness, and general maintenance.

- c. **PROGRAM AND ACTIVITY RATINGS.** Programs and activities were rated, including instructional classes, drop-in activities, day camps, and special events. At least one-half or more of the respondents did not participate in such activities. Of those who did participate, the majority rated the programs and activities as “good” or “excellent.”

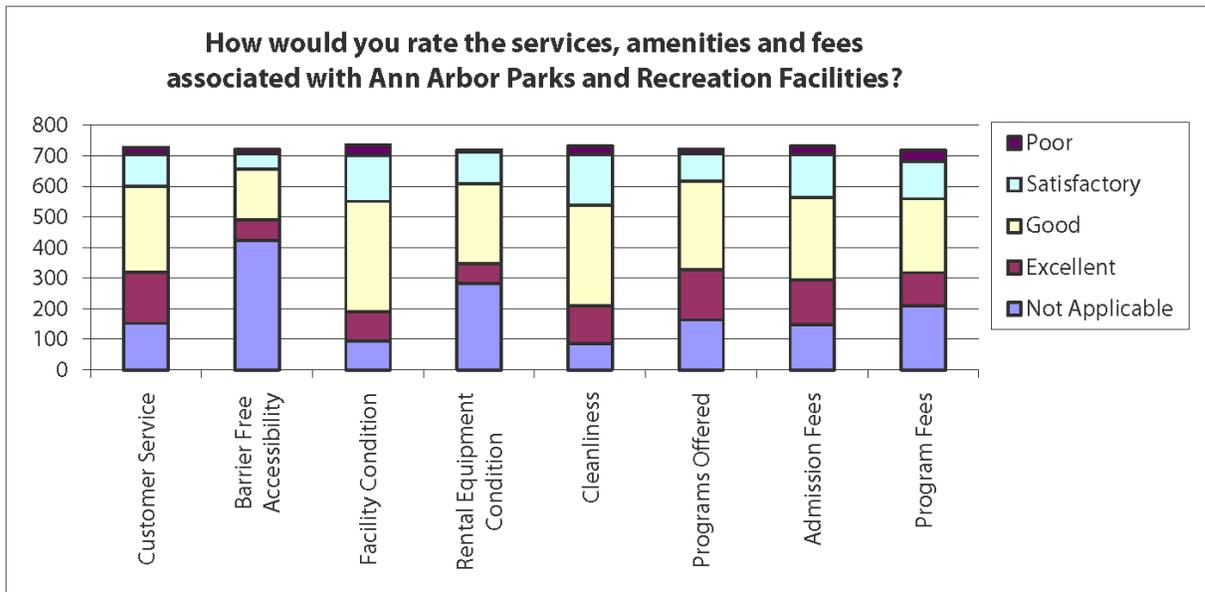
Respondents were asked whether they would refer a person to one of the parks and recreation facilities. The majority of respondents answered “yes,” listing Gallup Park, Veterans Ice Arena and Pool, day camps, canoeing, the Ann Arbor Senior Center, and Huron Hills Golf Course as the most recommended facilities. Those who answered “no” were concerned primarily with program costs.



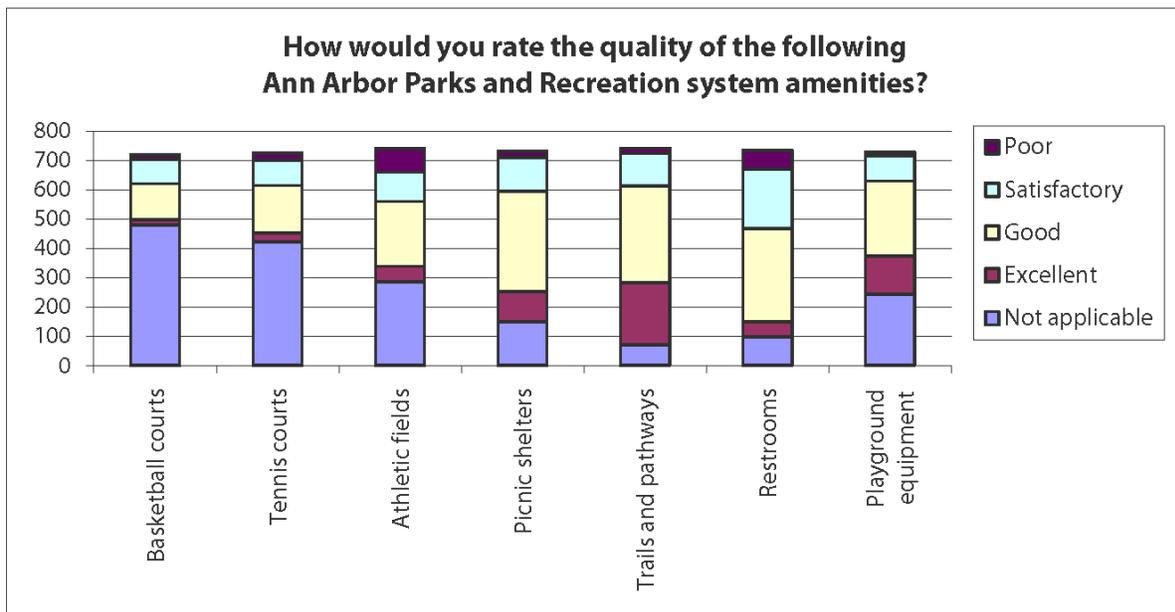
SECTION VI: Planning Process for the PROS Plan

- d. **FACILITY SERVICE, AMENITIES, AND FEES.** Survey respondents were asked to rate facility services, amenities, and fees, including customer service, barrier free accessibility, facility condition, rental equipment, cleanliness, programs offered, admission fees, and program fees. The majority of respondents answered “good” for each category. Barrier free accessibility, facility condition, rental equipment condition, cleanliness, and admission fees all had a greater number of “satisfactory” ratings when compared to the number of “excellent” ratings. Program fees and facility condition received the greatest number of “poor” ratings with 37 and 35 respectively.

Additional comments focused primarily on issues relating to cost and fees, cleanliness, accessibility, and maintenance. A number of respondents felt services and amenities were wonderful assets offered at reasonable costs.



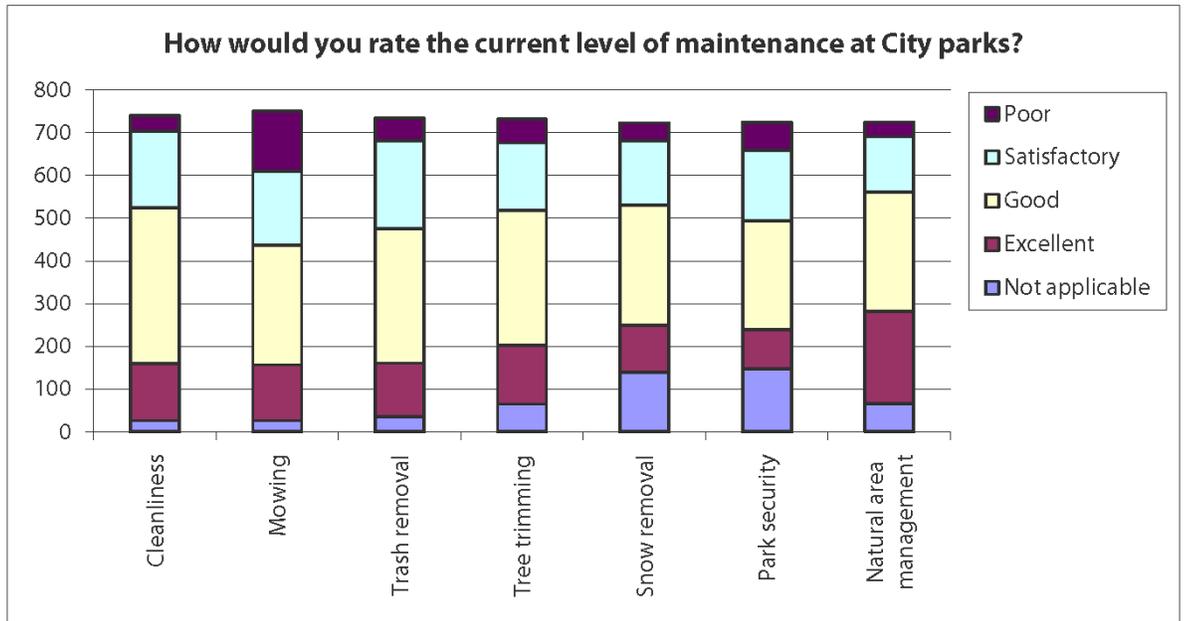
- e. **SYSTEM AMENITIES.** The quality of park and recreation amenities was rated, including basketball and tennis courts, athletic fields, picnic shelters, trails and pathways, restrooms, and playground equipment.



The majority of respondents rated all park amenities rated as “good.” Trails and pathways had the greatest number of “excellent” ratings. Only two categories, athletic fields and restrooms, had more “poor” than “excellent” ratings.

Participants also were asked about deficiencies regarding system amenities. Athletic fields generated numerous concerns regarding infrequent mowing, poorly maintained infields, improved playgrounds and tennis courts, connectivity and maintenance of trails and pathways, and restroom accessibility and cleanliness.

- f. **LEVEL OF MAINTENANCE.** Maintenance was rated, including cleanliness, mowing, trash removal, tree trimming, snow removal, park security, and natural area management.

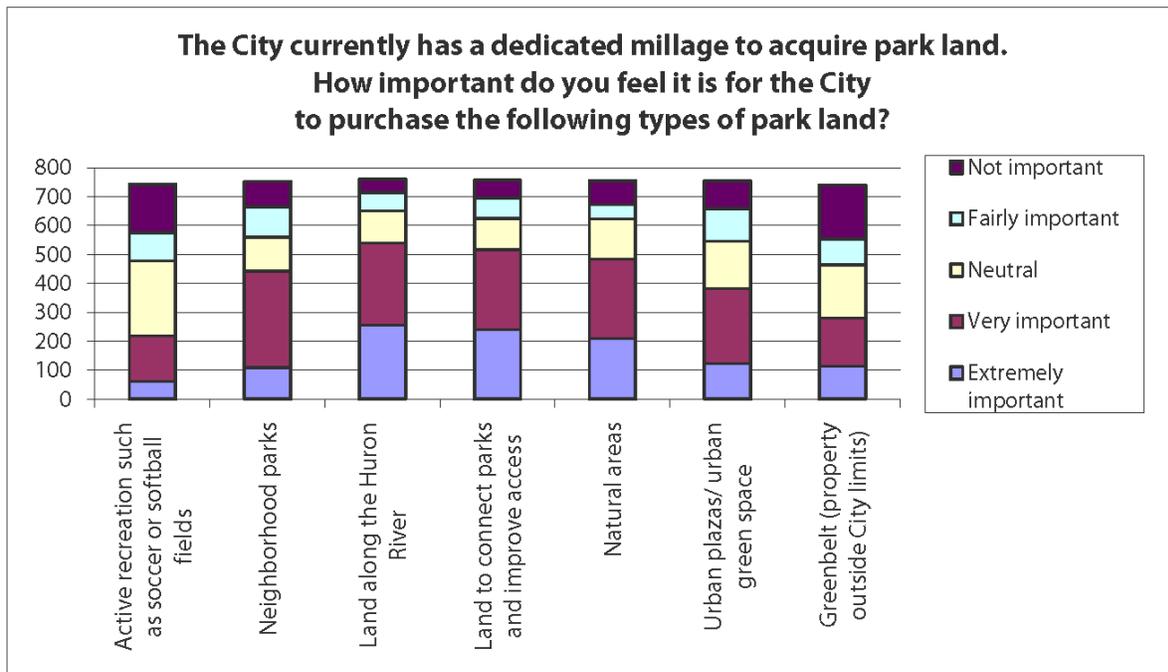


The greatest number of responses for all categories was a “good” rating. Natural area management received the greatest number of “excellent” responses, while mowing received the most “poor” responses.

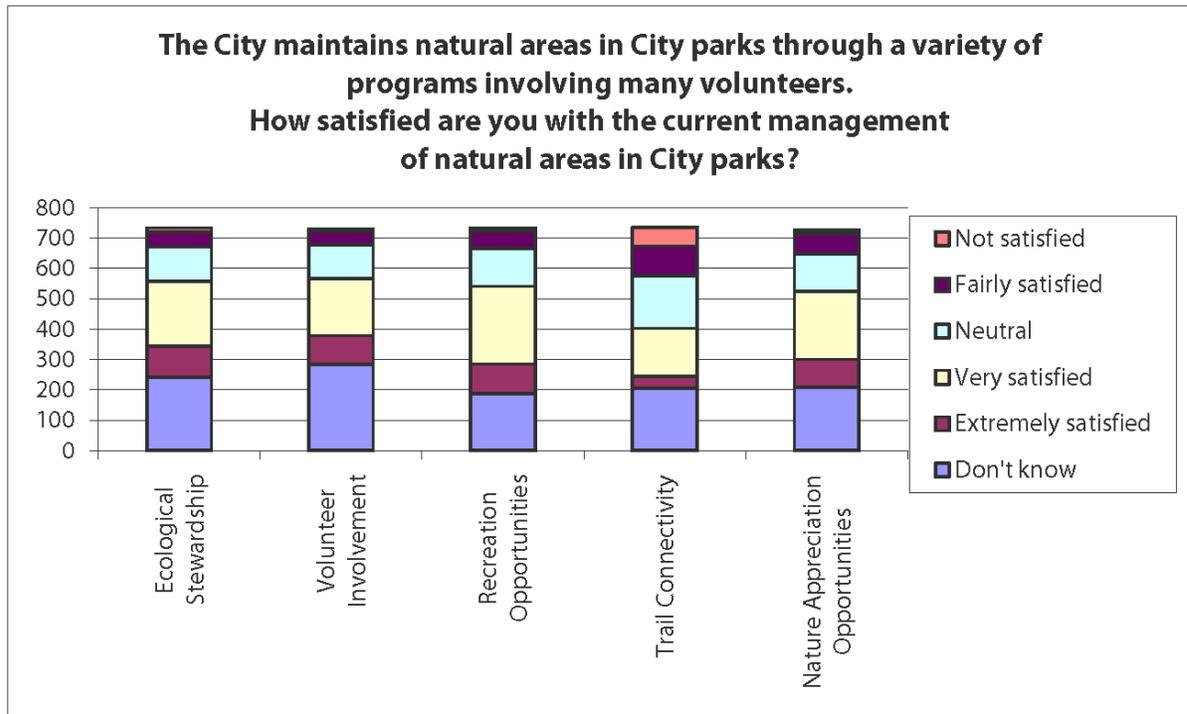
Additional comments included a number of concerns regarding athletic fields, especially mowing and overall poor condition of ballparks. Mowing in general was a significant concern. Other comments included enforcement of dog leash laws, the lack of visible security, excessive tree trimming, and improving trash removal.

- g. **PARKLAND ACQUISITION.** Survey participants were asked about parkland acquisition and the types of parks considered important to acquire, including active recreation, neighborhood parks, land along the river, land to connect parks, natural areas, urban plazas, and the greenbelt. The greatest number of responses for each category was “very important,” with the exception of active recreation and the greenbelt.

Many respondents commented that the City had enough parkland and were concerned that additional acquisitions would compromise and compound existing maintenance issues. Respondents also were interested in achieving greater connectivity between parks both within the City and with parks and pathways outside of the City, such as the Border-to Border trail. Connectivity included planning that incorporated safety and access for the pedestrian and bicycle. While there were a number of comments supporting a greenway, especially along the Allen Creek, survey participants were generally concerned about the financial management, maintenance, and protection of existing parks.



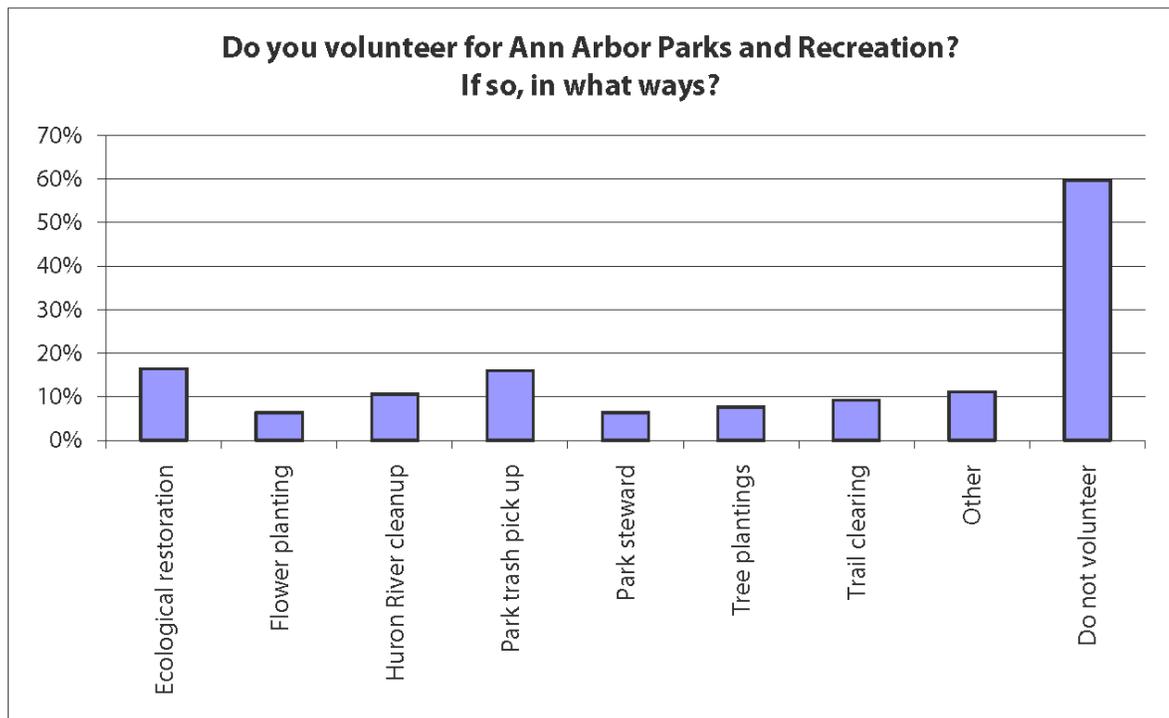
- h. **NATURAL AREA MANAGEMENT.** Participants were asked their satisfaction regarding natural areas. While many respondents answered “neutral” or “don’t know,” indicating a possible lack of public education regarding natural areas and the City’s Natural Area Preservation program, many also indicated “very satisfied.” Trail connectivity had the most “not satisfied” responses (62).



Additional comments indicated NAP is doing an exceptional job with natural area stewardship. Suggestions included improvements to public education and communication regarding prescribed burns, invasive species removal, volunteering, and park connectivity.

