

Chapter 1: **ACTION PROGRAM**

The Action Program addresses facility and program needs for the City over the next five years. It is a culmination of identifying needs and opportunities through organizational and staff workshops, public information meeting and hearing and review by the Parks and Recreation Department and City Council. The program includes goals, a prioritized capital improvement schedule and rationale for improvements.

RECREATION VISION AND GOALS

Goals and objectives have been developed based on the needs and issues defined in the following chapters. Observed inadequacies, public input sessions, written survey results, comparison to recreational standards, as well as other identified needs were considered when establishing the following goals and objectives.

Goal 1: Improve Existing Park Equipment and Facilities.

- Update equipment and provide safe, clean and well-maintained parks.
- Remove unsafe equipment.
- Improve security at all parks.
- Repair/replace park lighting and shelter/bathrooms.
- Implement a coordinated signage program at all parks.
- Continue to fully fund or expand maintenance budget.

Goal 2: Improve Existing Programs and Develop New Programs.

- Continue to expand programs and hire personnel and staff, both support/clerical and programming, as needed.
- Continue to seek partnership with neighboring communities to share programs and facilities.

Goal 3: Improve Communication to Increase Public Awareness and Participation.

- Utilize newsletter, website, press releases, advertising, mailings or other tools to encourage participation in recreational programs.
- Seek appropriate means of distribution.

- Continue to monitor needs, participation, and interests of the community and to facilitate open dialogue.

Goal 4: Provide for the Efficient Administration of the Parks and Recreation System.

- Limit duplication of tasks and services by coordinating with programmed activities of Eastern Michigan University.
- Proactively forecast needs. Continually monitor and revise capital improvement program.
- Use park system as an economic stimulus for businesses.

Goal 5: Improve Funding Levels

- Seek alternative sources of funding for park facilities and programs, including private donations, millage, bonds or grants – lobbying for new grants or grant renewal as necessary.
- Seek continuous levels of funding, simplifying adherence to the capital improvements program.
- Market and lease facilities for tournaments and events.
- Sponsor and facilitate tournaments and events.

Goal 6: Continue to Implement the Huron River Corridor Master Plan

- Develop River's Edge Park to complete the Huron River Corridor linkage.
- Develop pedestrian and canoe/kayak linkages between Huron River parks both upstream and within the City.
- Enhance the individual character of each Huron River Park with updated facilities to meet recreational, cultural and social needs.
- Take advantage of the Huron River's distinctive appeal as a focal point for residents, businesses, visitors and economic development efforts to encourage private reinvestment in the City.
- Ensure that users, particularly families with young children and seniors, can enjoy the parks with a comfortable feeling of safety and security.
- Continue to explore opportunities and establish priorities for public-private partnerships to realize the full potential of the entire Huron River Corridor.

Goal 7: Provide a Comprehensive Non-Motorized Pathways System Linking the City with the Surrounding Communities

- Continue to participate in regional greenway planning efforts.
- Seek alternative sources of funding to implement planned non-motorized pathways.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In order to accomplish the highest priority recommendations, a capital improvement program is prepared to schedule each investment by year. The program helps to prioritize spending and to spread it out over the life of this plan. The narrative below provides the details and justification for each project.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Peninsular Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Peninsular Park is a linear ten-acre park along the eastern shoreline, west of Leforge Road, that anchors the north end of the system. This park is isolated from the rest of the Huron River park system, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile northwest of Frog Island Park.

The park exhibits many characteristics of a typical roadside park or passive retreat camp in northern Michigan. Dense woodlands provide a thick tree canopy over heavy understory vegetation. Limited facilities include a utilitarian picnic/ restroom shelter, and a narrow gravel loop drive. An abandoned papermill powerhouse along the shoreline and a dam, are important and underutilized, features of the park. Wooden decks have been constructed to allow portage of canoes and kayaks around the dam.

The narrow park entrance at the base of a slope near the Leforge Street Bridge is almost hidden. A more visible, inviting park entrance is a key ingredient to making the site more accessible. Inside the park is almost 2,000 linear feet of public access along the river's edge. The extensive river frontage offers outstanding potential to integrate the park and the river. However, river access is limited and views to the water are blocked by thick, overgrown vegetation.

- The City should pursue an agreement with a developer interested in providing a restaurant/pub through the adaptive reuse of the powerhouse, a canoe livery/rental operation,

outdoor dining decks overlooking the dam and river, and new parking facilities.

