



DELTA
TOWNSHIP



2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

A great place to live, work, and play!

Acknowledgments

The Delta Charter Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan was a cooperative effort by Delta Charter Township, the Township Parks and Recreation Department, the Township Park, Recreation, and Cemeteries Commission, the Township Board, and the Citizens of Delta Township.

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Introduction

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space are important elements of all communities and provide many recreational, social, and environmental benefits that contribute to a high quality of life. Delta Township has recognized the importance of proper recreation planning and has chosen to take an active role in the delivery of recreational opportunities by developing the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Recreation planning is an exercise engaged by local governments to anticipate change, and to promote the development and expansion of recreational facilities and services for the benefit of its community. Parks and recreation facilities provide many benefits to the community and the natural environment. Parks provide people with a place to gather, be active, socialize, and connect with the environment and community. Green infrastructure also enhances the livability of a community by increasing property values and

connecting the community. Having the ability to recreate has also been shown to improve the quality of life by contributing to overall mental and physical health and reducing obesity brought on by inactivity. As the community continues to grow and change over time, the Township continues to dedicate themselves to improving recreational offerings for its citizens. This plan represents the culmination of the planning efforts of the community and local officials; and reflects the Township's desire to blend the available recreational resources and activities with the environmental and cultural elements of the community.

PLAN PURPOSE

The 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan is a guide for the future development of recreation facilities in Delta Township. It is an adaptive tool to help the Parks Department prioritize future park improvements in a way that elevates the

role of the parks and recreation system in the daily lives of all Delta Township residents in the years to come. Driven by community priorities and the mission of the Township, the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will serve as a guiding document for policy decisions, prioritizing and balancing demands and opportunities, and providing a framework for evaluating future land acquisitions, park improvements, and recreation programs.

The plan also provides recommendations for park facilities, programs, and services; maintenance operations; administration and management; and capital improvements. The Township recognizes the significant role that recreation plays in providing a high quality of life and improved physical health of its citizens. This appreciation has been manifested in this effort to update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the hopes of improving local park systems and public trails, promoting the preservation of natural areas, and establishing a strong commitment to strengthening a sense of community. This plan provides the data and direction to ensure that parks and recreation offerings are aligned with the community needs and values. The plan addresses current recreation issues and identifies and prioritizes future needs of the community and the means for meeting those needs over the upcoming five-year period.

In addition, the Open Space Plan aligns with the statewide planning process. Every five years the Township is required to submit a master plan to the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to become eligible for recreation grant funding. The planning process incorporated community feedback toward the development of all MDNR plan components and was submitted to the State in February 2023.

PLAN SCOPE

The scope of this plan includes suggestions for the management, improvement, and expansion



of the recreation system within Delta Township. The plan also considers recreational facilities within the county and neighboring townships that are available to citizens of the Delta Township community.

Key planning issues are identified, a clear set of goals and objectives are outlined, and specific implementation strategies are identified. The scope will include all of the Township's recreation facilities, undeveloped open space, trail systems, and recreational programming. The area of the planning effort is essentially limited to the Township boundaries. However, consideration is also made of regional facilities that influence use patterns. The use of Township facilities by residents living in the surrounding communities, which may have limited recreation facilities of their own, is also a consideration of the planning process. In terms of an implementation time-line, the Action Program section of this document covers development over the next five years.

TOWNSHIP WIDE COORDINATION

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan comes during a time of multiple township-wide planning efforts that invest in community health and equitable access to natural resources. Key ideas from the plan build on and reinforce investment in connectivity improvements and preservation of natural areas. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan builds upon the following recent township-wide planning efforts that have

established a strong framework for the future of Deltas' public realm:

2022 Capital Improvement Plan

In 2021 the Township developed the 2022-2027 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), a 6-year community plan focusing on projects that represent continued investment in the Delta community to help enhance the local economy and improve the quality of life for residents of Delta Township. Of the many projects established in the CIP, several align with the Parks and Recreation Plan including sidewalks and non-motorized facilities, restroom building at Delta Mills Park, baseball fields at Mt Hope Park, and a perimeter pathway at Mt Hope Park.

2021 Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan articulates strategic goals that provide focus in providing exceptional services, improving the quality of life for township residents, and enhancing the uniqueness of the Delta community. The plan includes objectives related to parks and recreation that include continued improvements to parks and non-motorized facilities, expansion of community events, public art, infrastructure improvements, and branding.

2020 Building and Site Assessment

The Township performed a condition evaluation and assessment of a number of community facilities in order to understand and plan for potential renovations, upgrades, and replacements that may be needed to some of the aging facilities. This assessment included park facilities such as the Drolett Community Center, the Enrichment Center, and the Parks and Recreation maintenance building and storage building. The study provided recommendations and potential costs for improvements to these park facilities which may be incorporated in to this plan's action plan.

2019 Placemaking Strategic Plan

In collaboration with the Greater Lansing Arts Council, the township engaged in an engagement process through the CREATE PLACE program to identify future placemaking opportunities using the arts as a driver of community and economic development. The Delta Township Placemaking Committee and community stakeholders developed a list of projects and implementation strategies that could revitalize, invigorate, and activate public spaces in creative ways. The projects discussed align with the Parks and Recreation Plan including a farmer's market, concerts and festivals, public art such as murals, and winter festivals.

2018 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

The Township recognized the need to provide the community with non-motorized connections and opportunities for social engagement, exercise, and mobility that provides benefits to quality of life and economic development. The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan was developed to plan for safe routes within the Township to connect neighborhoods, schools, parks, and shopping districts. The plan also provides priority routes, implementation strategies, and funding sources. The plan reinforces the Township's commitment to enhance the safety, access, convenience and comfort of all users of all ages and abilities through design, implementation, and maintenance of a non-motorized transportation network.

2013 Comprehensive Plan

The Township's Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2013 and focuses on issues on which township policy can have a direct impact such as land use, economic development, zoning, and other quality of life aspects. The plan responds to the current and future needs of the township, and outlines the community's vision for the future of Delta. The Parks and Recreation Plan will complement the Comprehensive plan for how township leaders approach public green space.

THRIVING PARK SYSTEM

The 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan considers all aspects of the previous 2018 plan update including physical assets and community needs within Delta. Many elements and goals of the 2018 plan remain relevant when considering improvements to today's park system and community. This updated plan maintains and expands upon these components where appropriate. The previous plan documented conditions and trends at the time and contained many ideas for improvements; some of which have been realized. The following identifies changes to the park system since the previous update:

Mount Hope Park

- Park development – utilities and parking
- 2 youth baseball/softball fields
- Multi-use sports fields
- Playscape w/ADA features
- Picnic Shelter
- Restrooms w/concessions
- 1.4 miles of paved pathway
- Install bike fix station (2022)
- 2 more ballfields completed by 2023
- 1.5 miles of paved pathway completed by 2023

Sharp Park

- Outdoor Exercise Equipment
- Library Story Walk
- Grant to demolish and replace existing picnic shelter (2024)
- Grant to build new restrooms next to new shelter (2024)

Delta Mills Park

- New restroom facility
- ½ mile paved pathway thru park which connects to Hunter's Orchard Park
- ADA & able-bodied paddle boat launches
- Fishing dock
- Small playground and new basketball court
- Cricket pitch to be completed summer 2022

Hunter's Orchard Park

- Grant to complete paving of all trails. ~ 1.8 miles (2023)

Hawk Meadow Park

- Grant to complete paving of ~ 1.75 miles of trail (2023)

West Willow Canoe Launch

- Develop new park, paved parking lot and sidewalks
- ADA & able-bodied paddle boat launches
- Small picnic/observation area
- Pollinator garden

Pathways

- East – West Pathway - Install 2 bike fix stations
- Added 6.25 miles of bike lanes
- Completion of the Waverly Road Pathway



COVID-19: A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

It is important to acknowledge that this plan update comes on the heels of a global pandemic which has impacted local park usage as well as the rise in awareness about the importance of public space. On January 21, 2020, the first documented case of SARS-CoV-2 was confirmed in the United States, and on March 10, 2020, the state of Michigan declared an emergency upon confirming the state's first two cases of coronavirus. Michigan schools were closed by executive order on March 12, 2020 and a state-wide stay-at-home order was issued by Governor Whitmer on March 23, 2020. Public and private gatherings outside of family homes were banned, businesses temporarily closed, people worked from home, and other than going to grocery stores or seeking medical treatment, most Michiganders stayed home (except essential workers).

As the world seemed to shut down, community residents rediscovered the idea of parks and trails for activity and entertainment. The pandemic thus reminded us of something that has been true all along: parks and trails are essential to the health and wellbeing of people and communities. As neighborhood hubs, parks are part of a larger solution to community wellbeing, bringing a deeper resilience that not only helps us make it through COVID-19 but enables us to thrive after.

Park Usage During Covid

As residents continue to navigate new social norms during the pandemic, parks have become a place to maintain a sense of normalcy. Local and state park agencies reported a large increase in visitation, on average a 30% increase, as people ventured outside to play golf and flood parks and recreational centers. Delta Township also saw a significant rise in park use during this time. Being in outdoor environments made it easier to follow CDC guidelines of keeping 6-feet of distance from others, which minimizes the chance of contracting COVID-19.

In addition, keeping the outdoors accessible to the public during the lock down also had major impacts on both mental and physical health. Spending time in nature has been proven to combat depression, calm anxiety, increase generosity and empathy, and decrease negative thoughts.

Delta Township Response to Covid

Although the parks in the township were not officially closed, the playgrounds were closed off with caution tape. Delta residents could engage in outdoor activities such as walking, hiking, running, cycling, or other recreational activities consistent with remaining at least six feet from people.

The township did endure a loss in revenue from canceled programs and facility rentals. Although the exact amount of revenue loss for programs was not calculated, the Township did process approximately \$25,000 in refunds for booked facility rentals in 2020-21, and another \$9,000-\$12,000 loss for potential rentals early 2021. The Township was also not able to hire seasonal staff who would normally maintain the parks from spring-fall and therefore all of the full-time staff spent many hours doing park maintenance and landscape work. In addition, the township spent a large amount of budgeted dollars purchasing masks, sanitizers, cleaning materials, and clear shields.



When the stay-in-place mandate was lifted in June 2020, the playgrounds were reopened. Beginning in July 2020, the Township began to hold outdoor exercise classes which became very popular in the fall of 2020. Classes such as Youth Dance, Yoga, Zumba, Pilates, and more were held outside and many of those classes continue today in the summer months. Also, beginning in May 2020, the Township held free virtual youth dance classes. Multiple other fitness classes were held virtually beginning in fall of 2020. In November of 2020, small indoor groups were allowed back indoors for class. Virtual classes and hybrid classes (combined in-person and virtual) were held until March 2021. The township's largest event, the fireworks show, were canceled in both 2020 and 2021, but resumed in 2022.



Community Description

PLAN JURISDICTION

This section is intended to describe the jurisdiction and focus of the master plan, provide a brief overview of the community, and identify important community based factors that should be considered in parks and recreational planning. This Master Plan has been prepared to serve Delta Township and focuses on all aspects of the Township's parks and recreation facilities and programs. Recreational facilities and programs that serve adjacent communities have also been considered and incorporated into this planning document. The plan is intended to contribute to the quality of life for the residents and visitors of the Delta community, but also provide recreational experiences to the residents in adjacent communities within the county.

REGIONAL SETTING

Delta Township is located in central lower Michigan in the northeastern corner of Eaton County. The Township's northern and eastern borders are shared with the counties of Clinton and Ingham respectively. Delta Township is bordered by Watertown Township and the City of DeWitt to the North, Oneida Township and the City of Grand Ledge to the West, Windsor Township and the City of Dimondale to the South and Lansing Township and the City of Lansing to the East. Delta Township is approximately 36 square miles and located on the west side of the Capital Area Region. The Township is the fourth largest municipality in the Lansing/East Lansing metropolitan area and its eastern border is approximately 1.5 miles from the Michigan State Capital. The location map shown on page 8 (Figure 2.1) shows the relationship of the Township to neighboring communities.

Delta Township was first surveyed and platted in 1827 by Musgrove Evans and settlement of the Township began. The first settlers arrived in 1835 when Erastus and Sally Ingersoll purchased and settled on 800 acres of land that was named "Delta Mills", and was the site of the first sawmill in 1836. In 1841 a plat was laid out for Delta Mills extending from the Grand River northward into what is now Watertown Township and was given the name "Grand River City". The Michigan Legislature organized the Township in 1842 and by the 1880s the area was mainly supported by farming, grist and sawmills, and several mechanic shops.

Delta Township was incorporated as a charter township in 1962 by a special election and contains four unincorporated areas that includes Delta Center, Delta Mills, Millett, and Waverly.

Delta Center is located in the center of the Township near Canal Rd and St. Joseph Highway, and is the site of the first Township Hall which was erected in the 1870s.

Delta Mills is located on the Grand River between the cities of Grand Ledge on the west side and Lansing on the east side. This was one of the original communities within the Township and got its name from the grist mill located there.

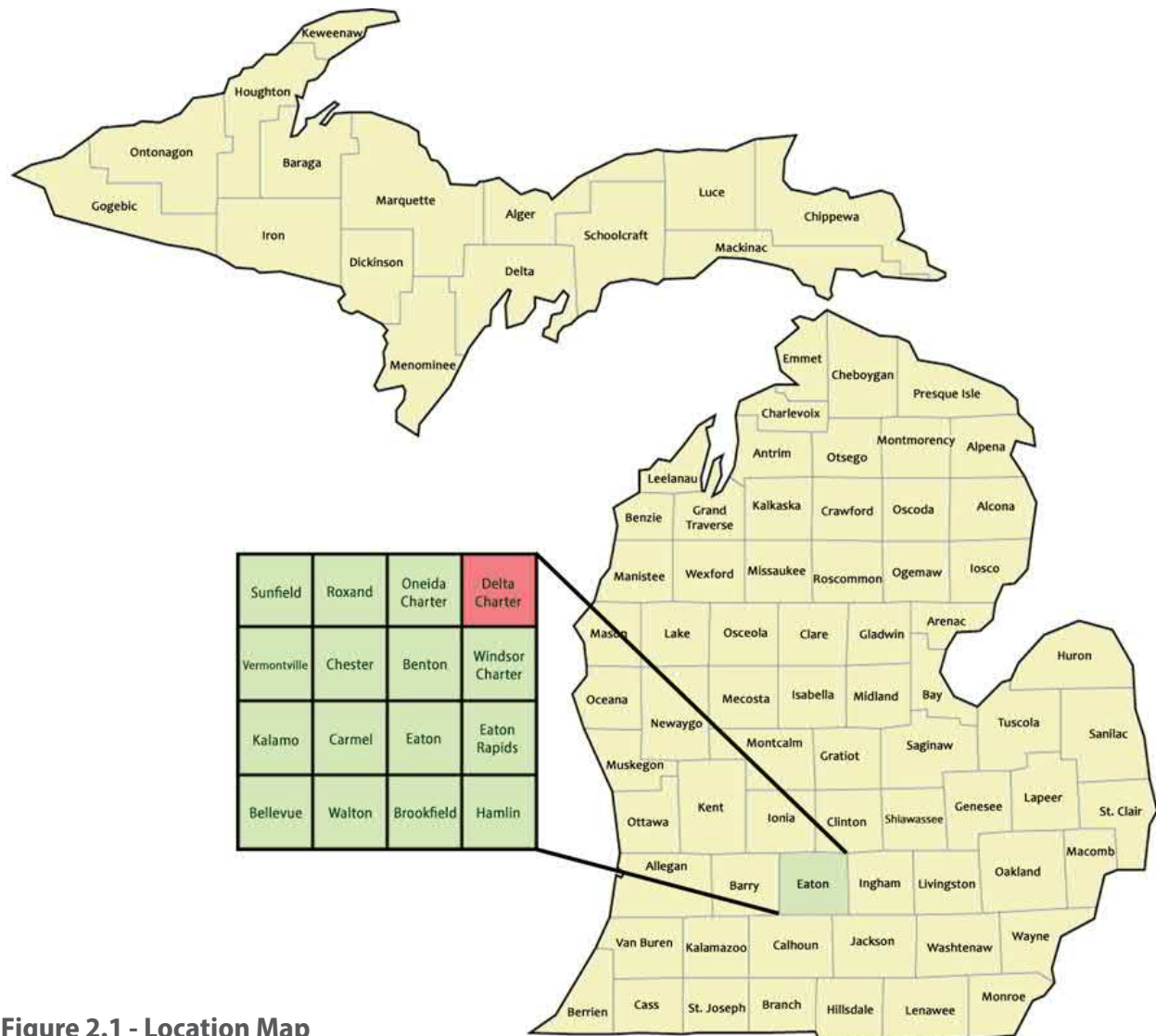


Figure 2.1 - Location Map

Millett (originally Millett's Station) is located in the southwest corner of the township along Lansing Rd, east of Creyts Rd and west of Waverly Rd. The area was originally platted in 1874 and includes the old Millett School building, the former Grand Trunk Western Millett railroad depot, and the Woldumar Nature Center.

Waverly is a census-designated place used for statistical purposes but has no status as a municipality.

Physical Characteristics

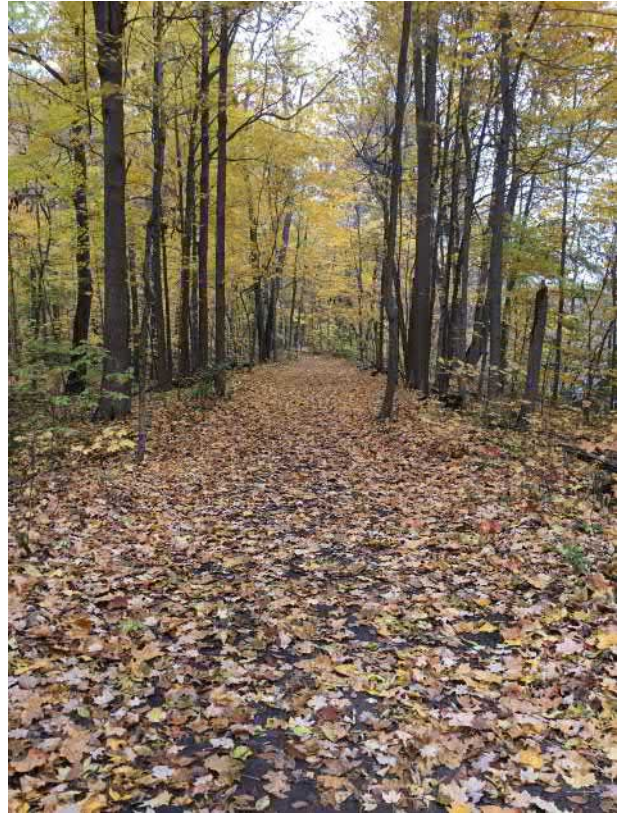
The topography in the Township is generally flat with little change in elevation, except for areas that lie along the Grand River. The highest point in the Township is 890 feet above sea level near the Creyts Road/Lansing Road intersection. The lowest point in the Township is 800 feet where the northern course of the Grand River exits the western edge of the Township. The Township contains an extensive system of county drains that are under the jurisdiction of the Eaton County Drain Commissioner.

Climatology

Lake Michigan has a significant influence on the climate of the Township. The lake temperature, together with the prevailing westerly winds, moderates seasonal temperature extremes including lake effect snow. Delta Township gets some kind of precipitation, on average, 133 days per year and gets 34 inches of rain, and 47 inches of snow, on average, per year. Delta Township is considered to have a low humid continental climate based on its seasonal precipitation and temperature patterns (warm summers and cold winters).

Soils

The majority of soils in the Township are loam except for soils associated with wetlands. The primary soils types in Delta Township are part of the Marlette-Capac and the Marlette-Capac-Owosso associations. The Marlett-Capac



association include soils that are classified as nearly level to gently undulating, well drained to somewhat poorly drained loamy soils on till plains. These soils are found in much of the western and central area of the Township. The Marlette-Capac-Owosso association include soils that are nearly level to hilly, well drained to somewhat poorly drained, loamy soils on moraines and till plains. These soils are found in the eastern and northern areas of the Township.