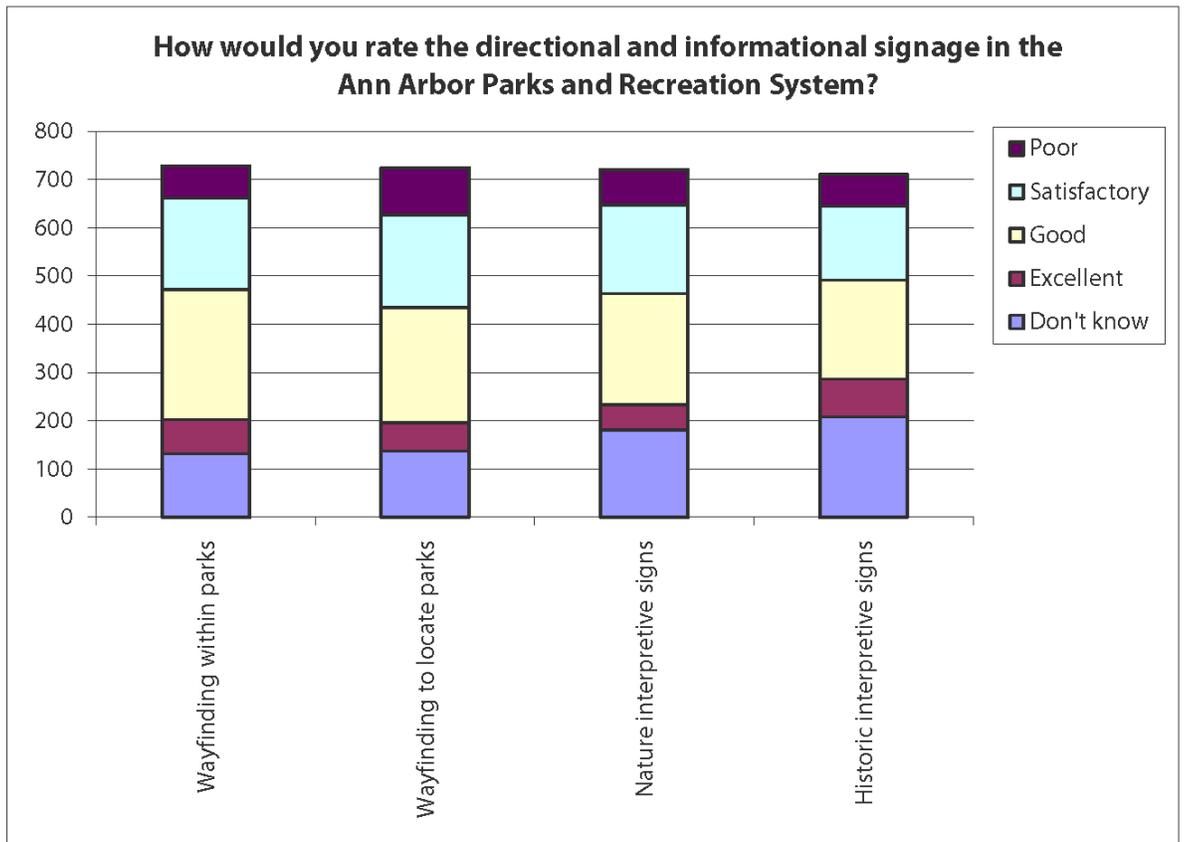
- i. **VOLUNTEERING.** Approximately 40% of the respondents volunteer for one or more park and recreation activities, such as clean-up and stewardship.

When asked about possible involvement in improving Ann Arbor’s parks, many respondents indicated a willingness to volunteer, especially programs involving trash pick-up, trail and facility maintenance (i.e., athletic fields), natural area restoration, and committee participation. Many were unaware of opportunities, indicating a need to develop new programs to involve the public. Others indicated the need to involve or invite families and organizations to help in volunteer efforts.



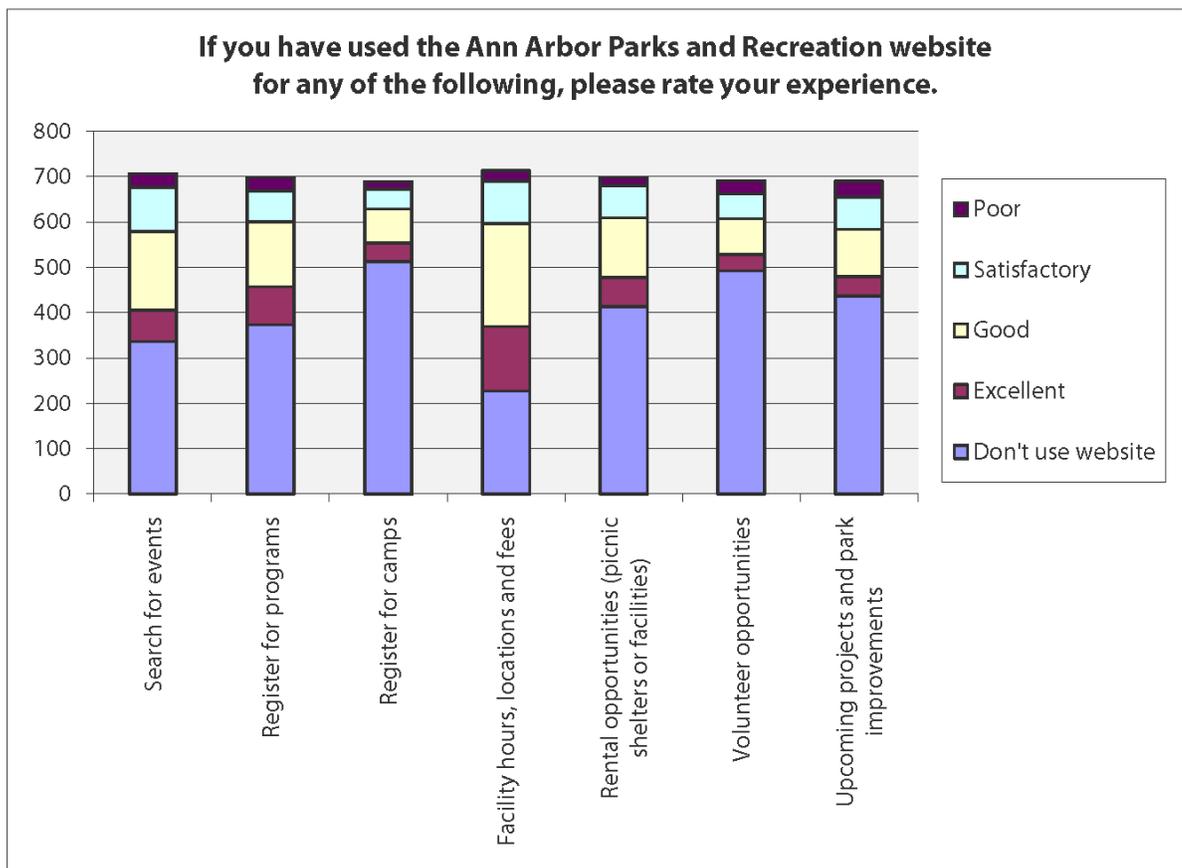
- j. **FUTURE INITIATIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION.** When survey participants were asked about park initiatives that should be prioritized for future implementation, the survey provided examples of a skate park, downtown dog park, and downtown greenway. The majority of respondents supported such initiatives; however, additional suggestions included updates to the Ann Arbor Senior Center, maintenance of existing athletic fields and facilities, additional bike paths and facilities, park connectivity, retaining and improving golf facilities, more outdoor ice rinks, more natural areas and neighborhood parks, and ultimate Frisbee.

- k. **DIRECTIONAL AND INFORMATIONAL SIGNAGE.** Additional comments from survey respondents regarding directional and informational signage included improvements to signs along roadways to parks, adding interpretive signs, restoring damaged or missing signs, adding and improving signs on the internet, and adding field signs (Vets Park) and enforcement signs (pool rules, leash laws, etc.). Many of the respondents felt that there was enough existing signage and that signage should be minimized. Others thought that maintenance of the park facilities should be a priority over signage.



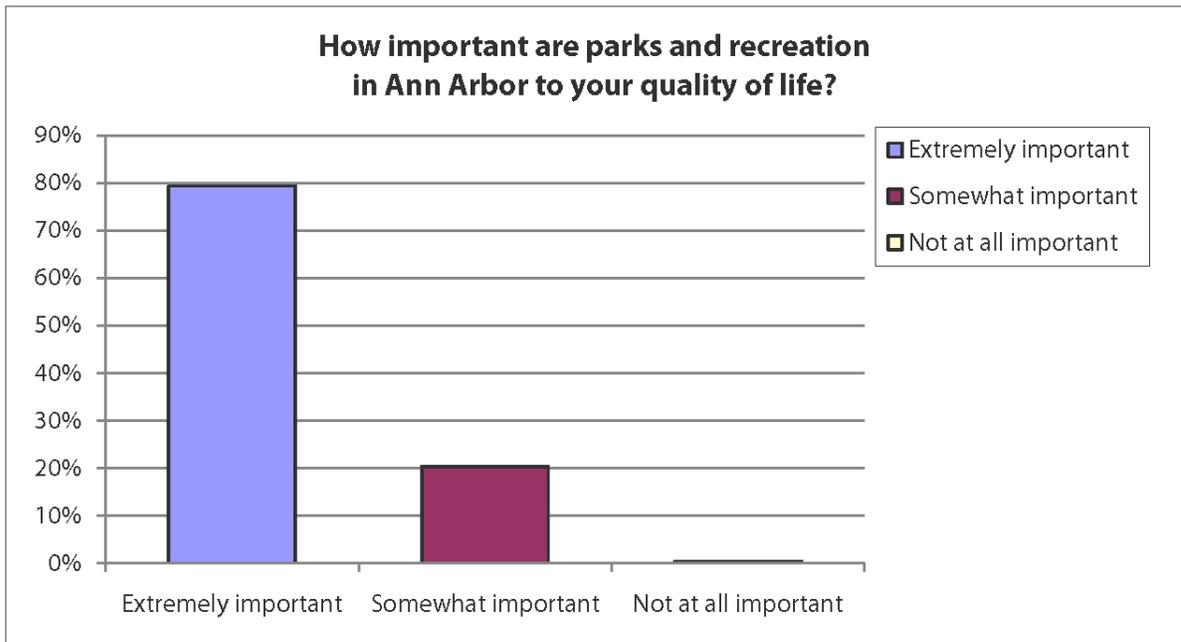
- I. OBTAINING INFORMATION ABOUT PARK AND RECREATION ACTIVITIES.  
 More than 63% of the survey participants obtain information about park and recreation activities through the City website. Over 38% continue to obtain information through the newspaper, especially the Ann Arbor Observer.

In addition to the categories above, a large number of survey participants gained information from “word of mouth,” friends, and neighbors. Others acquired information directly at facilities, email lists and newsgroups, and the Ann Arbor Observer.



- m. **PARKS AND RECREATION & QUALITY OF LIFE.** Almost 80% of the survey participants felt the parks and recreation system was “extremely important” to one’s quality of life.

Comments regarding the importance of parks and recreation in Ann Arbor to “quality of life” included great appreciation of parks and the diversity of the recreation facilities. Most of the respondents indicated they were frequent users and considered the park system to be an essential component of Ann Arbor’s ambiance, attraction, diversity, history, and identity.



**2. Focus Groups**

Staff met with various groups to discuss and obtain more detailed information on specific topics pertaining to parks and recreation. Below are summaries from members of each focus group.

- a. **PARK ADVISORY COMMISSION AND LAND ACQUISITION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**
  - 1) Dedicate a separate PROS Plan section to accomplishments from the previous PROS Plan cycle.
  - 2) Five-year focus should be on continued maintenance and enhancement of existing facilities, fiscal prudence, funding for parks including green space in the urban downtown, and providing for underserved neighborhoods.

- 3) Some of the strengths of Parks and Recreation include strong customer service, community outreach, the wide variety of parks, accessibility to parks, and neighborhood park identity.
- 4) Weaknesses include lack of public education about program availability, public understanding of budget and finances, staffing levels, funding issues, and need for increased public relations (i.e. improving website).
- 5) Challenges include clarification of how funding for parks and recreation functions, how to mitigate complaints, and determining formulas for maintenance.
- 6) Active recreation needs include a skate park, urban downtown dog park, Allen Creek greenway, continuation of the Huron River greenway, park water quality features, a soccer complex facility, and improving water quality of the Huron River to make it a swimmable river.
- 7) Passive recreation facilities, such as bicycle trails, should include improved signage/wayfinding and interpretive displays, although the facilities are generally excellent.
- 8) Programming needs include summer playground programs. Opportunities through private entities should be explored.
- 9) Land acquisition should address underserved neighborhoods, a soccer complex, and park connectivity. Priority should be to acquire land in the City.
- 10) Funding should be better explained to the public. Millages are more secure than the General Fund and should be retained. Mowing operations should remain in the General Fund.
- 11) Public/private partnerships should be pursued; however, there is a desire to retain control of facilities and land. Collaborative management of community centers is a good example of what is successful. There are reservations regarding corporate sponsorship, cell towers/parking with UM for revenue. A cost/benefit analysis should be done on a case-by-case basis.
- 12) A list of maintenance priorities needs to be developed. A little less mowing would be acceptable.

b. RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION

- 1) Five-year focus should be on easy use/accessible trails for elderly, educational signage, proximity of parks to neighborhoods, maintenance costs, increasing safety, maximizing multiple use opportunities, and exploring partnerships.
- 2) Strengths include the number and distribution of neighborhood parks, incorporating trends into planning, shared park and school resources, community support, and a variety of parks and programs.
- 3) Weaknesses include the need for more restroom facilities, parking lot availability, lack of winter maintenance, bike path connectivity, and

funding issues.

- 4) Additional facilities might include a climbing wall and soccer complex.
- 5) Funding issues include the question of tax credits for land acquisition, public education about funding resources, and formation of a non-specific parks and recreation millage.
- 6) Public/private partnerships, including golf courses, corporate sponsorships, volunteer opportunities should be pursued.
- 7) Maintenance of ball fields and tennis courts needs to be improved (i.e., fencing, cracks). Consider acquiring fewer parks and focusing on better quality.

c. FACILITY SUPERVISORS

- 1) Programming should stay competitive to keep up with changing trends. Ideas include the following:
  - Provide more weekday programs and classes
  - Provide additional school break day camps
  - Create health and wellness programs, including classes such as boot camps
  - Collaborate with the YMCA, Rec & Ed, and NAP to generate more programs
  - Provide more innovative programs such as geo-caching and disc golf classes
  - Organize races, such as a triathlon event
  - Run half-day and pre-kindergarten camps at Burns Park
  - Expand programming at Senior Center to meet needs of seniors
  - Encourage NAP to create more programs
  - Include coffee shops and quality eateries at facilities
  - Increase volunteer network to aid in running programs
  - Explore additional evening programming to expand user groups
- 2) Stay abreast with changing trends by doing more research through the following avenues:
  - Visit other park facilities
  - Perform web searches to explore program ideas
  - Attend conferences
  - Review park-related publications
  - Utilize resources of larger organizations such as National Parks and Recreation, Michigan Parks and Recreation, Michigan Senior Center Directors, and the National Senior Center Alliance

- 3) Provide park amenities to facilitate programming ideas:
  - Provide better connection between Island and Fuller Parks
  - Provide barrier free accessible kayak and canoe docks
  - Improve restrooms for user friendliness and add restrooms to allow for programming at other parks
  - Improve barrier free accessibility
  - Improve mill race area at Argo for kayak and canoeing
  - Improve access from Huron River to downtown to increase visibility
  - Acquire parcels along Huron River for more park programming
  - Construct more picnic shelters, especially at popular parks that do not have them, such as Furstenberg and Buhr Parks
  - Encourage construction of a restaurant along the Huron River
  - Provide more inclusive amenities to help keep facilities current
  
- 4) Specific park facility improvements recommended by Facility Supervisors include:
  - Argo – provide boat storage for individuals (not at the livery); implement boat launch improvements either at Argo or at Bandemer Park; construct a pedestrian bridge over North Main Street to connect the west side of the City to the Huron River to the river parks on the east side of the river; provide pathway connections to downtown from the Huron River; acquire as much riverfront property as possible near the downtown and through the City.
  - Buhr – construct barrier free ramp into pool, construct picnic shelter, purchase bleachers, paint beams on steel structure over ice arena.
  - Bryant Community Center – construct more space, including expanding facility with an addition. Reorganize existing space to better meet program demands.
  - Leslie Park Golf Course – construct a pavilion for rental such as corporate events and weddings.
  - Farmers Market – enclose part of market for more temperature comfort during winter. Add larger shelter to cover vendors in open lot and for potential rentals.
  - Fuller Pool – build a splash pad/water spray park, pave gravel section of parking lot and repave existing parking lot, build a second water slide, install more energy efficient outdoor lighting at parking lot, improve entry for aesthetics and wayfinding.
  - Gallup – provide boat storage for individuals, implement boat launch improvements, improve directional and interpretive signage, expand patio

seating at the Canoe Livery, reconfigure entry drive to reduce vehicle/pedestrian conflicts, reconfigure dock area to better serve kayak and canoe operations, improve meeting room space to include operable windows and patio doors, improve barrier free access.

- Huron Hills – construct a meeting room and golf teaching room, construct a shelter/pavilion for event and public rentals.
- Leslie Science Center – replace boiler in Leslie House basement; redo all signage at the park, including entry signs, building signage, interpretive signage around the site and at raptor enclosures, and directional signage for trails; construct barrier free pathway to access raptor enclosures; implement parking lot improvements to eliminate erosion issues and install LED lighting in parking lot fixtures; improve lighting and ventilation in the Leslie House, renovate kitchen, second floor of building and public entrance to Leslie House.
- Mack Pool – renovate locker rooms, including replacing lockers, create party room and exercise room, build pool offices on pool deck and change entrance to facility so that it is separate from school entrance and clearer for public wayfinding.
- Senior Center – improve media center, create coffee shop, renovate kitchen to allow for more programming, replace flooring, improve lighting and ventilation, rethink layout of Center to provide for enhanced programming, renovate parking lot, improve barrier free access and restrooms, create outdoor space to serve Center.
- Veterans Park – construct new women’s locker room by removing some bleachers to create more space, provide new arena lights, replace arena flooring, and repaint steel beams.
- Other – improve or eliminate concession areas, improve overall energy efficiency at facilities.

d. PARK OPERATIONS AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION STAFF

- 1) Maintenance issues that could be resolved through better design, equipment, and operations:
  - Mowing – city budget restricts increases in frequency; large mower decks increase efficiency for open areas/athletic fields; however, large decks are difficult to maneuver in dense tree areas; taking areas out of mowing creates different kind of maintenance problem (NAP involvement); need to develop plan for mowing wet areas.
  - Pathways – pathways are not designed to handle size and weight of maintenance equipment and this creates a problem with rutting and edges of pathways breaking.

- Trash – need to consider “carry out” trash policy instead of multiple interior trash receptacles. Signage could be installed at entrances to encourage individuals to carry out their own trash.
- Trees – small equipment may be needed to prevent damage; need to think about clumping trees and mulching to cut down on trim mowing.
- Plowing – take some areas out of winter use to cut down on maintenance; larger equipment would create efficiencies, although there is concern about increasing damage; need to continue plowing all sidewalks within public rights-of-way.
- Consider long-term maintenance implications with new projects and renovations.
- Facility staff should be involved in maintenance issues on a park system level.

2) Improvements to efficiencies as an organization:

- Improve communication and coordination within entire service area; email lists work well to communicate issues. Meetings are sporadically attended but are important to coordinate between service areas.
- Work as a team to reduce impact of staff reductions.
- Determine ways to provide balance and flexibility in millage spending between maintenance and capital projects.
- Consider another classification for open space land vs. active recreation areas.
- Need to determine how to and who should maintain pathway connections, such as school walks through neighborhoods that are not City-owned.
- Develop a prioritized list for maintenance practices such as mowing.

3) Trends:

- Develop strategic program for volunteerism.
- Work with volunteers on concept of food production in parks, such as community gardens and fruiting trees and shrubs.
- Incorporate native plant material in designs to decrease mowing and increase diversity.
- Establish ‘showcase’ areas in parks for events such as weddings.
- Promote the value of parks in terms of health, environment, air/water quality, economic/real estate impacts, etc.