- Acquire additional land along the street frontage to improve the entrance image and park security.
- The City should consider a development that uses the former paper factory.

The Railroad Street Shoreline between Peninsular Park and Frog Island Park

This shoreline extends for about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile through mostly private property. The Ypsilanti Economic Development Corporation purchased several of the lots at the southern end of Railroad Street. All or parts of these lots may be available for public use. Objectives include:

- Work with private property owners to secure easements or dedication of land along the shoreline to accommodate a pathway. All alternatives should be explored, as opportunities become available.
- Ensure redevelopment uses and site design complements the natural character along the shoreline.
- Amend the City's land use master plan to include a vision for a linear public shoreline park system.

Frog Island Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Frog Island is located along the east bank of Huron River and is framed by Forest Street, Rice Street and Cross Street. The 10-acre park is split into two levels by a 20-foot high bluff. The top of the bluff has a large parking area and a recycling facility. The slope of the bluff is covered with heavy underbrush and a canopy of trees such as cottonwood and box elder, resulting in obstructed views to the lower park area.

The lower park includes an underutilized storage building, a small amphitheater, soccer field, slag-surfaced running track and an asphalt pathway. A pathway is located along the top of a narrow 12-foot high, man-made berm at the river's edge. The berm "traps" a soccer field, and isolates the river from the park. The riverbank is littered cottonwood trees mass along the banks, denying park visitors opportunities to experience the river.

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The main entrance to the park is a large wooden stairway joining the parking lot and soccer field. A narrow footbridge connects Cross Street, and Riverside Park is linked to Frog Island Park via a “tridge” beneath the Cross Street Bridge. Pedestrian connections from the north do not exist, although the City is pursuing additional riverfront public access to connect Frog Island Park to Peninsular Park.

Frog Island’s role in the park system will be an outdoor entertainment center. The City proposes creating a popular place for concerts and events, while encouraging passive recreation such as jogging, picnicking, fishing, walking, bicycling, or simply enjoying the amphitheater lawn on a warm spring day.

Key features planned include:

- Soccer fields are relocated to Waterworks Park. The former field area is shaped by regrading the earth berm at the river and excavating along the foot of the bluff to restore the island and millstream.
- An amphitheater facing the river by construction of a large, gently sloping lawn area. Based upon preliminary estimates, the concert lawn should accommodate crowds upwards of 6,000 people.
- Primary access to the amphitheater lawn area via a new pedestrian bridge to create a dramatic entrance onto the island. This bridge would provide barrier free access, which has been difficult to accomplish in the past. Rice Street will be realigned and landscaped to appear as part of the park.
- Three pathways to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists/rollerbladers.
 - A promenade pathway, 10 feet in width, to grace the riverbank for the entire length of the park.
 - A pathway that climbs the rim of the amphitheater hill, and then slopes back down again to the river promenade.
 - The Cross Street Tridge and a new connection across or beneath the Forest Street Bridge will facilitate linkages north and south.
 - Relocation of the existing recycling center to a more appropriate, off-site location.
 - Restoration of the millstream as a subtle and effective means for controlling access during concert events

- A pond is constructed as part of the restoration. Canoeists will be able to retreat into the millstream, and pull up along the pond's edge for a peaceful rest spot. The pond area will be landscaped with aquatic and emergent vegetation, creating a passive, natural setting. In the winter, the pond's frozen surface can be used for ice-skating.

Riverside Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Riverside Park is the crown jewel of the corridor parks necklace. Riverside connects Downtown with Depot Town, and is part of the Historic District. Riverside is the place for community celebrations and events. It is the home of car shows and festivals, and its passive landscape and asphalt walkways have adapted well to accommodating special events. In addition to hosting events, it functions as a passive park. The landscape has lawn and canopy trees. Asphalt paths traverse the park accentuating the passive setting. A popular overlook deck connects to the Cross Street "Tridge."

The program for improving Riverside Park will enhance and embrace its role as the featured park. A number of proposed improvements will accentuate the passive landscape character of the park and improve access and visibility.