The Houghton-Gilford-Adrian and Capac-Parkhill soil classifications make up the balance of the soils in the Township. The Houghton-Gilford-Adrian association is identified as nearly level, very poor drained, mucky, loamy soils in glacial drainage areas and is most conducive to agricultural activities. The Capac-Parkhill association are nearly level, poorly drained loamy soils on till plains and low moraines.

Vegetation

The majority of the forested land is along the Grand River. In the "Potential Conservation

Area Assessment” completed by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory for the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, they identified several areas in Delta Township as medium to high priority conservation areas. In the northeast quadrant of the Park, the Audubon Society Property along the Grand River on Delta River Drive and Carrier Creek; in the southeast quadrant of the township they identified Woldumar Nature Center, Anderson Park and several spots along the Carrier Creek; in the southwest quadrant they recognized the GM Plant nature preserve and land near Royston and Nixon Road; and in the native vegetation that have various levels of harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features.” They may also provide beneficial features such as water quality benefits and wildlife corridors. There are not many forested areas remaining in Delta Township and they are mostly associated with parks, land along the Grand River and the areas identified above.

Water and Wildlife Resources

Delta Township, located in the Grand River Watershed, has over 400 acres of ponds, rivers and streams within its boundaries with the principal water feature being the Grand River. The Grand River occupies approximately 348 acres and stretches more than 10 miles in the northern and southern portions of the Township. Other water features in the Township include the Miller and Carrier Creeks which are both

tributaries of the Grand River. The Grand River runs through the northern portion and southeast corner of the Township, Carrier Creek runs south to north on the east side of the Township and Miller Creek runs to the north on the west side of the Township. Carrier Creek, a small urban tributary of the Grand River, is a designated County Drain that is 3.8 miles long and is a drainage watershed that covers approximately 11.1 square miles. Wetland areas are found in the Township, often adjacent to the Grand River and its tributaries. Lake Delta is a 40 acre man-made lake located in Lake Delta Park.

Wetlands, waterways, and small and large land holdings provide valuable habitat that benefit fish and other wildlife and provide a multitude of ecological, economic and social benefits. The contiguous green space created from the proximity of several park areas in the Township as well as the rivers provide key wildlife corridors in the Township. A particularly significant area is the combined acreage of Anderson Park, Woldumar Nature Center (private) and Fine Park and Fulton Park (City of Lansing) which represents a 368 acre wildlife corridor along the Grand River in the southeast corner of the Township. The abundant water resources provide fishing opportunities as well as wildlife habitat. Wildlife ranges from small rodents to wild turkeys, fox, deer, cranes and other birds.



Grand River

The Grand River is the longest river in Michigan running 252 miles from its headwaters in Hillsdale County on the southern border north to Lansing and west to its mouth at Grand Haven on Lake Michigan. The Grand River is the largest body of water in Delta Township at approximately 343 acres. The Grand River traverses more than 10 miles along the northern portion of the Township as well as along the southeastern corner of the Township. Both Miller Creek and Carrier Creek flow into the Grand River.

Transportation

Three major Interstate Highways pass through Delta Charter Township and include Interstate 69 (I-69), I-96, and I-496. The southern portion of Delta Township is situated at the junction of I-69 and I-96, providing access to Battle Creek and Kalamazoo to the southwest via I-69, Metro Detroit to the east and Grand Rapids to the northwest via I-96. Interstate 96 connects with I-496 providing easy access to Downtown Lansing to the east of the Township. Interstate 496 provides access to U.S.-127 to the south toward Jackson. The cities of Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo and Detroit are all within a 90 minute drive of Delta Township. Saginaw Highway (M-43), is the main commercial thoroughfare in the township running in an east to west direction for the length of the Township.

Eaton County Transportation Authority (EATTRAN) and the Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) both provide public transportation services to the area. The CATA buses run to shopping centers. EATTRAN is a dial to ride service. There are also non-motorized transportation routes in the Township including on-street bike lanes, shared use paths, and sidewalks.

Class one rail freight service is provided by Canadian National Railway (CN), operating out of a rail yard along Snow Road, Mt. Hope Highway and Lansing Road. The yard northwest quadrant they noted Looetens Park and property along the Grand River. Potential conservation areas are defined as “places on the landscape dominated by mainly handles automobile, coal, grain, and lumber loads for local industries.



SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

The review of trends in population growth is helpful in developing an understanding of the Township's recreational needs. Also reviewing other demographic indicators such as age, education, income, and employment trends can assist in determining the type of recreational facilities that may be needed or desired and will allow facilities and programs to keep pace with demand.

Population Trends

Demographic information was gathered from the 2020 US Decennial Census. As of 2020, Delta Township has a population of 33,119 making it the most populous municipality in Eaton County. The Township has experienced a higher rate of growth over the past two decades than most of the other municipalities in the region as well as the State of Michigan with a 11.5% increase since the 2000 Census. However, the Township has seen a much lower growth rate in the last ten years compared to previous decades. Table 2.1 delineates population growth in the Township over the last 40 years.

Year	Population	# Change	% Change
1980	23,822	-	-
1990	26,129	2,307	9.7%
2000	29,682	3,553	13.6%
2010	32,408	2,726	9.2%
2020	33,119	711	2.2%

To put the Township's rate of growth into perspective, it is important to compare growth comparisons with adjacent communities. This is useful in attempting to forecast areas of future growth in the area as well as future demands on the Township's park system. Table 2.2 illustrates population growth comparisons with adjacent communities as well as the County and State. The table shows that, with the exception of Watertown Township, the growth rate in Delta Township has been generally strong in comparison to adjacent communities including Lansing, as well as the county and state. As the population continues to grow in Delta, as well as in adjacent communities, the Parks Department is faced with the challenge of providing additional park facilities to keep up with the growth trends. Strategic acquisition of park land and continued enhancement of current parks and trails should continue to be a focus.

Community	2000 Population	2010 Population	2020 Population	% Change 2000-2020
Delta Twp	29,682	32,408	33,119	11.6%
Oneida Twp	3,703	3,865	3,908	5.5%
Watertown Twp	4,162	4,836	5,563	33.6%
Windsor Twp	7,340	6,838	7,140	-2.7%
City of Lansing	119,128	114,297	112,644	-5.4%
Eaton County	103,655	107,759	109,175	5.3%
State of Michigan	9,938,444	9,883,640	10,077,331	1.4%

Age

The median age of the Township is 42.7, which is 3.8% older than the County as a whole (41.1) and 8.1% older than the State of Michigan (39.5). The median age represents the mid-point in the range of all ages within the Township. Understanding the age demographics is useful in identifying the type of recreational facilities that may be needed, desired, or over provided. For example, a younger population may desire more active types of facilities while an aging population may desire more passive types of facilities. Table 2.3 illustrates the breakdown of population based on age (based on 2020 census).

Table 2.3 Population by Age - Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau		
Age	Persons	Percentage
Female	17,387	52.5
Male	15,732	47.5
Under 18	5,564	16.8
18 and Over	27,555	83.2
18-24	2,749	8.3
25-34	5,100	15.4
35-49	5,630	17
50-64	7,088	21.4
65 and over	6,988	21.1

A strong pattern for family oriented recreation is reflected in the age distribution with 1/3rd (32.4%) of the population in the 25-49 age group. Almost 17% of the population falls in the 18 and under age range, suggesting there may be some need for youth-oriented facilities. The highest population group, about 42.5% of the population falls in the 50 and older age group, suggesting the need for senior-oriented facilities. The 18-24 age group makes up the smallest portion of the population, likely due to lack of emerging professional job opportunities. The age distribution reflects a need for park and recreation facilities for young, active families, as well as accessible facilities for the aging population. The high percentage of the older

population is consistent with the nationwide increase to the aging population led by the Baby Boomer generation.

Persons with Disabilities

The proportion of the population with some type of disability should be considered when planning parks and recreational facilities and programs. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that all public services, including park facilities, be barrier-free. As the population ages, the proportion with one or more disabilities generally increases, and this trend is consistent for the Township. Disabilities may include vision, cognitive, auditory, neurological, ambulatory, self care, and living independently difficulties. According to the U.S. Census data, it is estimated that in 2019 approximately 16.8% of Township residents live with a disability, with 84% of those individuals being 65 years and older. These figures indicate that, while the disabled population is modest, there still exists an important contingent of residents who rely on more accessible places to recreate.

Income

A successful parks and recreation system includes providing affordable recreational opportunities to the community. It is important to understand the availability of disposable income for recreation within the community as household incomes vary within the region. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the estimated median household income level is \$71,802 for the Township. Table 2.4 illustrates the median household income of the Township compared to other nearby

Table 2.4 Median Household Income - Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau	
Delta Township	\$71,802
Oneida Township	\$85,817
Watertown Township	\$94,004
Windsor Township	\$79,861
City of Lansing	\$44,233
Eaton County	\$67,440

communities. The median income level in the Township is about 6.5% higher than that of the county (\$67,440) and about 21% higher than the State of Michigan. (\$59,234). In addition, the per capita income in the township is \$40,675 which is about 20% higher than the county (\$34,282) and about 25% higher than the State (\$32,854).

As shown in the table, income is lower in the Township compared to the adjacent Townships but higher than adjacent City of Lansing and the County. This level of income in the Township could make it possible to secure certain types of grants, but may not support the concept of a park millage.

Employment

Approximately 66% of Township residents are employed in a range of employment categories (*US Census*). The most common industries in Delta include: manufacturing, health care, agriculture, financial services, and retail service. The most common occupation groups, by number of people living in Delta, are management, sales, and office and administrative support. Major employers in the Township include General Motors', Farm Bureau Insurance, Auto Owners Insurance, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. According to the US Census, the rate of unemployment in the Township is 3.6%. This low rate indicates the local economy is stable and that residents should be able to continue to fund the parks and recreation budget.

Approximately 80.5% of residents work within Eaton County and the average commute time is 18.1 minutes (*U.S. Census*). Given that approximately 88% of residents drive automobiles to work (*U.S. Census*), expanding the current network of trails, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle lanes may encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation which in turn promotes a healthier lifestyle and high quality of life.

Land Use

The land use distribution and development pattern of a community is important when considering the geographic distribution of parks and recreational facilities because they should be placed where there are concentrations of residents and the related places of public gathering.

The predominant land uses in the Township are made up of residential and agriculture. The Township provides a variety of different housing opportunities based on both age and density. According to the U.S. Census data, there are a total of 15,839 housing units in the Township of which 96% are occupied and 63% is owner occupied. Single family structures make up 65% of housing units in the township with 34% multi-family units and 1% mobile homes. Numerous single-family neighborhoods are located throughout the township, with the largest concentrations located in the northwest and northeast sections of the township.

There is a large concentration of commercial uses in the north-central area of the township along West Saginaw and large tracts of industrial land in the southeast section of the Township. The majority of the agricultural uses are in the southwest section of the township and has seen a steady decline over the past decade as the land is converted to residential developments.





Administrative Structure

Delta Township operates under the Board/Manager form of government. The Board/Manager Plan is a system of local government that combines the political leadership of an elected Township Board with the professional managerial experience of the Township Manager.

In order to understand how park and recreation functions are administered in the Township, we must look at the administrative structure of the Township.

Delta Township Board

The Charter Township of Delta is governed by a seven (7) member board. Board members are elected every four years on the same cycle as the presidential elections. The seven member board is made up of a Township Supervisor, Township Treasurer, Township Clerk and four Trustees. With the exception of the Clerk, all board positions are part-time. The Board is the legislative and policy making body of the Township and is responsible for the performance of all obligations and duties imposed on the Township by the State of Michigan.

Township Manager

It is the primary responsibility of the Manager's Office to carry out the goals and objectives of the Township Board, and manage the daily operations of the Township. The Manager's office is responsible for the following:

- To ensure all Township ordinances are enforced.

- To provide leadership, coordination, and administrative support to the Township departments.
- To work to achieve the Township's mission and goals.
- To identify key priorities and establish management procedures that will further develop and effectively utilize Township resources.
- To hire the most qualified employees, using selection methods based on merit and equal opportunity.
- To keep the lines of communication open among residents, businesses, and municipal government.
- To promote Township government services and events through various media, so that the public is more aware of said services and events.
- To listen to the needs and concerns of the community, and route its desires to the Township Board.
- To make sure that all terms and conditions imposed in favor of the Township, or its inhabitants, in any public utility franchise or in any contract, are faithfully kept and performed.
- To prepare and administer the annual budget under policies formulated by the Township Board.
- To develop and implement all personnel policies for the Township.

Refer to Figure 3.1 for the Township Organizational Chart.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is responsible for the Township's Master Plan, the Capital Improvements Program, subdivision and site plan reviews, and conducting public hearings and providing recommendations to the Township Board. There are 9 members of the commission and all members are electors of the township.

Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Department

The Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Department is responsible for four different divisions, as well as the management of the Delta 39'ers program for senior citizens and the Aquatics Programs at the Waverly East Intermediate pool. The Parks and Recreation division is responsible for maintaining existing park grounds and facilities, acquiring and developing land for park use, providing varied recreational programs for all ages, enforcing the Park Ordinance, planning for the future in both park area requirements and recreation program needs, and maintaining assigned township grounds and facilities. Refer to Figure 3.2 for the Parks Department Organizational Chart.

The Mission Statement of the Department is "To acquire, develop, maintain and operate parks, recreation areas and open space for the use and enjoyment of all Delta Township residents and visitors along with offering quality leisure time activities, at a reasonable price, for the participation of all ages and interests."

The duties and responsibilities of the Department are:

- Maintain existing park grounds and facilities.
- Acquire and develop lands for park use.
- Provide varied recreation programs for all ages.
- Enforce the Park Ordinance.
- Plan for the future in both park area requirements and recreation program needs.
- Maintain assigned Township grounds and facilities.

Figure 3.1 - Township Organizational Chart

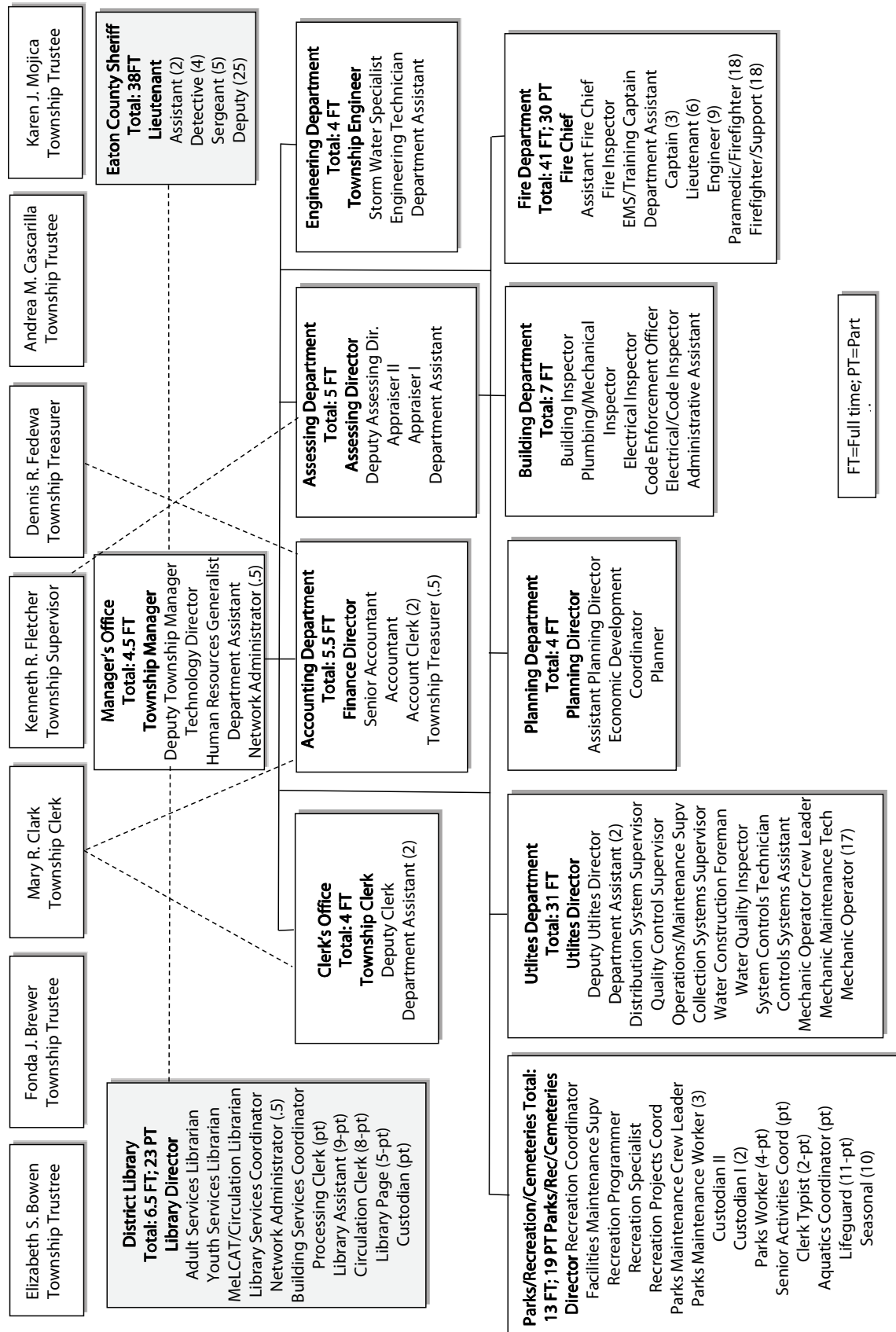
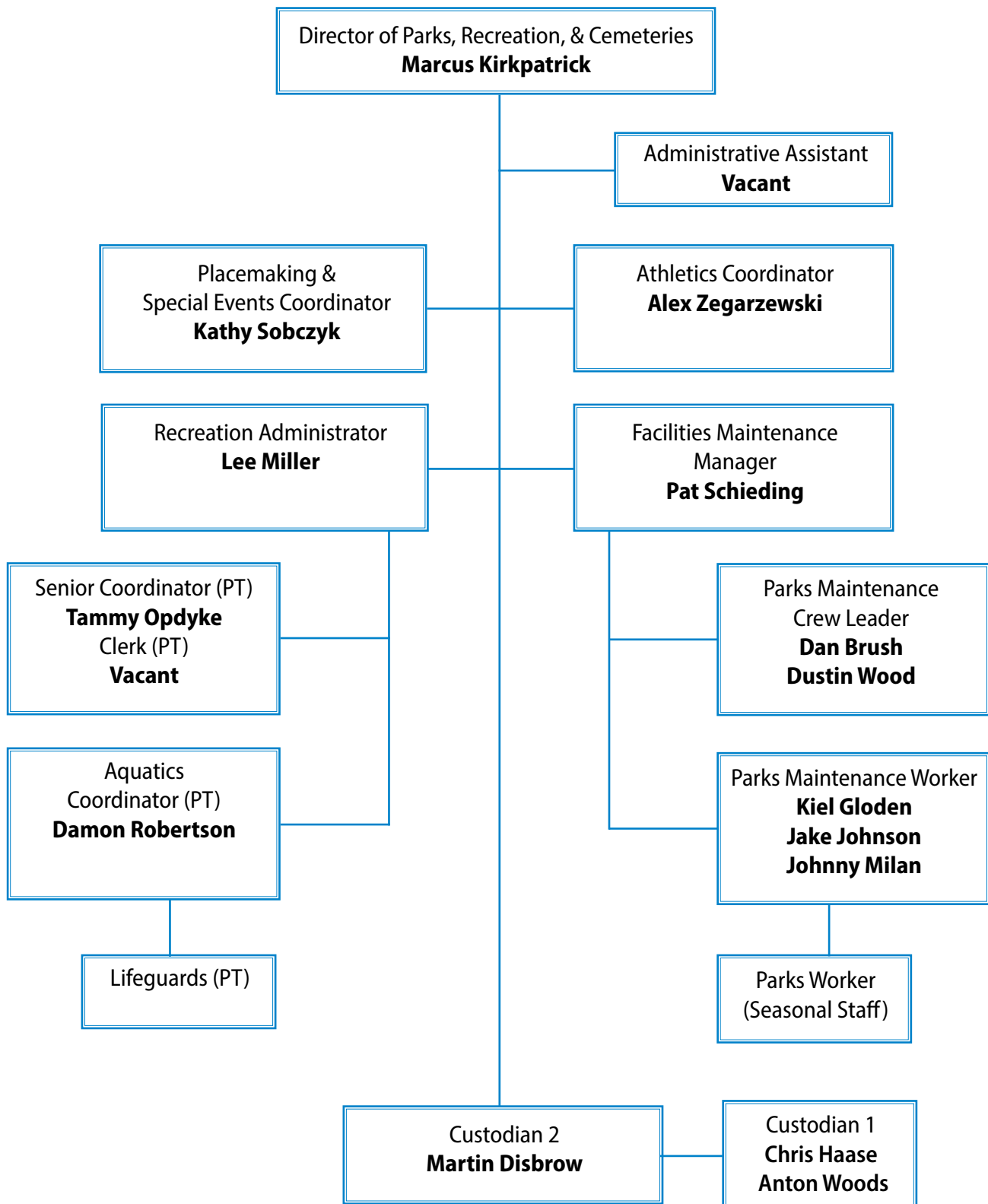


Figure 3.2 - Organizational Chart

Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Department

Recycling Center, Cemetery, Hall and Grounds

The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department shares management responsibilities with the Clerk's Office for cemetery management. The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department handles burials and ground maintenance, foundations, and the showing of plots for purchase while the Clerk's Office handles the official record keeping, deeds, purchases, transfers, and other similar functions. The Township owns and manages Hillside Cemetery, 6415 Delta River Drive and Delta Center Cemetery, 7301 W. St. Joe Highway.

