

5**BASIS FOR ACTION**

CW3 Soccer

Many elements must be considered prior to the decision-making process of establishing goals, guidelines and a prioritized capital improvements schedule for the next five years. A community must not base recreation improvement and service decisions solely on the voice of a handful of residents or the needs and wants of community officials, but must also be aware of recreational trends, national standards, community opinion, as well as demographic trends and the capability of the land and its surroundings.

This chapter attempts to consolidate the various factors that must be acknowledged and the abundance of aspects, perceptions, and ideas that need to be filtered and categorized with the end result of producing the prioritized needs of the community. Because there are so many factors that will ultimately determine needs, caution should be taken to not analyze each piece of information individually, but integrate them all to produce the "big picture."

RECREATION TRENDS

Recreation trends occurring nationally may provide insight into activities that can be expected to draw a large number of participants and activities that have shown the greatest growth in popularity. The National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA) conducts national surveys that measure activities by participation and percent change from the previous survey. The definition of participation includes those persons seven years and older who have participated in the activity more than once during the year of the survey. **Table 5** lists the top sports by percentage change from 2001 to 2006, as well as a rank by total participation.

In 2006, the top five sports in which people participated were:

- Exercise Walking (87.5 million)
- Swimming (56.5 million)
- Exercising with Equipment (52.4 million)
- Camping (vacation/overnight) (48.6million)
- Bowling (44.8 million)

In terms of change over the past five years, the top five fastest growing sports were:

- Football (tackle) (45.1%)
- Paintball games (42.9%)
- Weight Lifting (37.7%)
- Workout at Club (37.4%)
- Aerobic Exercising (28.1%)

In terms of change over the past five years, the top five declining sports were:

- In-line Roller Skating (-45.3%)
- Scooter Riding (-25.2%)
- Skiing (alpine) (-16.9%)
- Hockey (ice) (-13.6%)
- Bicycle Riding (-8.7%)

NATIONAL PLANNING STANDARDS

In the process of determining and prioritizing needs, it is not only important to understand the national trends in terms of participation levels and popularity, but it is also imperative to compare the provision of local recreation facilities to published standards. This comparison of existing facilities to standard acreage and facility recommendations is another tool to assist in determining needs within Commerce Township. However, it should be noted that the latest available national standards were developed in the 1970's and 1980's and may not fully reflect today's needs and trends.

Acreege Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association provides a recommended park classification system which recognizes that open space has various functions. The system categorizes open space as either mini-parks, neighborhood parks or community parks. The desirable characteristics relative to size, function, amenities and acreage provisions per 1,000 people (where available) are identified in **Table 6**.

The sidebar shows the classification of Commerce Township's public parks and total acreage.

Commerce Township Classified Recreation Facilities		
	Existing Acreage	NRPA Standard
Community Parks		
Byer's Homestead Park	2.76	
Dodge 5 Park	112.39	
Hickory Glen Park	156.54	
Long Nature Park	126.02	
Maple Glen Park	115.26	
Richardson Park/ Community Center	78.92	
All Community Parks:	591.89	195-312 ac.
Neighborhood Parks		
Bicentennial Park	9.73	19-78 ac.
Mini-Parks		
Mill Race Park	8.99	10-19 ac.
All Township Parks:	610.61	244-409 ac.

Table 5
Sports Participation Trends Nationwide: 2001 to 2006

Sport	2006 Participation (in millions)	2001 Participation (in millions)	Percent Change	Rank by Total Participation
Football (tackle)	11.9	8.2	45.1%	23
Paintball Games	8.0	5.6	42.9%	30
Weight Lifting	32.9	23.9	37.7%	10
Workout at Club	36.4	26.5	37.4%	7
Aerobic Exercising	33.7	26.3	28.1%	9
Hunting w/ Bow & Arrow	5.9	4.7	25.5%	34
Muzzleloading	3.7	3.0	23.3%	38
Mountain Biking (off road)	8.5	6.9	23.2%	29
Boating, Motor/Power	29.3	23.9	22.6%	13
Exercising with Equipment	52.4	43.9	19.4%	3
Hiking	31.0	26.1	18.8%	12
Running/Jogging	28.8	24.5	17.6%	14
Skiing (cross country)	2.6	2.3	13.0%	39
Exercise Walking	87.5	78.3	11.7%	1
Wrestling	3.8	3.5	8.6%	36
Water Skiing	6.3	5.8	8.6%	33
Bowling	44.8	41.9	6.9%	5
Canoeing	7.1	6.8	4.4%	31
Swimming	56.5	54.8	3.1%	2
Cheerleading	3.8	3.7	2.7%	37
Skateboarding	9.7	9.6	1.0%	27
Soccer	14.0	13.9	0.7%	20
Camping (vacation/overnight)	48.6	48.7	-0.2%	4
Target Shooting	17.1	17.3	-1.2%	18
Snowboarding	5.2	5.3	-1.9%	35
Baseball	14.6	14.9	-2.0%	19
Billiards/Pool	31.8	32.7	-2.8%	11
Tennis	10.4	10.9	-4.6%	26
Basketball	26.7	28.1	-5.0%	15
Softball	12.4	13.2	-6.1%	22
Hunting with Firearms	17.8	19.2	-7.3%	17
Volleyball	11.1	12.0	-7.5%	24
Golf	24.4	26.6	-8.3%	16
Backpack/Wilderness Camp	13.3	14.5	-8.3%	21
Fishing	40.6	44.4	-8.6%	6
Bicycle Riding	35.6	39.0	-8.7%	8
Hockey (ice)	1.9	2.2	-13.6%	40
Skiing (alpine)	6.4	7.7	-16.9%	32
Scooter Riding	9.5	12.7	-25.2%	28
In-line Roller Skating	10.5	19.2	-45.3%	25

Participation Source: National Sporting Goods Association Website, 2008.

Table 6
Recreation Classification System
 (Developed by National Recreation and Park Association)

Park Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria	Acres Per 1,000 Population
Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated, or unique recreational needs.	Less than a ¼ mile distance in residential setting.	Between 2500 sq.ft. and 1 acre.	0.25 to 0.5
Neighborhood Park	Remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation.	¼ to ½ mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads & physical barriers.	5 acres is considered min. size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.	1.0 to 2.0
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3 mile distance.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Between 30 and 50 acres.	5.0 to 8.0

According to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), Commerce Township is estimated to have a population of 36,099 as of August 2008, an increase of 18.9 percent from its 2000 Census population. Based on an extrapolation of this growth rate, Commerce Township is estimated to have an approximate population of 38,977 by the year 2012, the planning horizon of this Five-Year Recreation Plan. Using this projected population, park acreage standards can be applied and compared to existing park acreage to determine needs in terms of property.

It should be noted that the acreage standard analysis is based only on Township-owned parks. This analysis is important given that the jurisdiction of this Recreation Plan covers Township-owned parks. However, one State park, several public school facilities and numerous private recreation facilities are located within the Township and serve its residents. Also, many parks are located just outside of the boundaries of Commerce Township. These recreation facilities should be taken into consideration in combination with the results of the acreage standard analysis for Township-owned parks.

Community Parks

Six Township parks are classified as community parks, totaling 591.89 acres. The NRPA standard for community park land stipulates 5.0 to 8.0 acres per 1,000 people. Based on the Township’s estimated 2012 population of 38,977, the NRPA standard would require between 195 and 312 acres of com-

munity parkland. Commerce Township’s current park acreage exceeds this standard and thus would be considered sufficient.

Neighborhood Parks

Bicentennial Park is the Township’s only neighborhood park, which totals 9.73 acres. The NRPA standard for neighborhood parkland, which stipulates a total of 1.0 to 2.0 acres per 1,000 people, was applied to the estimated 2012 population of Commerce Township of 38,977. Based on this, Commerce Township should have between 39 and 78 acres of neighborhood parkland. The Township’s current provision of 9.73 acres would be considered deficient.