4) Other Maintenance issues:

- Address disturbances to vegetation due to removal for safety reasons.
- Find ways to eliminate rutting along pathways.
- Keep fence lines clear from vegetation that undermine the integrity of the structures.
- Work on increasing programming to attract more people to under-utilized urban parks.
- Work with police on enforcement issues such as alcohol use in parks, camping, safety issues, and criminal activities.
- Clarify communication lines as it is difficult for the public to find the right staff person to resolve issues.

e. CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

- 1) Concerns were expressed regarding loss of flexibility for public land zoning designation if parks were to have a separate designation, as well as the uncertainty that specific zoning for parks would increase protection. The current public land classification is often vague where the 'PL' designation of public land may be interpreted as parkland.
- 2) Downtown parks and open space discussion included the cost of land in the downtown core, that parkland needs to be within walking distance, but not necessarily located in the core. Consider incorporating public amenities into existing space rather than creating new parks and planting larger trees to create more of an impact. Green space is important to the downtown, but needs to be considered carefully.
- 3) Developer contributions should be considered to provide more publicly accessible space within new developments, or to provide additional amenities within existing parks. Developer contributions could help fund a consultant who could create a coherent vision for downtown public amenities.
- 4) Staff should explore all opportunities to generate revenue, including public/private partnerships. A balanced view must include all possible risks inherent with acceptance of private funding.
- 5) The City needs to look more comprehensively at connections between parks and park facilities, in addition to the relationship between park planning and transportation in terms of accessibility. All parks should have non-motorized links.

- 6) The City should maintain and develop what parkland it already has, especially along the Huron River. There was limited support for additional parkland purchases at this time, including land for the proposed Allen Creek Greenway, although there was support for planning initiatives.

f. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (DDA) BOARD

- 1) Planning for urban parks must take into consideration urban issues, including homelessness, panhandling, drinking, etc. All parks need to have “eyes and ears.” Open space alone does not mean a successful open park, and size and location are extremely important in the planning of a downtown open space. The successes and issues with Liberty Plaza, Sculpture Plaza, the U of M Diag, West Park, and the Library Lot were discussed in this context. A downtown playground might not be needed as there are not enough households with children to support the idea.
- 2) New downtown parkland should be part of a larger master plan for downtown public space. This should include streetscape plans or maintenance that could be part of what developers contribute for the streetscape in front of their buildings. Any developer contributions should be available to the public, not just for the use of residents in the proposed development.
- 3) A large greenway, such as the proposed Allen Creek Greenway, may generate undesirable issues as there is no river destination to the south, and residential development is not likely in the immediate future.
- 4) Programming is essential for the success of certain downtown parks, and it is not necessarily guaranteed that programming will be frequent enough to make the park a success.

**3. Public Meetings**

Three public meetings were held to gather community input for the PROS Plan. The meetings were held on June 2, 2010 at the Senior Center, on June 17, 2010 at the Leslie Science and Nature Center, and on June 29, 2010 at Cobblestone Farm. The meetings were held on different days of the week to accommodate various household schedules. The meeting format consisted of a short presentation explaining the purpose and content of the Plan. It also provided an explanation of the different types of parks, amenities, and services in the system, including neighborhood parks, urban plazas, community wide parks, recreation facilities, historic, cultural and community centers, natural areas and parks with natural areas, trails and greenways, and parkland and greenbelt acquisition.

Discussion focused on the following suggestions, concerns, and comments:

- Huron Hills Golf Course – retain land for golf, concern expressed about privatization and commercialization.
- Improve maintenance of athletic fields, especially for safety and player retention.
- Veterans Memorial Park – address wet areas at Maple Road parking lot, increase trash pick-up.
- Mowing – too infrequent, mowing cycles need to be decreased.
- Allen Creek Greenway – include information about the importance of the floodplain to improve water quality. Discuss environmental benefits of preserving open space for infiltration. Include some plan for the greenway development.
- South Maple Park – more frequent trash removal; improve appearance.
- Growing food in parks – encourage food production as a part of what parks have to offer to the community in collaboration with residents.
- Bicycle paths along the Huron River – finish the Border-to-Border Trail through the City.
- Fuller Road Station – concern over proposal in terms of whether it is an appropriate use of parkland. If project moves forward, it is important to include park improvements, such as trail system connections, Border-to-Border Trail and connections across Huron River. Public comment should be obtained.
- Need a comprehensive plan for bicycles in parks; bicycle parking should be provided at all park facilities.
- Include a PROS Plan section on the accomplishments that have been made since the previous plan was updated.
- The boardwalk at Mary Beth Doyle path is too narrow. Trail is quite wet, consider modifications.
- Consider more natural play areas, designs for children and their comfort will encourage use by all.
- Purchase low maintenance land. Buy smaller tracts that connect to other parks.
- Improve Buhr Park lighting – why does parking lot lighting need to be on all the time? Consider turning off at night when programs are not running.
- Trees – service organizations have been helping to install trees. Explore the use of volunteers to install street trees.

#### **4. Task Forces and Studies**

##### **a. ALLEN CREEK GREENWAY TASK FORCE**

In 2005, a resolution creating a task force to plan a new greenway along the alignment of the Allen Creek storm drain was passed by City Council. Members consisted of staff and representatives of the Park Advisory Commission, Planning Commission, the Downtown Development Authority, City Council, and other City residents. The task force developed concepts for a greenway which would be comprised of open

space and a pathway generally following the Allen Creek storm drain. The task force agreed that the proposed greenway should occupy the floodway portion of the City's three sites: 415 West Washington, 721 North Main, and the First and William Street parking lot, and that the pathway would connect to the Huron River, Border-to-Border Trail. Conceptual designs for the three City sites and various funding alternatives were proposed.

b. ATHLETIC FIELD TASK FORCE

In 2008, members of staff and the Park Advisory Commission evaluated conditions of soccer fields in parks, gathering information from user groups concerning their satisfaction with fields, as well as needs for additional fields. An athletic field task force was formed to make recommendations, which resulted in renovations to the soccer fields at Fuller and Olson Parks, including rebuilding the fields, installing fencing and irrigation. This also resulted in recommendations to continue to work towards improving the quality of baseball and softball fields within the City into the future.

c. GOLF COURSE TASK FORCE

In 2007, PAC sent a resolution to the City Council recommending that the City retain a consultant to evaluate City golf operations. A series of recommendations were made that would involve a significant capital investment and, in response, a task force was formed in 2008 to oversee funding allocated to the golf course for improvements. The task force includes citizens, PAC members, and staff, and continues to meet to review golf course performance. In 2010, a request for proposal for providing golf at Huron Hills in either its current form or modified form was released. Ultimately, the proposals received were rejected as they either did not meet required criteria or raised financial concerns. Discussions with City Council concerning the golf course operations are ongoing.

d. HURON RIVER IMPOUNDMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN (HRIMP)/ARGO DAM

In 2006, the Ann Arbor Environmental Commission created the HRIMP committee and charged them with developing a Huron River and Impoundment Management Plan. The committee considered a broad range of management recommendations on aquatic vegetation, dams, and recreation. These included ensuring water quality and ecosystem health, considering limited commercial development in the Argo/Broadway area, improving and maintaining water quality, and evaluating public use and access. The committee developed a vision for the Huron River with alternative routes based on the repair or removal of Argo Dam and associated recommendation based on how the City chooses to use the river. No final recommendation was made by City Council to maintain or remove the dam. (Entire HRIMP plan is on the City of Ann Arbor website)

e. MACK POOL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

In July 2009, City Council created the Mack Pool Task Force to work with staff to examine options for increased revenue as well as potential cost reduction measures to sustain operations at Mack Pool. The task force presented a number of recommendations to reduce the cost on the City's General Fund to operate the pool by approximately \$40,000 per year. Recommendations included the purchase and installation of a thermal blanket for energy savings, LED lights on the pool deck, computer decrease, raise fees for season passes and Master's swimming, add Master's class, establish annual fundraiser, increase rental fees, cost share with school district, and explore "swim school" program.

f. NEIGHBORHOOD PARKLAND DEFICIENCIES

In December 2009, individuals from the Land Acquisition Committee of the Park Advisory Commission performed field surveys of various portions of the City to determine areas potentially underserved by neighborhood parks. Each survey area was visited and evaluated for recreational amenities, such as playground structures, multi-purpose fields, and natural areas. The approximate distance from the center of these respective areas was measured to the nearest public recreational facility fulfilling the need of a neighborhood park, whether owned by the public schools, the University of Michigan, or the City, to determine if traditional neighborhood recreation is available to the residents of these areas. Findings included that most of the City is well served; however, there are some exceptions where isolated neighborhoods do not contain neighborhood parks. These findings will help inform future opportunities.

g. SENIOR CENTER TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

In May 2009, City Council created the Senior Center Task Force to work with staff to examine operations for increased revenue as well as potential cost reduction measures to sustain operations at the Senior Center. Recommendations were presented to Council that potentially decrease General Fund cost to operate the Senior Center from just over \$150,000 to \$52,000 per fiscal year. Recommendations included increased programming, expand trip program, restructure Instructor Agreements, decrease computers, reduce staffing and increase volunteers, implement membership fee, increase rental availability and total rentals, increase fundraising and advertising, and use portion of bequest to offset operation costs.

**5. Email Comments**

Residents and park users were able to send individual comments to Parks and Recreation

staff, in addition to receiving email notices for public meetings. Below is a summary of issues received via email.

- a. Maintenance of athletic fields is important. Safety should be a focus so that teams continue to play in Ann Arbor.
- b. Public land zoning should be evaluated.
- c. Trail connectivity, especially the completion of the trail system along the Huron River and the Border-to-Border Trail, is a high priority.
- d. Protection of the Huron River and the disposition of the recreational dams need to be considered.
- e. Public/private partnerships and the potential ramifications should be considered carefully.
- f. Consider adding a tennis court to Foxfire North Park.

### **C. Approval Process**

The approval process for the PROS Plan is determined by Michigan Public Act 33 of 2008. This Michigan Planning Enabling Act states how various planning procedures are done, and contains a single set of procedures for all entities of government to follow. The City requires these procedures to be followed for the plan to become an element of the official City of Ann Arbor Master Plan. It is also determined by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grant Management that outlines the format that the plan must follow in order to be approved by the state and enable the City to apply for grants.

A 42-day approval period must be provided for governing agencies, such as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, neighboring communities, and utility companies within the jurisdiction of the plan.

The plan is also made available to the public through posting on the City's website, and hard copies at the libraries and City facilities.

After the public review period is over, the Park Advisory Commission, the City Planning Commission, and City Council must all hold public hearings prior to approval of the plan.



## SECTION VII: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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The City of Ann Arbor park, recreation, and open space system exists to serve the needs and desires of the residents of the City and the Ann Arbor community by providing a full spectrum of recreational opportunities, while enhancing the visual quality of neighborhoods and the City as a whole. Historically, Ann Arbor's park, recreation, and open space system has been looked upon as one of the most important elements in the quality of life for Ann Arbor residents.

The park and recreation system-wide goals have not changed significantly from the previous plan. This is because after gathering the public input, staff recognized that even though some issues have changed, the overriding goals and objectives are still relevant and respond to the desires and concerns of residents today.

### **A. Mission Statement**

Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation is committed to the development and maintenance of quality programming, services, and facilities for the Ann Arbor community and to foster stewardship of our natural resources. Our goal is to provide both structured and unstructured opportunities which lead to improving the quality of life through recreational, educational, social, and cultural enrichment services. We provide these opportunities for community residents, regardless of their age, gender, socio-economic level, ethnicity, and abilities. This is achieved through cooperative team efforts with the City and Public Schools, other agencies and institutions, volunteers, the private sector, and the general public.

### **B. Guiding Principles for the Provision of Parks, Recreation, and Open Space**

- Provide accessible recreation, enrichment, and leisure opportunities for the Ann Arbor community, regardless of the physical or socio-economic characteristics of the participants.

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- Efficiently employ City resources, in concert with other public resources, to provide a wide range of recreation and leisure opportunities and avoid duplication of services where unnecessary.
- Actively seek the most appropriate acquisition and uses of community open space and natural features to meet the community's needs for active, structured recreation, as well as passive enjoyment of the outdoors.
- Plan for the continued availability of financial, physical, and personnel resources to support the park and recreation system through a combination of public and professional input.
- Provide responsible stewardship of the natural resources that impact the City's park system.

### C. Goals, Rationale, and Objectives

To assure that parks, recreation and open space meet the expectations of the Ann Arbor community, the following goals and objectives are offered:

#### GOAL 1

**Provide an efficient recreation and open space system, where all the components will compliment each other in providing a broad spectrum of services while minimizing duplication, where necessary.**

#### RATIONALE

The effective provision of recreation, enrichment, and leisure opportunities necessitates maximum use of available resources and cooperation among the various providers of services and facilities.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Promote cooperation and resource sharing among the public agencies involved in providing recreation and open space (i.e., Ann Arbor Public Schools, City Parks and Recreation Services, Community Education and Recreation, neighboring townships, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, Huron-Clinton Metropark Authority, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and the University of Michigan).
2. Maximize the use of existing resources to economically and conveniently serve a variety of uses and purposes (e.g., school buildings as after school meeting space, school grounds serving a neighborhood, golf course/cross-country ski area, schedule softball fields at fewer park locations to consolidate field usage to cut down on mowing). Indoor facilities can be multi-functional to reduce operational costs and provide convenience.

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3. Plan, design, and build parks and facilities to support multiple functions within the limitations of the site or the proposed improvement. Such planning will result in greater use of the parks and facilities and maximize the benefit for the dollars spent (e.g., Veterans Ice Arena and Pool).
4. Coordinate dissemination of information concerning both public and private recreation programs to better reach community residents.
5. Develop mechanisms to allow various public recreation agencies to develop and coordinate future directions, cooperatively address park and recreation issues, and consolidate marketing research.
6. Optimize utilization of all public land within the community, i.e., land owned by the City, County, schools, and university based on the capacity of the land to accommodate various uses.
7. Better utilize existing public land potentially to lessen the need for acquisition of additional lands. School sites, for example, with minimal changes in site design requirements, may serve to fulfill community needs for recreation land in areas deficient in park opportunities and facilities.

### **GOAL 2**

**Achieve and maintain a balanced park, recreation, and open space system, accessible to all of the community.**

#### RATIONALE

People throughout the Ann Arbor community have a broad spectrum of abilities, interests, economic resources, and cultural backgrounds. Public service providers have the goal of providing a broad variety of recreation, enrichment, and leisure opportunities for all those in the community who desire these services.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Strive to reflect the needs of all persons in the City, regardless of age, gender, nationality, race, socio-economic position, location, and access to transportation.
2. Attempt to provide balance in terms of facilities and opportunities as in the following examples: passive and active, summer and winter, daytime and evening, programmed and informal, structured and non-structured activities.
3. Enhance opportunities to provide cultural activities (music, dance, crafts, theater, arts, etc.).
4. Define role as public recreation providers. What services should be provided to meet community needs?

## SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

5. Increase efforts to improve the schedule for retrofitting existing facilities to accommodate people with varying abilities.
6. Focus on providing play areas that are designed to allow disabled users greater opportunities.
7. New facilities must continue to be designed barrier free and accommodations made for people with disabilities.
8. Develop strategies to identify and accommodate groups which are not currently receiving or participating in recreation services.
9. Address the recreation and service needs and interests of disadvantaged persons and residents of public housing sites and cooperatives. Also, improve access to parks and recreation services for low-income residents City-wide.
10. Enhance social and recreational opportunities for senior adults. Improve communications with this growing population.
11. Enhance and encourage opportunities to provide scholarships for residents who would benefit from this service.

### **GOAL 3**

#### **Assure a firm financial basis for the park, recreation, and open space system.**

##### RATIONALE

The effective provision of parks, recreation, and open space today and into the future is dependent on broad public support, through a combination of reliable funding sources.

##### OBJECTIVES

1. Consider a variety of funding strategies including millages, grants, easements, use agreements, land use controls, dedication, bequeaths, volunteer work, donations from private organizations, etc.
2. Encourage that new residential development within the City contribute equitably to the resulting increased demand for parks, recreation, and open space so that the current recreation and open space quality does not deteriorate.
3. Study the services and facilities that receive General Fund support and those services and programs which charge fees to determine optimal (desired) fee levels and General Fund support levels.

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4. Seek broad support for the park, recreation, and open space system, including support from the surrounding townships.
5. Develop strategies by which volunteers, community businesses, educational institutions (the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Washtenaw Community College, etc.) and service groups might be more directly involved in developing, sponsoring, and assisting with recreation programs, or ecological restoration of natural areas.
6. Increase public support through citizen knowledge of and identification with park spaces. Foster volunteerism and public input to the decision-making process by facilitating organized citizen park stewardship with an adopt-a-park program and continuation of the Natural Area Preservation Park Steward Program.
7. Strive for adult sports programs to be self-sufficient.
8. Include actions the City is interested in that are also state and federal goals, as these will qualify park projects for state and federal grants.
9. Encourage the University of Michigan and the Ann Arbor Public Schools to provide more public open space for community use.
10. Continue to raise money to offset value of scholarships provided by Parks and Recreation.
11. Explore opportunities for public/private partnerships while considering any long term affects on the park system.

### **GOAL 4**

#### **Assure adequate and suitable provisions of land and facilities to meet present and future park, recreation, and open space needs in terms of maintenance and development.**

#### RATIONALE

As a result of the 2004 City reorganization, responsibility for park maintenance shifted to the Public Services Area. In light of this reorganization, coordination between service areas is particularly important to assure the achievement of a balanced park system in terms of quality and quantity of facilities and park areas. The management and maintenance of a park area is as important as the formulation of an appropriate design and its implementation. The proper care and management of a park and its facilities are essential to instill pride in the system, discourage vandalism, and encourage optimum use.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Maintain, rehabilitate, and restore existing facilities and natural areas in keeping with their planned use, safety, enjoyment, and aesthetic sensibilities.

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

2. Assure citizens the best possible park or recreation experience by giving special attention to upkeep, including maintenance, safety, and cleanliness. Replace worn or obsolete equipment and facilities, maintain landscaping, encourage ecological restoration of natural areas, and rehabilitate park areas and facilities where indicated by changed needs or conditions.
3. Develop efficient maintenance procedures that decrease staff hours, equipment, and use of chemicals, and utilize natural processes such as controlled burning and native plant landscape areas.
4. Develop an adequate plan for maintenance and rehabilitation of all City-owned and operated park facilities.
5. Justify proposed acquisitions in terms of how they fit into the park and open space system as a whole. Evaluate all proposals with concern for where the benefits will occur and what long-term commitments they entail for operation, upkeep, and program delivery.
6. Provide physical connections such as walkways, bikeways, trails between City parks, and access to parks from adjacent neighborhoods where the opportunities exist and strive to create linkages where they are lacking.
7. Encourage volunteerism within the parks system with the expansion of the Adopt-a-Park Program.
- h. Continue to refine the park gifts program to benefit the park and recreation system.
- i. Develop a maintenance plan that will inventory, list maintenance standards, and provide a refurbishment schedule for athletic fields.
- j. Continue to work cooperatively with the Ann Arbor Public Schools to clarify operational agreements specifying particular duties and functions of each agency as they relate to funding for maintenance and refurbishment of athletic fields.
- k. Emphasize the care of existing park trees and planting of new trees in all park development or improvement projects.
- l. Adapt the extent of maintenance provided to the intensity and nature of use that the park and facility receive.
- m. Analyze the operational and maintenance impact prior to authorization of development, rehabilitation, and new facility construction.
- n. Review the organizational structure and total funding of parks, recreation, and open space towards the goal that proper services are provided.