The Recycling Center at 5717 Millet Highway is operated by the Department and is open 3 days per week year round.

The Joseph E. Drolett Community Center at 7550 W. Willow Hwy and Enrichment Center at 4538 Elizabeth Road are owned by the Township and operated by the Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department. The Joseph E. Drolett Community Center is used for programs and is available for rental Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Enrichment Center is used as a Senior Center for the 39ers group and for various classes during the week, the classrooms are available for rental Monday through Sunday and the activity room can be rented Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Commission

The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Commission was established in 1971 and is a volunteer advisory commission made up of 7 members who are appointed by the Township Board. They serve a 3 year term and meet once a month to discuss programs, events and facility improvements.

Senior Advisory Group

The Senior Advisory Group meets on a quarterly basis with the department director regarding programming, facilities, and amenities for senior recreation. The Senior Advisory Group consists of

Senior Representatives, age 50 and up, who are residents of Delta Township.

Recreational Programming

The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department provides enrichment classes available for all age groups, with a separate facility and program for the Delta/Waverly 39ers Senior Citizen Program. Programs and events offered through the Department are advertised in the quarterly Delta Township Magazine, in email newsletters and through social media updates. All of Delta Townships programs, athletics, classes, events and facilities can be registered for or reserved and paid for on-line through Civic Rec. Programs and events include:

Athletic Programs

- Softball (A&Y)
- Volleyball (A)
- Kickball (A)
- Soccer (Y)
- Baseball (Y)
- Co-Ed T-ball (Y)
- Co-Ed Flag Football (Y)
- Golf Classes (A&Y)
- Tennis Lessons (Y)
- Co-Ed Basketball (Y)
- Basketball Leagues (Y)
- Basketball Camp (Y)

Special Events

- Daddy/Daughter Dance
- Delta Rocks! All Summer Long
- July 3 Fireworks
- Kid Days
- Meet and Greet with Easter Bunny
- Mom 2 Mom Sale
- Mother/Daughter Dance
- Mother/Son Dance
- Movies in the Park
- Music in the Park
- North Pole Express Mailbox
- Pacers Walking Club
- Sweets & Treats with Santa
- Touch a Truck Day

Aquatics

- Swim Class (A&Y)
- Aerobics (A)
- Family Swim / Lap Swim

39ers Programs

- Lunches
- Bingo
- Bridge
- Euchre
- Pinochle
- Chair Massage
- Cribbage
- Blood Pressure Checks
- Foot Care
- Yoga
- Exercise Classes
- Jazzercise Lite
- Lunch Bunch

Travel Program

- 9 trips throughout the year

The Waverly School District provide sports programming for middle and high school students while the Township provides sports programs for youth and older adults. The Township uses the Waverly East Intermediate Middle School Gymnasium for youth basketball programs, but the rest of the Township run outdoor youth programs is held at Mt Hope Park.

Relationships with Other Organizations

The Township has a cooperative lease agreement granting exclusive use of the Delta-Waverly swimming pool at Waverly East Intermediate School. With other facilities the school districts get first choice on facilities and the Township has next priority, however, individuals must reserve space on an annual basis. The school districts provide sports programming for middle and high school students while the Township provides sports programs for youth and older adults.



The Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Department works with various other groups and continues to explore expanding partnerships with private and public organizations. Several local high schools use the trails at Grand Woods Park for hosting cross-country meets. The Capital Area Canine Club has used township parks for several years to host dog agility competitions that are certified by the American Kennel Club. The Lions Club runs a concession stand at Erickson Park and contributes toward sponsorship of various special events athletic programs.

Maintenance

Halls and Grounds, a division of the Parks, Recreation, and Cemeteries Department, is responsible for providing a clean, safe, and well maintained environment for conducting township business for township employees and our residents. Staff is responsible for interior and exterior maintenance. A primary goal of the division is to continue to properly maintain all Municipal building sites and parks through efficient scheduling of turf and landscape management.

39'ers (50+ Programs)

The Delta Township 39'ers program is an active program that serves people ages 50 and over from Delta Township, Waverly School District, and surrounding areas. There is no fee to become a member. Programs and events include luncheons, travel programs, golf leagues, trips, cards and games. A treadmill and small lending library is also available for use, free of charge, at the Enrichment Center.

Role of Volunteers

Delta Township understands the growing importance of volunteer resources. Volunteer services are prominently promoted on the Township website. Many of the services requested on the website relate directly to the Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department. Volunteer opportunities are available throughout

the year. Individuals interested in volunteering are asked to fill out a Volunteer Profile with their information and the activities they are interested in and return it to the Parks, Recreation & Cemeteries Department. Recent examples of volunteer services include:

Athletics:

Soccer Coach
Flag Football Coach
T-Ball/Softball/Baseball Coach
Youth Basketball Coach

Events:

Delta Township Fireworks
Kids Festival
KidsMud Run

Parks/Facilities:

Recycling Center Attendant

Others:

Election Workers
Senior Entertainer/Presenter

Budgeting and Funding

Budgets for parks, programs, services and maintenance are located in the Appendix of this document. The budget includes Operation and Maintenance, Capital Improvements, and Programs and Services.

The Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department is supported by the Township general fund. General fund expenditures include personnel salaries and benefits, daily operational expenditures and capital improvements. Revenues include program fees, league participation charges and facility rentals.

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Recreation Inventory

To understand the Township park and recreation system, we first completed an inventory and analysis of existing park facilities. The intent of the analysis is to evaluate the character, performance, and accessibility of the diverse spaces in the park system, and provide a comprehensive perspective of the opportunities and challenges of the existing recreational facilities the Township has to offer its citizens. The inventory is based on feedback provided by Township staff and stakeholders, site inventories carried out by VIRIDIS Design Group, park accessibility review, and a review of the 2018 Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Park and Recreation System Inventory

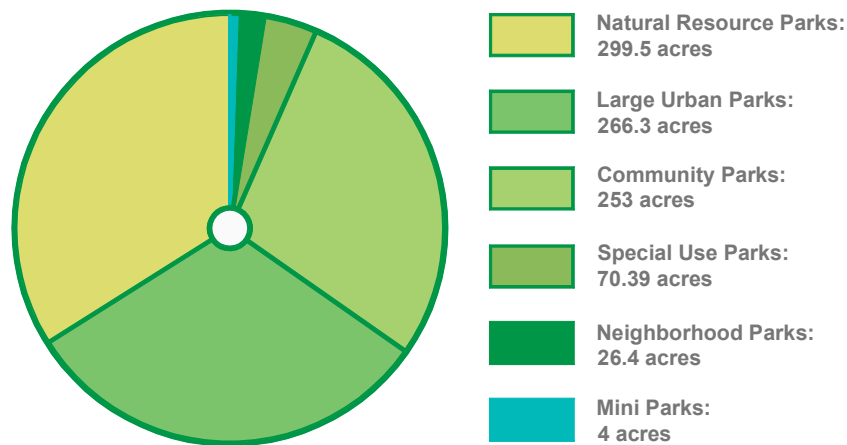
The park and recreation system inventory establishes a baseline understanding of the quantity, type, location, and quality of all park and recreation facilities in Delta. The project team visited each park facility and recorded its amenities, accessibility, and condition. The site inventory was supplemented by an aerial survey and verified against the Township's GIS database. Overall, 14 parks and open spaces, as well as school sites were inventoried through this process.

Delta Township has a variety of park spaces and other public recreational trails and facilities. Numerous county, private and non-profit facilities are also found within the community and county and are highlighted as part of the inventory. The Delta Township Parks and Recreation Department controls and manages approximately **919.6 acres** of land which include developed parks, undeveloped land, natural areas, and trails (Refer to Figure 4.1).

The NRPA has established generally recognized standards for classifying types of parkland based on size and function which provide a means for determining the primary purpose or use of existing facilities in a community. These designations have been adopted by the MDNR; and provide one method of defining the purpose and use of facilities.

Mini Parks are specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population of specific groups. Neighborhood parks are considered the most critical for local, walkable park access and community health as these types of parks provide a range of playground amenities and recreational opportunities for residents. Community parks are larger in size and often feature a greater concentration of sports fields and other recreation amenities to meet demand for a broader area. Large urban parks serve a wider area than community parks and focus on meeting community based recreational needs as well as preserving unique landscapes. Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of natural resources. These sites are typically unsuitable for development but can support recreational activities at a level that preserves the integrity of the natural resource. Special use parks are areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities.

Approximately one-third of the Township park acreage is held in two natural resource parks totaling 299.5 acres. One neighborhood park comprises 26.4 acres, four community parks add 253 acres, three large urban parks add 266.3 acres, two special use parks add 70.39 acres, and two mini parks adds another 4 acres to the park system.



Per the NRPA guidelines, park and recreation categories include associated service areas for each park type that indicate a minimum standard for geographic balance and availability of each park type in the park system. Classifying parks ensures the entire community is served by a wide range of park and recreational activities. Service areas for park types include:

Mini Parks:	1/4 mile or less
Neighborhood Parks:	1/4 - 1/2 miles
Community Parks:	1/2 to 3 miles
Large Urban Parks:	varies based on use
Natural Areas:	varies based on availability
Special Use Parks:	varies based on use

MINI PARK

- 2 Mini Parks
- Under 1 acre
- Address unique, or specialized recreation needs
- Typically clustered in urban or dense areas
- Complement neighborhood parks in dense areas

NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

- 1 Neighborhood Park
- 1 -10 acres
- Located in neighborhoods with family activities
- Walkable for residents
- Can provide active and passive uses

COMMUNITY PARK

- 4 Community Parks
- 10-50 acres
- Meet broad community recreation needs
- May contain specialized recreation facilities
- Contribute to a connected system

LARGE URBAN PARK

- 3 Large Urban Parks
- 50-75 acres
- Serve a broad purpose
- Focus on meeting community recreation needs
- May preserve unique landscapes/ open space

NATURAL RESOURCE PARK

- 2 Natural Resource Parks
- Acreage varies based on availability
- Preservation of significant natural resources
- Typically unsuitable for development
- Supports passive recreational activities

SPECIAL USE PARK

- 2 Special Use Parks
- Acreage varies based on use and location
- Single or specialized recreation activities
- May contain historic or cultural uses

Barrier Free Accessibility

Federal and State laws require all areas of public service to be accessible to all persons including those with limited sight, hearing, mobility, and comprehension. Developed park facilities must comply with barrier-free design standards. Park facilities in Delta Township have been reviewed to understand the need for improvements relating to barrier-free accessibility. In addition, as park development is considered in the future, barrier-free accessibility is a significant priority item to help ensure that recreation can be enjoyed by all residents and visitors of the Township. Following is a ranking system in accordance with MDNR standards:

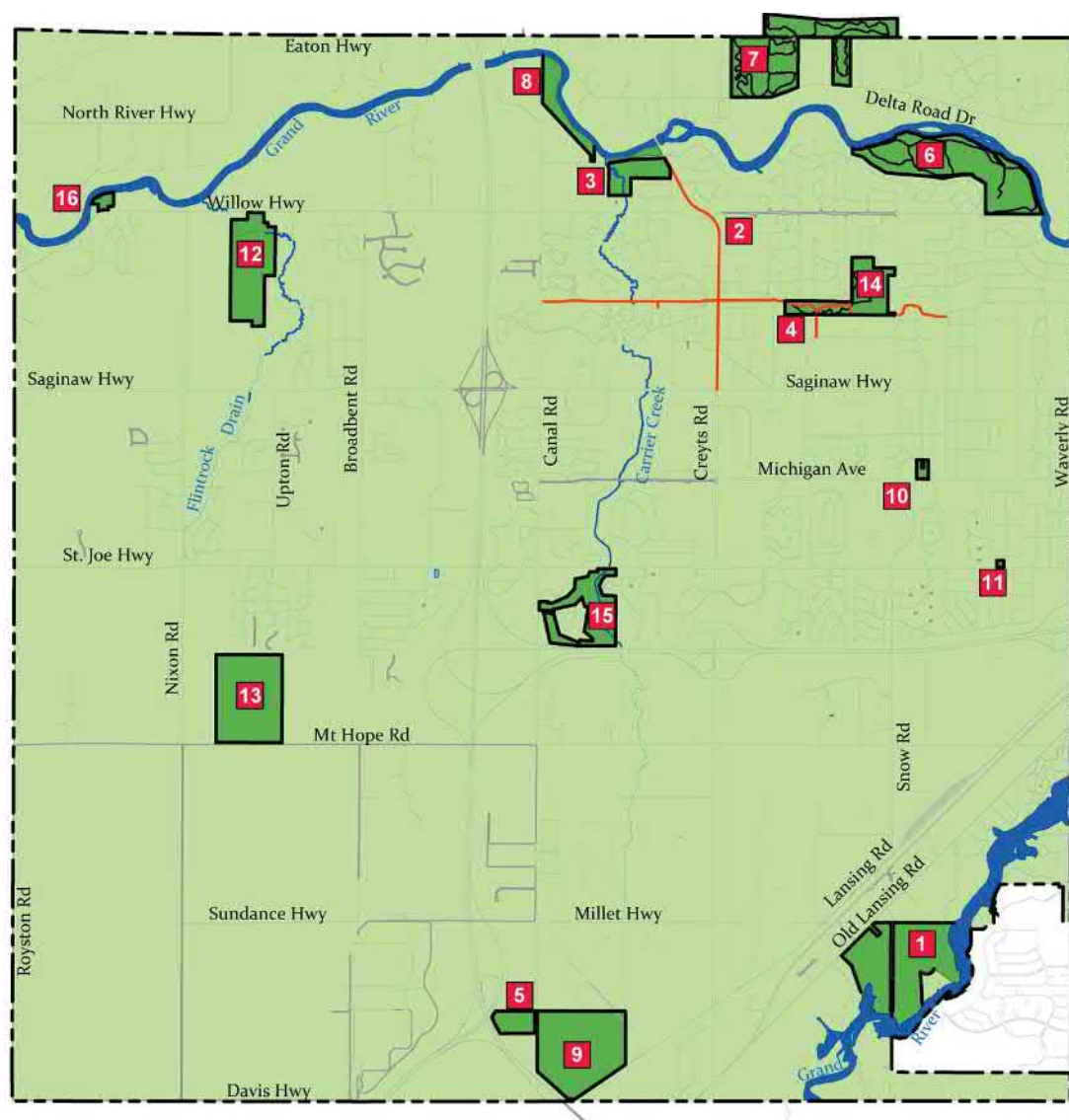

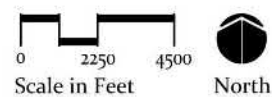
- 0 = Completely undeveloped, no paved surface, left in a natural state.
- 1 = None of the facilities in the park meet accessibility guidelines.
- 2 = Some of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
- 3 = Most of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
- 4 = All of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
- 5 = Universal design guidelines were used to design the entire park

Existing Parks

As part of the methodology of determining present-day and future needs of Delta Residents, the existing park facilities were examined. This combined with current trends, comparison to park standards, and community feedback (discussed later) will help the parks department anticipate and plan for future user needs. The team visited each park to observe existing facilities to understand defining features, quality and condition of existing facilities, quantity of amenities, and level of accessibility. This field analysis was completed during the early fall of 2022.



Figure 4.1 - Recreation Areas and Facilities Map

**LEGEND****1** ANDERSON NATURE PARK**2** CREYTS/WEBSTER PATHWAY**3** DELTA MILLS PARK**4** EAST/WEST PATHWAY**5** ERICKSON PARK**6** GRAND WOODS PARK**7** HAWK MEADOW PARK**8** HUNTER'S ORCHARD PARK**9** LAKE DELTA PARK**10** LAKE IRIS PARK**11** LELAND PARK**12** LOOTEN'S PARK**13** MT HOPE PARK**14** SHARP PARK**15** PLAYER'S CLUB**16** WEST WILLOW CANOE LAUNCH PARKS PROPERTY PAVED SHARED USE PATH TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY

Anderson Nature Park

Location: 3377 Wardell Rd
 Size: 151.3 Ac
 Accessibility: 1
 Park Type: Natural Resource Park

Description

Anderson Park is one of the largest land acquisition projects undertaken by the Township. In December of 1976 the Gladys Olds Anderson family donated 58.4 acres of the land to the Township to be used as a passive recreation area. The Township then applied for and received grants from the Federal Land and Water Conservation and the Michigan Land Trust Fund to purchase an additional 92.9 acres of land for the park. Anderson park is currently undeveloped but includes mountain bike trails that are widely used. There is also a very small parking area available.

Opportunities

- The park is undeveloped and the Township may consider developing a master plan for the site that could include trails, parking, and other nature based, passive activities.

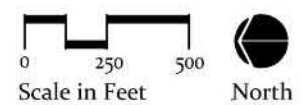
Grant History

- 1977: Land and Water Conservation Fund - land acquisition
- 1979: Trust Fund - land acquisition
- 1985: Trust Fund (withdrawn)





Anderson Park



Delta Mills Park

Location: 7001 Old River Trail
 Size: 32 Ac
 Accessibility: 2
 Park Type: Community Park

Description

Delta Mills Park was the Township's first park facility. Phase I was started on 14.3 acres of property purchased for future expansion of the Waste Water Treatment Plant. Recreation Bond Funds have been utilized along with donations and general fund monies to acquire additional property. Recent Trust Fund grants has allowed for upgrades and added features.

Features of the park include a large picnic shelter, playground equipment, basketball court, 2 softball fields, 1 small soccer field in the floodplain, 6 pickleball courts, a grass volleyball court, horseshoe pits, fishing, canoe launch, overlook deck, trails and restroom facilities.

Opportunities

- Paving the parking lot.
- Consider replacing the older large pavilion.
- Many site features are not barrier free or do not have accessible path connections including playgrounds, grills, ball fields, benches, picnic tables, and interpretive signs.
- Consider adding pathways to connect playgrounds and other activities.

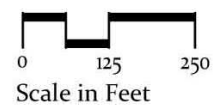
Grant History

- 2014: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Pickleball Courts
- 2016: Trust Fund - Restrooms
- 2017: Trust Fund - Pathway to Hunter's Orchard Park
- 2017: Trust Fund - Canoe Launch
- 2019: Trust Fund - Playground/Restroom





Delta Mills Park



Erickson Park

Location: 4220 S Canal Road
 Size: 17 Ac
 Accessibility: 2
 Park Type: Community Park

Description

Erickson Park has been leased from the Board of Water and Light since 1972. This community park includes two lighted softball fields, which is home to softball leagues, as well as restrooms, small concessions/picnic pavilion building, playground, picnic areas, and open lawn areas for soccer and free play.

Opportunities

- Paving the parking lot including paved barrier free spaces and pavement markings.
- Many of the facilities are not barrier free or do not have accessible paths including: playground, fields, and concessions/picnic building.
- Playground equipment is outdated and should be replaced with new surfacing.
- Consider adding pathways to connect site elements .
- Benches and picnic tables are mature and weathered. Consider updating with current site furnishings.