Mini-Parks

Commerce Township maintains only one mini-park, Mill Race Park, which encompasses 8.99 acres. The NRPA standard for mini-park land stipulates a total of 0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 people. Based on the estimated 2012 population of Commerce Township, the NRPA recommends between 10 and 19 acres of land. The current provision of 8.99 acres would be considered deficient.

All Park Categories

Overall, if combining the standard acreage requirements for community parks (5 to 8 acres), neighborhood parks (1.0 to 2.0 acres) and mini-parks (0.25 to 0.5 acres), a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of park land



should be available per 1,000 people. Applying the NRPA standards to the estimated 2012 population of Commerce Township would result in the need for 244 to 409 acres of total park land. Commerce Township's current total park acreage of 610.61 far exceeds the recommended total park acreage.

Park Service Areas

As shown in **Table 6**, each park type is given a typical service area. For community parks, the NRPA estimates a 3-mile service area radius, while neighborhood parks maintain a half-mile service area radius and mini-parks maintain a quarter-mile service area radius. The extent of the service areas within Commerce Township based on existing parks and their park classification is shown on **Map 2, Park Service Areas**. This map effectively shows the locations within the Township that are out of range of a certain type of park facility.

As with the acreage standard analysis, this service area analysis was conducted by only considering Township-owned parks. A variety of other school- and privately-owned recreation facilities are found within Commerce Township in addition to many recreation facilities just outside of the Township.

Community Parks

Map 2 shows the extent of the 3-mile community park service area radius within Commerce Township. As can be seen, only the northwestern corner of Commerce Township lies outside of the limits of this service area radius. This segment of Commerce Township does include several large residential subdivisions. The closest community park to this corner of Commerce Township is likely found within the Village of Milford, approximately two miles west of Commerce Township.

Neighborhood Parks

The extent of the half-mile service area radius for neighborhood parks (as well as the community parks that also function as neighborhood parks to surrounding residents) is shown on **Map 2**. Except for the central section and southeastern corner of the Township, the remainder of Commerce Township falls outside of this radius. This indicates that a significant number of Commerce Township residents are inadequately served by a neighborhood park. It should be noted, however, that the Planning Commission has encouraged residential

developments to include private neighborhood park space.

Mini-Parks

Although only one mini-park is found in the Township, neighborhood and community parks also function as mini-parks for those residents within one-quarter mile of them. The extent of the quarter-mile mini-park service area radius is shown on **Map 2**. Except for the central section and southeastern corner of the Township, the majority of the Township falls outside of the radius of a mini-park. It should be noted that in many cases, individual yards serve as sufficient "mini-park" space.

FACILITY STANDARDS

The NRPA has also published typical recreation facility standards that specify facility service areas, the number of facilities needed to service the population as well as the land area needed. Standards for facilities usually located within neighborhood and community parks are provided in **Table 7**. These standards can be used in conjunction with the acreage standards to further identify Commerce Township's recreation needs.

Table 8 provides a comparison of the Township's public park facilities against published recreation facility standards based on an estimated 2012 population of 38,977. The public school recreational facilities within Commerce Township have also been factored into the comparison against published standards. As shown in the table, some deficiencies and surpluses can be seen.

When considering only Township-owned facilities, the most prominent deficiency occurs in the provision of tennis courts. The NRPA standard calls for at least 19 tennis courts, but currently, only 2 tennis courts are within Township-owned parks. However, the public schools within Commerce Township provide a total of 24 tennis courts, pushing the total quantity above the NRPA standard.

For Township-owned facilities, significant deficiencies also exist with regard to outdoor basketball courts and outdoor volleyball courts. The NRPA standard based on the estimated Township population calls for 8 basketball and 8 volleyball courts, where only 2 and 4 courts are provided, respectively. Public schools within the Township offer a total of 13 outdoor basketball courts and 1 outdoor

volleyball court. With these added to the Township-owned facilities, a surplus exists for basketball courts based on the NRPA standard but a deficiency still remains for outdoor volleyball.

When counting only Township-owned facilities, other minor deficiencies exist for football fields and swimming pools; however, these deficiencies both become surpluses when public school facilities are added.

This data can be used in conjunction with other factors contained within this plan such as results of the public workshop. Footnotes are provided for clarification and to acknowledge facilities on school properties. It should again be noted that these standards are somewhat dated and may not accurately

reflect the popularity or decline in popularity of recreation activity.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The socioeconomic characteristics of a community play a role in the demand for certain types of recreation facilities. By examining socioeconomic characteristics such as population, density, age, and household size, municipalities can identify trends and opportunities that may influence future land use and recreation decisions and policy choices.

For example, if the elementary school enrollment in a particular area is growing, there may be a need to plan for more playgrounds and children's programs. Conversely, if the population of the community is

Table 7
Recreation Facility Standards
 (Published by National Recreation and Park Association)

Activity/Facility	Minimum Space Requirements	Units per Population	Service Radius	Location Notes
Basketball Court (Outdoor)	2,400-3,036 sq.ft. (youth); 5,040-7,280 sq.ft. (high school)	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mi.	Outdoor courts in neighborhoods and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
Ice Hockey	22,000 sq. ft.	1 per 100,000	1/2 hour to 1 hour travel time	Climate important consideration including travel time affecting number of units.
Tennis Court	7,200 sq. ft. per court; 2 ac. per complex	1 per 2,000	1/4 to 1/2 mi.	Best in batteries of 2-4. Located in neighborhood community park or adjacent to school site.
Volleyball Court (Outdoor)	4,000 sq. ft.	1 per 5,000	1/4 to 1/2 mi.	Outdoor courts in neighborhoods and community parks, plus active recreation areas in other park settings.
Ballfields: Baseball Little League Softball	3 to 3.85 ac. 1.2 ac. 1.5 to 2 ac.	1 per 5,000; 1 lighted per 30,000	1/4 to 1/2 mi.	Part of neighborhood complex. Lighted fields part of community complex. Softball fields may also be used for youth baseball.
Football Field	1.5 ac.	1 per 20,000	15 to 30 minutes travel time	Usually part of baseball, football, soccer complex in community park or adjacent to high school.
Soccer Field	1.7 to 2.1 ac.	1 per 10,000	1 to 2 mi.	Number of units depends on popularity. Youth soccer on smaller fields adjacent to schools or neighborhood parks.
Swimming Pool	1.5 to 2 ac.	1 per 20,000	15 to 30 minutes travel time	Located in community park or school site.
Trails	n/a	1 system per region	n/a	n/a

Source: Data from Roger A Lancaster, Ed., Recreation Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, Alexandria, Virginia; National Recreation and Park Association, 1983, pages 60-61.



Table 8
Recreation Facility Deficiencies

Facility	Standard per Population	Existing Township Facilities (a)	Existing School Facilities	Total Existing Facilities	Need Based on Standard (b)	Surplus or Deficiency (Twp. Facilities Only)	Surplus or Deficiency (Twp. and School Facilities)
Basketball Court (Outdoor) (c)	1 per 5,000	2	13	15	8	-6	7
Ice Hockey	1 per 100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tennis Court	1 per 2,000	2	24	26	19	-17	7
Volleyball Court (Outdoor)	1 per 5,000	4	1	5	8	-4	-3
Baseball/Softball Field	1 per 5,000	23	20	43	8	15	35
Football Field	1 per 20,000	1	6	7	2	-1	5
Soccer Field	1 per 10,000	4	18	22	4	0	18
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000	0	3	3	2	-2	1
Trails	1 per region	1	0	1	1	0	0

Source: Wade Trim Field Survey of July 2008.