## **GOAL 5**

### **Foster the quality of life in Ann Arbor by paying particular attention to the park, recreation, and open space system as a visual and functional resource.**

#### RATIONALE

One of the prime reasons that Ann Arbor is in its present location is the natural beauty of the Huron River valley. Significant architecture, historic buildings, and appealing landscapes add to the quality of life in the community. The park, recreation, and open space system, as a provider of parks and open space, must be conscious of the importance of its visual image to the community. Natural land functions in parks affect the quality of life. These functions include the visual image of the City, water retention and cleansing, air purification and cooling, wild plant reserves and wildlife habitat, as well as havens for physical activity and mental recharge for people.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Work with planners to emphasize the importance of views along streets, parkways, buffer areas, and greenways as integral components of visual resource planning.
2. Work with transportation planners to consider entrance corridors, gateway intersections, and visible outside edges of the City so as to enhance the image of Ann Arbor.
3. Strive to continue the view of Ann Arbor as the originally conceived "Ann's Arbor" by continuing a vigorous tree and landscape care improvement program. Remove and replace dead or diseased trees as soon as possible. Provide unstructured and natural areas where possible to assure that these elements are accessible to neighborhoods throughout the community.
4. Provide, where feasible, unstructured open space within the parks system and within individual parks.

## **GOAL 6**

### **Assure citizens a voice in the decision-making process of the park, recreation, and open space system, including acquisition, planning, and development.**

#### RATIONALE

The park, recreation, and open space system exists to serve the Ann Arbor community. To assure that the system meets the needs of the people, the evaluation of services, assessment of the community, and ongoing communication with the public is necessary. Involvement of citizen advisors and decision makers is crucial to maintaining strong support by the community for the park and recreation system.

## OBJECTIVES

1. Provide for an ongoing review of the park and recreation system objectives in light of future opportunities and the use and availability of resources.
2. Assure that information regarding programs, services, planning, and development proposals is made available to all residents of Ann Arbor, together with such other information needed by the public to make the best use of its system.
3. Develop strategies to identify those segments of the population whose needs are not currently being met and engage them in dialogue to identify their needs.
4. Assure that citizens have ample opportunities for public input including public hearings, feedback forms, and surveys.
5. Expand the use of social media and other electronic media to share information, advertise programs, and solicit input.

## GOAL 7

### **Develop recreation programs, services, and facilities after assessing changing trends and community needs.**

#### RATIONALE

The Ann Arbor community is dynamic with a diverse population. To keep pace with the needs and desires of the public, an ongoing evaluation and marketing plan is necessary to solicit citizen input regarding existing recreation services and identify needs and changing trends.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Explore and develop options for expanded opportunities for senior adult activities by increasing the range of programs and scope of service.
2. Strive to identify leisure time needs of adolescents to develop appropriate activities.
3. Collaborate with local non-profits such as the non-profit teen center (Neutral Zone) and the YMCA.
4. Expand programs and activities for pre-school children - daytime during the week and on weekends.
5. Expand environmental interpretive programs and activities.

## SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

6. Study the need to expand outdoor recreation opportunities.
7. Work with AATA to explore expanded public transportation opportunities to better serve the senior adult population.
8. Continue to seek ways to connect parks through acquisition of parcels to serve as linkages for use as bicycle and pedestrian paths.

### GOAL 8

Excerpted from the Huron River Impoundment Management Plan (HRIMP) of 2009:

**A healthy Huron River ecosystem that provides a diverse set of ecosystem services. 'We envision a swimmable, fishable and boatable river, including both free-flowing and impounded segments, which is celebrated as Ann Arbor's most important natural feature and contributes to the vibrancy of life in the City. The river and its publicly owned shoreline and riparian areas create a blue and green corridor across the City that contains restored natural areas and adequate and well-sited public trails and access. Ample drinking water, effective wastewater removal and a full range of high quality passive and active recreation and education opportunities are provided to the citizens of Ann Arbor. Ongoing public engagement in the river's management leads to greater stewardship and reduced conflict among users.'**

The following website contains the entire HRIMP document:

[www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/systems\\_planning/Environment/hrimp/Documents](http://www.a2gov.org/government/publicservices/systems_planning/Environment/hrimp/Documents)

### RATIONALE

The Huron River's watershed, its streams, creeks, wetlands, and floodplains should be viewed as an entire natural system. The Huron River can only be preserved and restored by taking care of the land and water system that is connected to the river.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to evaluate for possible implementation the North Main Street/Huron River Corridor Study, the Argo Pond Framework Study, and other plans and studies that focus on the direction of improvements to the North Main Street and Argo Pond areas.
2. Strive to complete the non-motorized linkages along the river from Dixboro Dam to Barton Pond to enable the nearly ten-mile pedestrian/bicycle way to be completed, and work with other agencies to complete the Huron River Greenway and Border-to-Border Trail through Washtenaw County.
3. Continue efforts to clean up the Huron River and its tributaries and to address the non-point source pollution issues.

SECTION VII: Goals and Objectives

4. Plan and provide for greater access to the Huron River by developing appropriately existing lands along the river to relieve crowding of areas such as Gallup Park.
5. Enhance the fishery in the river to improve sport fishing.
6. Enhance and protect scenic shorelines. Provide more native plant landscapes in parks to reduce maintenance, reestablish wildlife habitat areas, and increase diversity of species.
7. Insure/maximize multiple-use activities/programs/facilities at riverfront parks (i.e., canoeing, rowing, fishing, etc.) that provide balanced opportunities.
8. Plan and utilize stormwater management as a resource for recreational or educational use rather than a waste product to be removed quickly.
9. Enforce buffer zones of no mowing adjacent to streams and the river and work to restore eroded stream banks through revegetation and erosion control to enhance water quality.
10. Coordinate water quality monitoring activities with other organizations such as the Huron River Watershed Council and the Water Resources Commission Office.
11. Develop greenways along the tributaries of the Huron River where feasible to improve water quality and reduce flooding.

Additional objectives found within the HRIMP Document.



## SECTION VIII: MAJOR PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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This purpose of this section is to provide a comprehensive listing of the park system incorporating public and staff input that was gathered through the survey, focus groups, public meetings, email, letters, and comments described in the Public Process section. This overview reflects both improvements that will help preserve the life of amenities, such as resurfacing a game court, to providing space and structure for new programming opportunities.

The assessments considered the public input that was gathered, including the major categories summarized in the Planning Process chapter. These included maintenance, especially mowing and athletic fields; taking care of what we have; planning for the future of existing facilities; accessibility and connectivity, including non-motorized trails and greenways; community outreach/programming and public involvement; more leadership in volunteerism; and affordability and fees. There is far more to do than can be accomplished in this PROS Plan cycle, but there are issues that can be addressed arising from what was heard during the public process.

### **A. Facilities Needs Assessment**

Although several of the existing recreation facilities have had renovations in recent years, much remains to be accomplished at most facilities in the system. The intensive maintenance required at these facilities includes repair of aging structures and mechanical systems, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and restoration of historic structures.

## **1. Recreation Facilities General Infrastructure Needs**

- Compliance with ADA – The City of Ann Arbor is committed to building facilities that are in full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. All new facilities are built to meet or exceed ADA standards. Older facilities are brought into ADA compliance as they are renovated. The City will continue to renovate facilities so that all park and recreation facilities are fully accessible.
- Mechanical, heating and cooling, and energy efficiency are ongoing infrastructure needs.
- Programmatic – additions and upgrades at several facilities to accommodate innovative programming.

## **2. Recreation Facilities General Programming**

- Important to stay abreast of trends to stay competitive and offer diverse programs.
- Expand use of social media to advertise programs and activities.
- Collaborate with other recreation providers, such as the YMCA, Rec & Ed, NAP, to offer innovative programs that complement rather than duplicate.
- Increase weekday lessons and after-hours programming.
- Increase volunteer opportunities for recreation facilities.

## **3. Recreation Facilities Infrastructure and Programming Needs**

### **a. Ann Arbor Senior Center**

- The top floor at the facility lacks ADA accessibility and limits how the space can be used.
- Additional space for programming is desired.
- New roof and improved insulation is needed in the upcoming years.
- Cold temperatures during the winter remain an issue for the users of the Center; an entry vestibule could help eliminate the cold draft problems.
- The linoleum floor throughout needs to be replaced.
- Kitchen needs upgrades, including new cabinets, industrial dishwasher, safe serving area for food warmer, sink to meet health code with three sink areas, renovate flooring.
- Additional storage space is needed.
- Additional space for parking is desired.
- New energy efficient and effective lighting throughout the building is desired.
- The wood floors throughout need to be refinished.
- Restrooms need to be renovated to be ADA compliant.

**b. Argo Canoe Livery**

- Replace gravel parking lot with pervious parking at livery lot to facilitate drainage and control dust.
- Additional parking is needed. Reconstruction of the existing lots would help to better organize parking and alleviate drainage issues.
- Modifications (removal of trailer launching) at the existing boat launch might occur if a new trailer boat launch can be developed on the Argo Pond/Huron River waterway. An alternative location might include somewhere in Bandemer Park.
- Provide boat storage for public.
- Construct kayak storage racks.
- Construct deck, pervious surface, and awning outside staff door on south side of building to accommodate staff needs.
- Seal concrete floor in livery building for longer life.
- Develop trail and signage through woods to connect to neighborhood.
- Explore additional parking opportunities through collaboration with neighboring uses.

**c. Bryant Community Center**

- The site is constrained and there is no room for physical expansion to provide for program growth. The one large activity room in the existing building can only accommodate a single program at a time. The need exists to run multiple programs for separate kids according to age and activities during peak use times.
- Landscape improvements are desired for aesthetics and drainage.
- Kitchen and bathroom renovation and/or replacement is desired.

**d. Buhr Park Pool and Ice Arena**

- Replace pool gutter grating.
- Paint steel structure of ice arena to preserve life of building.
- Replace plaza area concrete to eliminate trip hazards.
- Construct water slide at pool to attract more families and children.

**e. Cobblestone Farm Historic Site**

- Replace roof on barn.
- Replace cedar siding on barn.
- Improve landscaping.
- Tuckpoint brick of the historic house.
- Replace chinking at historic log cabin.

**f. Farmers Market**

- Repave deteriorated parking lot.
- Construct picnic shelter to accommodate vendors in open area as well as events.
- Reconfigure parking lot, including paving space on Fourth Avenue where house was demolished.

**g. Fuller Park Pool**

- Renovate parking lots, including paving dirt portion of parking lot.
- Design and construct splash pad to attract families and children.
- Replace pool liner.
- Install second water slide.
- Upgrade pool light poles, possibly with solar.

**h. Gallup Park Canoe Livery**

- Additional storage space needed.
- Modification and repairs to the existing dock system to accommodate increased use and barrier free access.
- Additional boardwalks, docks, improved water access around livery facility.
- Canoe livery building needs renovations, including replacing rotting boards on the exterior, replacing the brick pavers which have become loose and are creating a trip hazard, updating mechanical systems, modifications to make building, doors, restrooms compliant with ADA, sliding door to patio, increase patio space for events and for café, operable windows.
- Park service vehicles operating along the trail/driveway and space adjacent to the livery frequently conflicts with park users. Alternative design options should be investigated to separate vehicles from pedestrians.
- Renovations to the meeting room and restroom building should be reviewed to address ongoing issues with the heating and cooling systems.
- ADA improvements at restrooms.
- Private boat storage.
- Wayfinding signage to canoe livery and for Gallup Park in general.

**i. Huron Hills Golf Course**

- Renovate clubhouse to accommodate a meeting room, teaching room.
- Shelter/pavilion for rentals, programs, events.

**j. Kempf House**

- Brick tuckpointing at foundation to maintain structural integrity of building.
- Complete renovations as recommended in Smith Group Condition Assessment Report of 2005.

**k. Leslie Park Golf Course**

- Cart storage building to protect carts.
- Pavilion/patio/banquet hall to accommodate events, programs, and rentals, as well as deck for food and beverages overlooking third green.
- Refueling station as well as electric hook up for electric carts.

**l. Leslie Science and Nature Center**

- Caretaker cottage needs renovations for energy efficiency, to keep out critters, repair windows, etc.
- Office and storage space needed for staff and program materials.
- Renovate Critter House to update exhibits and improve teaching opportunities.
- LED lighting in parking lot for energy efficiency.
- Parking lot renovations to address drainage and erosion issues.
- Barrier free path to raptor enclosures.
- Landscape improvements west of Nature House.
- Provide signage for raptors.
- Additional space for programming including an outdoor classroom.
- Renovate basement of Leslie House.
- Wayfinding and interpretive signage.

**m. Mack Pool**

- A more attractive outside area on the deck or an enclosed sunroom area would be an amenity for the site.
- Renovate locker rooms – new lockers.
- Upgrade party room.
- Reconfigure office and entrance to move both to the pool deck to separate public from school kids.

**n. Northside Community Center**

- Facility needs minor interior maintenance.
- Exterior will require painting in a few years.

- Modify or update the interior of the adjacent shelter building to increase its potential for rental revenues.
- Improve the restrooms and shelter.

**o. Veterans Memorial Park Pool and Ice Arena**

- Arena flooring is worn and outdated and needs replacement.
- I-beams and purlins need to be repainted due to condensation problem causing rust.
- Arena lights should be replaced with florescent, high efficiency lighting.
- Shade structures on pool deck, including solar panels.
- Renovate pool locker rooms.

**B. Community-wide Parks**

**1. Buhr Park**

- Provide inter-connecting pathway system to provide pedestrian access from the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Light the tennis courts.
- Construct new picnic pavilion with added picnic opportunities.
- Provide new wayfinding signage.
- Continue implementation of the goals and elements as identified in the Buhr Park Stormwater Management Plan.
- Renovate entry road and parking lots.

**2. Fuller Park**

- Non-motorized path around the park along the Huron River connecting to Island Park would provide a link to the more natural features of the park and provide a pathway from the parking lot to the fields, as well as the missing link along the Huron River Greenway.
- Enhance entry to park and plaza area outside of facility.
- Develop and install signage for the park trails to improve wayfinding.
- Install map of soccer field locations to assist with wayfinding.
- Renovate parking lots.
- If Fuller Station is built, include park amenities such as pathway connections and improvements to parking areas.
- Shelter/pavilion would provide rental opportunities.

**3. Gallup Park**

- Renovate trail systems throughout Gallup Park.
- Develop wayfinding signage and historic interpretive signage improvements.
- Improve boat launch and parking area. The shoreline is eroded in this area of the park and could use improvements, including riprap and native plantings.
- Provide private boat storage.
- Develop water trail or canoe trail with interpretation stopping areas/resting areas for canoes.
- Renovate entry road and parking lots.
- Upgrade lighting system for improved efficiency and performance.

**4. Island Park**

- Renovate historic Greek Revival Shelter to preserve structural integrity.
- Evaluate condition of historic concrete bridge, which is showing cracks.

**5. Olson Park**

- Enhance mountain bike trail network. Encourage relationship with core group of local mountain bike rider volunteers to develop and maintain trails.
- Continue trail east and then south along the railroad right-of-way, which can be accommodated with an existing easement through the property east of the park.
- Continue vegetation management.

**6. Riverside Park**

- Repave path and drive entry to create separation between path and road, pave parking lot, create rain garden.

**7. Southeast Area Park**

- Repave existing gravel parking lot and driveways to help control dust, allow for marking of parking spaces, and comply with ordinance requirements.
- Install speed bumps along the driveway, at crosswalks and as necessary to control traffic speed.
- Gated drive at Platt Road could be opened to provide additional access with a right-turn-only exit for safety.
- Complete master plan, including pathway connection in a northwest direction from the park.
- Explore feasibility of extending a trail connection along the northern boundary of the University Townhouses residential property and I-94 toward the existing pedestrian overpass bridge at I-94 to Mary Beth Doyle Park.

- Open space on Platt Road may accommodate additional basketball courts or an in-line hockey court.

#### **8. Veterans Memorial Park**

- Renovations of ball diamond complex should include automated/computerized irrigation system and amenities necessary to maintain a well-manicured facility.
- Construct basketball courts.
- Parking at the east and west ends of the ice arena building could be reconfigured to provide additional needed parking spaces.
- Renovation of the parking lots serving the baseball fields may include asphalt paving, reconfiguration, and stormwater management components. Consider pervious paving.
- Shelter should be replaced as well as a new restroom building and possible concession stand.
- The lighting should be evaluated.
- The slag path in the park is eroding and weeds are prolific. It should be paved to make it barrier free and to require less maintenance.
- Renovate existing paved paths.
- The storage building near the removed batting cages should be demolished.
- Improve entry area and provide barrier free pedestrian walk to pool and ice arena from Jackson.

#### **9. West Park**

- Complete master plan started in 2009.
- Construct restrooms.
- Renovate tennis courts including rebuilding retaining wall.
- Renovate/add shuffleboard courts.
- Replace/add park benches and picnic tables.
- Design/implement interpretive signage for stormwater features and park history.
- Enhance deteriorated Native American Trail.
- Construct creative play area to reflect stormwater theme.
- Renovate pergola.
- Renovate baseball field.

### **C. Natural Areas**

- Identify resources and start ecological stewardship activities in newly acquired natural areas where appropriate.
- Extend ecological stewardship activities to previously unmanaged, City-owned natural areas.

- Identify areas appropriate for construction or alteration of trail systems to facilitate greater connections to a system-wide trail network.
- Establish and enhance wildlife corridors.
- Establish and enhance Huron River and tributary native vegetation buffers.

#### **D. Parkland Acquisitions**

- Purchase of property along the Huron River is a high priority.
- Purchase of property to make greenway connections along natural areas and creeks as well as to create a downtown greenway.
- Any parkland acquisitions should consider the additional burden on park system maintenance.
- Purchase of property to increase both visual and physical access to existing parks.
- Establish a formal operating agreement with the Ann Arbor Public Schools regarding Greenview, and explore acquisition through the established process.
- The desire for a future Allen Creek Greenway is ongoing, and includes designation of the floodway portions of the City-owned properties at 415 West Washington, 721 North Main, and the First and William sites.

#### **E. The Huron River/Other Greenways**

- Recommendations from the Huron River Impoundment Management Plan should be considered in planning improvements for Huron River parks (see link in goals section).
- The Argo and Geddes Dams are considered recreational dams and future maintenance of these structures will need to be accounted for in the parks budget.
- A master plan for a future Allen Creek Greenway should be developed in cooperation with all potential stakeholders (DDA, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Railroad, etc.).

#### **F. Neighborhood Parks and Urban Plazas**

- Existing play areas should be replaced if they are out of compliance with safety regulations, do not adequately meet ADA, or exhibit unsafe conditions.
- Gaps in neighborhood park service (for residents who do not have a neighborhood park within one-quarter mile or where they need to cross a busy street) should be considered, taking schools into consideration, including demographics (study done by PAC) when developments may include land dedication or when vacant parcels that are appropriate become available.
- Creative play areas should be designed imaginatively to create variety in play structures and experiences.
- Discussion concerning downtown open space should continue as well as to plan for

developer contributions and small pocket parks.

- Work with the Downtown Development Authority to plan for renovation and acquisition of downtown open space, including the development of the library lot.

## **G. General Infrastructure Needs**

### **1. Athletic Fields/Ball Fields**

- Plan for major renovation of athletic fields as part of a capital project plan.
- Overused fields need to be rested on a regular schedule. This is a challenge as fields at Olson and Fuller are booked to capacity. Ability to restrict usage is vital to sustainability of quality turf.
- Irrigation systems should be installed in City fields that are heavily programmed.
- More fields are desired for sports such as ultimate frisbee, rugby, and lacrosse.
- A number of elementary and middle school baseball and softball fields need refurbishing by schools.

### **2. Game Courts**

- Maintain quality and safety of existing courts, especially those with more community wide use, such as West, Veterans and Buhr Parks.
- Evaluate number of courts in existence. Evaluate need for replacement by usage and suitability of location.
- Evaluate and prioritize for repairs all game courts.

### **3. Park Security**

- With the absence of park rangers, continue to work closely with Police Department to make sure that parks are kept safe.