- Expansion of the Michigan Avenue entrance to provide more design flexibility and create a more gracious entry point, better sight lines, and room for signs, lighting, a pedestrian walk and landscaping. Property immediately adjacent to the entry drive should be evaluated for potential acquisition.
- A strong entry image and a gathering place at the open area atop the hill fronting the busy Cross Street-Huron Street intersection. Special landscaping, park lighting, flagpoles, a sign pylon and other features would accent this highly visible space.
- A grand pavilion to serve as the centerpiece for gatherings, events and festivals. The building will provide picnic tables, restrooms and service counters. A gazebo is part of the larger pavilion structure. A small flower garden designed around the gazebo, along with the riverside setting, make an attractive setting for ceremonies and photo settings.
- Other site improvements should support needs of families, such as play structures for children.

River's Edge Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

River's Edge Park is a 7.1-acre public space on the Huron River and adjacent to downtown and Michigan Avenue that extends the entire length of Water Street. As a major neighborhood amenity, the new Water Street neighborhood has been redesigned to gracefully engage the park edge and to front residential buildings onto the park. Other new streets are intentionally oriented to lead people to the river. A paved pathway connects to the City's park system, embracing the concept of maximum public access to the river.

Four themes: *access, ecology, community* and *connection* guided the River's Edge Park design, encouraging the community to experience the natural habitat of the Huron River corridor. This concept emphasizes beneficial relationships among people, the river, and the built environment. The park design is programmed as a series of spaces that reflect on the heritage of Ypsilanti and the importance of the Huron River. The interpretive feature of the site's industrial heritage, community garden, small sanctuary, and narrow river-way link together to provide numerous experiences along the path system. Important design features include:

Old Mill Site

- Potential riverfront restaurant site
- Point of connection at Michigan Avenue draws people from downtown
- Potential pedestrian underpass to Riverside Park at Michigan Avenue
- Historic Mill foundations exposed as artistic heritage expression
- Salvaged mechanical artifact featured as industrial heritage sculpture
- Wet meadow and open lawn for snow storage and filtering of storm runoff
- "Defensible Space" created by homes fronting the park

Community Gardens

- Narrow concrete walk grid establishes ten foot by ten foot plots for gardeners

- Portion of plots maintained with landscaping and portion leased to community members for individual gardens to ensure well kept appearance
- Colorful huts store tools out of view
- Hedge surrounds garden to screen plots
- Open “Garden House” shelter cantilevered at river’s edge as focal point of street terminus
- “Rockery” with native groundcover uses boulders to stabilize bank and allows informal access to the water

Small Sanctuary

- Contemplative setting
- Bird and butterfly houses and wildlife habitat creation
- Indigenous plant species minimize maintenance and support wildlife
- Under-story native trees such as Serviceberry, Eastern Redbud, Dogwood and Witch Hazel and perennials such as Butterflyweed, Echinacea and Black-Eyed Susan
- Park benches along stone path

The River Way

- Transition to narrow greenway at bridge to Waterworks Park
- Access to water for canoe and kayaks at “Canoe Cove”
- Existing island stabilized with plantings of Willow and Red Osier Dogwood
- Path close to water between bluff and existing mature trees
- Edge walk with guardrail at steep slopes leading to overlook pavilion

River Pointe

- Overlook structure as focal point of Park Street
- Long views down river
- Community space with open lawn area and snow removal storage area
- Rail track to remain as interpretive element

Gilbert’s Square

- Serves as a green terminus to River Street in the heart of the neighborhood

Action Plan

- Tower feature responds to the character of the park and the identity of the community, while providing a point of orientation for way finding
- Small paved area with special landscaping, a seat wall, benches and flowers accent the tower and invite people into the park
- Broad open lawn allows for informal active and passive uses, including opportunities for staging community gatherings and small events
- Framed by residences, forming an attractive community space that is comfortable in scale with its surroundings

Waterworks Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Waterworks Park lies along an oxbow along the river and is the most underutilized park space along the Huron River Corridor. It is primarily used for baseball and softball games. Waterworks has tremendous potential to become an attractive park for active recreation given its flat topography, extensive river's edge access and floodplain habitat. Currently, the baseball diamond is in fair to poor condition, and the landscaping is nondescript. A pedestrian bridge creates a convenient connection to River's Edge Park. The site has several good fishing areas, and a small cove area for portaging canoes.

Waterworks Park is best suited for sports fields. This is especially true if the park can be expanded onto the water treatment plant site. This site is identified as parkland in the City's Master Plan, but has not been officially dedicated for recreational use.

The programming concept for Waterworks Park is a sports recreation facility that is part of the river park system. Potential amenities would include sports fields for soccer, baseball and softball, basketball courts and roller hockey. The river's edge will be enhanced for access and fishing.