Footnotes:

- (a) Facilities under construction at Dodge 5 Park are included as existing.
- (b) Based on estimated 2012 population of Commerce Township of 38,977.
- (c) Two hoops were considered to be equal to one court.

aging, more recreational facilities may be needed for senior citizens. This section provides a brief summary of the socioeconomic characteristics of Commerce Township that may influence parks and recreation planning decisions.

The U.S. Census Bureau serves as the primary source of data for this demographics section. Census statistics are presented for Commerce Township as a whole, but are also presented for the sixteen census block groups that comprise the Township. As a supplement to this analysis, a series of maps have been prepared to illustrate the relevant census data by block group.

Township Population Trends and Projections

Overall, Commerce Township has experienced significant growth in recent years, and is projected to continue to increase in population through 2035. The sidebar below shows the historical, estimated and projected growth rates of Commerce Township between 1980 and 2035. This significant growth rate is a clear indication that the Township will likely need to provide additional park facilities and services to accommodate a growing population.

Commerce Township Population Trends and Projections

Year	Population
1980 ¹	18,789
1990 ¹	22,156
2000 ¹	30,349
2008 ²	36,099
2012 ³	38,977
2035 ⁴	45,042

Footnotes:

- 1. U.S. Census Reports
- 2. SEMCOG August 2008 Estimate
- 3. Linear extrapolation based on rate of growth between 2000 and 2008
- 4. SEMCOG 2035 Forecast

Population and Population Density

Population and population density characteristics can have a significant influence on recreation planning. In general, Commerce Township is a well populated suburban community and making it practical for park facilities to be located throughout the Township. However, there are certain portions of the Township that have larger or fewer numbers of residents, and at varying densities. **Map 3,**

Population Density shows the population density of the sixteen block groups within the Township.

As is shown on the map, the block groups in the central portion of Commerce Township are quite dense. The centralized location of most of Commerce Township's existing parks is generally supported by this higher population density. Block Group #4200.3, located just north of Wixom and encompassing two manufactured home parks, is the most dense in the Township accommodating 3,582 persons per square mile. Although no public parks are located within this block group, each manufactured home park features private recreational facilities to serve its residents.

Median Age

Knowledge of a community's age distribution plays a crucial role in the planning of recreation facilities and programs. As mentioned earlier, whether an area is comprised of older or younger citizens will greatly influence such things as the facilities that are most desired within parks. **Map 4, Median Age** shows the median age for the block groups within Commerce Township.

The youngest block groups in Commerce Township are found just north and east of the City of Wixom. These include Block Group #4200.3, with a median age of 31.5 years and Block Group #4200.2, with a median age of 31.9 years. Other younger block groups are generally found in the central portion of the Township. Comparatively older populations are found in the northern portion of the Township and, in particular, the southeastern corner of the Township. Block Group #4800.1, features the highest median age of 40.3 years. Consistent with the age characteristics of the different sections of the Township, the Township may want to consider providing recreation facilities that serve a younger or older population as necessary.

Household Size

A household, as defined by the US Census, is all persons who occupy the same housing unit. A housing unit can be described as a house, apartment, mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room used as a separate living quarters.

A trend occurring nationwide and characteristic of today's population is the declining size of house-

holds. There are several factors that demographers have linked to the declining size. People are marrying later, postponing having children, and having fewer children. Nation-wide, married couple families still comprise the largest and economically most powerful household. However, the number of single parent households is increasing, thus contributing to the decline in average household size.

Household size is an important factor when making recreation facility and program decisions. A high person per household figure can be an indication that an area is comprised of families with children and thus could justify family or youth oriented recreation facilities. Conversely, an area with a low person per household figure may require recreation facilities more favorable to singles, adults or the elderly.

Map 5, Household Size illustrates the average household size by block group within Commerce Township. The block groups of the Township that feature the smallest households are found in the southeast and northeast corners. Block Group #4800.1, which was also the oldest block group, has the smallest average household size of 2.36. The higher median age and lower household size indicate that this block group features a higher concentration of elderly citizens, households without children, and/or single persons.

The largest households are found in the northwest corner of the Township (Block Group #4100.9, with an average household size of 3.13). Although this block group was not found to be particularly young in comparison to other block groups, the large household size does indicate a higher concentration of families.

RELATED PLANNING INITIATIVES

There are several related planning initiatives that are significant in terms of their relevance to the provision of recreation within Commerce Township. Each initiative is described in further detail below.

Oakland County's Green Infrastructure Visioning Project

Oakland County's Green Infrastructure Visioning Project focuses on identifying an interconnected network of green space that conserves natural

ecosystem values and functions, guides sustainable development, and provides associated economic quality of life benefits to our communities.¹

Green infrastructure networks consist of the following components:

- **Hubs:** Hubs anchor the network and provide an origin or destination for wildlife. Hubs range in size from large conservation areas to smaller parks and preserves. Hubs provide habitat for native wildlife and help maintain natural ecological processes.
- **Sites:** Smaller ecological landscape features that can serve as a point of origin or destination or incorporate less extensive ecological important areas.
- **Links:** The connections that hold the network together and enable it to function. Links facilitate movement from one hub to another.

Using the natural areas information developed by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) as a starting point for analysis, the Oakland County Planning's Environmental Stewardship Group has been working with the local communities of Oakland County to identify and map local green infrastructure elements. This process has been completed in Commerce Township, and resulted in the creation of a Green Infrastructure Vision (see **Map 6, Green Infrastructure**). With a vision in place, local communities are then encouraged to use their maps to establish recommendations for best land management practices, rank conservation priorities and identify funding needs, and address green infrastructure goals through local plans and ordinances. When complete, a county-wide vision will be developed that will include maps of interconnected natural resources, along with local community recommendations and implementation goals.

As shown on **Map 6**, many of the identified hubs, sites, and links fall within municipal parks and properties, public lands (State, schools) and private recreation lands (golf courses, conservation clubs). However, a significant percentage of these green infrastructure components are in private ownership and may be susceptible to encroachment from future development. Therefore, Commerce Township's green infrastructure vision should serve as a foundation for the evaluation of lands for acquisition by the Township for future parks or conserva-

tion purposes.

Also shown on **Map 6** is the existing trail network within Commerce Township, which can play a key role in linking the hubs and sites of the green infrastructure network. The green infrastructure vision will play a key role in the identification of future trail connections.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2007

The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department completed a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in March 2007. The purpose of the plan is to guide recreation and planning efforts through 2011 and to meet necessary MDNR standards for eligibility for grant programs. The Master Plan includes an overall description of the County and overview of the administrative structure and financing for the department, an inventory of County Parks, a needs assessment and summary of public input, goals and objectives, as well as a capital improvement plan and implementation strategies.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation Master Plan Goals:

- Acquire, preserve and manage parkland and natural resources.
- Provide outstanding facilities and programs.
- Provide the highest quality recreational and educational services.
- Enhance communications, cooperation and coordination with intergovernmental agencies, the private sector and other organizations.
- Sustain the financial stability and viability of parks system.