### **4. Picnic Shelters**

- Incorporate LED lights at shelters to help save energy.
- Historic Greek Revival shelter at Island Park needs restoration work to maintain structural integrity and stop deterioration.
- Upgrades at Northside shelter might make it more viable for rentals.
- Shelters are desired at Bandemer and Buhr Parks for programming and public rentals, especially a few larger shelters for larger groups.
- Perform necessary upgrades/restoration of picnic shelters.

**5. Play Areas**

- Play areas need to be replaced when they no longer comply with safety standards and become outdated.
- Staff needs to perform regular inspections to stay ahead of safety issues.
- Additional staff should be trained to perform regular safety inspections.
- More interesting/diverse playgrounds should be included.

**6. Restrooms**

- Heavily used restroom facilities need to have more frequent maintenance and cleaning.
- Updating restroom facilities on a rotating/as-needed basis should continue to occur.
- Constructing restrooms in heavily used parks or regional park facilities, such as West, should remain a priority.

**7. Signage**

- Signs should be utilized where necessary and where it will facilitate interpretation opportunities, but not in excess.
- As interest in and accessibility to natural areas have increased, the need has increased for interpretive signage to explain their features and improve wayfinding.
- The need for consistent signage to explain appropriate uses of parks and natural areas has increased (dogs on leash, prohibit bicycles in sensitive natural areas).
- Signage systems should be developed in a systematic way that provides consistent content and appearance.
- Replace entry signs to all major facilities to be consistent and easily read from the street.

**8. Snow Plowing**

- Continue to coordinate with facilities to maintain safe, clear pathways and parking lots.

**9. Trails and Greenways**

- Walking, hiking, and bicycling were the most popular activities for City residents, and the completion of the Huron River Greenway trail (Border-to-Border) has been one of the highest priorities for the park system. (See map of the Huron River Greenway priorities at end of this section.) Filling gaps and completing sections of the trail along the Huron River to create a safer and more aesthetic route along the river is a high priority.

- Maintenance of heavily used non-motorized pathways through parks and along the Border-to-Border Trail remains a high priority for safety and usability.
- The Non-motorized Transportation Plan from 2007 details desired trail connections throughout the City. This plan should be consulted when renovating streets and pathways.
- Coordination with other City departments to repair deteriorated path systems should remain a priority.
- Construction of non-motorized pathways along creeks flowing into the Huron River should continue to be explored. Implementation of a greenway following the alignment of the Allen Creek and Ann Arbor Railroad is a high priority of the community.
- New pathways as well as existing paths wherever possible should comply with AASHTO standards for a 10-foot path for shared-use facilities.
- At-grade crossings at railroads have been difficult to secure. A safe, legal, public crossing at Lakeshore Drive into Bandemer Park is a high priority. As discussions to turn the Norfolk Southern rail line into a high speed corridor continue, securing these public crossings is crucial and needs to be addressed in the short term.

#### **10. Turf Maintenance**

- Appearance of the parks is important, and maintenance of turf is priority for residents.
- Elimination of mowed turf areas due to financial constraints must be accomplished in a manner as not to decrease usable areas or create unsightly vistas.

#### **11. Trash Pickup**

- Uniform curbside trash containers has improved appearance and ability to remove trash. This program should be expanded.
- Replace all old style barrels with uniform, attractive trash containers throughout park system. All new barrels should be designed to easily remove liner, but keep container in place and be attractive.
- Placement of barrels should facilitate ease of trash pickup.

#### **H. Programming for Volunteerism**

- The need for additional park maintenance received attention from City Council and a Park Maintenance Task Force in 2005. Part of this need has been met by implementing an Adopt-A-Park program. The Volunteer and Outreach Coordinator coordinates volunteers, who commit to certain responsibilities and steward parks throughout the City. The program has been highly successful, and another staff person is slated work on this program to increase volunteerism at the recreation facilities.

- Additional community resources must be sought to increase parks programming, educational programming, park maintenance, and recreation facility maintenance to meet community needs. This will be done through two Volunteer and Outreach Coordinators who will seek community partnerships, civic and neighborhood volunteers, and grant opportunities.

## **I. Potential New Recreational Facilities and Park Amenities**

### **1. Centrally Located Dog Park**

- The two off-leash dog parks are currently located in the north and south part of Ann Arbor at Swift Run Park and at Olson Park. Requests have been made for a more centrally located off-leash facility. Locations near the downtown have not yet been identified.

### **2. In-Line Skating/Skateboard Facility**

- A permanent, concrete skateboard facility has been desired by residents for many years. Starting in 2005, the Ann Arbor Skate Park Action Committee (AASAC) began its mission of building a free skate park facility in Ann Arbor. In May 2008, the Park Advisory Commission passed a resolution recommending that City Council approve a designated location in Veterans Memorial Park for a future skate park. City staff, the AASAC, and the Ann Arbor Community Foundation then developed a Memorandum of Intent (MOI) regarding how the parties would work towards completing a skate park. The MOI states that the City will not pay towards construction or on-going maintenance of the proposed skate park, as the City is focusing on rehabilitating or upgrading existing facilities. In 2009, the Washtenaw County Parks Commission agreed that if the AASAC raises \$400,000, that amount will be matched. AASAC is in the process of fundraising for this project.

### **3. Allen Creek Greenway**

- A greenway running generally along the alignment of the buried Allen Creek has been proposed in several previous PROS Plans as well as the 1988 Downtown Plan. The main branch of the Allen Creek runs along the railroad tracks in the transitional area on the western edge of downtown. The 1988 Downtown Plan calls for the development of a highly visible 'greenway' on the valley floor of the Allen Creek to reinforce the visibility of the valley, develop an improved transition between the downtown core and the neighborhoods to the west, to establish a visual and recreational amenity, to create improved pedestrian and bicycle access to downtown, and to enhance downtown's unique identity as a place. The connection to the Huron

River is important for safety and to provide a more visible entry to the Huron River Greenway.

In 2005, a task force was created to produce a report offering recommendations and options for the greenway (Council Resolution R-258-6-05). The report outlines conceptual recommendations for the three City-owned properties at 721 North Main, 415 West Washington, and the corner of William and First Streets. It recommends that the entirety of the William and First parcel become a greenway park. While proposing various options for the North Main and West Washington sites, the schemes call for the floodway area to be set aside for exclusive greenway use. The report suggested examining streets and sidewalks as a starting point for connections, and recommended continued conversation with the Ann Arbor Railroad towards a possible Rails-with-Trails project.<sup>1</sup>

In 2009, a City Council resolution (R-09-273) supported the recommendation to preserve the City-owned parcel at the corner of First and William, and stated that the City has secured partial funding for environmental remediation. A 2010 Council Resolution (R-10-028) proposed an investigative effort to look into the viability of creating a Greenway park and a community arts center at 415 West Washington Street.

#### **4. Other Trail and Greenway Connections (excerpted from 2006 PROS Plan chapter)**

- West side greenway - Allen Creek to West Park with eventual connection to an Allen Creek greenway. This branch of the Allen Creek runs west through many of the existing City parks. A natural/wildlife corridor runs along the ravine in Hannah Park and Maryfield Wildwood Park.
- South spur along Malletts Creek. A Malletts Creek Restoration Plan was completed in April 2000 and outlines land to be preserved along the length of the creek as well as action items to improve the water quality and erosion issues. A potential greenway along Malletts Creek could include a spur from Gallup Park through the South Pond Nature Area, Huron Parkway Park, and Malletts Creek Park along Huron Parkway to provide both wildlife and pedestrian corridors. A better connection from Packard at Malletts Creek to Redbud Park and Scheffler Park could be provided through acquisitions and public access easements. A parallel connection through County Farm Park, Buhr Park, and Brown Park would provide alternative trail corridors. Tying in Swift Run Park with the corridor would provide connection opportunities

1. In 2005, a group of citizens interested in working towards the creation of an Allen Creek Greenway formed a non-profit corporation named the Allen Creek Greenway Conservancy. In 2008, they produced a report outlining a proposed route; they continue to work on this effort. As of the writing of this Plan, no official City action has been taken on the Conservancy's recommendations.

further east to the Scarlett Mitchell Nature Area. Exploring opportunities to improve the pedestrian and non-motorized trail between Southeast Area Park and Lillie Park in Pittsfield Township would provide a connection with the trails to the Pittsfield Preserve and Rolling Hills Park outside the City.

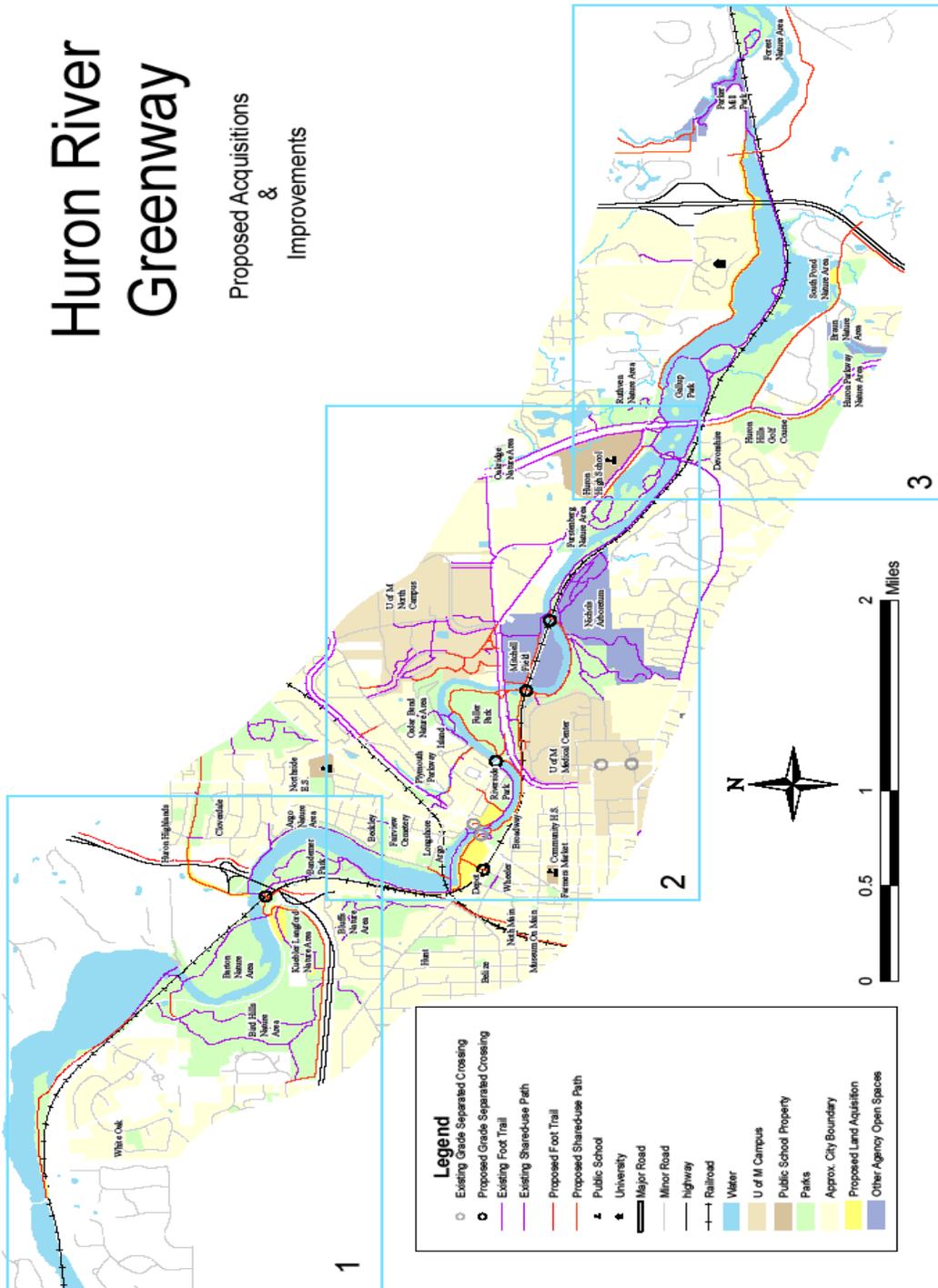
- West spur connecting Bandemer Park to Traver Creek at Leslie Park. This trail would follow the abandoned Huron Parkway right-of-way connecting the Huron River at Bandemer Park with Leslie Park. This is already a heavily used corridor by pedestrians and mountain bicyclists and would provide the connection with the Huron River greenway. Land needs to be acquired to complete the trail both to the river as well as continuing north. At Leslie Park there is a three-way split. The north trail would follow Traver Creek to Olson Park through the existing public path easement on the Food Gatherers property. A spur further north is desired to connect the natural areas adjacent to proposed developments along Pontiac Trail. The south trail needs an improved connection between Leslie Park and the path along Plymouth Road to the Traver Creek trail crossing Broadway to Island Park. This entire section should be formalized as an identifiable park space with signage, wayfinding, and clearly marked trails.
- Northeast spur from Leslie Park along Traver Creek would extend through portions of Foxfire South, Placid Way, and Foxfire East Parks, along and across Nixon Road to the pond east of Nixon, and on to Oakwoods and Sugarbush Parks.
- Dolph Nature Area and Honey Creek. Connecting Third Sister Lake in the University of Michigan's Saginaw Forest to Dolph Nature Area has been a long-term goal. Making this connection would add significantly to the greenway that runs between Dolph Park at Wagner Road to Liberty Road through Lakewood Woods and along Honey Creek Pond, owned by the Water Resource Commission.
- Millers Creek and Swift Run Creek have no trail improvements planned at this point; however, adding to the public corridor along these tributaries will be sought as land is developed in these areas. A Restoration Plan for the Millers Creek watershed was completed in April of 2004. The mission is "to establish and implement socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable watershed management standards and practices that will improve the quality of the Millers Creek Watershed." Goals include improving recreational opportunities in and around the creek.

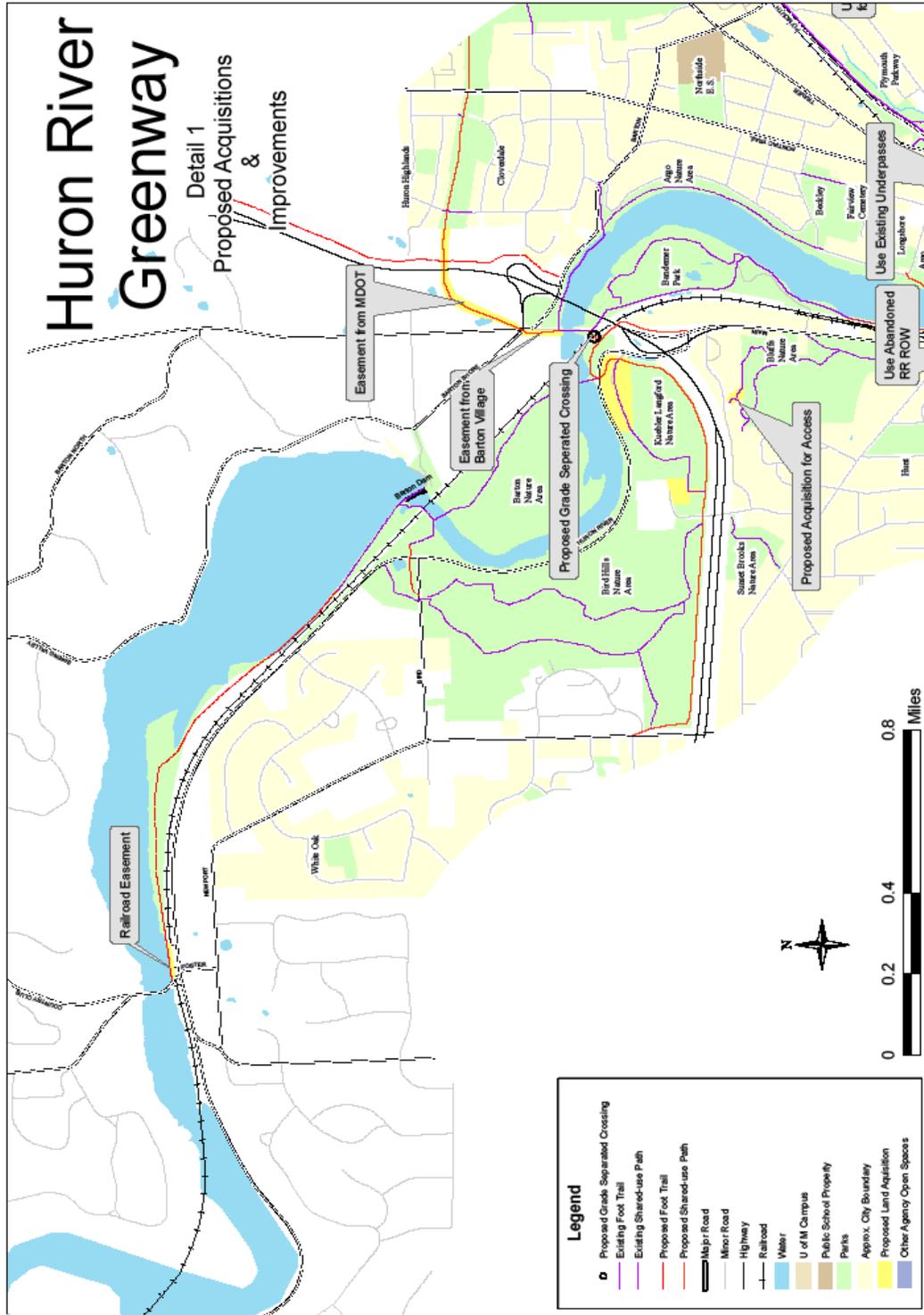
The following maps illustrate the pathway connections that are envisioned to complete the Border-to-Border Trail, as well as to connect greenways throughout the City.