Key design elements include:

- Creation of a major sports and athletic complex.
- Combine with adjacent United Auto Workers "park" to create more space for sports fields.
- Explore vacation of Catherine Street to improve efficiency of a combined quality sports park.

- Explore the location of a community center on the former water treatment facility site.
- Prepare a feasibility study for a new community center.

NEIGHBORHOOD AND MINI-PARKS

Candy Cane Park

Candy Cane Park is a 7.0 acre neighborhood park located in the northwest corner of the community. This park is used primarily for active recreation and is programmed with one baseball field, tennis courts, play equipment and picnic facilities. The play equipment was recently updated. There is minor deterioration of both the baseball diamond and the restroom/shelter due to age and wear. Picnic areas of the park were observed to be noncompliant with ADA standards for accessibility. Recommended improvements include:

- Install walking path to provide access to picnic areas.
- Renovate/replace picnic facilities based on condition.
- Install lighting along new walking path and at baseball diamond to accommodate demand.
- Renovate restroom/shelter.

Parkridge Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Parkridge Park is an 8.1-acre neighborhood park located in the southwest corner of the city. It is adjacent to the Parkridge Community Center and the Perry Childhood Development Center. Programmed for active recreation uses such as basketball, softball, jogging and playground activities, Parkridge is underutilized due to deterioration of the playfields. The conceptual design plan strives to reactivate the park for year-round usage through refurbishing existing courts and fields and the introduction of a new hockey/skating rink and picnic areas. Recommended improvements include:

- Refurbished softball field, little league diamond, football field, soccer field.
- Replace and improve play areas.
- Install rink (roller hockey, ice rink).
- Install picnic areas.
- Refurbish existing horseshoe pit.
- Remove existing fitness stations.

Action Plan

- Refurbish existing path system.
- Improve existing tennis and basketball courts.
- Create connection to the Monroe Avenue city-owned parking lot.

Prospect Park (See Appendix D for Conceptual Site Plan)

Prospect Park is the oldest park in Ypsilanti's recreation system. The 9.5-acre park is located immediately adjacent to the historic district in the northeast corner of the city. Prospect Park provides a mix of both active and passive recreation opportunities. The north end is programmed with a multi-purpose field, play equipment, basketball, tennis courts and picnic facilities. Adams Elementary School utilizes this area as a school playground. All the courts, field and play equipment has recently been replaced and/or renovated.

The south end of the park provides a passive recreation environment, with mature trees, pathways and picnic facilities. Luna Lake, a small pond with a fountain was once the prime focus of activity in Prospect Park's earliest days. Substantial improvements are needed to upgrade its appearance and recreate this historic amenity. Recommended improvements include:

- Install pathway linking the north end of the park with the south.
- Formalize Luna Lake. Recreate Luna Lake with new pond liner, naturalized plantings, hardscape edge, seating and fountain.
- Expand and improve existing parking lot. Add shade trees, lighting and identification signage.
- Enhance park entry points at Cannon Statue and Prospect and Cross Street corner. Add floral beds.

Recreation Park

Recreation Park is a 17.4 acre neighborhood park located in the western part of the city. It is adjacent to the Senior Citizen Center and Rutherford Municipal Pool. The park is heavily used. Many amenities require refurbishing and/or replacement. Current uses include two baseball fields, one soccer field, outdoor pool, play equipment and picnic facilities. Pathway construction around the park and to Chapelle School is currently in progress. There is

minor deterioration of the baseball diamonds and the soccer field due to age and wear. The tennis court facilities have been removed, leaving a hard court surface area, but have not been reprogrammed or replaced. A playground safety audit should be performed to assess the viability of the existing equipment. Recommended improvements include:

- Convert hard court sport area to an inline skating/roller hockey rink or skateboard park depending on demand.
- Refurbish baseball fields.
- Refurbish soccer field.
- Install sports field lighting.

Carrie Mattingly, Charles Street and Edith Hefley Tot Lots
(See Appendix D for Edith Hefley Conceptual Site Plan)

Ypsilanti currently operates three tot lots. Carrie Mattingly and Edith Hefley Tot Lots are located in central Ypsilanti, amidst a mature and active neighborhood. Charles Street Tot Lot is located in the northeast corner of the city in a mature neighborhood. All three parks contain playground equipment in visible states of decay. As such, a playground safety audit was performed at each Tot Lots in accordance with the standards of the NRPA – National Playground Safety Institute. The audit recommends removal of all playground equipment pieces due to general wear, corrosion and protrusion and entrapment hazards. Other areas of concern include lack of safety surfacing, inadequate use zones and general inaccessibility. Playground Safety Inspection Summaries are included in Appendix E.