Oakland County Trails Master Plan

The Oakland County Trails Master Plan (2008) was developed to provide a framework for creating a connected system of greenways and trails throughout Oakland County. This non-motorized system is envisioned to serve a diverse range of users, provid-

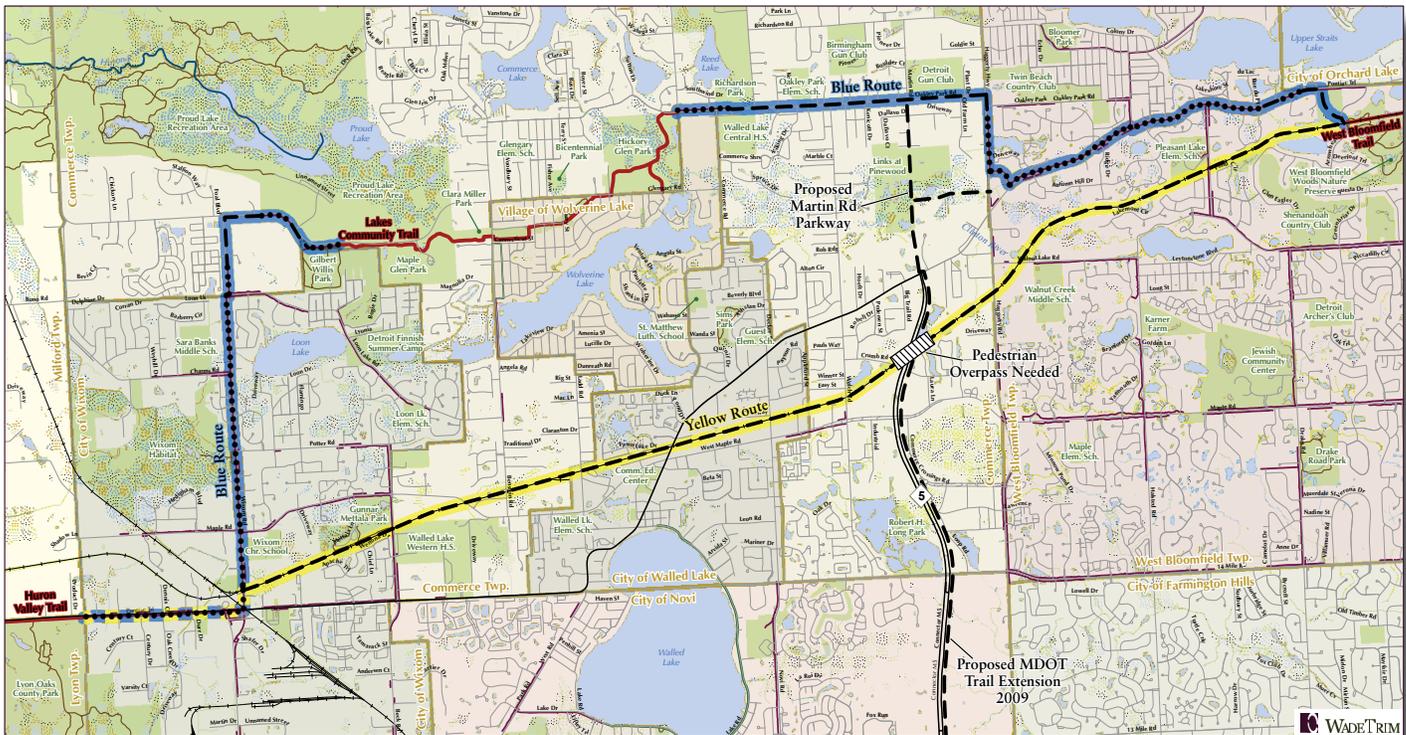
ing safe and well-maintained linkages to important natural, cultural and civic destinations and other points of interest within and outside of the county.

The development of the Trails Master Plan was overseen by the Oakland Trails Advisory Council, Oakland County Parks and Recreation Department and Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services. These agencies serve in a leadership role in the development of a connected non-motorized system, but rely on the determined efforts of numerous local municipalities, trail commissions, friends groups and property owners for trail implementation. As of August 2008, 95 miles of completed trails stretch across Oakland County, with 13 miles in the planning, design and development stage and another 146 miles of trails under consideration.

The Oakland County Pathway Concept Map, included on the next page, illustrates the vision to link pathways and greenways throughout Oakland County. All of the existing primary trail systems are shown on the map, as well as the concept for future connections. These connections are either in the design/development phase, under consideration,

or under review, and have been identified as such because of their importance in linking the natural, cultural, historic and community amenities in Oakland County.

An important focus of the Oakland County Trails Master Plan was the bridging of several primary "gaps," or critical missing links that exist in the major trail system. One such gap was identified in the Commerce Township area, where the Lakes Community Trail, Huron Valley Trail and West Bloomfield Trail converge toward each other but do not connect. Two potential connector routes, a "Blue Route" and a "Yellow Route," were identified and assessed based on their opportunities and constraints. In the end, both routes were identified as options and recommendations for implementation of the connector routes were identified. The trail gap and potential connector routes are illustrated on the Huron Valley/Lakes Community/West Bloomfield Trails Gap Analysis Map, included below.



MAP 3 HURON VALLEY/LAKES COMMUNITY/WEST BLOOMFIELD TRAILS GAP ANALYSIS

July 2008

Legend

Proposed Trail Routes:	Existing Trails:	Water Bodies
Yellow Route	Trail	Water Features
Blue Route	Safety/Side Path	Wetlands
New Path Required	Bike Lane	Recreation Land/Schools
Utilize Existing Path	Water Trail	Municipal Boundaries
	Park Path	

Scale: 0 500 1000 2000 3000 Feet

Sources: Roads: TeleAtlas Road Data, 2006
Trail Network: Oakland County GIS, 2008
Wetlands: National Wetlands Inventory
Recreation Lands: Oakland County GIS, 2008

AKLAND COUNTY TRAILS MASTER PLAN



OKLAHOMA COUNTY PATHWAY CONCEPT



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Trail

County Trail Concept*

- Complete
- - - Design/Development
- - - Under Consideration
- · · Under Review

- Municipal Boundary
- County Parks
- HCMA Recreation Land
- State Recreation Land

*The county pathways system is comprised of a vision to link pathways and greenways throughout Oakland County and Southeastern Michigan. The county concept envisions a hierarchy of pathways consisting of primary and secondary

June 2008



Sources
 Roads: Oakland County GIS, 2008
 Trail Network: Oakland County GIS, 2008
 Recreation Lands: Oakland County GIS, 2008



M-5 Trail/Martin Parkway Trail Projects

In addition to the proposed connector routes bridging the gap between the Huron Valley, Lakes Community and West Bloomfield Trails, additional trail development efforts have relevance to the emerging trail system within Commerce Township and the larger region.

As an extension of the I-275 Bike Path, which runs along I-275 between Monroe County and Oakland County (the trail currently ends in Novi), the Michigan Department of Transportation has committed to moving forward with a trail extension that will run along M-5 through Novi and into Commerce Township. The M-5 trail extension will stop at Pontiac Trail, where M-5 currently ends. The design and construction of this new trail is slated to occur in 2009/2010.

In conjunction with the construction of the new Martin Parkway by the Commerce Township DDA, a new trail system is also planned within the Commerce Commons property. This trail could connect the M-5 trail extension to Oakley Park Road, where the "Blue Route" is planned and to the existing trail system within West Bloomfield Township. The Huron Valley/Lakes Community/West Bloomfield Trails Gap Analysis Map illustrates the location of the M-5 trail extension and the Martin Parkway trail project in relation to other existing and planned trails in the area.

PUBLIC INPUT

During the development of the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Township gathered public input via four primary methods: focus group sessions, a recreational opinion survey, a public workshop and the DNR required public hearing. A detailed description of each public participation element is included below.

Focus Groups

Commerce Township held several focus group meetings with various user groups and stakeholders to assist in identifying specific needs, desires, and concerns related to Recreation over the next 5 years. In total, five user groups participated in

hour-long sessions during the afternoon and evening of October 7, 2008. The focus groups included:

- Township staff (3 attendees);
- Seniors and Township staff (7 attendees);
- User groups (8 attendees including representatives from the Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA), Save our State Land (SOS), and Friends of Byer's);
- Athletic leagues (8 attendees including representatives from Commerce Little League, CW3 Soccer Association, Lakes Athletics Association and Inter-Lakes Girls Softball); and,
- Township Parks and Recreation Committee members.