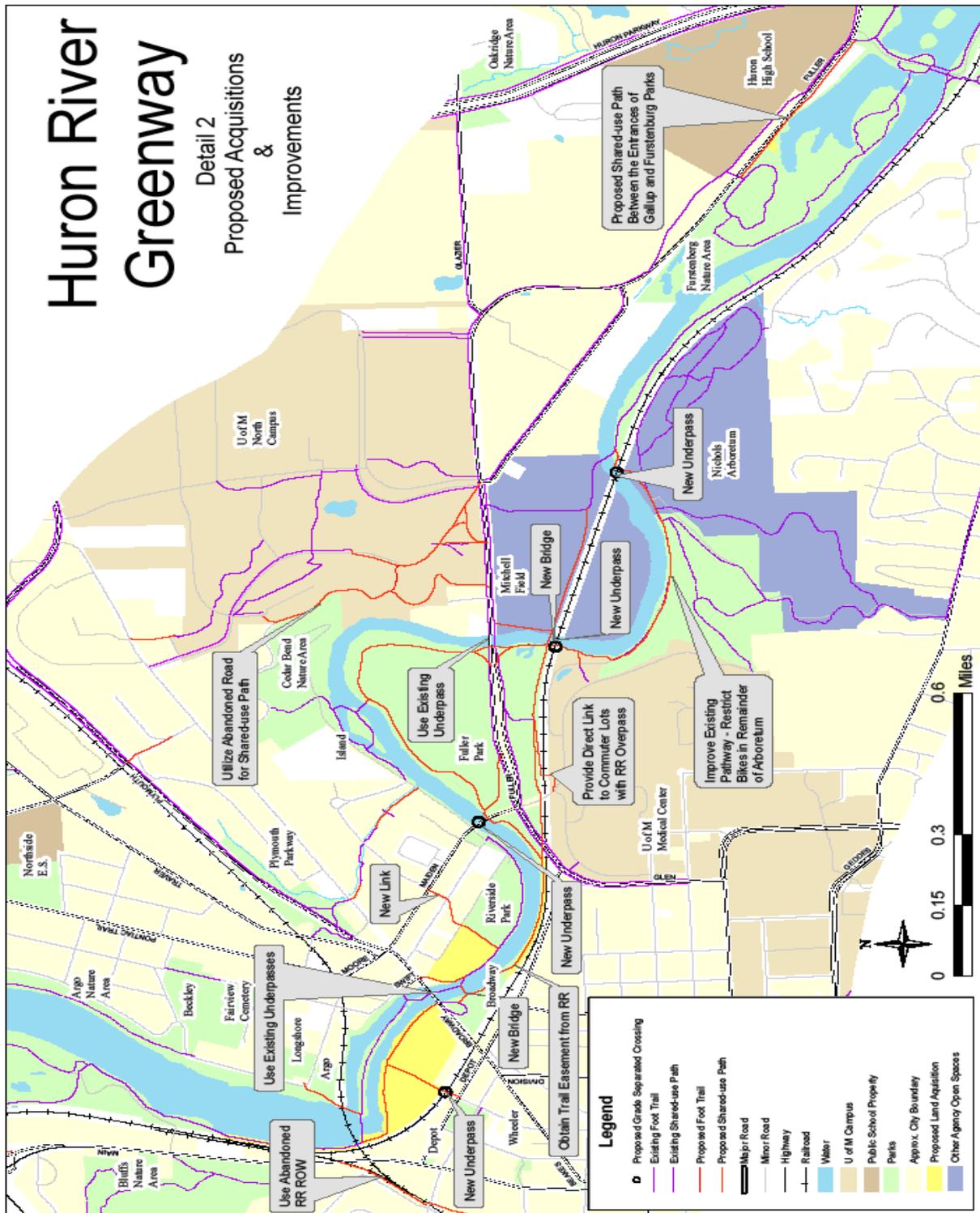
J. Greenway Maps

# Huron River Greenway

Proposed Acquisitions & Improvements











## SECTION IX: ACTION PLAN

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Numerous projects are completed in City parks every year. These may be large, capital improvements requiring larger amounts of funding, renovation projects completed by City staff, or special or ongoing projects completed by volunteers. As demonstrated in Section VIII (Major Park and Recreation System Infrastructure Needs Assessment), there are far more projects than can be completed over the course of this PROS Plan cycle, and it is a challenging task to determine priorities. Making matters more complicated, unanticipated projects arise that must be completed to maintain the operation of a facility or to assure safety of citizens.

In order to provide flexibility while addressing park system needs, several types of projects in the capital improvements plan are identified generally rather than as specific park projects. For example, the maintenance of trails and pathways was a high priority for residents; however, there are far more paths than can be repaired each year. There is also a desire to complete trail systems such as the Border-to-Border Trail. Consequently, two categories were developed for yearly attention to address both repair and development of trails. The order of their attention is based on the amount of use they receive, their condition, and safety. These are then reviewed each year to determine how much can be accomplished given the budget allocation.

A balance must also be achieved between types of projects to maintain what we have while keeping current with trends and providing desired amenities. For example, every year several recreation facilities, such as a pool or ice arena, receive some upgrade or modernization to accommodate customers, improve energy efficiency or barrier free access, and maintain the viability of the resource. Basic infrastructure, such as parking lots and restrooms, must also be repaired and updated and require significant financial resources. Additionally, larger new

amenities, such as a skate park, are desired and should be addressed to eliminate deficiencies within the park system. To provide a balance, the capital budget is divided between the different types of resources to assure that the entire system is addressed at some level. The exhaustive list provided in the previous chapter helps staff to make sure that they are referring back to priorities stated during the public process while developing the Capital Improvements Plan.

### **A. Staff Projects**

Staff projects include amenities such as drinking fountain replacement, interior restroom renovations, bench and picnic table renovations. These projects are completed on a rotating basis to keep facilities updated and to improve barrier free accessibility.

Each year, as time and budget permits, projects are identified, either in conjunction with other projects or as a group to improve efficiency. For example, drinking fountains were replaced at ten parks that were in need of upgrades for barrier free access. The parking lot at Bandemer Park is being repaved after the bridge repair to complete the appearance and usability of the lot.

### **B. Volunteer Projects**

Volunteer projects occur primarily in natural areas through the Natural Area Preservation Program as well as in other parks, through the Adopt-a-Park Program. The types of projects that have been traditionally completed include:

- Neighborhood groups volunteer to plant flowers at park signs, help to spread woodchips at playgrounds, and mulch around newly planted trees primarily at their local neighborhood park.
- Eagle Scouts often approach the parks staff to do construction projects to complete their badge requirements. Projects have included boardwalks, signs, small bridges, and pathways.
- Individuals and groups, such as schools, fraternities, sororities, and service groups, collect trash from parks, help clear trails, and plant trees.
- Work days are organized to clean up and plant flowers in the downtown and collect trash from the Huron River.

Expansion of the Adopt-a-Park program is envisioned to include more projects at recreation facilities. Incorporating more volunteers with programming, maintenance at facilities, planting, and flower bed maintenance is being explored.

## **C. Capital Projects**

The City of Ann Arbor's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) forms a starting point for the capital projects portion of the budget. Every two years the complete six-year plan is reviewed, modified, and updated. Projects considered to be capital improvements are generally large, expensive, and relatively permanent in nature.

The City staff and the City Planning Commission initiated changes to the CIP process to develop an improved manner in which to prioritize projects. In 2009, City teams were formed to identify capital needs associated with the various categories of infrastructure assets, such as streets, water treatment, and parks. A tool was developed to help prioritize needs and was customized within each service area to make it more pertinent to the type of asset being evaluated. These were then tied to availability of funding and capacity of staff to perform the projects.

Parks and Recreation staff developed and piloted a prioritization model to establish a more detailed, clear ranking of projects. In developing the tool, staff and key stakeholders met to create criteria and a ranking system that would be applicable to the park system, its facilities, and infrastructure assets. The criteria are weighted to convey the relative importance of each category. For example, safety and code compliance received a higher weighting than aesthetics. These were then plugged into a model that tallies the scores and the justification for the ranking.

The group that met to develop the criteria included Parks and Recreation Facility Supervisors, Maintenance Supervisors, Parks Manager, Park Planners, Forestry, and Natural Area Preservation staff. The criteria cover the breadth of issues that staff considered vital to park operations including safety, customer service, aesthetics, fiscal responsibility, and environmental sustainability. The Park Advisory Commission was also involved in the process, and was presented the final version.

In 2010, staff City-wide used the parks model as a basis for developing and expanding the criteria so that they could be applied to other areas of the City in developing the CIP. The list grew to include 12 criteria. Although a model suited to parks and recreation was developed, coordinating with other City service areas to use the same basis for evaluation seemed appropriate. However, after ranking projects with the new criteria, it was decided that several were not applicable to parks and recreation and were discarded. The rating model can be revisited to continue to develop the best possible tool.

## **D. Capital Projects Criteria**

Using this PROS Plan as the starting point, potential projects are evaluated and prioritized according to myriad factors. Projects are chosen each year according to the condition of the facility, community desires for amenities, and adherence to codes. Other factors, including ability to maintain an amenity and its financial impact, are important in rating projects. Playgrounds, for example, are replaced if there are dangerous components that cannot be repaired or if they no

longer meet safety or ADA guidelines. A heavily used asphalt path that is badly cracked would rank higher than a lower use path. Construction of new facilities that will create an additional maintenance burden have in recent years ranked lower because of the emphasis on taking care of existing parks in difficult financial times.

The rankings for the following criteria range from zero to ten, with specific scores assigned to descriptions detailed below. Bulleted points then illustrate examples to aid in assigning scores.

1. **Environmental Indicators – efficient energy use, contributes to clean water, clean air, local food sufficiency, responsible resource use, and viable ecosystems.**
  0. Project does not contribute to meeting any of the City’s environmental goals
    - Construct new parking lot with impermeable asphalt
  3. Project modestly contributes to meeting one of City’s environmental goals
    - Resurface parking lot with permeable surfacing
  7. Project significantly contributes to meeting one of the City’s environmental goals or modestly contributes to meeting several of the City’s environmental goals
    - Construct parking lot with innovative stormwater management elements
    - Restore prairie from turf grass to minimize mowing and improve stormwater quality
  10. Project significantly contributes to meeting several of the City’s environmental goals.
    - Replace impermeable asphalt lot with recycled materials/pervious pavement that exceed stormwater standards and improve water quality
    - Use recycled materials in construction or renovation of facility while incorporating use of solar energy or windmill in renovations of facility
2. **Safety/Regulatory Compliance – protects health, safety of citizens, addresses a known safety concern, eliminates hazards, creates an environment that encourages feeling of safety and wellbeing, and addresses code compliance.**
  0. Does not address safety
    - Asphalt walks seal coated, but cracks/trip hazards not addressed
    - Unsafe playground equipment is not replaced in a timely manner
    - Playground equipment does not meet standards set by Americans with Disabilities Act
  2. Contributes to meeting public safety, but is not required for compliance
    - Asphalt walks cracked, but no trip hazards: seal coat to maintain life of path

- Playground equipment outdated, but still meets safety codes, refill safety surfacing
5. Project improves safety standards
- Asphalt walks cracked, but no trip hazards: cracks filled to maintain surfacing
  - Playground area with some non-compliant elements, but minimal safety hazards: elements replaced
  - Branches on trees trimmed to maintain health or trees around play area are limbed up to allow for greater visibility
8. Project essential to protect safety and to meet necessary compliance
- Trees trimmed that have dead branches or are in area of play area or walk where someone could be injured
10. Contributes to mandatory compliance, significantly improves safety
- Asphalt walks cracked with trip hazards: replace walk with new
  - Playground area with safety hazards replaced in entirety to bring all elements into compliance with safety guidelines
  - Diseased/dead trees removed/replaced adjacent to use areas/user proximity and private property
3. **Social, Cultural, Recreational, and Aesthetic Considerations – provides cultural activities that enhance appreciation for the arts, appropriately utilize (while preserving and restoring) areas of natural, historical, or architectural significance, provide creative designs that beautify the park system, and provide environmental education opportunities that enhance appreciation of natural resources.**
0. Project does not address needs of community
- Facilities are not provided that are desired by the community
  - Funded facility only serves a small segment of the community
4. Project maintains status quo
- Basketball court resurfaced to maintain playability
  - Play area refurbished in same location and with similar equipment
7. Project upgrades existing facility to encourage greater use
- Replace gravel walk with asphalt to allow for wider range of users
  - Provide barrier free surfacing for existing play area
10. Project provides new facility/experience/program for underserved population
- Create an innovative, entirely barrier free play area that includes

programming opportunities

- Provide innovative facility for underserved population, such as skate park
- Construct a new park linkage, such as a route for bicycles and pedestrians that makes the river front accessible and/or connects parks

**4. User Experience (Level of Service) – assure that recreational opportunities are balanced throughout the park system, including passive and active, winter and summer, daytime and evening, structured and non-structured, natural areas and developed parks. Afford opportunities for all, regardless of age, socio-economic status, and physical ability. Provide high quality, well-built, state-of-the-art facilities.**

0. Project will reduce the quality of user experience
  - Layout of renovations is confusing for users
  - Lighting replacement not conducive to programming
2. Will not affect level of service
  - Upgrade a computer system that helps employees but from which customers do not benefit
  - Continue to minimally repair aging locker rooms
4. Modestly improves existing level of services: project addresses convenience and customer service
  - Provide technology to allow customers to register for classes at any facility
  - Cosmetic rehabilitation of locker rooms such as paint and flooring to improve aesthetics and cleanliness
10. Significantly improves existing level of service or provides a new service which is requested by the community, improves convenience and customer service
  - Provide technology for online registration of classes
  - Fully rehabilitate locker room facilities to provide barrier free accessible amenities, slip resistant flooring, hands-free sinks and toilets

**5. Financial Impact – achieves savings by generating or increasing revenue as well as reductions in energy costs and maintenance costs.**

0. Project increases operating and/or maintenance costs
  - Installation of a new soccer field, new areas to be mowed
  - Install new restroom in park area

2. Project has no effect on operations and/or maintenance costs
  - Replace a mower that has broken with the same type of mower
  
6. Project produces a net savings in operations and/or maintenance costs
  - Existing soccer field has automated irrigation added and field aerated
  - Take areas out of mowing to decrease energy costs and staff time
  - Replace lighting at shelters with LED lights
  
8. Project has probability of increasing revenue
  - Add splash pad at pool to attract more families/children
  - Add picnic shelter to increase rental opportunities
  
10. Project produces/increases revenue while decreasing energy costs
  - Renovate recreation facility to expand opportunities for new programming or event reservations while improving energy efficiency of structure
  
- 6. Operations and Maintenance (O&M) – achieves efficiencies and cost savings to maintain and operate park facilities, grounds, and amenities.**
  
0. Will cause increase in O&M costs
  - Construction of new paths, roads, restrooms, etc.
  
2. Has a neutral effect on O&M costs
  - Paths, roads, restrooms renovated with same materials
  
6. Makes modest contribution to O&M cost reduction
  - Turf grass removed and prairie planted – reduces mowing but still involves natural area maintenance
  
8. Makes modest contribution to O&M cost reduction and creates opportunities to improve operational flexibility/use of technology, or extends asset life
  - Replace aging compressors, dehumidifiers, etc. that save on staff maintenance and yearly repairs
  
10. Makes significant contribution to O&M cost reduction and creates opportunities to maximize operational flexibility/use of technology, or extends asset life, or utilizes materials or techniques that provide lowest overall life-cycle costs
  - Replacing roof system with materials that extend life, such as insulated metal roof that also reduces energy costs

7. **Master Plan Objectives – the PROS Plan is one element of the City Master Plan. This category would address not only the elements of the PROS Plan, but include objectives of other elements of the City Master Plan such as non-motorized transportation and land use.**
  0. Does not contribute to meeting any of the City’s master plan or other strategic planning document goals
    - Allowing facilities to become run down and not user friendly
  3. Modestly contributes to meeting one of the City’s master plan or other strategic planning document goals
    - Construction of new facilities that are not strong desires of the community and increase operating costs
  6. Significantly contributes to meeting one of the City’s master plan or other strategic goals or modestly contributes to meeting two or more of the City’s master plan or other strategic planning document goals
    - Improve stormwater quality by constructing rain gardens in parks
  10. Significantly contributes to meeting two or more of the City’s master plan or other strategic planning document goals
    - Completing segments of the Border to Border trail is consistent with the PROS Plan and the Non-motorized plan as well as forwarding the goals of reducing energy costs by providing pedestrian/bicycle corridors for commuters

#### **E. Major Categories of Capital Project Improvements**

From the above criteria, a yearly list of projects is developed. In order to prioritize projects and assure that funding is distributed in a manner that addresses infrastructure needs as well as programming and citizen desires, staff from recreation facilities, operations and maintenance, and planning and administration meet annually to evaluate needs. A potential list of projects is then compiled that furthers the goals of the PROS Plan. The general categories listed below help ensure that the broad scope of needs within the park system are addressed.

1. Recreation Facility Renovations – With the number and variety of facilities in the park system, there are multiple renovations that need to be made to maintain infrastructure, provide for programming opportunities, and update appearance. Improvements include larger capital projects, such as replacing the floor refrigeration system at an ice rink, to enhancing an existing facility, such as Gallup, to increase the ability to rent the meeting room for events and improve barrier free access.

## SECTION IX: Action Plan

2. Park Roads and Parking Lots – Several of the community-wide parks and facilities contain entry roads and parking lots that are in disrepair. In order to maintain safety and provide a positive user experience, these surfaces need to either be replaced or repaired, depending on their condition.
3. Trails and Pathways Repair and Reconstruction – With over 60 miles of trails and pathways in the park system, it is important to implement renovations for safety by eliminating trip hazards, and to bring them up to code for barrier free access and for current traffic standards.
4. Trails and Pathways New Construction – The PROS Plan as well as the Non-motorized Transportation Plan detail trail connections that would complete the Border-to-Border Trail, provide desired greenway connections, and provide connections to and through parks. These improvements are of high importance to the community as shown through the public input received.
5. Athletic Field Renovations – The park system contains multiple athletic fields, including baseball and softball, that have deteriorated over the years from heavy use. This category was included in the CIP to rebuild fields that need attention for safety and improve user experience.
6. Playground Improvements – Federal guidelines that determine design of playground equipment change periodically and, consequently, playgrounds must be updated or replaced. Replacement may also occur if repairs require such significant changes that it is more cost effective to install new equipment. Playgrounds are generally replaced on an approximately 15 to 20-year cycle.
7. Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations – In order to maintain the quality of the surface and safety of play, the surfacing and other court amenities such as basketball hoops, tennis posts and nets, are replaced and/or color coated.
8. Community-wide Parks – Include infrastructure such as picnic shelters, restrooms, landscaping, lighting, and signage, as well as proposed new elements.
9. Historic Preservation Projects – The structural integrity of historic structures, such as the Kempf House and Greek Revival Shelter at Island Park, is undermined over time due to weather, wildlife, and vandalism. These structures are renovated periodically to preserve them for future generations to enjoy.
10. Park Bridge Repair – Bridges throughout the park system along the Huron River and tributaries deteriorate over time and need to be repaired or replaced for safety.

## F. Draft Project Schedule for 2011-2015

The draft project schedule outlines projects completed in 2011 as well as a plan for 2012. Beyond 2012, the evaluation system will again need to be revisited to establish specific projects. Cost estimates are preliminary and will be adjusted as the scope of needs is developed.

The Allen Creek Greenway is not listed under a specific year as the construction of new trails and park areas are contingent upon land acquisition, master plan approval, and an implementation plan.