A conceptual site plan was developed for Edith Hefley Tot Lot that can be used as a starting point for future park master plans for Charles Street and Carrie Mattingly. Recommended improvements include:

- Remove existing play equipment.
- Relocate and consolidate new play equipment.
- Enhance and relocate existing Peace Pole.
- Install concrete walks along park perimeter.
- Install new identification signage.
- Install new picnic tables.

PATHWAY SYSTEM

A process of creating a greenway trail system through Washtenaw County was undertaken by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) and the Washtenaw County Greenways Advisory Committee (GAC) Its objective is to enhance the region's recreation and non-motorized transportation opportunities.

The trail will serve the residents of Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti Township and the City of Ypsilanti. Two segments of a thirteen segment Huron River Corridor system are located in Ypsilanti. Segment K includes much of Eastern Michigan University, surrounding residential areas, several city parks, and the Depot Town commercial district. Segment L covers south central Ypsilanti, including the downtown area, the Water St. redevelopment site, Waterworks Park, and the Ford/Visteon plant. The trail provides recreation opportunities and interconnects many important civic locations. Applicable segments are described as follows:

Segment K of the proposed Greenway Trail through the City of Ypsilanti (See Appendix D for Map)

Superior Rd. to Michigan Ave.

Segment K, stretches from Superior Rd. near the western edge of the City of Ypsilanti to Michigan Ave. downtown, travels through a range of settings ranging from semi-rural to urban. However, it is often hidden from its surroundings. The trail development will improve transportation and recreation within the city and re-connect the river's natural features to the surrounding urban community.

This route interconnects the institutional resources of Segment J, EMU's main campus, Depot Town, downtown Ypsilanti, and the greater Ann Arbor-Ypsilanti region as a whole. This development would enhance the recreational needs of the community, bringing residents to the river and the connected parks and community centers.

The Greenways Advisory Committee's proposed long-term route consists of the EMU campus corridor path connecting with the South Bank Easement Route. However, the short-term solution

relies upon the Railroad St. Route from Leforge Rd. on, until the intended final route can be attained.

Segment J will connect to the EMU Campus Corridor Path at Superior Rd., and which will proceed east along the northern edge of campus before crossing Huron River Dr. and the railroad corridor to Railroad St. From here, the long-term South Bank Easement Route follows the river to a crossing into Frog Island Park. The near-term Railroad St. Route follows the street to its end near the Railroad/Forest Ave. intersection, where it then crosses the river into the park.

This route serves as an effective central spine, connecting the EMU campus area, St. Joseph Hospital Complex, residential areas, and downtown Ypsilanti, as well as providing unique urban access to otherwise untouchable regions of the Huron River. The Superior Rd. intersection provides access to the north side of the river, as well as connectivity to section J. Oakwood and Mayhew connect the trail to the main EMU campus and the residential areas surrounding it. The LeForge Rd./Huron River Dr. intersection is a major hub of activity, and an established crossing at this point will enhance the safety of non-motorized travel through the area. The point on the north side of Frog Island is a major access point to both the park and the adjacent Depot Town commercial district, and the “tridge” is a significant access point between Frog Island, Riverside Park, and the Depot Town area.

Segment L of the proposed Greenway Trail through the City of Ypsilanti (See Appendix D for Map)

Michigan Ave. to Ford Lake

Segment L of the proposed greenways trail begins at Michigan Ave. and travels south through residential, commercial, and industrial regions before opening up into Waterworks Park. Beyond the park, the river heads further south through the Ford/Visteon Plant and into Ford Lake. Through this stretch, the river is completely inaccessible to the public, barren of vegetation, and its banks are re-enforced with steel plating. A densely vegetated hillside rises to the west which feeds a drainage channel paralleling I-94, and a vacant, sparsely vegetated former landfill stretches to the southwest (a contaminated site which has been considered for redevelopment by the City of Ypsilanti).