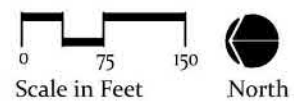
Grant History

- None





Erickson Park



Grand Woods Park

Location: 4500 Willow Hwy
 Size: 128.2 Ac
 Accessibility: 2
 Park Type: Large Urban Park

Description

Grand Woods Park is a large park located along the banks of the Grand River. The intent of this park space is to maintain a family-oriented atmosphere. Park amenities include a picnic shelter (seats 80), pavilion (seats 100), playground equipment, fishing pond, nature trail, softball field, one sand volleyball court, disc golf course, radio-controlled race car track, restrooms, and access to the Grand River. This park also provides a course for local cross-country meets.

Opportunities

- Paving the parking lots.
- Many park facilities are not barrier free or do not have accessible pathways including: sand volleyball, ball field, disc golf, RC course, horse shoes, one playground, one restroom, and one pavilion.
- Consider adding pathways throughout the park to connect features.
- Park provides access to the Grand River but lacks barrier free facilities. Consider improvements such as lookout deck to improve access and activities along the river.
- The park has a number of mature facilities that could be renovated or replaced such as a restroom building and pavilion building.

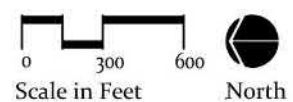
Grant History

- None





Grand Woods Park



Hawk Meadow Park

Location: 6160 Delta Run Drive
 Size: 148.2 Ac
 Accessibility: 3
 Park Type: Natural Resource Park

Description

The Township received donations of land from Carl Haussman and family in 1985 and 2005 to be used as a natural and wildlife area. Deed restrictions prohibit the development of any major park facilities at this location. Current park amenities include 4.5 miles of paved and nature trails, restroom building, site furnishings, interpretive signs, an existing pond and a floating boardwalk.

Opportunities

- The paved parking lot and trails could use maintenance and repairs.
- Consider adding site furnishings such as benches, waste receptacles, and signage.
- Consider additional interpretive signage and nature based activities.

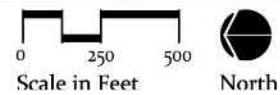
Grant History

- 2015: Trust Fund - Restroom building
- 2019: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Pathway





Hawk Meadow Park



Hunter's Orchard Park

Location: Old River Trail
 Size: 26.4 Ac
 Accessibility: 3
 Park Type: Neighborhood Park

Description

Mr. Howard Hunter and his family donated the land for Hunter's Orchard Park to the Township in 2000 including 3,500 feet of frontage on the Grand River. The Hunters had owned the property since 1934 and operated Hunter's Orchard on the current park site. A grant was received from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for assistance in funding the development. The park is primarily flood plain and was developed as a natural area with approximately 1.3 miles of non-motorized trails with nearly 2/3 of a mile of the trails being accessible by wheelchair. Other features of the park include three picnic/fishing areas with grills, two canoe landings and views of the Grand River.

Opportunities

- The site does not have a park identification sign.
- Consider adding restrooms.
- Sections of the paved trails need maintenance.
- Grills are in poor condition and should be replaced with accessible grills.
- Consider improving the nature trails including interpretive signs.

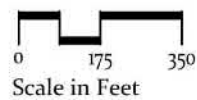
Grant History

- 2000: Trust Fund - Park development
- 2019: Trust Fund - Pathway





Hunter's Orchard Park



Lake Delta Park

Location: South Canal Road
 Size: 65 Ac
 Accessibility: 1
 Park Type: Special Use Park

Description

Lake Delta is a 40 acre lake available for shore and dock fishing only and is designed to accommodate physically challenged individuals. The lake is located south of Erickson Power Plant and is available to residents from approximately April 1 through November 1 (weather permitting). Boats, rubber rafts and wading are prohibited. The property was developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and is operated by Delta Township. The property is leased from the Lansing Board of Water & Light Company. The park includes a barrier free boardwalk, nature trails, and picnic tables.

Opportunities

- The parking lot is not paved and does not have defined spaces and drive aisles. Consider paving and designating barrier free spaces.
- The boardwalk decking is severely weathered and broken in many places including the dock at the lake which is unsafe to use. Consider replacement of the deck structure.
- Consider barrier free picnic tables.
- Consider adding interpretive signage to the nature paths as well as benches and waste receptacles.

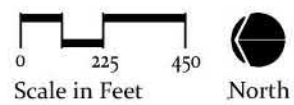
Grant History

- None





Lake Delta Park



Lake Iris Park

Location: Iris Road
 Size: 2.9 Ac
 Accessibility: 1
 Park Type: Mini Park

Description

This park is essentially a vacant green space within a neighborhood that is partly used for stormwater collection. The park is at the end of a neighborhood road and has a short section of an asphalt path that is in poor condition. The site also includes large mature trees, open grass areas, and wetland areas where the storm drainage is collecting. The open lawn areas could be used for picnicking, gatherings, and free play or informal sport games.

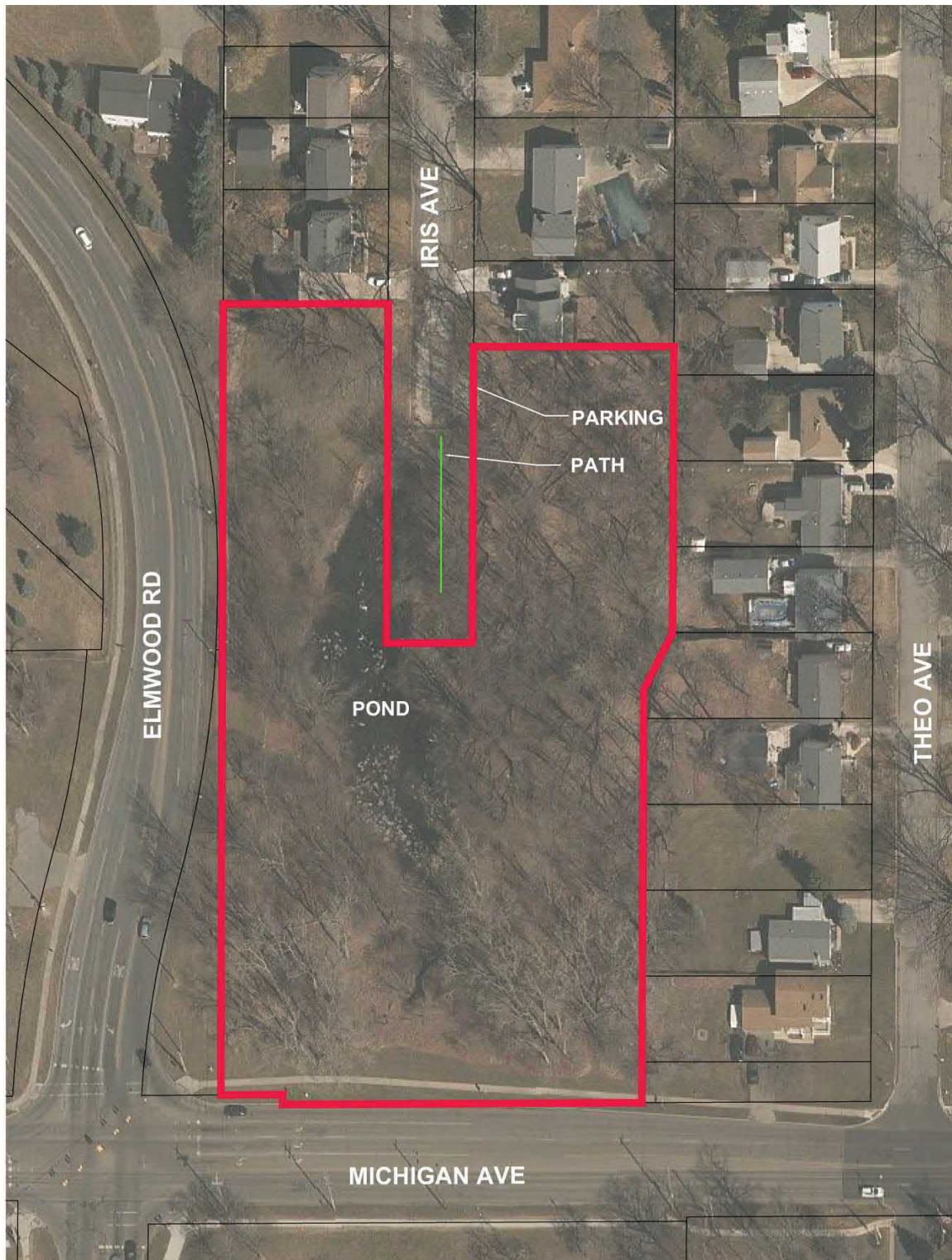
Opportunities

- The park is undeveloped and could benefit from the development of a master plan.
- The park is difficult to locate and could benefit from a site identification sign and parking.
- Consider adding passive activities such as accessible picnicking, seating areas, pavilion, and pathways.

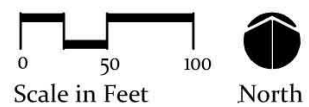
Grant History

- None





Lake Iris Park



Leland Park

Location: 600 Leland Place
 Size: 1.1 Ac
 Accessibility: 1
 Park Type: Mini Park

Description

Leland Park has been leased from the Lansing Board of Water and Light since 1972 and is located within a neighborhood. General fund monies have been utilized along with donated labor to provide play equipment and a small picnic area. The small park also includes mature trees and open lawn area that can be used for free play. The park is connected to the adjacent neighborhood with sidewalks but does not have a dedicated parking lot.

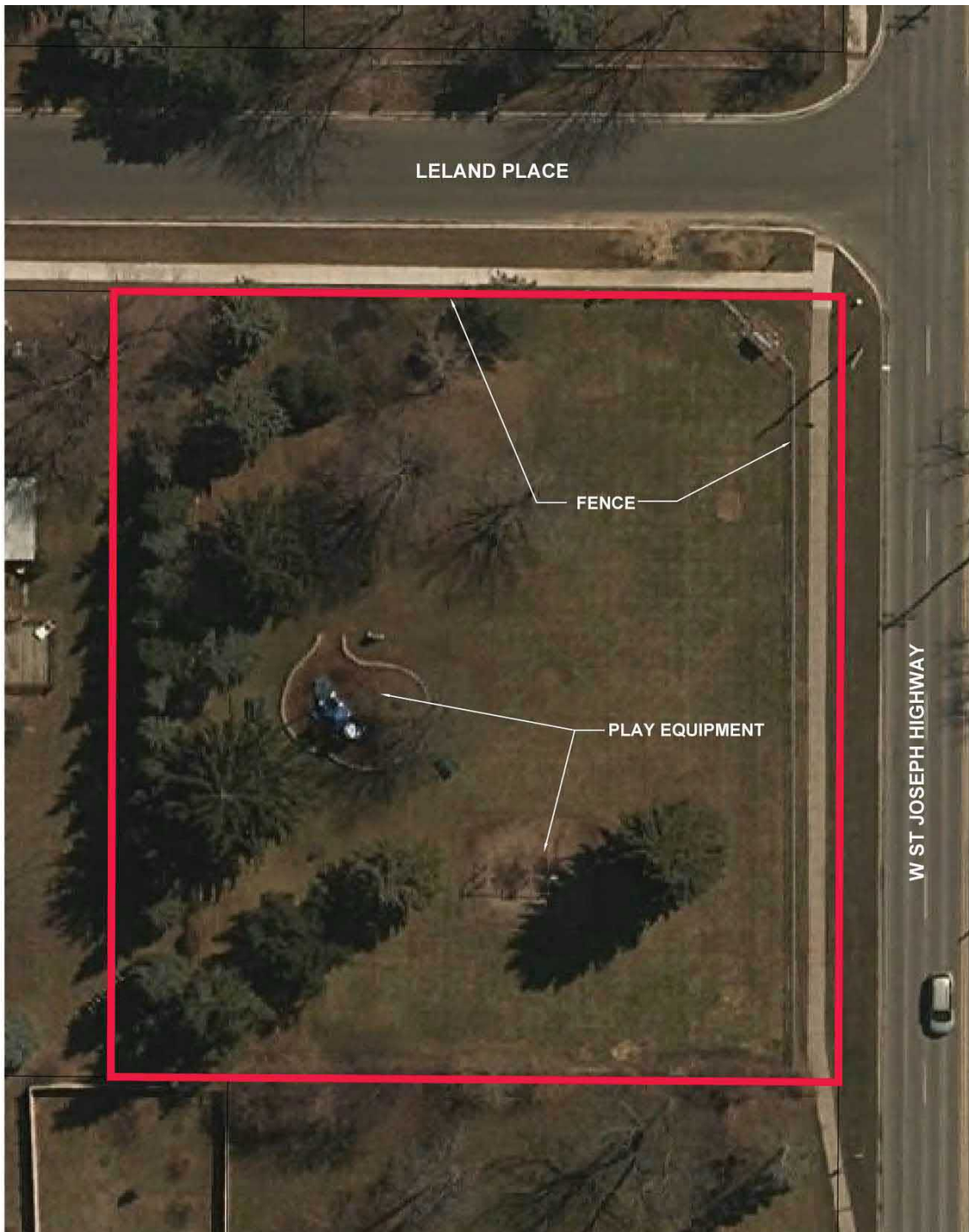
Opportunities

- The addition of parking lot.
- There is no accessible pathway to the playground equipment or picnic area. Consider adding pathways to connect the park amenities to the adjacent sidewalk.
- Consider adding restrooms and a picnic pavilion.

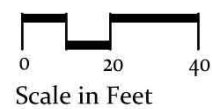
Grant History

- None





Leland Park



Looten's Park

Location: Willow Highway
 Size: 84 Ac
 Accessibility: 0
 Park Type: Community Park

Description

This park is currently undeveloped and has no formal access point. Lootens Park was purchased by Delta Township in April 1980 with assistance of a grant from the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. The original 74 acres located adjacent to Hayes Middle School of the Grand Ledge School District was purchased by the Township. A net 10 acres was added to the park in 1993 as a result of an Eaton County Drain Commission project. The park features mowed pathways and provides opportunities for nature based activities such as bird watching and plant identification.

Opportunities

- The park is undeveloped and may benefit from the development of a master plan.
- Consider the addition of parking, site identification sign, paved trails, restrooms, interpretive signage, and other nature based activities and programs.

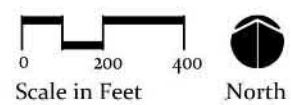
Grant History

- 1980: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Land acquisition.





Lootens Park



Mount Hope Park

Location: 7419 Mt Hope Highway
 Size: 120 Ac
 Accessibility: 4
 Park Type: Community Park

Description

New development at Mt Hope Park was recently constructed in 2019 and provides the west side of the township and adjacent neighborhoods with many recreational activities. Approximately half of the park acreage was developed and includes: restrooms, concessions, playground equipment, two baseball/softball fields, picnic pavilion, multiple soccer fields, picnic areas, site furnishings, and paved trail system. The park is also open in the winter for cross-country skiing. Two additional baseball fields and paved trails are in the process of being added to the park through grants. The overall park site contains additional undeveloped acreage for future facilities.

Opportunities

- The park is newly developed and includes many accessible park facilities.
- Consider paving the gravel parking lot.
- Continue to expand park facilities per the master plan as funds become available.

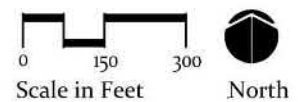
Grant History

- 2016: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Park development.
- 2017: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Connector Pathway.
- 2019: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Perimeter Pathway.
- 2019: Land and Water Conservation Fund - North Baseball Fields.





Mount Hope Park



Player's Club

Location: Spyglass Lane
 Size: 80.3 Ac
 Accessibility: 1
 Park Type: Large Urban Park

Description

The Player's Club site is a former golf course that the Township acquired for the purposes of developing into a passive recreation based park. The site is currently undeveloped and is tucked within a residential neighborhood. The park currently includes mowed grass pathways, prairie/wooded areas that have grown up over the years, and offers nature based recreational uses such as bird and wildlife observation, hiking, walking, and plant identification. The park also has a large parking lot available.

Opportunities

- The site is undeveloped and could benefit from the development of a master plan.
- Park usage suffers from lack of awareness and therefore consider adding a site identification sign and other signage to make it known it is a public park.
- Consider passive based recreational development such as paved/nature trails, interpretive signage, cross-country skiing, picnicking, and wildlife viewing areas.
- Consider adding restrooms.

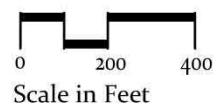
Grant History

- None





Player's Club Park



Sharp Park

Location: 5223 Woodmont Road
 Size: 57.8 Ac
 Accessibility: 2
 Park Type: Large Urban Park

Description

Sharp Park was the second major park facility constructed in Delta Township. The 57.8 acres of land was a donation from the Forbes-Cohen Corporation, the developers of the Lansing Mall. Site amenities include a picnic shelter (seats approximately 75 people), amphitheater (seats 300), playground equipment, fishing dock, pond, basketball court, 4 softball fields, 3 tennis courts, 2 sand volleyball courts, outdoor fitness equipment, story pathway, and a restroom/concession building. The park is also the easterly terminus of the East/West pathway, which is a 10-foot wide concrete non-motorized pathway.

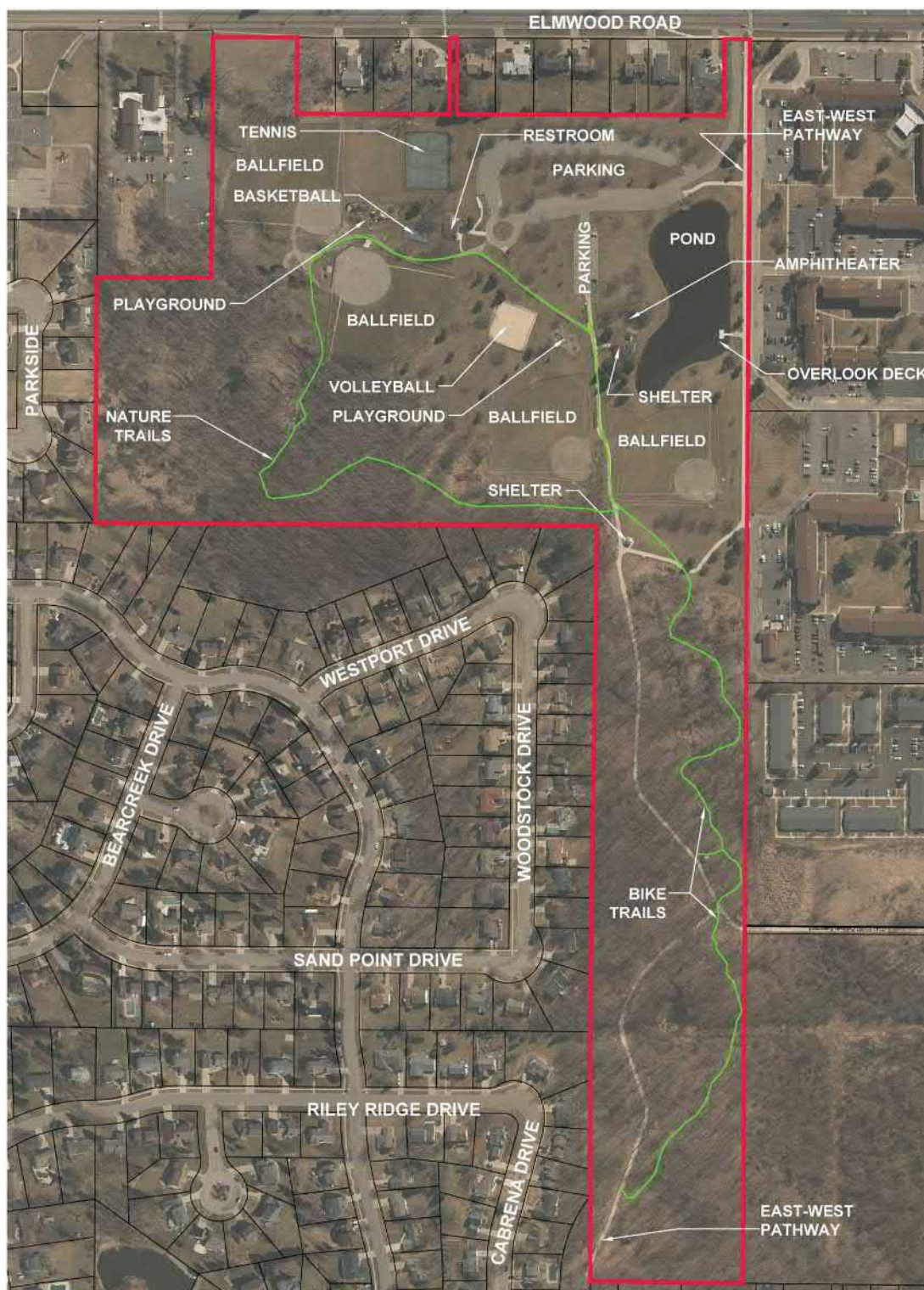
Opportunities

- Most park facilities are not barrier free and do not have accessible path connections.
- Tennis and basketball courts, ball fields, and playground equipment are in need of renovations or replacement.
- Consider implementing phases of the recent master plan which includes upgrades to the ballfields, pickleball courts, new playground equipment, sledding hill, and other proposed improvements.
- Per the 2020 grant, the Township is planning for the replacement of the old picnic shelter, a new restroom facility, and paved pathway connection to existing amenities.