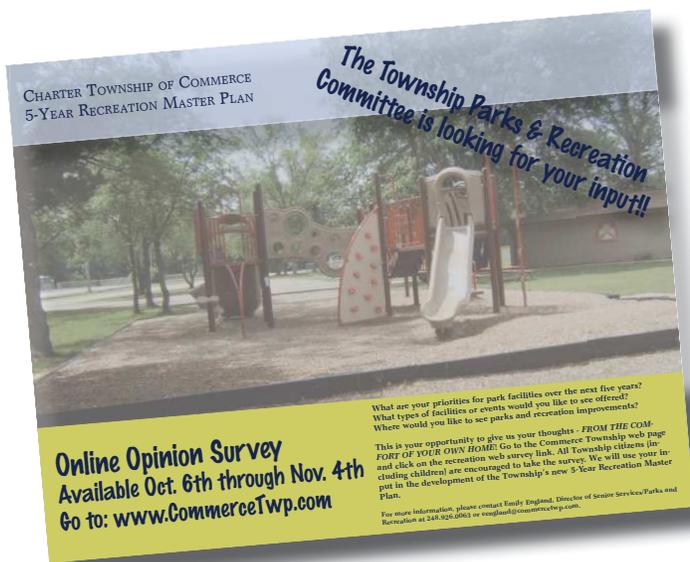
By the culmination of the focus group sessions, the Parks and Recreation Committee and consultant team had a detailed listing of parks and recreation needs from the groups. With an extensive listing of needs identified, the Committee and consultant team utilized the subsequent public input activities to validate the results of the focus group meetings and formulate priorities. The full results of the focus group meetings are presented in **Appendix A**.

Commerce Township Recreational Survey

The Commerce Township recreational survey was an online poll conducted October 9, 2008 through November 5, 2008 with the purpose of determining community opinion and support regarding recreation needs and improvements. The survey questions were posed in a variety of formats and provided opportunities for open ended responses. The availability of the online survey was advertised through several means, including flyers, e-mail distribution lists, and an article in the local newspaper. All Township citizens, including youth, were encouraged to participate in the survey. In all, 462 citizens participated in the survey. A summary of the results is presented below.

When asked about the number of recreational programs, activities and facilities provided in Commerce Township, 83 percent of respondents felt that more were needed. When asked about the amount of parkland in the Township, 74 percent of respondents felt that more parkland was needed.





When asked about the current funding level for recreational programs, activities and facilities, 56 percent of participants felt that more funding was needed.

One survey question was designed to gauge the current participation level and interest for a variety of physical recreational activities. In terms of current participation, the following were the top 5 physical activities:

1. Walking or Hiking (79 percent)
2. Bicycling (75 percent)
3. Soccer (71 percent)
4. Picnicking (65 percent)
5. Golf (60 percent)

The top 5 physical activities that respondents were NOT interested in were:

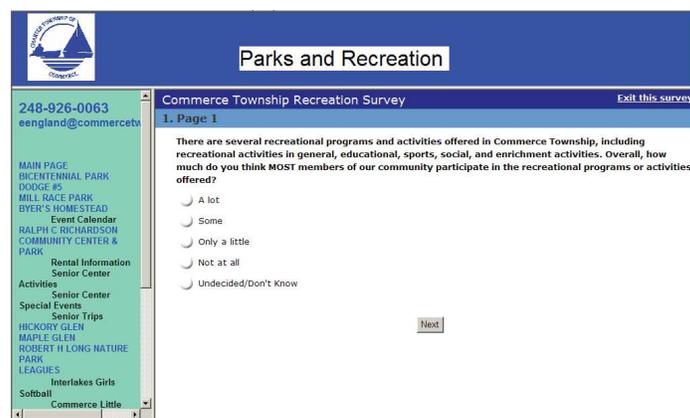
1. Field Hockey (66 percent)
2. Equestrian (58 percent)
3. In-Line Hockey (57 percent)
4. Ice Hockey (56 percent)
5. Skateboarding (55 percent)

For non-sport recreational activities, the largest percentage of respondents currently participate in fitness classes (32 percent), followed by concerts (28 percent) and outdoor youth camps (28 percent). The largest percentage of respondents had a future interest in concerts (54 percent), followed by fitness classes (47 percent) and arts & craft classes (45 percent). Finally, the highest percentage of respondents were NOT interested in senior trips, activities, meals (57 percent), followed by computer & tech-

nology classes (32 percent) and plays & other stage productions (32 percent).

The survey offered a listing of various types of recreation facilities and prompted respondents to indicate whether more facilities should be provided or if enough are currently available. The top 5 facilities that respondents indicated more were needed were:

1. Bicycle Paths (82 percent)
 2. Sledding & Toboggan Runs (80 percent)
 3. Soccer Fields (77 percent)
 4. Hiking/Walking Trails (76 percent)
 5. Nature Areas (66 percent)
- Outdoor Theatre & Bandstand (66 percent)



One of the online survey questions

Survey participants indicated that enough of the following facilities were currently available:

1. Golf Courses (53 percent)
2. Softball Fields (45 percent)
3. Baseball Fields (43 percent)
4. Football Fields (42 percent)
5. Gymnasiums (37 percent)

The full results of the online survey are provided in **Appendix A**.

Public Workshop

Commerce Township held a public workshop on October 29, 2008, in order to gather input and generate a prioritized list of issues, needs, and wants for parks and recreation in the Township over the

next five years. Approximately 25 people attended the workshop. The consultant team provided attendees with a brief overview of the master planning process, schedule, and the work that's been completed to date, followed by the objectives of the workshop. Attendees were put into one of five groups and asked to take 20-25 minutes to discuss and brainstorm various parks and recreation issues/needs/wants amongst themselves prior to discussing with the large group.

Attendees were then asked to present their ideas, needs, and concerns to the group as a whole. All comments were documented on flip charts and posted around the room. After each group spoke and all comments were noted, each person was given 3 sticker dots. Each person was asked to place their dots next to the three items they felt were most important and/or critical (i.e., those viewed as the "hot issues").

The end result of the workshop was a prioritized listing of attendees' ideas concerning parks and recreation in Commerce Township. Below are the ideas that received at least one "sticker" (total number of stickers identified in parenthesis):

- More soccer fields (25)
- Additional trails and trail connectivity (10)



A spokesperson for each table presented their ideas at the public workshop



- Need for permanent, barrier-free restrooms at parks (5)
- New outdoor ice skating rink (4)
- Need dog park (Dodge Park) (3)
- Additional Parks and Recreation maintenance staff and program director (3)
- Improve visibility/safety at all parks (2)
- Need for outdoor education/nature/learning center (2)
- Better volunteer coordination and communication (2)
- Need for outdoor event space (2)
- Additional arts programs (1)
- New splash/spray park (1)
- More picnic areas and pavilions (1)
- Develop disc golf course at Maple Glen (1)
- More adult soccer programs (1)
- Proud Lake out-lot land swap (1)
- Need skate park and bike park (BMX) (1)
- Improve park signage (1)
- Improve universal access at all parks (1)
- Construct a maze/labyrinth (1)
- Multi-purpose open space for markets (1)
- Lighted ball fields for adult use (1)
- Forest management (1)
- Need challenge course - high ropes (1)

Public Hearing

[to be inserted upon completion]

Footnotes

1. Oakland County's Green Infrastructure Visioning Project. Oakland County Website, 2008. [Http://www.oakgov.com/peds/program_service/es_prgm/green_infras/gi_project.html](http://www.oakgov.com/peds/program_service/es_prgm/green_infras/gi_project.html)

Average Household Size by Block Group:

- Less Than 2.6
- 2.6 to 2.69
- 2.7 to 2.79
- 2.8 to 2.89
- 2.9 or Higher

- Block Group Boundaries
- 4100.9** Block Group ID Number
- Community Parks
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Water Features
- Municipal Boundaries