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>
<b><u>FY 2011 (complete except for Buhr steel painting)</u></b>	
Trails and Pathways – Repairs and Reconstruction	\$175,000
Veterans Memorial Park Maple Road path	
Cobblestone Farm service drive/walk	
Easy Street entrance to Buhr Park	
Playground Improvements	\$100,000
Wheeler Park	
Bader Park	
Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations	\$150,000
Veterans Memorial Park tennis courts	
Recreation Facility Renovations	\$150,000
Buhr Park Ice Arena steel painting	
Community-wide Park Renovations	\$250,000
West Park	
<b><u>FY 2012</u></b>	
Trails and Pathways – Repairs and Reconstruction	\$175,000
Riverside Park entry path	
Leslie Science and Nature Center barrier free path to raptor enclosures	
Playground Improvements	\$150,000
Winewood Thaler	
Beckley	
Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations	\$150,000
West Park tennis courts and retaining wall	
Park Roads and Parking Lots	\$250,000
Buhr Park entry drive and pool/arena parking lot	
Riverside Park entry drive and parking lot	
Recreation Facility Renovations	\$450,000
Gallup Park Canoe Livery	
Athletic Fields	\$150,000

SECTION IX: Action Plan

West Veterans Historic Preservation Projects	\$100,000
Island Park Greek Revival Shelter West Park Pergola	
Skate Park Facility (privately funded)	\$1,000,000

**FY 2013**

Trails and Pathways – New Construction	\$200,000
Trails and Pathways – Repairs and Reconstruction	\$250,000
Playground Improvements	\$270,000
Clinton Park Placid Way Park	
Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations	\$150,000
Clinton Park	
Park Roads and Parking Lots	\$250,000
Recreation Facility Renovations	\$250,000
Park Bridge Repairs	\$100,000
Athletic Field Renovations	\$100,000
Clinton Park	

**FY 2014**

Trails and Pathways – New Construction	\$175,000
Trails and Pathways – Repairs and Reconstruction	\$175,000
Playground Improvements	\$250,000
Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations	\$150,000
Park Roads and Parking Lots	\$250,000
Recreation Facility Renovations	\$250,000

**FY 2015**

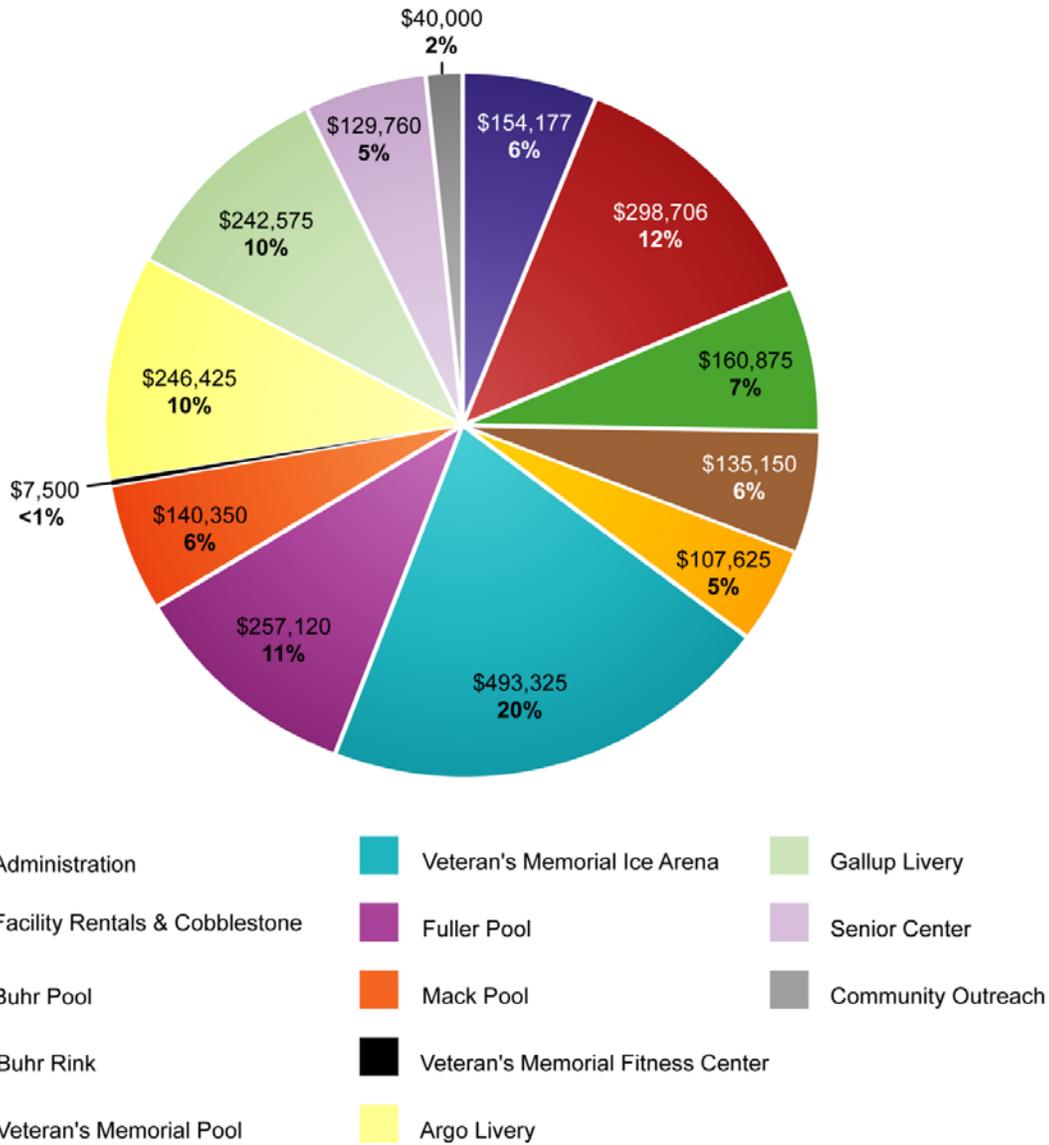
Trails and Pathways – New Construction	\$200,000
Trails and Pathways – Repairs and Reconstruction	\$200,000
Playground Improvements	\$175,000
Tennis and Basketball Court Renovations	\$200,000
Park Roads and Parking Lots	\$300,000
Recreation Facility Renovations	\$200,000
Athletic Field Renovations	\$200,000
Historic Preservation Projects	\$100,000

# **APPENDIX SECTION A:**

## **Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Charts**

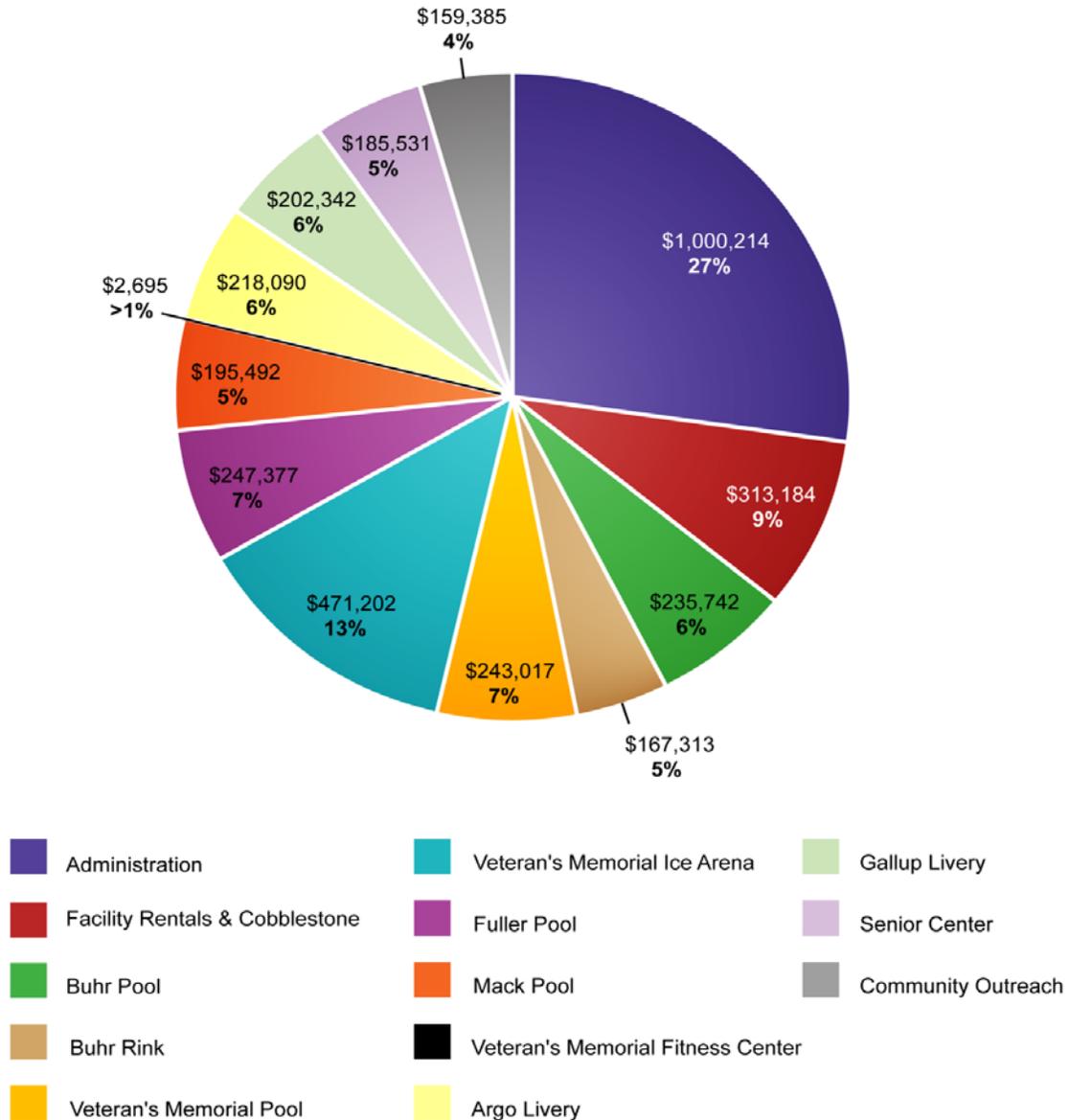
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**PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES**  
*General Fund*  
**FY2011 REVENUE BUDGET**  
 Total \$2,413,588



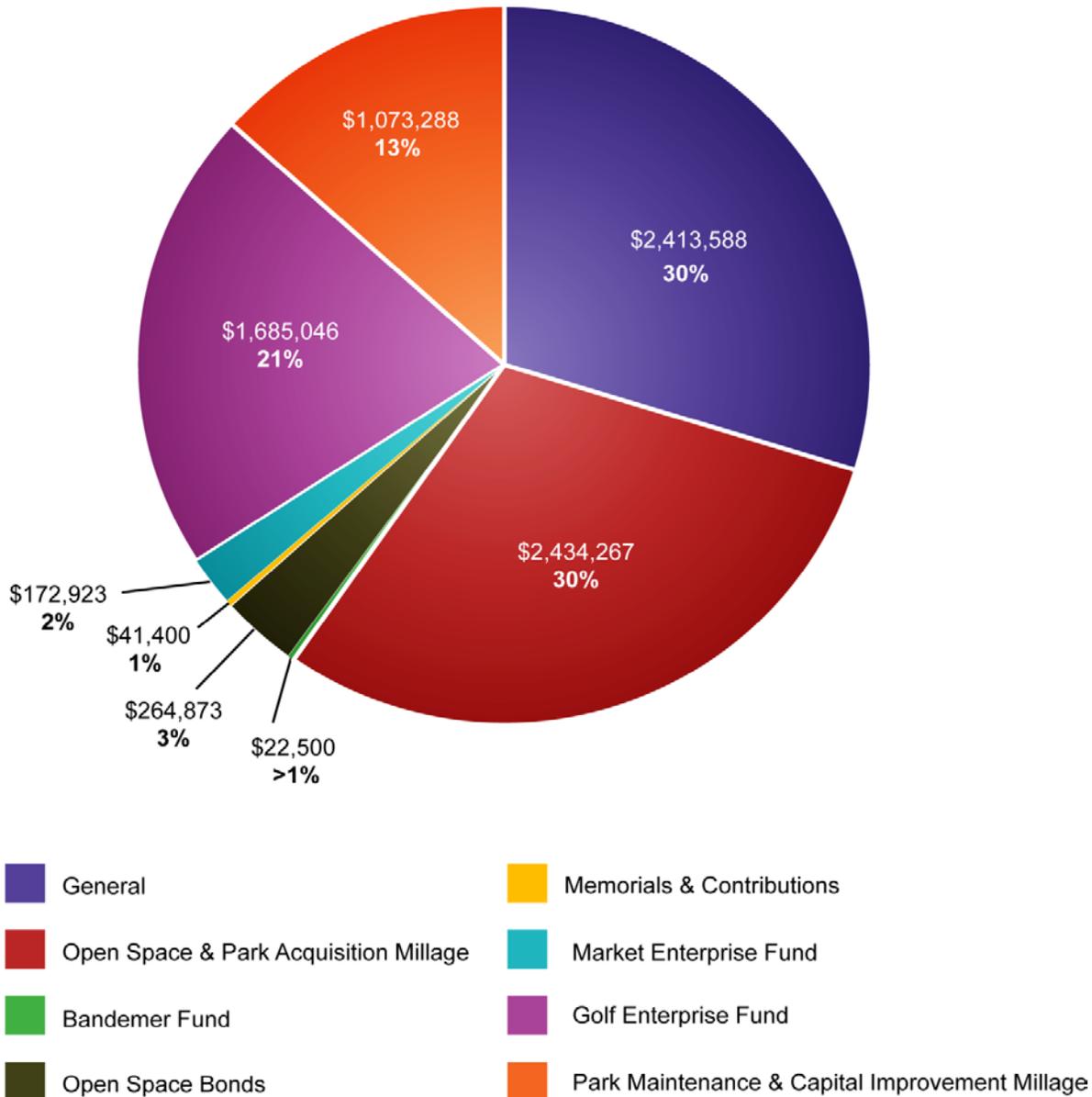
This chart shows the Parks & Recreation Services General Fund revenue budget for FY2011. Revenues are tied to the facility that generates the revenue. For example, Buhr Pool revenue is comprised of fees collected for season passes, daily swimming admission, swim lessons, swim team registrations, day camp registrations, and concessions. Revenue collected in Administration is generally not program specific – for example, fees collected for the lease of parking spaces to the University of Michigan is recognized in Administration. In totality, revenues that the park facilities generate are exceeded by the cost to operate them.

**PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES**  
*General Fund*  
**FY2011 EXPENSE BUDGET**  
 Total \$3,641,584



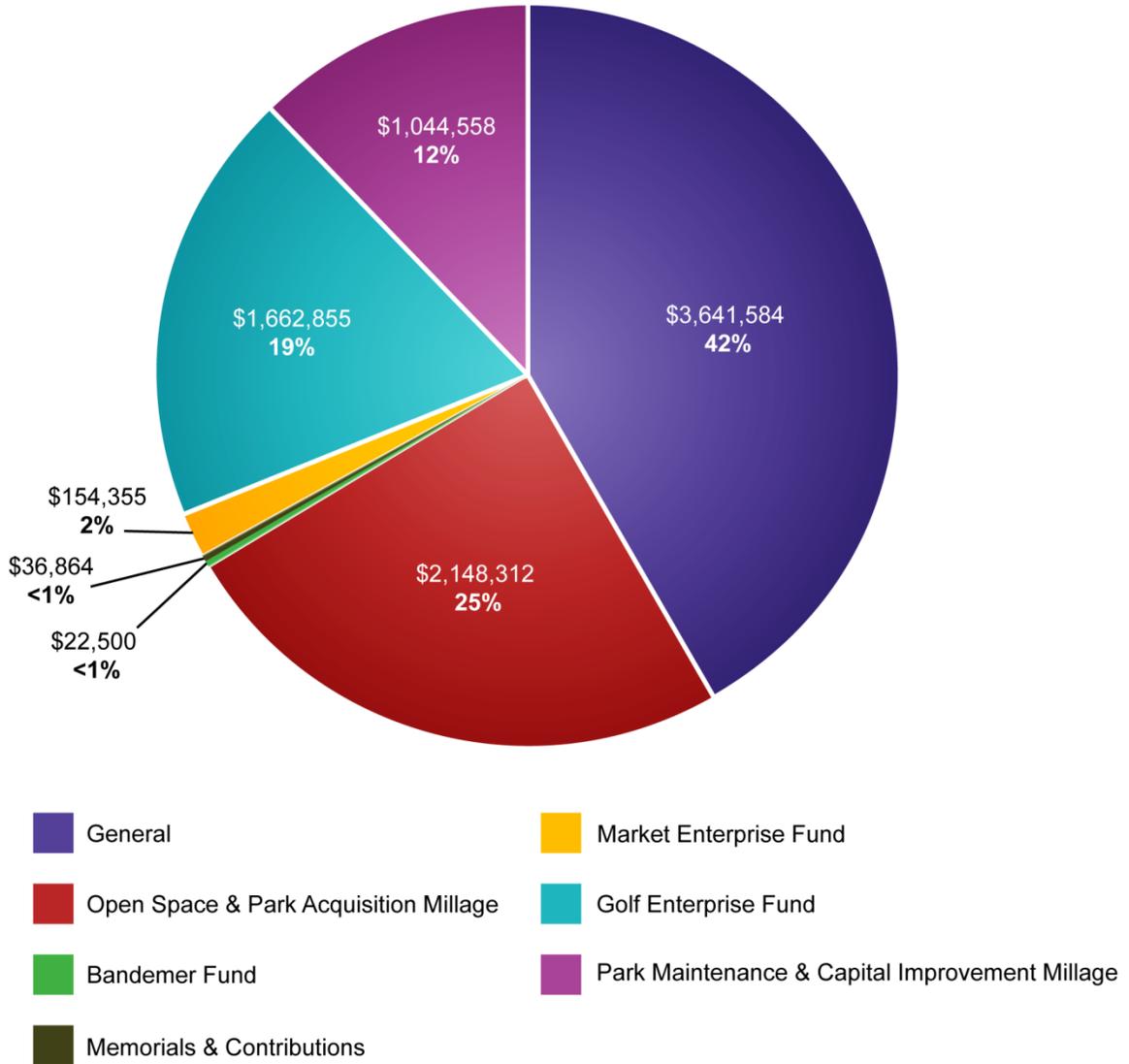
This chart shows the Parks and Recreation Services General Fund expense budget for FY2011. Expenses are tied to the appropriate facility. For example, Buhr Pool expenses are comprised of full-time staff and fringe benefits, seasonal staff, utility and water costs, materials and supplies, pool chemicals, information technology charges, and other operational expenses. Administration expenses include staff, significant medical retiree costs, insurance premiums, stormwater charges, information technology charges, and other operating costs.

**PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES**  
*All Funds*  
**FY2011 REVENUE BUDGET**  
 Total \$8,107,885



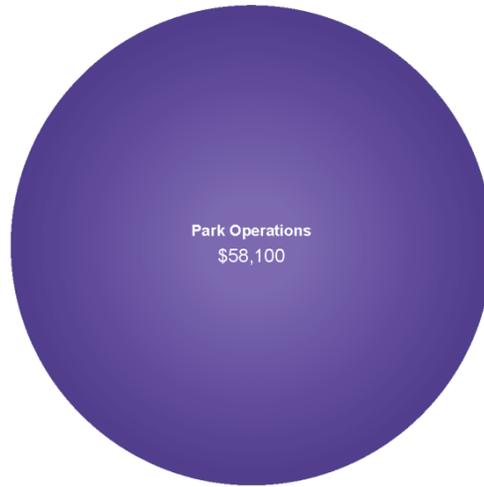
This chart shows the Parks and Recreation Services revenue budget for all funds for FY2011. Revenues are tied to the specific fund that generates the revenue. The chart demonstrates the complexity of the Parks and Recreation Services budget, with 8 unique funds. For example, the Golf Enterprise Fund includes all revenue generated at Huron Hills and Leslie Park Golf Courses.

**PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES**  
*All Funds*  
**FY2011 EXPENSE BUDGET**  
 Total \$8,711,028



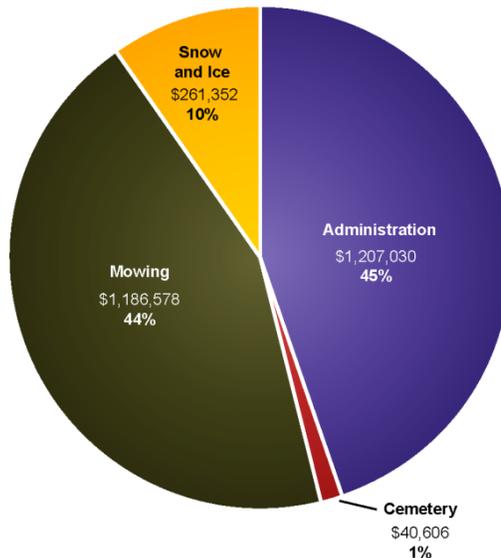
This chart shows the Parks and Recreation Services expense budget for all funds for FY2011. The chart demonstrates the complexity of the Parks and Recreation Services budget, with 7 unique funds. Expenses are tied to appropriate funds. For example, the Golf Enterprise Fund includes all expenses related to the operations of Huron Hills and Leslie Park Golf Courses.