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Land use throughout the entirety of this range varies from a residential/commercial/industrial mix near the Water St. region (currently planned for redevelopment) to the parkland which presides over the sweeping turn the river takes just before ducking into the completely industrial complex of the Ford/Visteon Plant. Beyond the plant and south of I-94, the river deposits into Ford Lake, which serves as a backdrop for many residences and community parklands, such as Ypsilanti Township's North Bay Park.

The development of this greenway trail throughout the area would enhance non-motorized transportation opportunities between downtown Ypsilanti and the Township of Ypsilanti to the south, connecting regions north of I-94 with the non-motorized transportation routes along Whittaker and Grove roads. The greenway would also enhance connections of existing parks within the City and around Ford Lake, improving recreation opportunities for residents of the City and Township of Ypsilanti, as well as those in surrounding communities.

Upon consideration of all possible routes, the Greenways Advisory Committee has decided upon a preferred route that will follow the east bank of the river south into the neighborhood redevelopment of Water St., beyond which it will split into a western route and an eastern route. The western route will cross the existing bridge into Waterworks Park, head west along Spring St., and dart south along Whittaker Rd. (the study on the I-94/Whittaker exchange will determine factors regarding the last leg of this route, such as on-street transportation). The eastern route will follow an existing railroad grade around the east bank of the river to an intersection with Grove Rd. The route will then follow west of Grove Rd. to an overpass over I-94 and a connection with the trail near the east shore of Ford Lake.

Several points along this route will serve as important connections between the greenway trail, parks, and surrounding neighborhoods. Michigan Ave. will serve as a major access point to and from downtown Ypsilanti. The Waterworks Park Bridge is a focal crossroad between the Water St. redevelopment site, Waterworks Park and the diverging branches of the trail. The Spring St./Huron

St. intersection is a connecting point between the greenway trail and park areas and the neighborhoods to the west. The North Bay Park entrance provides access to North Bay Park and its existing trail, which connects with Grove St. along the north edge of Ford Lake.

SIGNS, LIGHTING AND SITE FURNISHINGS

A uniform set of signs and wayfinding elements should be used throughout the City's park system. The character and theme should focus on welcoming people to the parks and enticing them to enjoy the community's amenities. The style and color of signs should be consistent, and be respectful of the historic image of the adjacent neighborhoods and business districts. Signs should be informative and attractive.

Signs can include a special logo that identifies each park and pathway segment as part of the corridor. Signs at key street crossings, and from selected locations in the downtown and Depot Town, could announce the system to bypassers. The wayfinding system could be designed with the first park renovation project or as part of the overall wayfinding system proposed in the City's Master Plan.

Lighting improvements are needed throughout the park system, both within and outside the parks. It must provide the desired illumination for security, be vandal resistant and complement the overall image. A "timeless" fixture design consistent with the historic character of the area should be selected. Fixtures should be pedestrian in scale, easily maintained and attractive. Benches, waste receptacles, and other site furnishings should complement the character of the selected signs and light fixtures, creating a common identity for Ypsilanti's park system.

GENERAL LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Landscaping for each park should be refreshed with new plantings of trees, shrubs and flowers. Although effort should be made to retain large trees, the redevelopment program for the proposed site improvements would, in some cases, require some tree removal. Riverbank restoration would include native plantings and/or riprap stone designed to help stabilize banks from erosion without inhibiting views and access to the river.

New canopy trees should include species that complement the river-edge environment. A concerted effort is needed to create a setting that has seasonal and botanical interest, such as spring flowering understory plantings/trees, summer flowering plants, and fall color. Any planting programs initiated by volunteer groups should be coordinated using specific design criteria for the size, type and location of proposed plantings.

PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS

Existing program improvements are listed in Table 1. The list specifies the age category, specific program and resources needed to become effectuate positive change.

Program Improvement Schedule		
Table 1		
Program/Activity	Resource Needs	Basis for Action
Youth		
Dance	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Gymnastics	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Swimming	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
After-School Program	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Summer Program	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Transportation	Coordinator, vehicle, and driver	1
Cultural Arts Program	Coordination and partnership with Riverside Art Center	1
Teens		
Basketball	Coordinator to schedule activity	1, 2
Football	Facility, coordinator to schedule activity	1
Track and Field	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Library /Computers	Expand/Improve equipment	1