Sources
 Roads: TeleAtlas Road Data, 2006
 Recreation Lands: Wade Trim Field Survey of July 2008
 Socioeconomic Data: U.S. Tiger Line Files - Census 2000

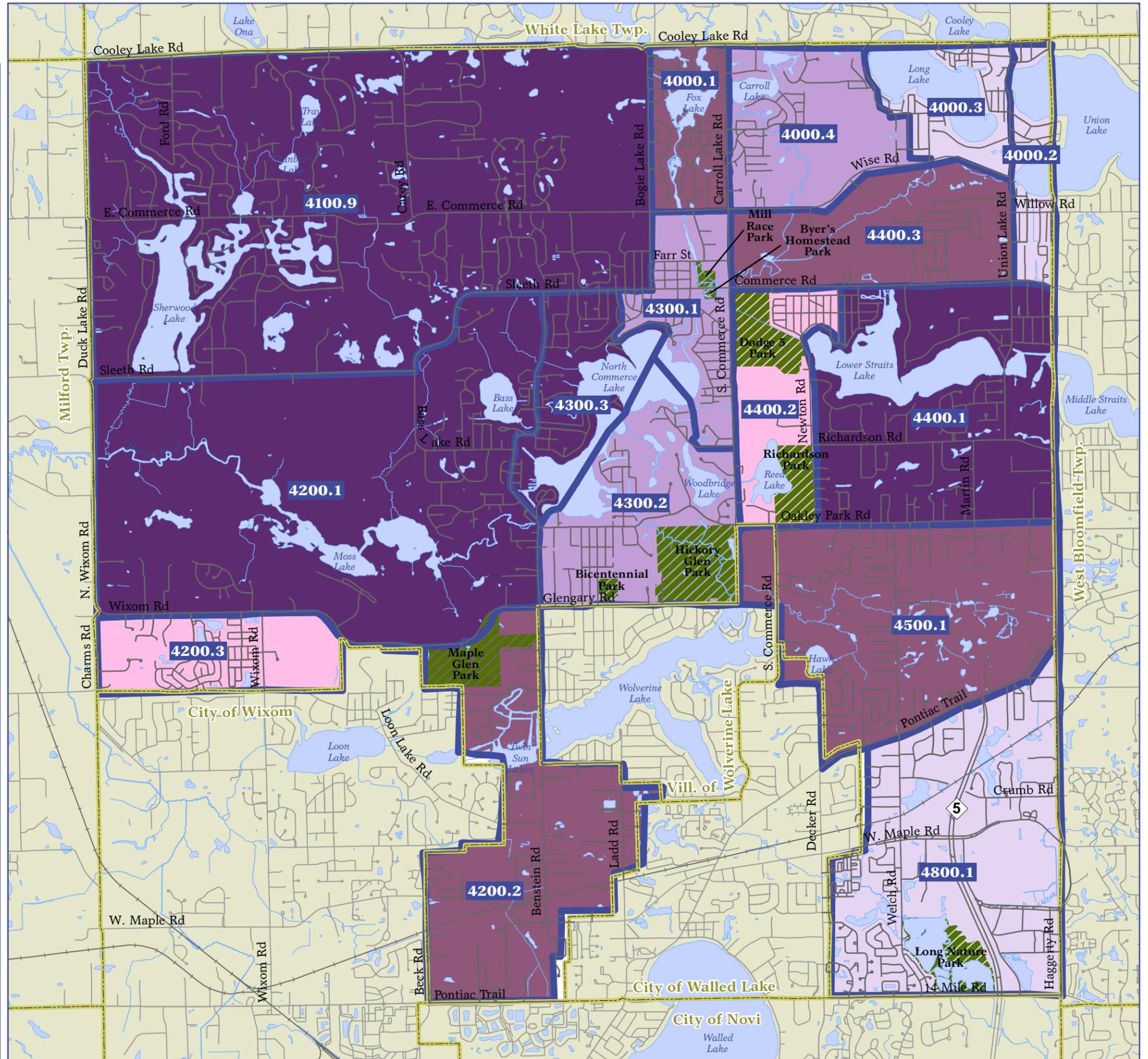
September 2008



0 750 1,500 3,000 4,500 Feet



FIVE-YEAR RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Population Density by Block Group:



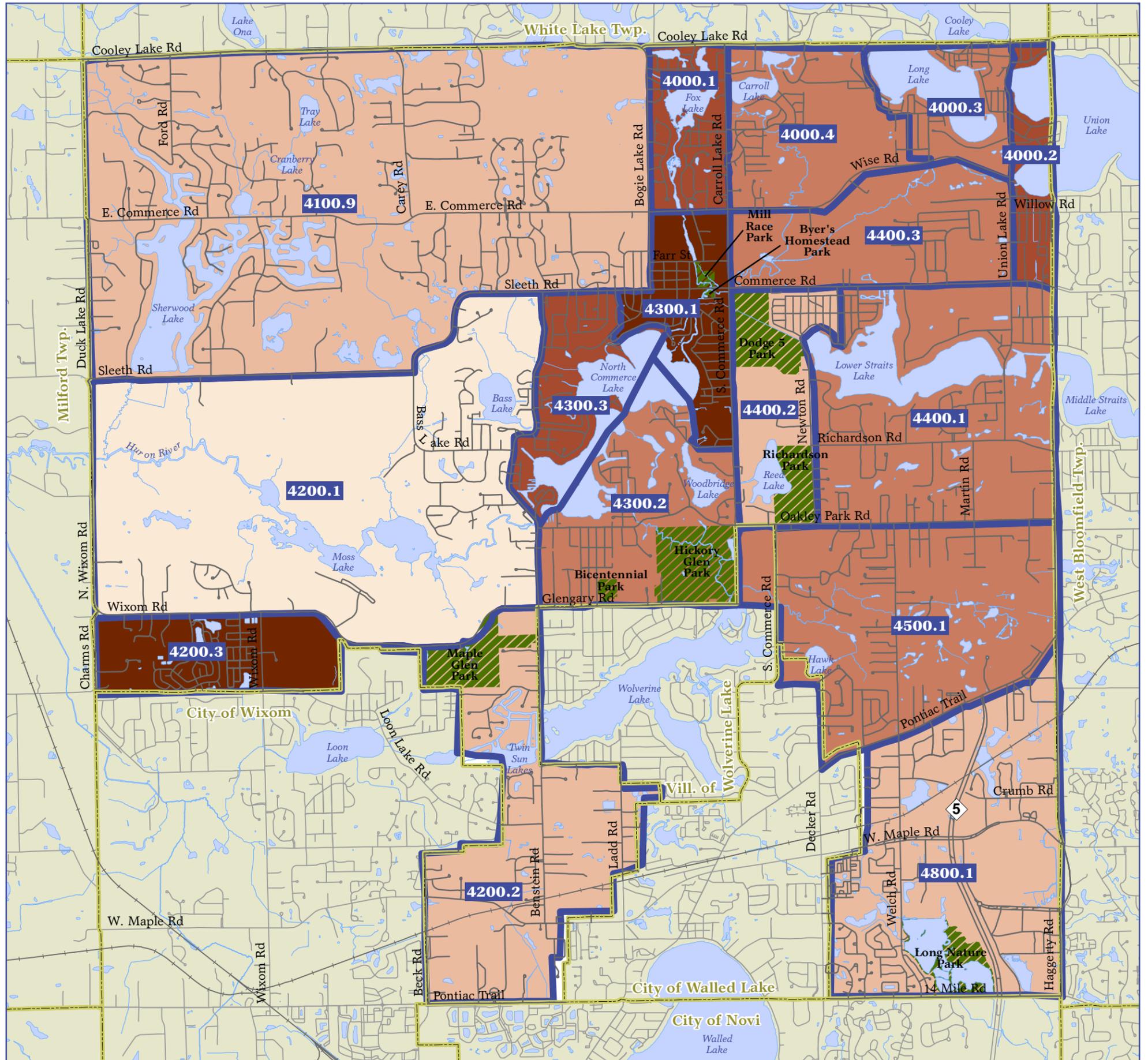
- Block Group Boundaries
- Block Group ID Number
- Community Parks
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Water Features
- Municipal Boundaries