PARK OPERATIONS  
*General Fund*  
 FY2011 **REVENUE BUDGET**  
 Total \$58,100



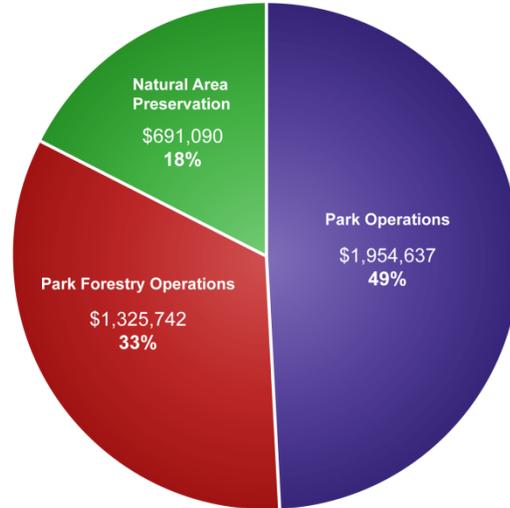
The Park Operations General Fund Revenue budget consists of a few minor items, such as fees collected from the Ann Arbor Public School system for field preparation. In totality, revenues that the parks generate are exceeded by the cost to operate them.

PARK OPERATIONS  
*General Fund*  
 FY2011 **EXPENSE BUDGET**  
 Total \$2,695,566



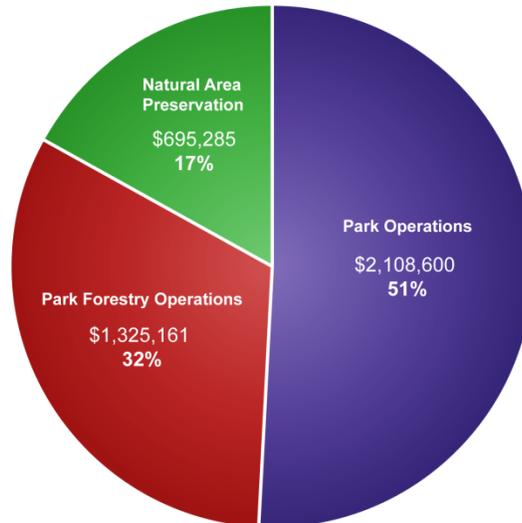
The Park Operations General Fund Expense budget pie chart shows how the General Fund is used for a relatively limited number of essential functions such as mowing, snow and ice maintenance, and administrative costs, including retiree health costs and debt service for the Parks portion of the Wheeler maintenance center.

PARK OPERATIONS, FORESTRY  
AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION  
*Park Maintenance & Capital Improvement Millage Fund*  
FY2011 **REVENUE BUDGET**  
Total \$3,971,469



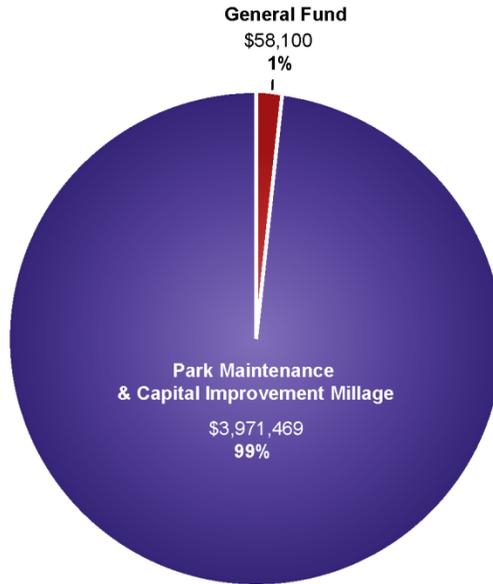
The Park Operations Millage revenue fund pie chart shows how the millage supports three primary functions: forestry operations in the Parks, maintenance in the Parks and Recreation Facilities, and the Natural Area Preservation Program.

PARK OPERATIONS, FORESTRY  
AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION  
*Park Maintenance & Capital Improvement Millage Fund*  
FY2011 **EXPENSE BUDGET**  
Total \$4,129,046



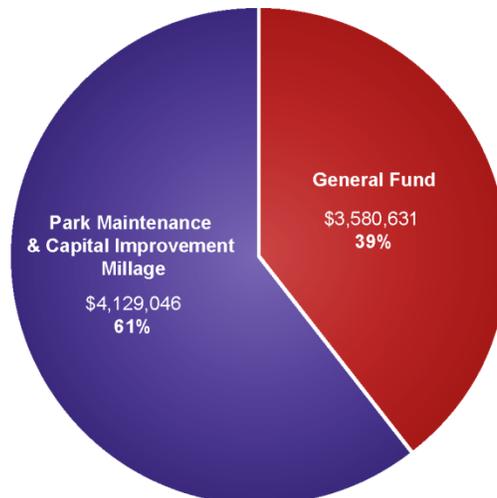
The Park Operations Millage expense fund pie chart shows how the millage generated revenue supports three primary maintenance functions: forestry operations in the Parks, maintenance in the Parks and Recreation Facilities, and the Natural Area Preservation Program.

PARK OPERATIONS, FORESTRY  
AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION  
*All Funds*  
FY2011 **REVENUE BUDGET**  
Total \$4,029,569



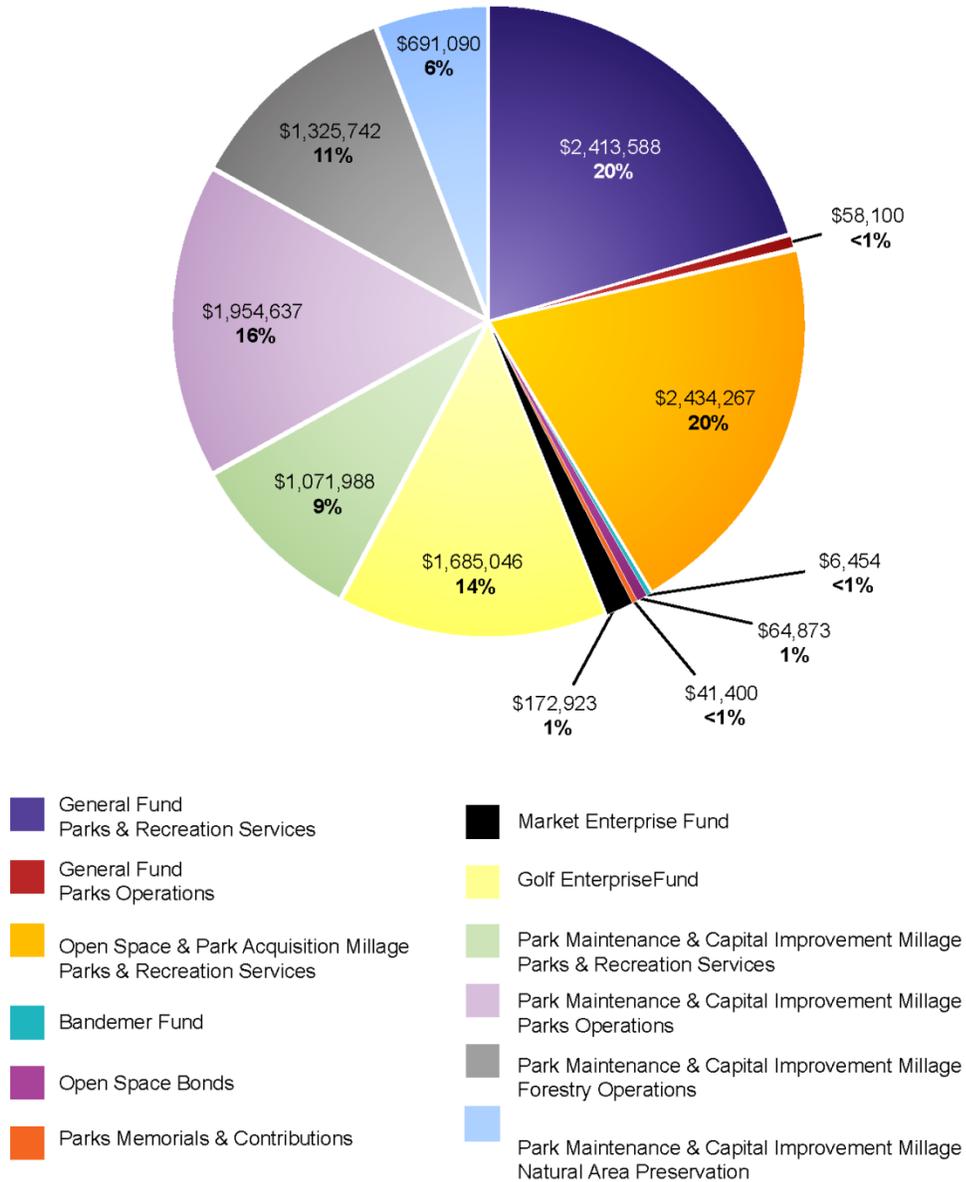
This pie chart shows how Park Operations generates and receives revenue from two funds.

PARK OPERATIONS, FORESTRY  
AND NATURAL AREA PRESERVATION  
*All Funds*  
FY2011 **EXPENSE BUDGET**  
Total \$6,824,612



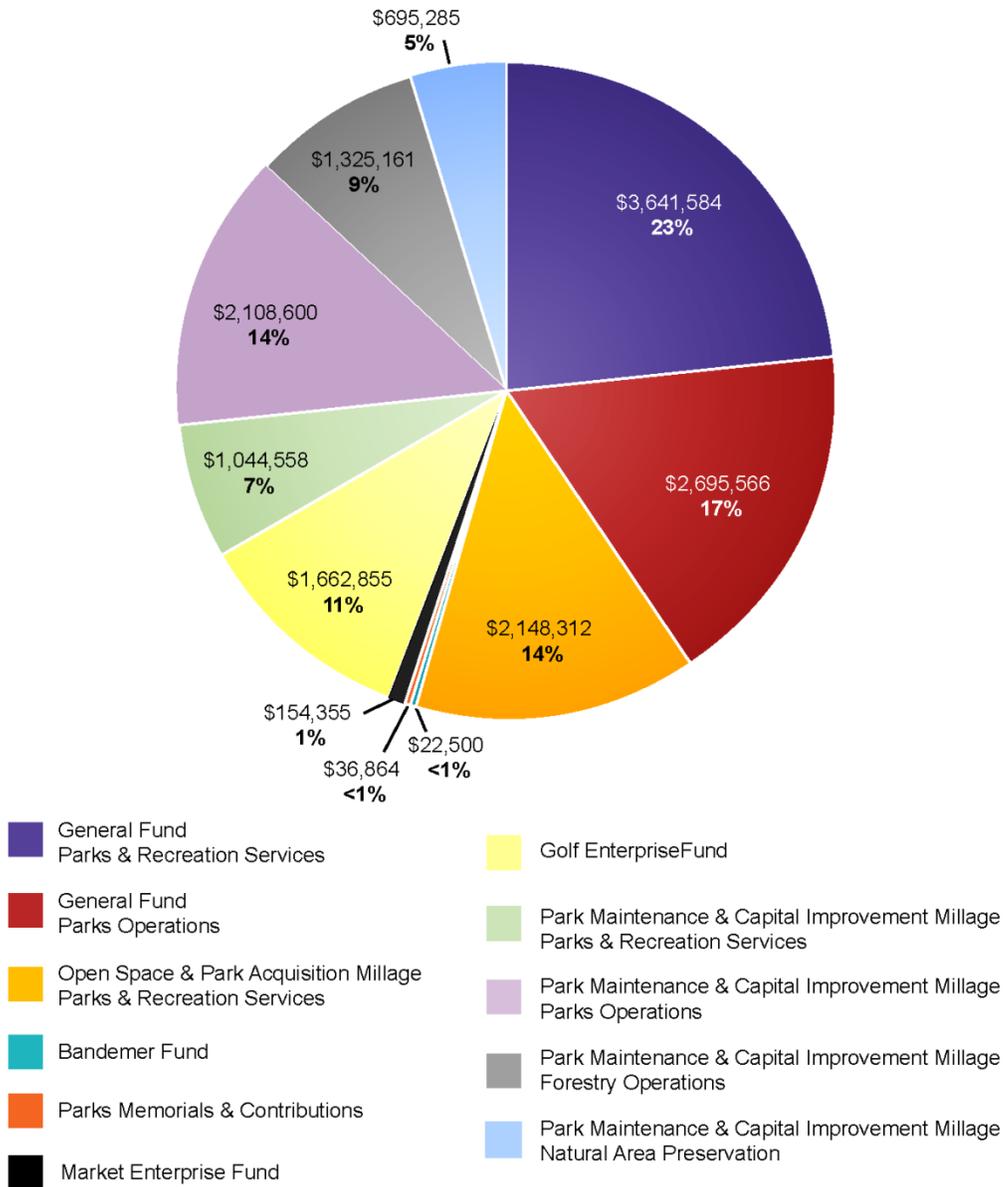
This pie chart shows how Park Operations expenditures are budgeted in two funds. It also demonstrates the importance and necessity of the millage for supporting ongoing operations within the Parks System.

**TOTAL PARK SYSTEM  
FY2011 REVENUE BUDGET**  
Total \$11,926,094



This chart shows the Parks revenue budget for all funds for FY2011. The chart demonstrates the complexity of the Parks and Recreation Services budget, and the number of different funds. Revenues are tied to the specific fund or activity that generates the revenue. For example, the General Fund for Parks and Recreation Services includes all revenue generated at General Fund Recreation Facilities through admissions, program registrations, lessons, concession, merchandise, and other revenue-generating programs. A smaller fund, such as the Market Enterprise, comprises of revenue generated solely at the Farmers Market.

**TOTAL PARK SYSTEM  
FY2011 EXPENSE BUDGET**  
Total \$15,535,640



This chart shows the entire Park System expense budget for all funds for FY2011. The chart demonstrates the complexity of the Parks and Recreation Services budget, and the number of different funding sources. Expenses are tied to the appropriate fund or activity. For example, the Golf Enterprise Fund includes all expenses associated with the operation of the City’s golf courses.

# **APPENDIX SECTION B:**

## **Resolutions**

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RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE 2011-2015  
PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN

Whereas, The Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS) has expired and the updated PROS Plan must be approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources by April 1, 2011;

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires that the PROS Plan be updated every 5 years and that the City must provide an updated plan to be eligible to apply for grants;

Whereas, the PROS Plan is an important guiding document for all future planning for the Ann Arbor Park System and part of the City master plan;

Whereas, A City-wide email survey, focus groups, public meetings and public hearings as well as other input processes were completed as part of preparing the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan;

Whereas, Public review of the draft plan has been completed including all surrounding municipalities, townships, Washtenaw County, and public utilities as required to incorporate the PROS Plan as part of the City of Ann Arbor's Master Plan; and

Whereas, A comprehensive list of facility improvements, recreation needs and park improvements was developed to provide the basis for millage renewals and capital improvements as a result of the public input;

RESOLVED, That the Park Advisory Commission recommends approval of the 2011-2015 PROS Plan.

Park Advisory Commission  
February 15, 2011

*On a voice vote in addition to a show of hands – **Motion Passed** to Recommend Approval of the 2011 – 2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan*

**PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES STAFF REPORT**  
**For Planning Commission Meeting of February 15, 2011**

**SUBJECT: 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan**

***PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION***

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby supports the draft 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan and recommends that the Mayor and City Council approve the plan for submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

***PROPOSED CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MOTION***

The Ann Arbor City Planning Commission hereby adopts the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan as a Citywide element of the Ann Arbor City Master Plan.

***STAFF RECOMMENDATION***

Staff recommends that the Master Plan: Land Use Element be **adopted** as an element of the City of Ann Arbor's Master Plan. Staff also recommends that the draft 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan be forwarded to City Council for its **approval**. City Council action on the plan is necessary for the City to be eligible for upcoming State grant deadlines.

***STAFF REPORT***

The Parks and Recreation Services Unit updates the Parks and Recreation Open Space (PROS) Plan every five years to retain funding eligibility with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). This plan will replace the 2006-2011 PROS Plans.

The process used by Parks and Recreation Services and the Park Advisory Commission was initiated approximately 18 months ago. A steering committee was formed comprised of staff from Parks and Recreation Services as well as Planning and Development Services, representatives from the Park Advisory Commission and the Recreation Advisory Commission, a Planning Commission Member, and a member of City Council. Planning Commission member Erica Briggs volunteered to represent the Planning Commission on this committee and has been actively involved in the development of the plan.

## Appendix

In the summer of 2010, Parks and Recreation Services staff along with the steering committee designed an on-line survey in which over 800 individuals participated and answered questions concerning their satisfaction levels with parks and recreation services. The survey provided substantial information about condition of park and recreation facilities and services and provided staff with a better understanding of issues facing the system. Additional input was solicited in the form of interviews with parks personnel, public meetings with the Park Advisory Commission, Recreation Advisory Commission and the Planning Commission. In addition, the draft plan was distributed to adjoining jurisdictions and has been available for public review on the City's website.

Planning staff participated in the process of developing the plan from the early stages of the planning process. The plan provides comprehensive information on the condition of the park, recreation and opens space systems and provides guidance to future decision makers.

Any proposed Planning Commission modifications to the draft plan will be forwarded to City Council in a separate memorandum.

Prepared by Jeff Kahan  
Reviewed by Wendy Rampson  
2/11/11

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Sumedh Bahl, Community Services Administrator

DATE: March 7, 2011

SUBJECT: Resolution to Approve the City of Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, 2011-2015

Attached for your review and approval is the final draft of the 2011-2015 Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS). The Parks and Recreation Services Unit updates the PROS Plan every five years to retain funding eligibility with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, whose grants have provided millions of dollars for project construction and land acquisition. This plan will replace the 2006-2011 PROS Plan.

The PROS Plan is the guiding document for the Parks and Recreation system. It provides a vision for the future, as well as an overview of services and programs, an inventory of parkland and amenities, an explanation of the budget and land acquisition process, and the long term goals for the park system. The Plan is an element of the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan and as such is considered a vital piece of the larger vision for the City.

The process to update the plan was initiated approximately twelve months ago. A steering committee was formed composed of staff from Parks and Recreation Services, Public Services and Planning Services, two members of the Parks Advisory Commission, two Recreation Advisory Commission members, one Planning Commission member, one City Council member, and the director of the Downtown Development Authority. The committee met every month for approximately 5 months to provide direction for the planning process.

In June/July 2010 an email survey was conducted in which over 820 residents answered questions concerning their satisfaction levels with parks and recreation services as well as future potential amenities and programs. Additional input was obtained through focus groups, public meetings and via email. In addition, the draft plan was available at the public libraries and on the City's internet website. The draft plan was also sent to surrounding communities, utility companies and planning organizations. Public hearings were held at the Park Advisory Commission on January 18 and City Planning Commission on February 1, 2011. Comments were incorporated into the plan from these hearings, as well as those received from the public.

Prepared by: Amy Kuras, Landscape Architect II  
Reviewed by: Colin Smith, Parks & Recreation Services Manager  
Sumedh Bahl, Community Services Area Administrator  
Approved by: Roger W. Fraser, City Administrator

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN, 2011-2015

Whereas, the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan (PROS) is the guiding document for future planning for the Ann Arbor Park System;

Whereas, The Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires that the PROS Plan be updated every 5 years and that the City must provide an updated plan to be eligible to apply for grants;

Whereas, The PROS Plan expired in December, 2010 and must be renewed by April 1, 2011;

Whereas, An extensive public input process was implemented, including a City-wide email survey, focus groups, public meetings, and a steering committee as part of preparing the Plan;

Whereas, Public review of the draft plan was completed including all surrounding municipalities, townships, Washtenaw County, and public utilities as required to incorporate the PROS Plan as part of the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan;

Whereas, A comprehensive list of facility, recreation and park improvement needs was developed to provide the basis for millage renewals and capital improvements as a result of the public input; and

Whereas, The Park Advisory Commission and City Planning Commission approved the Draft Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, 2011-2015 for inclusion in the City Master Plan consistent with State law;

RESOLVED, That City Council approve the Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan, 2011-2015 as part of the City of Ann Arbor Master Plan

Submitted by: Parks and Recreation  
Date: March 7, 2011  
Approved by: City Attorney