Program Improvement Schedule		
Table 1		
After-School Programs	Coordination and partnership with schools	1
Summer Programs	Churches and Townships	1
Cultural Arts Programs	Coordination and partnership with Riverside Art Center	1
Substance abuse prevention program	Coordination and partnership with Police Department	1
Health and Wellness program	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Adult		
League/Team sports	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Family		
Canoe livery	Storage place and canoes, staff and vehicle, canoe launch, consider locating at Peninsular Park	1
Tennis	Instructor to coordinate and schedule activity	1
Swimming	Improve maintenance and hours	1
Sledding & Ice Skating	Consider locating at Riverside Park and neighborhood parks	1
Intramural programs	Seek partnership with schools, Townships, or EMU for sharing of facilities	1
Walking	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Cultural Arts Programs	Coordination and partnership with Riverside Art Center	1
Health and Wellness Program	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Senior		
Aerobics/exercise	Instructor to coordinate and schedule activity	1
Walking	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Speaker/ with lunch	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Language	Instructor and room	1
Yoga	Instructor and room	1
Therapeutic programs	Instructors and rooms	1

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Program Improvement Schedule		
Table 1		
Transportation	Coordinator, vehicle and driver	1
Health and Wellness Program	Coordinator to schedule activity	1
Special Events		
Outdoor and performance programs	Concerts in the park(s)	1
Key to basis for action	1. Public Input 2. Recreational deficiency	

FUNDING INITIATIVES

Recreation improvements can be financed solely through general fund proceeds or a combination of the funding sources. In addition to the City providing resources to parks from the general fund, there are other sources of funding for parks and recreation. These include a dedicated millage, user fees, bonds, grants, donations and foundations. The following is a brief description of these funding sources.

General Fund

Continue to allow a healthy budget for recreation programming and to accommodate the recommended improvements to community parks.

Dedicated Millage

A property tax millage can be used to finance specific park and recreation projects such as parkland enhancements or land acquisition or for the operation of recreation facilities.

User Fee

The Parks and Recreation Department must continue to charge reasonable fees to participants of recreation programs. Every year the Department should evaluate the fees to ensure they are providing the appropriate amount of funding to allow the programs to continue.

Bonds

A number of bond programs can be used to finance construction of parks and recreation facilities. General Obligation Bonds are issued for specific community projects and may not be used for other purposes. These bonds are usually paid for with property tax revenues. Revenue bonds are issued for construction of public projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project.

Lease Arrangements

Communities successfully lease parkland or management of operations to private companies. A common method uses underutilized park area to site cell towers. Another example is to have a contractual arrangement with a management company or caterer to operate an event facility such as a banquet hall or concert area.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Grant provides funding assistance for state and local outdoor recreation needs, including land acquisition and development of recreation facilities. This assistance is directed at creating and improving outdoor recreational opportunities and providing protection to valuable natural resources. These are grants between \$15,000 and \$500,000 with a required minimum local match of 25 percent.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provide grants to local units of government to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation. At least 50 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local government applicants. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) makes recommendations to the National Park Service (NPS), which grants final approval.

Donations

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations and individuals will 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 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.


A brief list of grant making foundations is depicted in Appendix G. Additional private grant funding opportunities can be accessed through the *Michigan Foundation Directory*.

Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan

The Community Foundation is an organization which solicits and collects charitable donations from individuals, other foundations, families, and corporations. The foundation manages these funds in an effort to better the quality of life in the region comprised of the seven southeasterly counties (Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Livingston, Washtenaw, and St. Clair). The foundation's efforts are varied, but include a supportive role for nonprofit organizations, as well as assembling organizations to address specific community issues and problems of the present as well as the future.

One significant Community Foundation initiative which looks to accomplish this enhanced community experience is "The Great Outdoors", a 5-year, \$75-million attempt to connect parents and their children with the out-of-doors. In an attempt to enhance the health and social well being of the region's youth, The Great Outdoors program will use parks, greenways and other public spaces to instill in children an appreciation for the natural world while strengthening their family and community ties outside of school.

Another Community Foundation grant program is the GreenWays Initiative. The GreenWays Initiative looks to utilize the region's natural resources concentrated throughout the innumerable riversides, lakeshores, parks, woods, and grasslands to enhance the region's recreational opportunities, natural habitats, inter-



community connectivity, and economic sustainability. The program will help local governments and nonprofit organizations construct and implement greenway projects today, as well as look to the future for further greenway expansion. The program also looks to build up non-profit and government capacity for greenway project implementation, while increasing public awareness of the benefits of enhanced and expanded open green space.