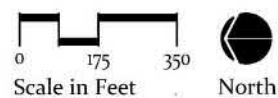
Grant History

- 1973: Land and Water Conservation Fund - Land Acquisition and site improvements.
- 2008: Trust Fund - East-West Pathway.
- 2020: Land and Water Conservation Fund - East-West Pathway





Sharp Park



West Willow Canoe Launch

Location: 6575 Willow Highway
 Size: 5.39 Ac
 Accessibility: 4
 Park Type: Special Use Park

Description

West Willow Canoe Launch is located at the northwest side of the Township and situated along the Grand River. The park was recently developed in 2018 and funded by a Trust Fund Grant. The park features a barrier free canoe launch as well as a picnic area, seating areas, paved pathways, able-bodied access to the river, site furnishings, and a pollinator garden. The park provides the opportunity for all individuals to access the river for canoing, kayaking, fishing, wild life observation, and other nature based activities.

Opportunities

- The site is newly developed and mostly fully developed. There may be opportunities for additional nature based activities such as interpretive signage or viewing platform.
- Consider adding permanent restrooms (port-a-john restroom is available).

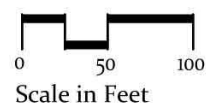
Grant History

- 2016: Trust Fund - Canoe Launch





West Willow Highway Canoe Launch



Inventory Summary Table

Table 4.1 summarizes the inventory of public-owned parks located within the Township boundaries.

Anderson Nature Park	Delta Mills Park	Erickson Park	Grand Woods Park	Hawk Meadow Park	Hunter's Orchard Park	Lake Delta Park	Lake Iris Park	Leland Park	Lootens Park	Mount Hope Park	Players Club	Sharp Park	West Willow Canoe Launch	TOTAL	
151.3	32	17	128.2	148.2	26.4	65	2.9	1.1	84	120	80.3	57.8	5.39	919.59	Size (Ac)
1	2	2	2	3	3	2	1	1	0	4	1	2	4		Accessibility Rating
NR	C	C	LU	NR	N	SU	M	M	C	C	LU	LU	SU		Category
	1											1		2	Basketball
												3		3	Tennis
	6													6	Pickleball
	2	2	1							2		4		11	Baseball/softball
	2	1	2							1		2		7	Picnic Shelter
	2	1	3							1		2		9	Restrooms
	4	1	2					1		1				9	Play Equipment
	1	2								13				16	Soccer
	1		1									2		4	Sand Volleyball
		1								1		1		3	Concessions
	X	X	X		X	X		X				X	X		Picnic Area/Tables
	X		X		X							X			Grills
	X	X	X	X						X		X			Benches
X	X		X	X	X	X						X	X		Fishing
	2		1		1								1	5	Canoe Launch
	X		X	X			X			X			X		Paved Trails
X	X		X	X	X	X			X		X				Nature Trails
					X					X		X			Bike Facilities
	2		2											4	Horseshoes
	1				1	2						1		5	Overlook Deck
			1											1	Disc Golf
X															Mountain Bike Trails
												X			Exercise Equipment
												1		1	Amphitheater
						X									Boardwalk
			1											1	RC Car Track
	1													1	Cricket Pitch
													1	1	Polinator Garden
	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X		Parking

Mini Park (M), Neighborhood Park (N), Community Park (C), Large Urban (LU), Special Use (SP), Natural Resource (NR)

Cemeteries

Although cemeteries are not considered recreational in nature and do not have programmed recreational events, they do provide open green space, a place to walk and meditate, and they serve as points of historic interest. There are two cemeteries within the Township. Both cemeteries are maintained and operated by the Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department. Delta Center Cemetery is located on St. Joe Highway east of Canal Road (7301 West St. Joe Highway). The Hillside Cemetery is located on Delta River Drive east of Webster Street (6415 Delta River Drive).

Joseph E. Drolett Community Center and Enrichment Center

The Joseph E. Drolett Community Center at 7550 W. Willow Hwy and the Enrichment Center at 4538 Elizabeth Road are owned by the Township and operated by the Parks, Recreation and Cemeteries Department. The Joseph E. Drolett Community Center is used for programs and is available for rental. The Enrichment Center is used as a Senior Center for the 39ers group and for various classes during the week. Both the classrooms and activity room are available for rent.

Trails and Greenways

Greenways tie park systems together and form a continuous park environment. The location and size of these parks are largely governed by availability. Trails may be located within parks, on an independent right-of-way, or within the road right-of-way. There are a number of different types of trails that can provide both transportation and recreation opportunities. Connector trails are defined as “multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the Community” (J.D. Mertes and J.R. Hall, Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, 1995). These trails are generally located within the road right-of-way and can be divided into two types. Type I has separate paths for different user types, such



as pedestrians and bicyclists. Type II has mixed uses and is suited to lighter use patterns. Delta Township has many beautiful trails to walk, jog, bike, and roller blade on. The most recent is the Waverly Road pathway.

East - West Pathway

2.2 miles of shared use path that runs from Canal Rd to Maycroft Rd and connects the library and mall to Sharp Park.

Creyts Road Pathway

2.56 miles of 6-foot wide pathway that intersects the East-West Pathway and connects to Delta Mills Park.

Semi-Public Facilities in Delta Township

Some facilities exist that are available for public use but are not owned by the public. These facilities are owned through private-public partnerships or non-profit groups. The following quasi-public facilities are available to Delta Township residents:

Capital City Bird Sanctuary at Hawk Valley Farm

Capital City Bird Sanctuary is a nature sanctuary that protects 65 acres of forest, meadow, and riverside habitats. Nearly 2 miles of unpaved trails offer visitors a chance to get close to nature and observe birds, flowers, and wildlife. It is open to the public and parking is available at Hawk Meadow Park. The Sanctuary is located on Delta River Drive.

GM Park

The GM Park is a 75 acre nature preserve on the GM Delta-Waverly Assembly Plant property. It is in Delta Township, but is under a 425 Agreement with the City of Lansing. It is open to the public and includes a trail network and access to 2 ponds. The property is located east of the GM plant on R.E. Olds Drive.

Great Lakes Christian College

Great Lakes Christian College's main campus is located in Delta Township. Although the college is public, access to recreational facilities is primarily intended for students and limited public access is possible usually through prior arrangement with the college. The campus includes soccer fields and indoor volleyball and basketball courts.

Woldumar Nature Center

The Woldumar Nature Center was established in 1966 when a land donation of 177 acres was made to the Nature Way Association; the governing body of Woldumar. It is located at 5539 Lansing Road, in Delta Township and currently maintains 178 acres of land. The nature center provides an educational trail system through woodlands, fields, prairie, pine forests, orchards, and along the Grand River. The site includes over 5 miles of trails and at least 1 mile of river shoreline.

School Facilities

Public school facilities can add tremendous recreational value to a community. Delta Township is served by four school districts: Grand Ledge, Holt, Lansing, and Waverly. Delta Township utilizes indoor courts at the Waverly Intermediate Middle School for basketball programs. The Township has a cooperative lease agreement granting exclusive use of the Delta-Waverly swimming pool at Waverly East Intermediate School. With other facilities the school district has first choice on facilities and the Township has next priority, however, individuals must reserve space on an annual basis.

Colt Elementary	Delta Center Elementary	Elmwood Elementary	Willow Ridge Elementary Hayes Middle School	Winans Elementary Waverly Middle School Waverly High School	TOTAL	
9.5	34.58	9.76	72.81	96.28	222.93	Size (Ac)
1	6	1	7	3	18	Basketball
				10	10	Tennis
1	1		4	3	9	Baseball/softball
	2	2	4	2	10	Soccer
2	1	2	1	3	9	Play Equipment
	1			3	4	Lacrose Field
				4	4	Football
				1	1	Track
			2		2	Volleyball

Table 4.2 School facilities within the Township.

Regional Park Facilities

Regional facilities may offer unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, observing wildlife habitats, fishing, boating, hiking, hunting, and trail use. They may include active play areas and organized recreation as well as historical or cultural interest uses. While these parks are not used for formal programming by Delta Township, they are public facilities that provide recreational opportunities for the residents of the township. There are numerous park facilities that surround Delta Township that provide a wide range of recreational facilities available to township residents.

State Facilities

State Parks provide diverse recreational opportunities to Delta residents and the region. These facilities provide activities including camping, picnicking, swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and horseback riding. State parks in close proximity to Delta Township include:

- Ionia State Recreation Area, 3,998 acres in Ionia County.
- Maple River State Game Area, 9,948 acres in Clinton, Ionia, and Gratiot Counties.
- Muskrat Lake State Game Area, 181 acres in Clinton County.
- Portland State Game Area, 2,373 acres in Ionia County.
- Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area, 4,000 acres in Bath and Woodhull Townships.
- Sleepy Hollow State Park, 2,678 acres in Clinton County.

County Facilities

Eaton County and Ingham County both provide large public park spaces that include a variety of passive and active recreational amenities. These facilities are located in close proximity to the Township and provide residents with additional recreational opportunities. The following County

Parks are available to Township residents:

Eaton County Parks

- Butler Park
- Crandell Park
- Duane Tirrell Memorial Park
- Dyer Kiln Historic Site
- Fitzgerald Park
- Fox Memorial Park
- Keehne Environmental Area
- Lincoln Brick Park
- Optimist Youth Park

Ingham County Parks

- Bunker Canoe Landing
- Burchfield Park
- Hawk Island Park
- Lake Lansing Boat Launch
- Lake Lansing North
- Lake Lansing South
- McNamara Canoe Landing
- Riverbend Natural Area
- Soldan Dog Park

Clinton County Parks

- Clinton Lakes County Park
- Motz County Park

Other Local Facilities

Other municipalities adjacent to the Township provide many regional park and recreational facilities that serve Delta Township residents. The larger parks include:

City of Grand Ledge

Fitzgerald Memorial Field

Jaycee Park

Oak Park

City of Lansing

Crego Park

Ferner Nature Center

Fine Park

Frances Park

Fulton Park

Hope Soccer Complex

Hunters Ridge Park
 Scott Woods Park
 Woodcreek Park

City of Potterville
 Alliance Lake Softball Complex

Watertown Township
 Gloria Miller Looking Glass Valley Park
 Heritage Park

Pathways and Trails

Regional pathways and trails provide excellent recreational opportunities, and can act as secondary transportation routes, often connecting key parks with other destinations or places. Regional trail systems include:

Lansing River Trail is a 25-mile trail that traces the course of the Grand River, Red Cedar River, and Sycamore Creek in the City of Lansing.

Northern Tier Trail is a 6.6-mile trail that traverses through Clinton and Ingham County between East State Rd and White Memorial Park.

Private Recreation Facilities

Several privately-owned recreation facilities located in the area complement the public parks system. Although these facilities are privately operated and often charge a use fee or require membership, they are considered because they do meet specific recreation needs. A list of other local private facilities is provided below.

Billiards

Pinball Pete's

Bowling

Lansing Bowling Association
 Mason Bowling Center
 Redwing Bowling Lanes
 Royal Scot Lanes
 Sky Lanes

Camp Grounds

Hickory Lake Campgrounds
 Lansing Cottonwood Campground
 Moon Lake Campground
 Mullican's Riverside Resort
 Wheel Inn Campground

Camps

Camp Meeting Retreats
 Girl Scout Camp Wacousta
 Mystic Lake YMCA & Pa-Wa-Pi YMCA Day Camp
 Tutor Time Adventure Camp

Canoe & Boat Rentals

Burchfield Park
 Grand Kayak Rentals
 River Town Adventures

Clubs

American Legion
 Capital City Old Car Club
 Capital City Sportsmens League
 Chief Okemos Sportsman's Club
 City Club of Lansing
 Country Club of Lansing
 Family Motorcycle Club
 Jug & Mug Ski Club
 Kiwanis Club of East Lansing
 Lansing Boat Club
 Lansing Sailing Club
 Leiderkranz Club
 Metropolitan Flying Club
 Trap Shooting Association
 Okemos Seahawks Aquatic Club
 Rotary Club of Lansing
 Spartan Water Polo Club

Ten Pound Fiddle
University Club of Michigan
State
V.F.W. Post 6034
V.F.W. Post 7309

Dance / Gymnastics

Academy of Dance Arts
Ann's School of Dance
Assiff Studio of the Dance
Baur Nancie Dance Studio
Children's Ballet Theatre
Dance Fusion
Dance World
Danzalot LLC
Delta Dance Connection
DeMellio Studio of Dance
Great Lakes Gymnastics
Lansing Ballet Company
Happendance Studio YWCA
In Motion Dance Center
Island Dance Center
Karyn's Dance Place
Lansing Chamber Dance
Red Cedar Gymnastics
Rising Star Studio
Studio de Dance
Synergy Touring Company
Tari's Cornerstone Studio
Twisters USA Inc.
Watson Patsy Dancing School
Williams School of Dance

Golf Courses - Miniature

DeWitt Family Golf Center
Funtime Adventure Park
WindRiver Adventure Golf

Golf Courses - Practice Range

Branson Bay Golf Course
DeWitt Family Golf Center
El Dorado
Forest Akers Golf Course
Eagle Eye Golf Club
Royal Scot Golf
Timber Ridge

Golf Courses - Private

Country Club of Lansing
Walnut Hills

Golf Courses - Public

Bonnie View
Branson Bay
Brookshire Inn
Centennial Acres
Eagle View Golf Club
El Dorado
Forest Akers
Glenbrier
Governors Club of Michigan
Grand Ledge Country Club
Hawk Hollow Golf Course
Hunter's Ridge Golf Course
Indian Hills
Ironwood Links
Lake O' the Hills
Ledge Meadows
Meridian Sun Golf Club
Oak Lane
Pine Hills
Prairie Creek
Royal Scot
The Falcon at Hawk Hollow
Timber Ridge
Twin Brook
Twin Oaks
Wheatfield Valle

Health & Fitness

Court One
Curves for Women
Go Work Out
Gold's Gym
Gym Bumz
Hawaii Health Spa
Michigan Athletic Club
Mid-Michigan Academy of
Martial Art
One on One Personal Training
Planet Fitness
Powerhouse Gym
Spartan Swim Team

World Gym
Dewitt YMCA
Lansing YMCA
Oak Park YMCA
Parkwood YMCA
Westside Community

Museums

Abrams Planetarium
Capital Heritage Hall
Impression Five
Michigan Historical Museum
Michigan Museum of Surveying
Michigan Supreme Court
Learning Center
HERstory Gallery
MSU Museum
R.E. Olds Transp. Museum
Telephone Pioneer Museum

Nature Centers

Fenner Nature Center
Harris Nature Center

Skating Rink / Rental

Edru Roller Skating Area
Suburban Ice Sports
Munn Ice Arena

Theater - Cinema

J Celebration Cinema
NCG Lansing Cinemas
Regal Lansing Mall Stadium 12
Sun Theatre

Theater - Performing Arts

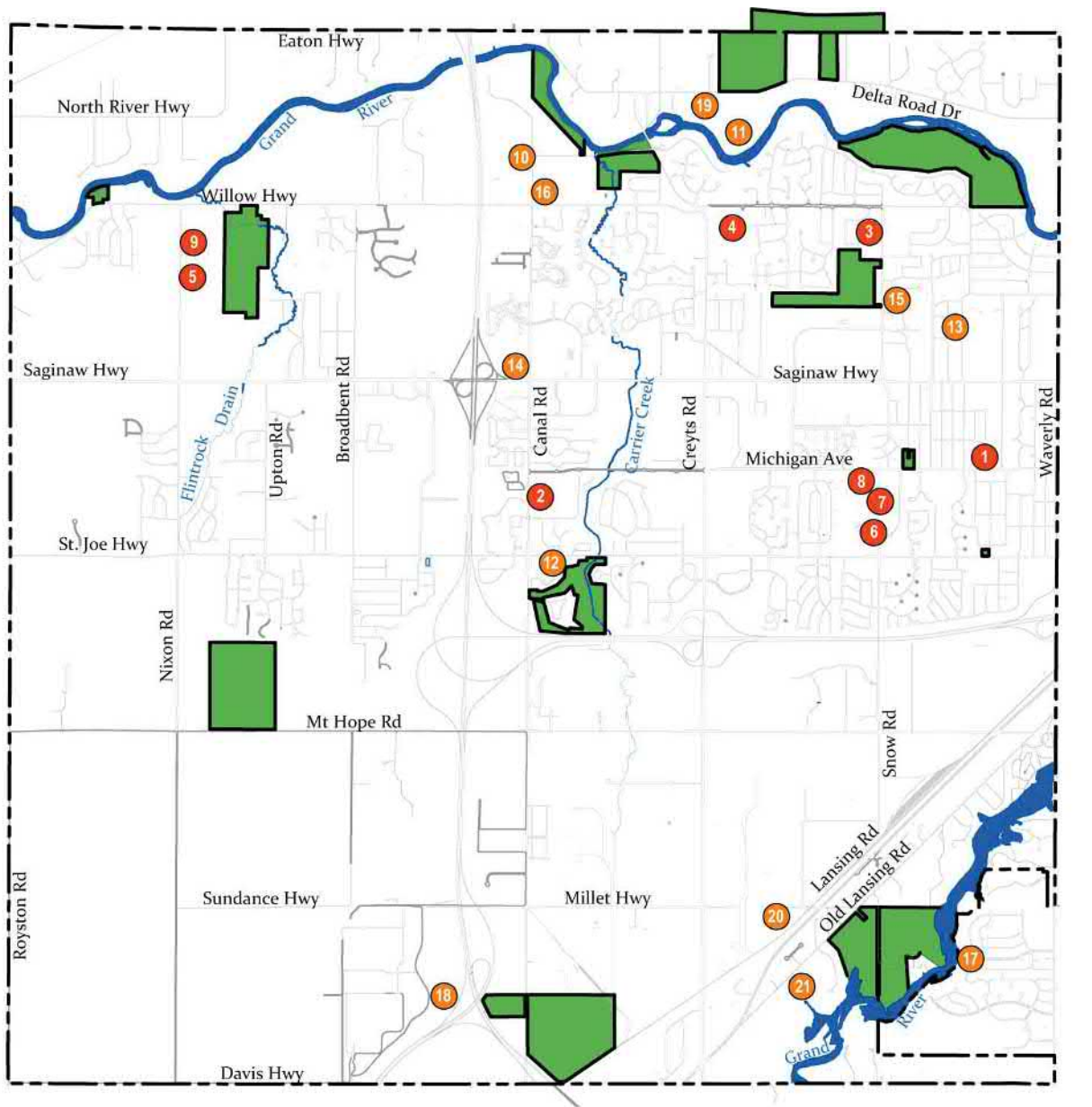
All of Us Express – Children's
Lansing Community College
MSU Department of Theater
Riverwalk Theatre
Wharton Center

Grant Status

Delta Township has been successful in obtaining grants from the MDNR for many years. All grant assisted facilities are still present and open to the public. Below is a summary:

Year	Project No.	Project Name	Funding Source	Grant Amount	Status
1973	26-00517	Sharp Park	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$190,000	Closed
1977	26-00981	Anderson Nature Park	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$111,300	Closed
1979	TF316	Anderson Nature Park	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$185,000	Closed
1980	26-01098	Looten's Park	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$55,000	Closed
1985	TF1030	Anderson Nature Park	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$68,000	Withdrawn
2000	TF00-052	Hunter's Orchard Park Development	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$65,000	Closed
2008	TF08-005	Sharp Park East-West Path	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$244,700	Closed
2014	26-01743	Delta Mills Pickleball Courts	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$32,500	Closed
2014	TF14-0198	Mt Hope Property Acquisition	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$281,000	Closed
2015	TF15-0055	Hawk Meadow Restrooms	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$49,500	Closed
2016	TF16-0002	West Willow Canoe Launch	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$162,500	Closed
2016	26-01778	Mt Hope Park Development Phase 2	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$150,000	Closed
2016	TF-16-0004	Delta Mills Restroom Renovation	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$175,000	Closed
2017	26-01789	Mt Hope Connector Pathway	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$62,300	Closed
2017	TF17-0074	Delta Mills . Hunter's Orchard Pathway	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$298,500	Closed
2017	TF147-0075	Delta Mills Canoe Launch	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$237,500	Closed
2019	26-01835	Mt Hope Perimeter Pathway	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$212,500	PA Executed
2019	26-01836	Hawk Meadow Pathway	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$300,000	PA Executed
2019	26-01840	Mt Hope North Baseball Fields	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$300,000	PA Executed
2019	TF19-0068	Hunter's Orchard Park Pathway	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$225,000	PA Executed
2019	TF19-0069	Delta Mills Playground/Restroom	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$50,000	PA Executed
2020	26-01852	Sharp Park / East-West Pathway	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$300,000	PA in Review
2020	TF20-0105	Elmwood Rd Land Acquisition	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$30,000	Closed
2020	TF20-0108	North Canal Rd Land Acquisition	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$75,000	Closed

Figure 4.2 - Other Recreation Areas & Facilities

**LEGEND****SCHOOLS**

- 1 - COLT ELEMENTARY
- 2 - DELTA CENTER ELEMENTARY
- 3 - ELMWOOD ELEMENTARY
- 4 - GREAT LAKE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
- 5 - HAYES MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 6 - WAVERLY MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 7 - WAVERLY HIGH SCHOOL
- 8 - WINANS ELEMENTARY
- 9 - WILLOW RIDGE ELEMENTARY

OTHER FACILITIES

- 10 - CAPITAL AREA SPORTSMENS LEAGUE
- 11 - CAPITAL CITY BIRD SANCTUARY
- 12 - DELTA CENTER CEMETERY
- 13 - DELTA ENRICHMENT CENTER
- 14 - DELTA TOWNSHIP HALL
- 15 - DELTA TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY
- 16 - DROLETT COMMUNITY CENTER
- 17 - FINE/FULTON PARK (LANSING)
- 18 - GM NATURE PARK
- 19 - HILLSIDE CEMETERY
- 20 - RECYCLING CENTER
- 21 - WOLDUMAR NATURE CENTER



PARKS
PROPERTY



TOWNSHIP
BOUNDARY



North

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Description of the Planning Process

During the early phase of the planning process background data was gathered from site investigations and available reports in order to develop a current snapshot of the Township and comprehensive understanding of the needs of the community. This chapter looks to assess community need for parks and recreation facilities against facility availability and program offerings. There are a variety of methods for assessing community need for recreation services. This Plan uses the combination of the following methods to identify the recreational needs of the Township:

1. Location and distribution of park space throughout the Township.
2. Quantity of park acreage and amenities.
3. Analysis of demographic trends

Level of Service Analysis

Level of Service Standards are guidelines that define service areas based on population that support investment decisions related to parks, facilities, and amenities. Standards may change over time as demographics, program life-cycles, and needs of the community change. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) maintains a data base of park system data in the U.S. which, combined with a yearly agency performance review report, has taken the place of outdated park standards. Our team used information from the NRPA Park Metrics database as well as the 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review to understand national trends and metrics in park and recreation elements and to benchmark Delta Township with comparable communities. The NRPA Park Metrics and Agency Performance

Review help inform conversations and policies about the role of parks and recreation planning, land acquisition, and development of park, recreation and open space property at the local level.

Building on data from the park and recreation system inventory, Delta was compared to similar systems (communities in the range of 20,000 – 49,999 people) in the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA)'s park metrics database. The NRPA database contains self-reported information from parks and recreation departments across the country. This comparison allows the project team to benchmark the level of service in terms of park acreage and amenities per capita between Delta and peer Townships nationally to evaluate the relative adequacy or inadequacy of the Township's recreation system. It should be noted that these comparisons are to be used as a guide and should be interpreted according to local needs, trends, and current situations. The purpose of recreation planning is to address the specific needs of the community, based on its own particular resources and resident preferences/demands so that the plan best suits the community's desires for recreation.

Service Area Analysis

NRPA guidelines classify parks, open space, and greenways in accordance with their size and the role they play in the overall park system. They include associated service areas for each park type that indicate a minimum standard for geographic balance and availability of each park type in the community. Classifying parks in the system ensures the entire community is served by a wide range of park and recreational facilities. Figure 5.1 delineates the service area for each park in the Delta Township Park system.

Evaluation

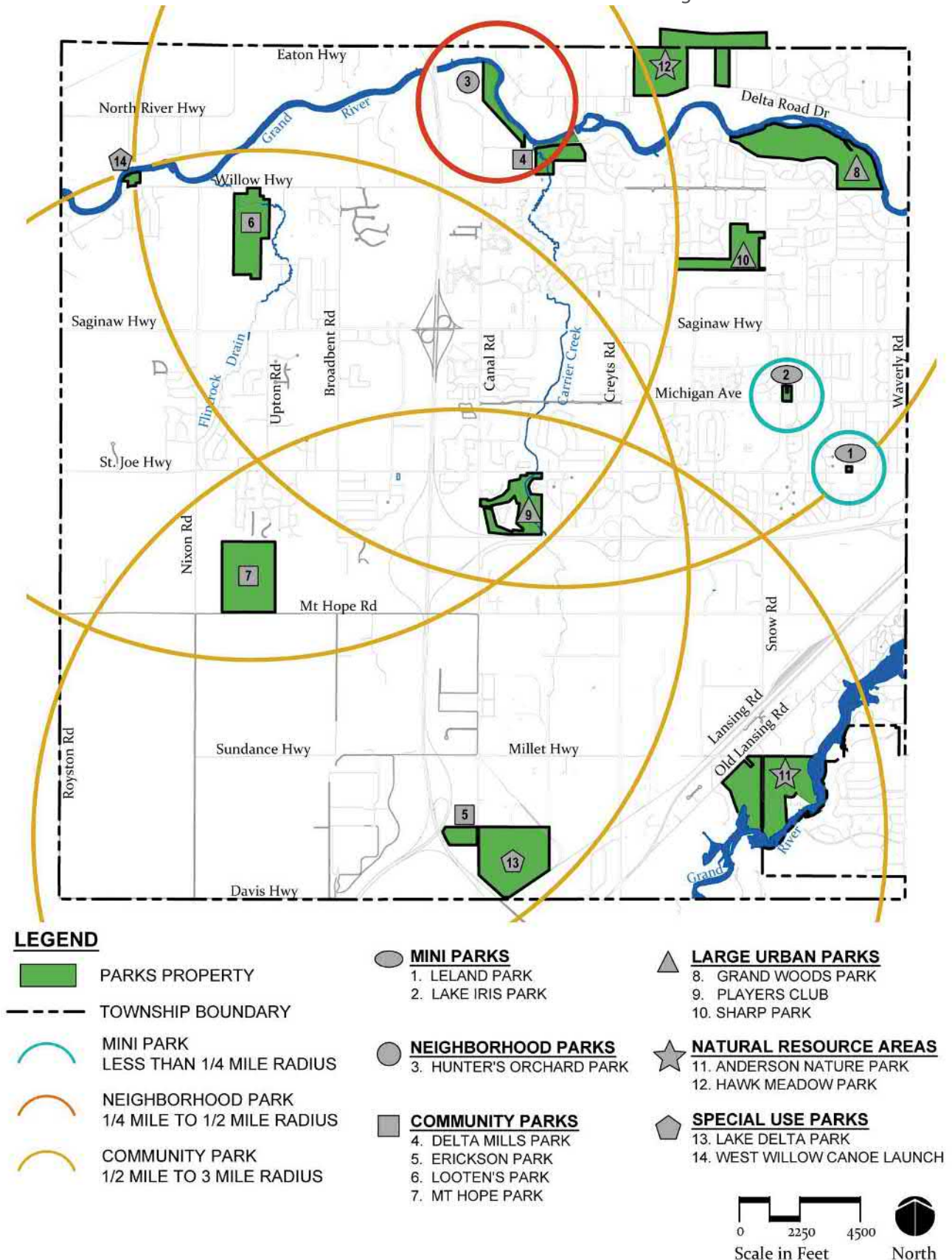
Analysis of the geographic distribution of park facilities throughout the Township reveal the following:

- Overall coverage is good and all residents have access to some type of park
- All neighborhoods in the Township have access to Community parks.
- Natural resource area parks are mostly at the north side and southeast corner of the Township along sections of the Grand River.
- Neighborhoods on the east, south, and west side of the Township do not have access to neighborhood parks
- The north, southeast, and northwest neighborhoods are not serviced by a mini park.
- The township is in need of more neighborhood parks.
- There are two large urban parks located in the northeast quadrant of the Township, which is where most of the neighborhoods are located
- The southwest area of the township is lacking in park service area.

Needs

- Addition of mini parks and neighborhood parks in the higher density neighborhoods in the north-east quadrant and the neighborhoods on the west side of I-69.
- Consider development of Anderson Park which would service the neighborhood at the southeast corner of the Township.
- Consider development of Players Club which would provide a centrally located large urban park.
- Consider development of Lootens Park which would provide the northwest area of the Township with recreational activities.
- Look for opportunities to provide natural resource areas along Carrier Creek, which would provide centrally located access to natural features.

Figure 5.1 - Park Service Areas



Park and Open Space Acreage

A basic measure of the level of service is the amount of park and open space acreage available per resident. In this Master Plan, the analysis begins by considering “accessible”, usable acreage, which excludes golf courses, cemeteries, undeveloped sites, and shared school sites. **The analysis showed that “accessible” park acreage per capita in Delta exceeds comparable communities and townships (see Figure 5.2).** The NRPA database demonstrated a median of 10.6 acres per 1,000 residents in similarly sized communities, and 11.3 acres per 1,000 residents in all townships. Delta measures at 16.4 acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents (excluding parks that are not developed). **When all parkland acreages are considered, including undeveloped sites, Delta has 27.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, which is more than double the median of all communities in the NRPA database (10.4) including comparable communities with a population between 20,000 and 49,000 (10.6). In addition, Delta also more than doubles the NRPA database median of 11.3 acres per 1,000 residents for all townships.** This positions the Township well with capacity for additional population growth. This also demonstrates an opportunity to expand park facilities within the Township’s own holdings, upgrade existing facilities, and improve general park maintenance.

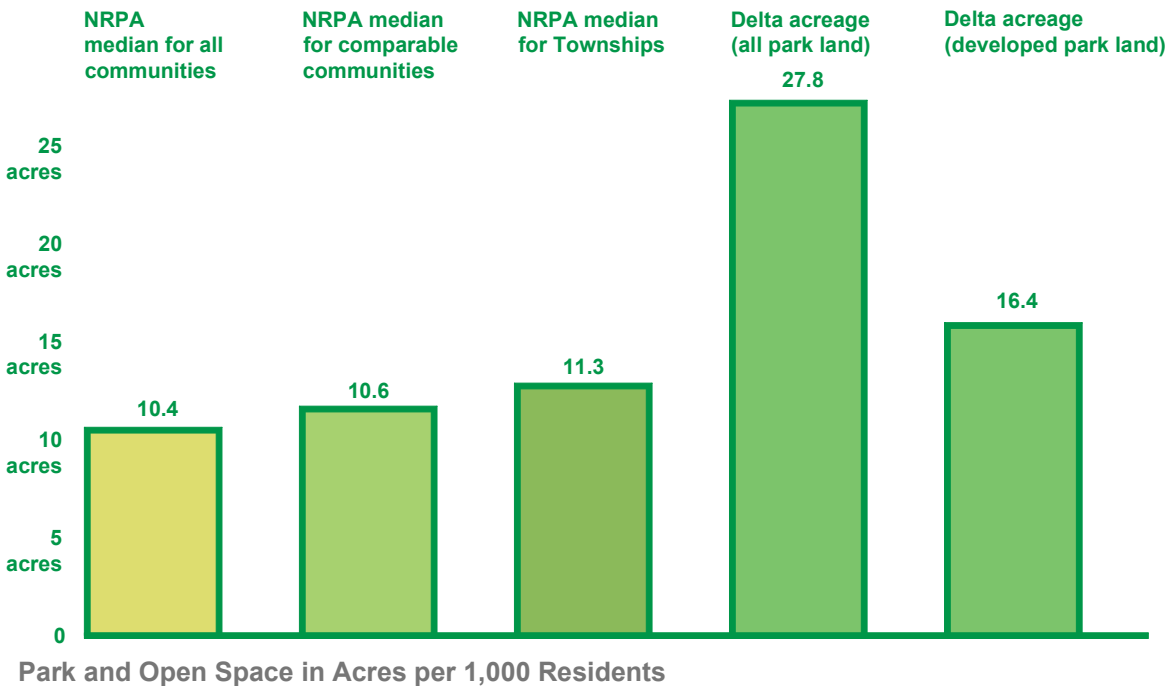
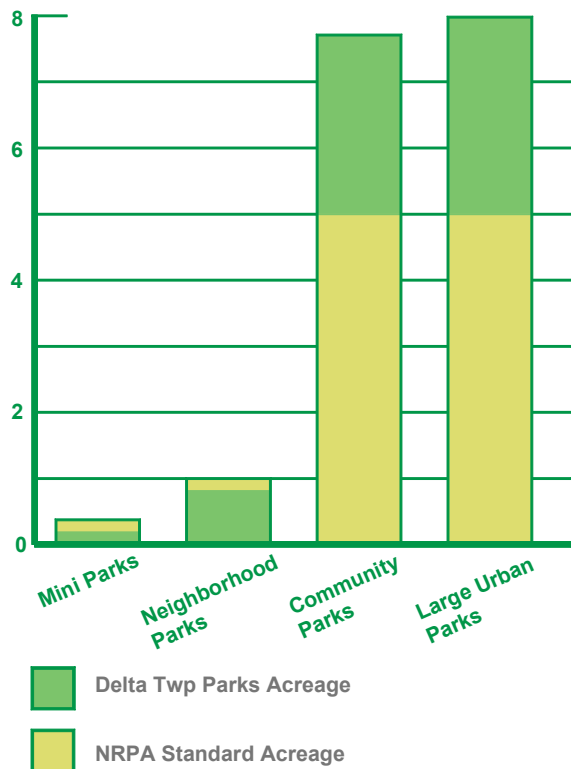


Figure 5.2 - Park Acreage

In addition to overall acreage, NRPA metrics recommend a certain number of park acres per units of population for different types of park classifications. NRPA standards state that per 1,000 residents, 0.25 acres of mini parks, 1 acre of neighborhood parks, and 5 acres for community and regional parks is needed to meet the needs of the community. Delta is below the standard for mini parks and neighborhood parks, but exceeds the standard for community parks and large urban parks (see figure 5.3). It should be noted that these standards are to be used as a guide and interpreted according to local needs, character, trends, and current Parks Department capacity, and the demand may be greater or less than the national standard.



Park Types in Acres per 1,000 Residents
Figure 5.3 - Park Type

Park Amenities

Park amenities are the built elements within Deltas' parks that support various forms of recreation. Passive recreation and active recreation are the primary types of recreational uses. Passive recreation includes less intense activities that are more quiet and non-exertive for a limited numbers of users. Active recreation requires space and facilities capable of accommodating exertive activities. Examples include: sports fields, play apparatus areas, open areas, special facilities, such as pools and court areas, and areas for organized activities.

Recreation areas must provide for both types of use and preferably include a variety of opportunities for each to respond adequately to a wide range of interests and age groups. For many users these are crucial components that help them feel welcome and safe. It is critical that Deltas' parks supply the right number and types of amenities to meet the needs of their users. As the demographics of Delta changes over time

(race, age, population, etc.) park amenities need to be assessed for their relevance to the changing user groups.

To understand gaps and surpluses among amenities in Delta Township, Level of Service metrics from the NRPA benchmarking database were used. The analysis showed that in Delta's "basic" park amenities per capita, in categories with comparable NRPA benchmarks, are on par with comparable Townships, without major gaps in service by number or by geography, although there are minor deficits in the total number of basketball courts, tennis courts, and dog parks. Still, amenities that should serve a walkable population, such as playgrounds, are fairly equitably-distributed across the township.

While the NRPA benchmarking analysis is limited by the availability of amenity categories in the database, discussions during the engagement process, revealed community interest in more specialized amenities such as a farmers market, splash pad, and art installations.

The combination of the benchmark analysis and public input give clear direction for the township. The township has done a good job of providing basic park amenities across the community. There is a desire for new, innovative and specialized amenities to add diversity to the system. At the same time, the community has demonstrated need for more trails, access to natural areas, and



Figure 5.4: Park and Recreation Facilities - Population per Facility

Facility	NRPA median for Townships	NRPA median for similar population	NRPA median for all agencies	Delta Township
Tennis	5,000	5,000	5,608	11,040
Playground	5,263	3,111	3,750	3,680
Baseball	5,044	4,858	7,000	3,011
Softball	7,110	8,509	11,339	3,011
Basketball (outdoor)	6,910	6,839	7,403	16,560
Volleyball	15,655	14,807	18,232	8,280
Soccer	5,030	5,011	7,382	2,365
Football	14,125	19,351	26,493	-
Dog Park	20,500	28,000	48,586	-
Recreation Center	25,000	24,601	31,239	33,119
Swimming Pool	n/a	31,230	53,025	-
Community Center	12,847	26,668	29,036	33,119
Auditorium	40,000	30,745	68,181	-
Pickleball	n/a	8,143	14,714	5,520
Skate Park	n/a	32,335	53,708	-
Outdoor Ice Rink	n/a	13,123	16,887	-

gathering spaces. Focusing on walking and biking trails within the system would provide the greatest benefit for the largest number of residents within Delta Township. Respondents indicated they were very supportive of upgrading and expanding walking and biking trails and the community has also voiced that indoor facilities for fitness and sports are high priorities for the future. (Additional detail on public engagement is discussed within the following chapter).

Trends Analysis

A number of recent reports and surveys exist regarding parks and recreation participation patterns within the United States. Inferences can be made about the Township parks and recreation program and service needs by cross referencing the research data with Township population demographics.

The numbers show that during the pandemic in 2020, over 260 million people visited a local park or recreational facility. Additionally, 70% of us either maintained or increased park, trail, and public space usage, with about 50% being parents, active adults, and those 25 and under. This trend is likely to continue as we come out of the pandemic and outdoor recreation options remain popular.

According to the *Outdoor Participation Topline Report 2022*, by the Outdoor Foundation, 54% of the U.S. population, ages 6 and over, participated in outdoor recreation in 2021, which in Delta would equate to 17,884 people. In addition, the report states that the Midwestern region of the US, which includes Michigan, has the second highest rate of outdoor participation in the Country. Of those who participate in outdoor recreation nationally it is split 53% males and 47% female (Delta is almost identical to this split). This report also found the following trends:

- Since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared in March 2020, the number of new outdoor recreation participants has increased by 26%.
- The most popular outdoor activities by participation rate include hiking, camping, fishing, running and biking.
- The number of children participating in outdoor recreation is up, but they are participating less frequently.
- The number of participants 55 years old and older has increased more than 14% since 2019.
- The most popular team sports include basketball, baseball, soccer, softball, and football.
- The number 1 reason for participating in outdoor recreation was to get exercise.

According to the *2022 Participation Report* by the Physical Activity Council, 76% of the U.S. population ages 6 and over are active on some level which in Delta would equate to 25,170 active people. The report also found:

- Interest in outdoor recreation is on the rise due to people wanting to experience nature, join fitness classes, and participate in team sports.
- Fitness sports (67%), outdoor sports (54%), individual sports (42%), and team sports (22%) show the highest participation rates.
- Racket sports (14%), water sports (14%), and winter sports (8%) show lower participation rates.
- Participation in fitness sports and outdoor sports are on the rise over the last 5 years.
- Participation in individual sports, team sports, and water sports are seeing declining rates over the last 5 years.

According to the 2022 NRPA Americans' Engagement with Parks Report 1 in 5 Americans ride bikes to parks. Gen-Xers are more likely to walk to a park while Millennial's are more likely to ride a bike to parks. These age groups make up approx. 32% of the Delta population. The report

also indicates that 62% of respondents visit parks to be with family and friends while 54% visited parks for exercise.

Taking these use patterns and transferring them to Delta, the following activities would capitalize on trends as they relate to outdoor recreation and population in the Township:

- Look for non-motorized/walking trail opportunities to connect parks. This aligns with desires noted in the on-line survey and documented from the public input open house.
- Consider adding fitness equipment in parks, or look for opportunities for partnerships to provide this activity along with programs.
- Consider expanding team sport activities.
- Consider providing opportunities for camping and fishing activities.
- Consider developing adventure sports such as BMX biking and cross-country skiing.

Age also plays an important role in recreation as it relates to activity and participation. According to the *2022 Participation Report* by the Physical Activity Council, the most active group (82%) is those 18 and under, followed by those 18-34 (76%), those 35-49 (72%), and those 50 and older



(67%). The report also found the following:

- Outdoor sports and team sports have the highest participation rates for those 18 and under.
- Fitness sports and outdoor sports have the highest participation rates for those 18-35 and 35-49, however the younger group is more likely to participate in water sports.
- Those 50 and older prefer fitness activities, particularly low impact activities such as walking, cycling, or aquatics.
- The 18 and under group are growing up in the age of technology. Nationally, the use of technology while engaging in outdoor recreation is high in this age group. Recreation participants in this group are more likely to use smart phones and other devices to engage in outdoor recreation.
- The top three factors that motivate youth/families to participate in outdoor activities and visit recreational facilities are to be with family and friends (61%), participate in organized and team sports (59%), and to experience excitement/adventure (46%).
- The top three factors that hamper youth/families from participation in outdoor activities are lack of time (38%), lack of interest in available activities (20%), and safety concerns (17%).
- Most participants under the age of 18 are visiting parks with parents/families and relying on family members to take them to parks.
- Those in the middle aged group are more likely to visit a park to be closer to nature, minimize stress, and for fitness.
- Those in the 23-43 age group are more likely to visit parks to experience excitement and adventure. Family oriented recreational facilities will also be important to this group.

The largest population group in the Township is the 50 and older group which make up 42.5% of the population. This group is the least active population group being 66.3% active. Fitness

sports represent the highest participation activity in this group and they are least likely to play team sports. The top factors that motivate this group to participate in outdoor activities and visit recreational facilities are to get exercise (55%) and be close to nature/enjoy open space (55%).

The following activities would benefit this age group based on the trends: recreational activities geared toward active seniors such as fitness classes, pickleball, bocce, shuffleboard, and fitness trails; open space and natural resource features to enjoy nature and go for walks; non-motorized trail systems within parks and regionally.

The second largest population group includes those aged 18-34 which make up 23% of the township population and the next two largest groups include 35-49 at 17% and 18 and under at 16.8%.

The following activities would capitalize on trends as they relate to these groups:

- Develop programs and facilities that support adventure recreation.
- Continue to develop youth sports programs and provide facilities for organized sports.
- Offer technology focused activities as an integral component to recreation programs and facilities.
- Offer family oriented programming and park amenities.
- Expand nature based activities by providing nature trails, interpretive signage, boardwalks, and other passive types of recreation.
- Develop programs to attract young professionals.



Description of the Public Input Process

Delta Township encourages its residents to take an active role in planning for their community's recreational opportunities. The Township appreciates the fact that recreation planning plays an important role in maintaining the quality of life in a community and therefore tries to be responsive to citizen needs and desires for parks and recreation. Community outreach is one way of obtaining a perspective on the needs and desires of the community and engaging in a process that includes; developing realistic alternatives, formulating goals, policies, and recommendations for public and private decisions, developing criteria to measure change, and involving people in the planning, design and decision processes.

In order to ensure that the Township's parks and recreation offerings are aligned with the needs of the community, and to understand the community perception of the level of service being provided, the Township engaged in a public input process.

Community Outreach

The community outreach process included the following: an on-line survey, a public input open-house workshop, a Park Commission input meeting, a Township Board input meeting, a 30-day public review period, and open public hearings. The input and opinions received at these meetings helped the administration and facilitator provide the basis for revising the goals and objectives from the previous plan.

On-Line Survey

In May of 2022 the Township developed an on-line survey to solicit input and ideas from its residents regarding current use and future needs of the Township's parks, recreation and programs, services, maintenance, and facilities. The survey was conducted over an approximate 5-month period using an on-line survey tool (Survey Monkey).

The survey was promoted to the community using a number of methods including: publication in the Township monthly E-newsletter, posting at Township Hall, and through social media platforms including the Township website and Facebook page.

Six-hundred eighty-three (683) individuals elected to fully complete the survey. Respondents were 67% female and 30% male (3% chose not to answer or identified as other). Eighty-five (85) percent of the respondents were Township residents, with 41% residing in the northeast section of the Township, 21% residing in the northwest section, 15% residing in the southwest, and 8% in the southeast. About 46.5% of the respondents indicated that members of their household are in the 25-44 age group, and 38% have household members in the 45-64 age group which indicates the results may focus on family and senior recreation. Approximately 46% of respondents indicated they visited parks more frequently than pre-pandemic whereas 41% indicated number of visits remained the same. See Figures 6.1 through 6.3 for more detailed results of selected categories. The Appendix contains the full survey results.

Public Input Workshop

The Township understands the importance of meaningful citizen input and is committed to using this input to assist in evaluating trends and forming goals and actions. Prior to development of the plan, the Township solicited input and participation from the residents of the Township



through a public input open house workshop. The workshop was intended to develop a general consensus among the participants regarding current issues, needs, desires, and deficiencies regarding parks and recreation in the Township.

VIRIDIS Design Group led the workshop and facilitated the discussions. The open house took place on September 21st at 6:00 pm at the Township Hall, with approximately 25 people attending. The meeting followed a typical open house format to ensure a productive outcome, but encouraged an open and informal atmosphere. Attendees were encouraged to engage in the process to provide perspective and to think about the big picture, in other words the attendees were asked to dream big.

The public workshop was set up as an open house format which allowed participants to come and go during the allotted time and spend as much or as little time as they needed to

Figure 6.1: Demographics of Survey Respondents

Gender	Survey Respondents	Ages in Household	Survey Respondents
Male	30%	0-17	31%
Female	67%	18-24	6.7%
		25-44	46.5%
		45-64	38%
		65-84	25%
		85+	0.6%

Live in the Township	Survey Respondents
Yes	85%
No	15%

Figure 6.2: On-Line Survey Results: Patterns of Park Use

Top Facilities with Most Importance	Survey Respondents	Top Ranked Needed Facilities	Survey Respondents
Walking/Jogging	65%	Walking/Nature Trails	52.8%
Nature Trail	59.5%	Bike Path/Trails	49%
Playground	40%	Farmers Market	47%
Biking	37.6%	Splash Pad	33%
Pickleball	25%	Pool	30.5%

Highest Desired Community Events	Survey Respondents	Top Ranked Needed Programs	Survey Respondents
Outdoor Concerts	55%	Fitness Classes	30.8%
Family Events	48%	Nature Based	28.7%
Nature Events	45%	Youth Sports	27.5%
Holiday Events	44%	Concert Series	26.7%
Run/Walk Events	38%	Swimming Lessons	25.33%

Park Visits	Survey Respondents	Reason Preventing Park Use	Survey Respondents
Daily	12.63%	No barriers / using parks	55%
Weekly	50.66%	No amenities of interest	21%
Monthly	23.49%	Too busy	17%
Every 6 Months	7.64%	Program not offered	14%
< Every 6 Months	5.58%	Safety concerns	14%

provide input. Upon checking in at the meeting, participants were provided with a packet of information that included the purpose of the meeting, poling dots, comment cards, and a questionnaire that asked for information about the park system.

Three interactive stations were set up and participants were able to move through the meeting at their own pace. Township staff and VIRIDIS facilitated the stations. The first station included a map of the existing city park system and participants were asked to provide feedback regarding the existing park system. Questions such as “what is the township doing well” or “what could be done better” were posed to participants. Feedback was written on post-it notes and stuck to the map. Station 2 was the dot poling station, where images of park amenities, programs, and activities were displayed and

participants were asked to place dots on their top priorities. The third station posed a series of questions regarding park facilities and participants were asked for feedback on what is important to them regarding recreation needs, safety concerns, and future connections. Refer to Figure 6.4 for a brief summary of public workshop feedback and refer to the appendix for all public input feedback.

30-Day Public Review

Once a draft of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan was complete, citizens were provided with a 30-day period to review and comment on the plan. A copy of the plan was made available for public review at the Township Hall, the Township Library, and published on the Township website on December 01, 2022. To notify the residents that a draft of the plan was available for review, a notice was published on the Township website,

Figure 6.3: On-Line Survey Results: Satisfaction Levels

Benefits of parks	Survey Respondents	Non-Township Parks	Survey Respondents
Improve Health	66%	County Parks/Trails	65%
Best Place to Live	64%	State/Federal Parks	61%
Reduce Stress	52%	Nature Center	53%
Preserve Open Space	51.6%	City of Lansing Parks	51%
Reduce Crime	18%	School Facilities	45%

What to focus on for next 5-years	Survey Respondents	Top Maintenance Issues	Survey Respondents
Safety	36%	Cleanliness	54%
Non-Motorized Trails	33%	Safety	30%
Park Cleanliness	30%	Repair items	22%
Youth Programs	22.5%	Lighting	17%
Acquisition/Expansion	20%	Landscaping	15%

Quality of Programs	Survey Respondents	Overall Appearance of Parks	Survey Respondents
Excellent	22%	Excellent	22%
Good	43%	Good	61%
Fair	7%	Fair	12%
Poor	1%	Poor	0.74%
Did not participate	27%	Unsure	2%

Township Facebook page, posted at the Township Hall, and noticed in the local newspaper, describing the purpose of the 30-day review period. A copy of the notice that was published/posted is included in the Appendix.

Public Hearings and Meetings

On December 19, 2022, the Township Parks Board held a public meeting and reviewed and discussed the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. On January 17, 2023 the Township Board of Trustees held a public hearing to review the plan and accepted input at its regularly scheduled meeting prior to adoption. Both of these meetings were open to the public and presented the opportunity for the public to review and comment on the Plan and make recommendations. Meeting minutes, meeting notices, and recommendations can be found in the Appendix.

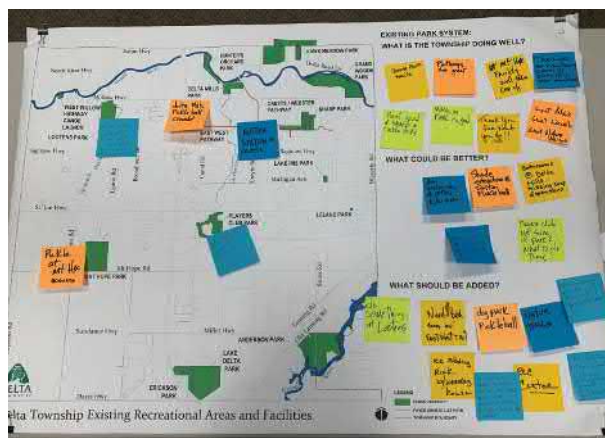


Figure 6.4: Public Input Open House Results

Top recreation facilities from dot polling	Most important regarding recreation
Pickleball courts	Pickleball courts
Non-motorized trails	Winter activities
Athletic Facilities	Develop parks that are undeveloped
Splash Pad	Non-motorized trails
Nature Trails	Recreational center / Indoor fitness facility

Top desired programming ideas	Most important regarding safety
Outdoor concerts / music	Lighting
Winter Activities	Cleanliness - restrooms in particular
Fitness Classes	Wayfinding signs
Kayaking / paddle board rentals	Current Rec Center repairs/replacement
Tied: Farmer's market & Holiday Celebrations	Water-centric parks

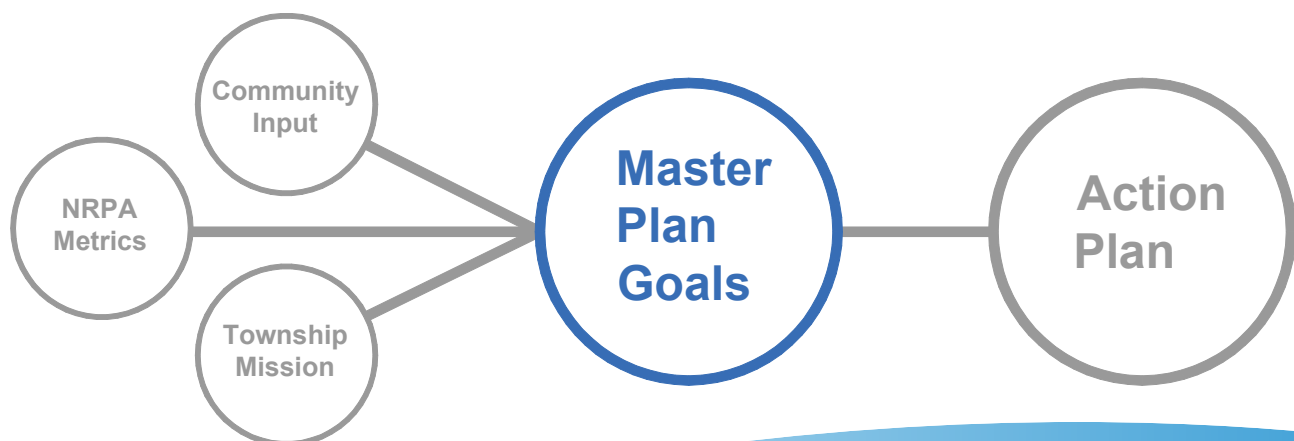
Top desired amenities	Most important regarding connections
Restrooms (year-round)	West side of township under-served
Dog Park	Nature trails with interpretive signs
Picnic pavilion	Bicycle facilities (air filling, bike repair stations)
Habitat Restoration	Connect parks/green space with trails
Rental / four season event facility	Accessible trail facilities (bench, water etc)

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Goals and Objectives

As a result of the recreation inventory, public input, survey results, and trends, Delta Township has developed the following goals and objectives in order to guide the management and development of recreation opportunities for the next 5 years. Goals and objectives are meant to guide the intent of the actions to be taken but flexible enough to reflect changing attitudes and opportunities. A degree of flexibility is essential for the Township to be responsive to its citizens. The goals are long-range in nature and intended to be broad in scope to accommodate future change. The objectives are short-range in nature and intended to direct specific program and development decisions to be made in the next five years. The goals are listed in no particular order.



GOAL 1

Enhance existing recreation facilities to provide a high quality, accessible, and safe recreational experience at all current Township parks and facilities.

- Provide access to all users by meeting or exceeding barrier-free standards.
- Update existing playgrounds to meet current safety and ADA guidelines.
- Evaluate security measures such as call boxes, security systems, and lighting.
- Work with enforcement agencies and community organizations to provide a safe environment for park users.
- Maintain park facilities by providing adequate staff, equipment, and response systems.
- Incorporate low maintenance products and equipment that save energy, reduce wear, reduce environmental impact, and reduce demands on staff.

GOAL 2

Preserve, protect, and improve historic, natural, scenic, and environmentally sensitive areas for appropriate public use and enjoyment and habitat protection.

- Develop management / maintenance strategies for natural areas including eradication of invasive species, enhancement of natural areas, and protection of water quality.
- Identify land acquisition opportunities to preserve environmentally sensitive areas.
- Provide programs and interpretive facilities that educate the public about the environment.
- Provide programs and facilities that support the conservation, protection, and preservation of the natural environment.

GOAL 3

Expand the diversity of recreation facilities available at new or existing recreation facilities to offer year-round opportunities for individuals of all ages and abilities in order to meet current and future demands.

- Identify new innovative equipment and/or facilities.
- Integrate technology into parks and public spaces.
- Provide playground equipment for all ages.
- Provide wide range of active and passive recreation facilities and programs with four season activities for all ages.
- Acquire property as it becomes available to ensure recreational opportunities keep pace with the needs of the community.
- Promote healthy and active lifestyles through fitness programs, four season recreation, and activities that encourage healthy habits.

GOAL 4

Encourage community partnerships and joint ventures with groups and organizations that have a supportive relationship.

- Identify organizations with similar goals that can be collaborative and share costs for activities and events.
- Collaborate with local agencies, area school districts, adjacent municipalities, and other public organizations to share resources.
- Coordinate with local non-profit organizations to identify synergistic programs and activities.
- Explore opportunities to partner with private organizations to encourage philanthropic investment in Township park and recreation facilities.
- Facilitate partnerships that support venues for cultural, and recreational activities.

GOAL 5

Provide non-motorized and way finding connections between parks, neighborhoods, community facilities, and municipalities.

- Identify potential opportunities for regional non-motorized trail connections to adjacent communities.
- Provide non-motorized connections to connect users with facilities throughout the community.
- Develop a way finding system to assist users locate facilities more easily and locate their proximity within the park system.
- Explore opportunities for easement acquisition for future trail connections.
- Explore opportunities to connect trail systems to local businesses.
- Develop a funding mechanism for long term trail maintenance.

GOAL 6

Acquire property as it becomes available to ensure recreational opportunities keep pace with the needs of the community.

- Plan for long-range needs to develop existing Township owned land, expansion of existing park facilities, and acquire new park property.
- Provide a geographically balanced park system throughout the Township.
- Encourage new residential projects to include parkland and/or open spaces to serve future residents

GOAL 7

Increase community awareness of available park facilities and programs through communication, promotion, and branding.

- Promote volunteer opportunities and other methods of citizen support for programs and parks.
- Encourage public engagement in park facility development and programs through community out reach projects, stewardship programs, and interpretive programs.
- Continue to publicize park events, facilities and programs through social media, newsletters, press releases, web site, promotional events, and other media outlets.
- Increase resident awareness of the Township's park goals, events, and accomplishments to get the community involved in programs and increase use of park facilities.

GOAL 8

Promote healthy and active lifestyles through park and recreation facilities and programs.

- Promote awareness of fitness programs that support healthy lifestyles.
- Provide four season recreation opportunities.
- Provide recreation facilities that encourage healthy habits.
- Target programs for specific age groups based on current trends.

GOAL 9 Explore sustainable funding opportunities for future park development and maintenance.

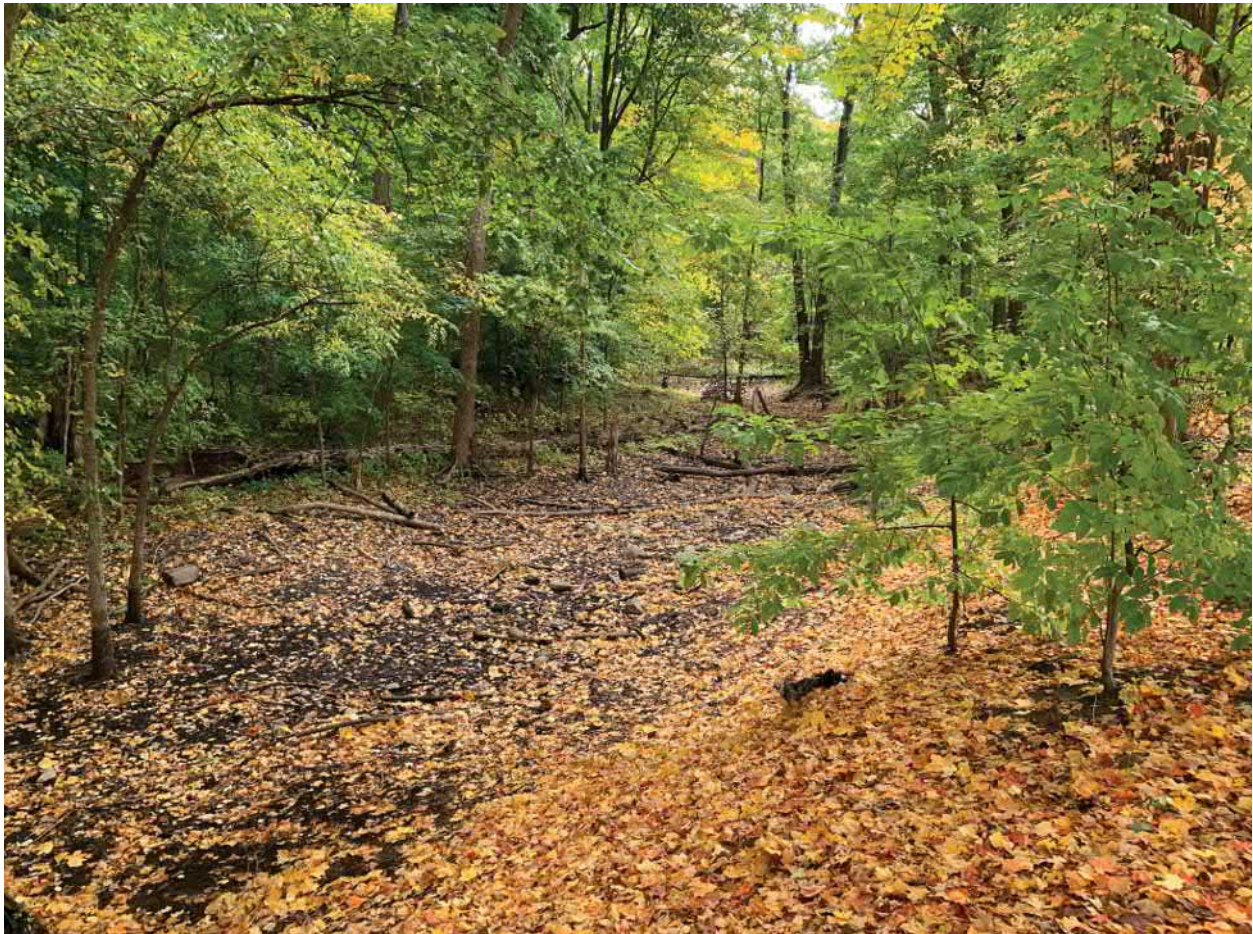


- Explore partnerships with local corporations.
- Develop a fundraising arm or friends group for maintenance.
- Continue to seek funding opportunities from grants, foundations, millages, and donations.

GOAL 10 Identify opportunities for place making and public space development



- Integrate technology into parks and public spaces.
- Provide space for public art display.
- Provide for the display/use of sustainable technologies in public spaces.
- Use public space to promote the branding and identity of the park system.





Action Plan

While the Master Plan sets out the ambitious vision for the future of Delta's park and recreation system, realizing this vision will require a carefully considered implementation plan, with clear actionable steps. The Action Plan and Capital Improvement Plan of the Delta Township Parks and Recreation Plan states the proposed course of development or improvement that will be taken over the next five years. The Goals and Objectives, from the previous section, serve as guidelines for the development of the Action Program. The Capital Improvement Plan focuses on needs identified in the Action Program and projects potential expenditures for the five-year action period on a park-by-park and project-by-project basis. The five-year period will begin in 2023 and extend through 2027. This time period will not be sufficient to accomplish all of the goals and objectives, but begins to prioritize those projects that may be achievable within the initial five years.

The Action Plan focuses on reduction of deficiencies, and expansion and improvements of facilities in a manner that not only meets current needs, but also diversifies the type and quality of recreational opportunities within the Township. These needs were recorded during the public input process and identified during the review and comparison of park standards and demographic/population trends. The Action Plan describes specific priorities to be taken to address these needs. The Capital Improvement Plan specifically itemizes those projects which will be most feasible during the next five years. The proposed schedule will allow for flexibility as funds become available and as opportunities are presented.

The priorities and action plan items for the 2023 Parks and Recreation Master Plan are as follows (not listed in particular order):

Action A: Expansion of Non-Motorized trails

The development of non-motorized facilities including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and off-road walking paths were strongly supported by the results of the community outreach process. Projects that include non-motorized transportation/recreation trail planning and development are a priority including projects that enhance greenway corridors, connect parks and lakes, support existing trail extensions, eliminate barriers, and enhance the overall trail system. The Township has developed a Non-Motorized Transportation Master Plan that identifies specific non-motorized priorities.

Non-Motorized Transportation / Walkability

The Township should consider working towards implementation of the Non-Motorized Plan to connect parks, schools, residential areas, and commercial hubs to each other and to neighboring communities. In addition, the Township should encourage the development of pathways within existing parks to facilitate universal accessibility and promote a healthy lifestyle.

Action B: Improvements to existing facilities

The most efficient use of Township resources is to focus on projects that improve existing facilities and maximize the potential of Township owned property. Projects that renovate or re-use existing facilities are considered a high priority. This may include improvements that eliminate barriers to increase accessibility for all users, renovations and upgrades to existing equipment and features to ensure modern and clean facilities, and redevelopment or expansion of existing parks to eliminate redundancy and maximize the potential of the site.

Anderson Park

This natural resource park will be improved to include a restroom building to provide accessible facilities to the users of the park. In addition, proposed development will include improvements to vehicular parking, and entrance, educational, and way-finding signs to identify the park, help guide users of the trail, and provide users with an educational experience.

Delta Mills Park

Proposed development for this community park will improve parking, provide access around the park, educate the public about natural features of the park and improve shade and aesthetics. Improvements will include updated playground equipment, updated picnic pavilion, paved parking lots, barrier free pathways, landscaping, benches, and accessible interpretive displays.

Erickson Park

Improvements for this community park will improve spectator and participant comfort, provide an updated playground, and create space for functional use as well as recognition of donors. Improvements will include paved parking lot, accessible pathways, shade structures, wall of fame, entrance plaza, landscaping, and an updated playground.

Grand Woods Park

Proposed development for this large urban park will improve visibility into and out of the park,

provide convenient amenities for park users including restrooms and a pavilion, improve accessibility of trails, improve river vistas, provide access for canoes/kayaks, and landscaping for aesthetics and erosion control. Improvements include entrance drive, restroom, pavilion, baseball backstop repairs, trails, landscaping, site furnishings, and a river overlook.

Hawk Meadow Park

Improvements to this facility will include trail paving and landscaping.

Hunter's Orchard Park

The proposed development for this facility will improve accessibility within the park, provide additional facilities, and improve aesthetics. Improvements include a new restroom facility, landscaping, trail paving and maintenance, site furnishings, new grills, and provide a new trail connection.

Lake Delta Park

Proposed development for this special use park will provide access to the Township's non-motorized system and within the park. The development of a path will include an 8-10 foot wide hard surfaced trail. In addition, repairs and replacement of the existing boardwalk / overlook structure will be considered.

Leland Park

Proposed development for this park will create an entrance feature for the park, enhance the existing playground, and improve surface drainage. Improvements will include an entry plaza, playground, landscaping, grading, accessible path connections, and site furnishings.

Looten's Park

Improvements for this undeveloped park include passive uses including trails and opportunities for nature based education and programs. The proposed development will provide parking, site amenities, and educational interpretive signs.

Mt Hope Park

Continue to implement the overall master plan in phases, including additional baseball fields, trails, restrooms, and paved parking.

Players Club Park

The development of this park will be preceded by a master plan process that will allow for community input. Preliminary ideas include developing the park for a combination of both passive and active uses. Improvements may include a dog park, soccer field, bridge repair, trails, landscaping, site amenities, fishing pier/observation dock, and signage.

Sharp Park

The township has completed a master plan for improvements to this park and should consider implementing the master plan in phases. Improvements include restroom/pavilion renovations, pickleball courts, basketball courts, accessible play structures, upgrades to the baseball facilities, pathways, new amphitheater, and implementation of safety features (see figure 7.1).

Figure 7.1: Sharp Park Master Plan



West Willow Canoe Launch

This is a newly developed site that provides barrier free access to the Grand River for canoeing and kayaking. Future development may include the addition of restrooms, an observation deck, landscaping, and site furnishings.

Enrichment Center

During the public engagement process it was noted many times that users enjoyed this facility however it is in need of many upgrades and renovations. Improvements to existing amenities such as locker rooms and bathrooms should be considered as well as structural and roof improvements.

Action C: Reduce or minimize operating costs

With budgets getting tighter and grants becoming more competitive, projects that can help reduce operating costs are a priority. Examples include: projects that increase efficiency in operations and reduce maintenance, removal or replacement of equipment or features that are costly or inefficient to maintain, projects that consider the use of alternative energy sources and use of recycled materials, and projects that could generate revenue.

Action D: Conserve, preserve, and enhance natural features and environmentally sensitive areas.

During the community outreach process, the community expressed a strong desire to further utilize and protect the Township's natural areas and features, and to implement environmentally sustainable maintenance practices. This includes invasive species management, nature programming, additional trails including soft trails, use of native species, interpretive signage, using recycled materials and alternative sources of energy, and employing environmentally sustainable design and maintenance practices.

Action E: Planning for future parks and recreational needs

As the community continues to grow and change over time, the Township continues to dedicate themselves to improving recreational offerings for the community. The Township understands that in order to continue to ensure that park and recreation offerings adapt to and meet the needs of the growing community, they must be willing to continually invest in and look for new opportunities in parks and recreation programs, facilities, and services. This makes planning for future parks and recreation facilities a high priority. This is reflected in projects that spark or are a part of economic development, projects that seek opportunities for land acquisition, and the pursuit of additional funding mechanisms. The following are examples of projects the Township may consider:

Community Center

During the public input open house, the need for a new community center was made clear, due to the current condition of the Enrichment Center. Building a new community center may require the Township to acquire additional land. The community indicated there is a need for the following; gymnasium, multi-use flexible space that can be used for active or non-active recreation, rentable activity rooms, walking track, fitness equipment, and an exercise studios.

Land Acquisition

The Township will consider opportunities to purchase land for recreational purposes or natural resources value as it becomes available. This could include land for: new sports field development,

passive recreation, splash pad, community center, Dog Park, facilities and acreage available for parks in residential areas, and potential trail easements.

Winter Recreation

Results from both the public input open house and the on-line survey indicated that winter recreation opportunities is a high priority for Township park system. Such activities include cross-country skiing, sledding, ice skating, and snowmobiling.

Pickleball

It was conveyed during the public engagement process that there is a need for developing additional pickleball courts, with an emphasis on courts dedicated to pickleball (not line markings on tennis courts). Pickleball is typically an activity associated with the older population of which the Township has a high number.

Farmers Market

According to the public input on-line community survey, the farmers market was the number three most desired facility that the Township should add. Development of a market would include a dynamic space for food vendors, food trucks, and farmers with farm vehicle access to stalls. The market would include space for entertainment, dining, and outdoor cooking classes. The market would include a section that can be enclosed in the colder months for small retail venues for more permanent market vendors. On off days when not used for the farmer's market the area could be used as a festival site.

Athletic Facilities

The planning process demonstrated a deficit in the quantity of organized sports facilities under Township control. Currently the Township partners with other organizations to meet these needs, but it was mentioned during the public input process that the community would prefer if the Township had their own facilities. With the recent development of Mt Hope Park, the Township is providing two baseball fields and many soccer fields. However, to continue to meet the increasing demand for team sports, and to meet the needs of the high population of youth in the community, the Township may consider adding additional fields for baseball, softball, football, lacrosse, and rugby.

Action F: Develop diverse, balanced, and innovative park facilities

Developing diverse park facilities and incorporating exciting new park features for all ages is a high priority for the Township, as a means of attracting young families and professionals, while providing activities for the aging population. This is also important given the Township's highest population groups are those under 24 and those over 50. The following are examples of projects the Township may consider in response to these needs:

BMX Bike Course

As an addition to the outdoor experiences found in the Delta Parks system, a BMX Bike Course could be developed that will appeal to bikers of all levels with all different types of track elements. This could also include programs on bicycle safety and building cycling skills. This type of activity would meet the needs of the adventure seeking youth population and is one of the most popular activities for those under 18 years old

Outdoor Gym

The Township has recently installed outdoor exercise equipment at Sharp park, however, to meet the needs of the aging population, additional outdoor equipment may need to be added at other park sites within the Township. According to the on-line survey, fitness classes was a high desired program. Fitness activities was identified by the 2022 Participation Report by the Physical Activity Council as having the highest participation rate in 2021. The Township has a high percentage of aging adults, and fitness activities are the most popular activity for this age group.

Other Items

The following items listed below were mentioned as being desirable concepts worth further exploration during the public engagement process:

- Splash pad
- Camping
- Flexible indoor activity space
- Dog park or dog runs
- Increase park marketing and awareness efforts
- Swimming pool
- Additional pickleball courts
- Providing WI-FI at parks
- Additional access to water activities such as kayak/canoe launches
- Bike share program
- Interpretive signs to tell the history of the Township parks as well as flora and fauna / water resources

Action G: Continue to provide a diverse slate of programs for all ages and seasons

In addition to providing cutting edge park facilities, it is equally important to provide exciting programs and activities. This need was discussed during the community outreach process and the Township recognizes the need for diverse programs that cover all ages and seasons.

Improvement Plan

Improvements and development will occur as funds and opportunities evolve. Assistance will be solicited from all available sources and will include both physical and financial support. Local businesses, service organizations, land developers, and governmental agencies will be solicited for monetary and material support. The Township will seek funding assistance from all available sources such as trusts, charitable foundations, and all Federal and State funding programs. The following schedule is a breakdown of the anticipated projects and projected funding for the next five years. All projections are based upon year 2022 costs and will be refined as the program progresses. A range of prices is given for a number of items as the scope of work is yet to be determined.

Changes in the program may occur if projected funding levels increase or decrease, but it is anticipated that the changes would be related more to adjustments in the time schedule rather than specific projects.

Figure 7.2: Action Program - Potential Projects

Delta Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan				
2023 - 2027 Action Program - Potential Projects				
	Project	Cost Estimate	Relates to	
			Action	Goal
PARKS				
Anderson Park	Restroom building	\$200,000	B, D, F	1, 3
Anderson Park	Entrance sign and interpretive signs	\$75,000	B, D, F	1, 2, 3, 7
Delta Mills Park	Parking lot, interpretive signs, site amenities	\$150,000	B, F, G	1, 3, 7
Erickson Park	Shade structure, playground, entry plaza, wall of fame	\$200,000	B, G	1, 3, 4
Grand Woods Park	Parking, restroom, and shelter improvements	\$300,000	A, B, D	1, 3
Grand Woods Park	Trails, baseball field improvements, overlook deck	\$200,000	A, B, D	1, 3, 5
Hawk Meadow Park	Trails and landscaping	\$500,000	A, C, D, G	1, 3, 5, 8
Hunter's Orchard Park	Trails, restroom, landscaping	\$500,000	A, B, D	1, 3, 5, 8
Lake Delta Park	Paved Trails	\$100,000	A, B	1, 5, 8
Lake Delta Park	Boardwalk and overlook deck improvements	\$50,000	A, B	1, 3
Leland Park	Entry plaza, playground, site amenities, landscaping	\$80,000	B	1, 3, 7, 9
Lootens Park	Parking lot, entrance sign, site amenities	\$150,000	E, F	1, 3, 7
Mt Hope Park	Development plans or Master Plan projects	5 million	A, B, E, F	1, 3, 10
Player's Club	Trails, dog park, observation deck, soccer golf	\$100,000	A, E, F, G	1, 2, 4
West Willow Canoe Launch	Restroom building, observation deck	\$300,000	D, E	1, 3
Sharp Park	Pavilion/restroom & courts renovation, playground	3 million	A, B, F, G	1, 3, 5, 8
Enrichment Center	Facility renovations	TBD	B, C, D	1, 4, 7
New Community Center	Multi-use gym, exercise and office space, activity rooms	7 million	E, G	1, 6, 9

Potential Funding Sources / Resource Partners

A variety of funding sources and resource partners may exist to assist with the implementation of proposed recreation projects. A summary of the primary sources are listed below:

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

The MNRTF can provide assistance for the Township's outdoor recreation projects, including land acquisition and physical development of park facilities. This assistance is intended to bolster existing facilities, protect critical natural resources and establish new parkland. Development project grants may range between \$15,000 and \$300,000; there is no limit to acquisition requests. The minimum required local match is 25%.

Michigan Natural Resources Passport Grant

The Passport grant fund program is primarily focused on renovating and improving existing parks, however the development of new parks is considered eligible. The minimum grant request is \$7,500 and the maximum grant request is \$150,000. The minimum required local match is 25%.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The LWCF is similar to the Trust Fund grant described above, in that it is meant to help fund land acquisition and park development. The minimum grant request amount is \$30,000 and the maximum grant request amount is \$300,000. The minimum required local match is 50%. Natural feature preservation has historically been the primary award criteria; and as such, this opportunity should especially be taken into account when planning for new passive recreation facilities. In addition, the LWCF now places emphasis on trails, “green” technology in outdoor recreation, universal design and coordination among recreation providers.

MDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

The TAP fund is a grant program that funds non-motorized paths and streetscapes that enhance the community’s inter-modal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. The program uses federal funds to promote walkability, alternative transportation options, and place based economic development to improve the quality of life for communities. The minimum required local match is 20%.

Clean Michigan Initiative Local Recreation Grants

The program provides funding for the development and renovation of indoor or outdoor public recreation facilities and infrastructure. The goal of the program is to enhance or develop recreational opportunities by improving or replacing an existing public facility, by meeting the recreational needs of the local residents, or by attracting tourists. Grants are awarded for non-acquisition projects in amounts between \$15,000 to \$750,000, based on the need for the project, capability of the local community to operate and maintain the improvement, and quality of the site and project design.

Michigan Natural Resources Tree Planting Grants

Through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), there are two tree planting grant programs that will assist in funding park landscape enhancements and reforestation projects. Applicants must provide at least 50% of the total project cost.

- **Arbor Day Mini-Grants.** This mini-grant program is designed to provide information and technical assistance to municipal governments and volunteer groups for urban and community forest activities related to Arbor Day. Applications are due in July with maximum grant request of \$20,000.
- **Urban Community Forestry Program.** This program provides the same services as above plus management plans, inventories and maintenance activities. These activities do not have to be related to Arbor Day. Applications are due in July with maximum grant requests of \$20,000.

Wetland Program Development

The goals of the Environmental Protection Agency’s wetland program and the Clean Water Action Plan are to increase the quantity and quality of wetlands in the U.S. by conservation and increasing wetland acreage, and improving wetland health. State, tribal, and local governmental agencies, interstate, inter-tribal, and local government associations are eligible to receive grant funds. Applications are due in the fall with a required 25% minimum local match. For more information, visit their website at: www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grant_guidelines.

Baseball Tomorrow Fund

This fund, which is provided through a joint partnership between Major League Baseball and the Major League Baseball Players Association, awards annual grants to projects aimed at increasing the number of youth participating in and improving the quality of baseball and softball programs. The program is specifically aimed at children ages 10 to 16, and to those using innovative approaches or providing opportunities to minorities and women. Tax exempt and 501(c)3 organizations are eligible, and Baseball Tomorrow strongly encourages at least 50% matching funds.

Local Fundraising

The Delta Township community is full of active, community-minded residents. Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations, and individuals often contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment or facilities.

Foundations

A foundation is a special non-profit legal entity that is established as a mechanism through which land, cash, and securities can be donated for the benefit of parks and recreation services. The assets are disbursed by the foundation Board of Directors according to a predetermined plan.

People for Bikes

The People for Bikes Grants Program strives to put more people on bicycles more often by funding projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling. They seek to assist local organizations, agencies, and citizens in developing bicycle facilities projects. Bikes Belong Coalition accepts applications for grants quarterly for up to \$10,000 each, and will consider successor grants for continuing projects.

Township Funds

The general fund, a special millage, the parks budget, bonds, and the parks capital improvement account are possibilities to help fund new and improved facilities in the Township.

Park Millage

A special millage can help the Township generate funds for development, acquire park land, or to use as leverage for grant applications.

Appendix

- Township Budget
- Documents from Public Hearings and Public Meetings
- On-Line Community Survey Results