Sources
 Roads: TeleAtlas Road Data, 2006
 Recreation Lands: Wade Trim Field Survey of July 2008
 Socioeconomic Data: U.S. Tiger Line Files - Census 2000

September 2008



FIVE-YEAR RECREATION MASTER PLAN



4 MEDIAN AGE

Median Age by Block Group:

- Less Than 34 Years
- 34 to 35.9 Years
- 36 to 37.9 Years
- 38 to 39.9 Years
- 40 Years or Higher

- Block Group Boundaries
- Block Group ID Number
- Community Parks
- Roads
- Water Bodies
- Water Features
- Municipal Boundaries

Sources
 Roads: TeleAtlas Road Data, 2006
 Recreation Lands: Wade Trim Field Survey of July 2008
 Socioeconomic Data: U.S. Tiger Line Files - Census 2000

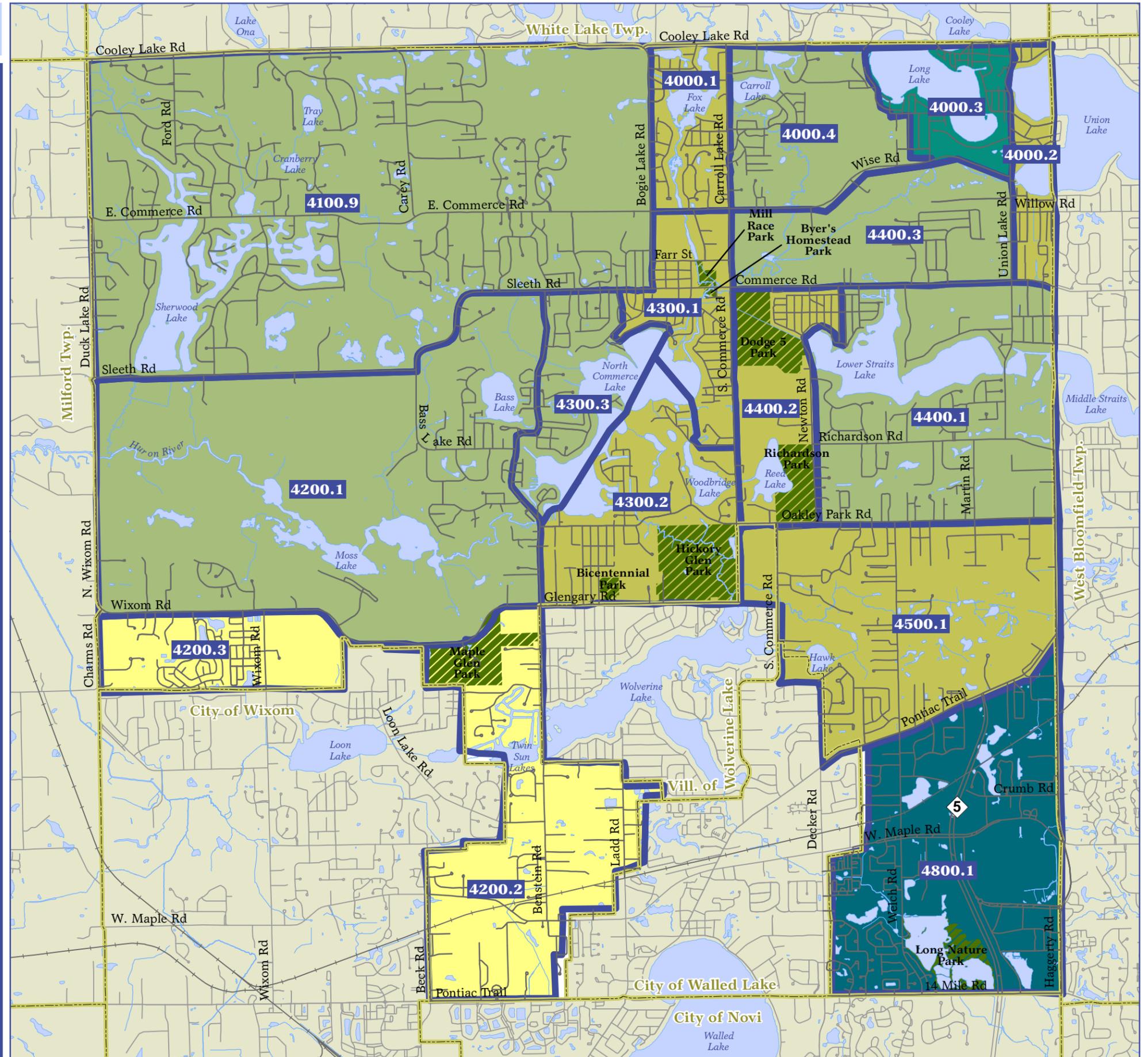
September 2008



0 7501,500 3,000 4,500 Feet



FIVE-YEAR RECREATION MASTER PLAN



Green Infrastructure Vision:

-  Hub
-  Site
-  Link
-  Other Restoration Link

 Municipal, State, School, Private and Other Recreational Facilities or Properties

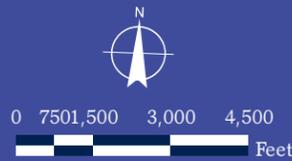
Existing Trails:

-  Trail
-  Safety/Side Path
-  Bike Lane
-  Water Trail
-  Park Path

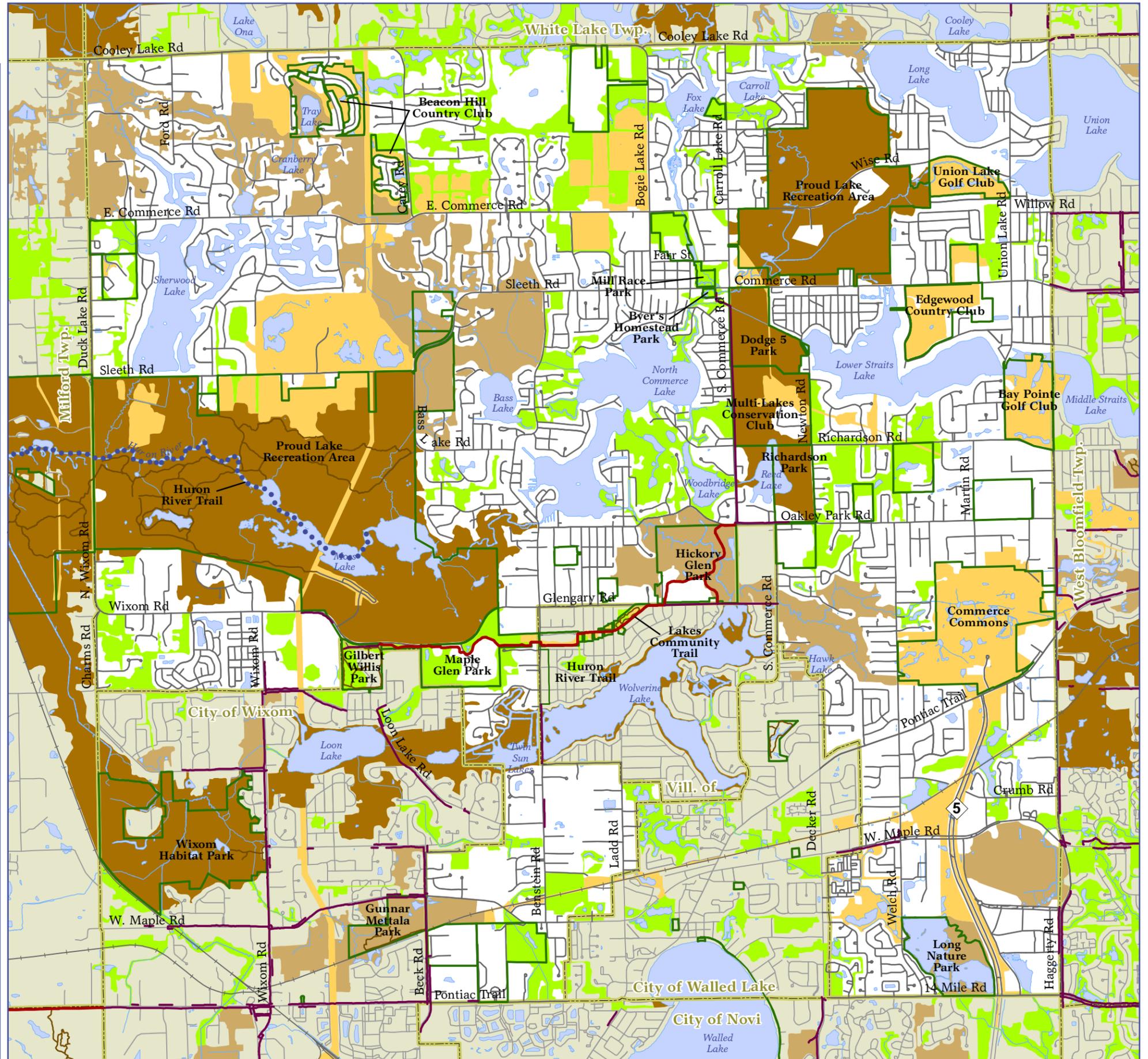
-  Roads
-  Water Bodies
-  Water Features
-  Municipal Boundaries

Sources
 Roads: TeleAtlas Road Data, 2006.
 Recreation Lands: Wade Trim Field Survey of July 2008.
 Green Infrastructure: Oakland County GIS, 2008.

October 2008



FIVE-YEAR RECREATION MASTER PLAN





6

ACTION PROGRAM



Pathway Bridge

The Action Program details the direction that the Township would like to take over the next five years in order to maintain, improve, and expand parks and recreation opportunities within the community.

As was described in the Basis for Action section, a community must base recreation improvement and service decisions on a variety of information. These include items such as recreational trends, national standards, existing facilities, community opinion, needs identified and observed by staff and committee members, as well as demographic trends, the capability of the land and its surroundings, and availability of funding sources.

GOALS AND GUIDELINES

Goals and guidelines statements were developed to assist in providing direction to the Township Board, Township Staff, and Parks and Recreation Committee. Goals are statements that describe how the Township views its own future. They are the long-term ideals or end products that are desired. Goals should meet the following guidelines:

- Provide guidance, but not be too detailed;
- Be realistic and achievable; and,
- Inspire people to action.

Statements of specific goals and recommended guidelines (or objectives) are intended to guide the formulation and implementation of the 5-Year Recreation Master Plan. Guideline statements below each goal have been established to outline more specific actions that will assist in meeting the goal. The goals and guidelines are intended to be as important as the capital improvement priorities and serve to provide further guidance and direction to the Township over the next five years. It is envisioned that these guidelines will be reviewed on a regular basis and be utilized as a tool for decision making.

The following goals and guideline statements were developed by synthesizing input from staff and the Recreation Committee, as well as input gathered from the public during the Master Planning process including the Opinion Survey, Focus Group Meetings and Public Workshop. They are listed in no particular order of importance or priority.

Organization, Operation and Maintenance

Goal

Strive to ensure efficient, high-quality operation and maintenance of public park facilities and properties within the Township.

Guidelines

- Current Township organization and staffing levels dedicated to parks, recreation, seniors, and maintenance is insufficient to provide for quality, efficient and effective operation of the current number of properties, facilities, and programs as well as those that are desired within the next 5 years. Discussions should continue related to the development of a Parks, Recreation and Senior Services Department with an adequate dedicated staff and budget.
- The provision of additional facilities and/or programs will likely mean additional staff and maintenance needs as well as the costs associated with them. Consider and include long-term maintenance funding requirements when implementing new or expanded facilities and programs.
- Educate, train, and equip Township staff to identify and manage invasive species with particular attention to phragmites and purple loosestrife. If necessary, contract invasive species management and control to a qualified firm in order to protect Township properties.
- Design improvements and purchase products with maintenance in mind. Consider the use of low-maintenance, vandal-proof, durable, environmentally-friendly materials, as well as native landscaping wherever possible.
- Security, visibility and vandalism are critical issues at the Township Parks. The Township should:
 - Work to ensure that low level brush, particularly along major road rights-of-way is cleared in order to provide open vistas to and from the park properties for as much as is practical.
 - Communicate and coordinate with police/sheriff to initiate an increased police presence in and around the Township Parks.

- Consider security-level lighting in appropriate locations to increase visibility and deter vandalism.
- Incorporate storage and maintenance facilities at large Township Parks for Township equipment and supplies, as well as athletic league equipment.
- Coordinate with and utilize the Oakland County WWAM (Weekend & Weekday Alternative for Misdemeanants) program as well as volunteers and athletic organizations to assist with various maintenance and clean up activities.
- Develop a Forest Management and Stewardship Plan for the applicable Township Park properties including a detailed property description and resource inventory, management recommendations and an activity schedule.
- Improve communication and awareness of Commerce Township parks, facilities, programs, and leagues by:
 - Redesigning and better utilizing the Parks/ Recreation website
 - Continuing to build an email distribution lists
 - Making announcements at Board meetings
 - Redesigning and updating the Parks and Recreation brochure
 - Making regular announcements on cable television
 - Including regular articles/announcements in local newspapers
 - Coordinating with the school district, Athletic Leagues, Chamber of Commerce, DDA, and realtors to distribute parks and recreation information and "cross advertise" services and offerings.
- Remain involved in the Township's discussions related to potential uses for the old Township Hall and determine feasibility and demand for parks, recreation, senior related uses.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Goal

Continue to partner and collaborate with other parks and recreation providers in order to provide residents with comprehensive, high-quality programs and facilities in a cost effective and efficient manner.

Guidelines

- Continue to seek and foster partnerships with a variety of entities, agencies and public and private organizations such as:
 - Adjacent local governments
 - State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources
 - Oakland County Parks
 - School Districts
 - Police / Sheriff
 - Volunteer Groups
 - DDA
 - Commerce Township Community Library
 - Homeowner Associations
 - Athletic organizations and associations such as Interlakes Girls Softball, Commerce Little League, CW3 Soccer, Lakes Athletic Association, Lake Area Hawks, and Michigan Mountain Bike Association
- Coordinate with other parks and recreation providers to avoid duplicating services and offerings.
- Utilize partnerships with the county, state, schools, library and others to cross-advertise programs and services.
- Partner with the Commerce Township Library to transfer historical recreation-related records into electronic formats.

Facility Development, Improvement and Expansion

Goal

Provide residents with high quality, diverse recreation opportunities by renovating existing facilities and, where possible and appropriate, expanding parks and recreation offerings.

Guidelines

- Develop Concept Master Plans for each of the Township Parks in order to analyze and dis-

cuss opportunities and challenges in a comprehensive rather than piecemeal manner. These Concept Master Plans will be used to guide, coordinate, and plan for future improvements to the parks. The community, park users and maintenance personnel should be engaged in the development of the Concept Master Plans.

- Immediate park improvements and resources should focus on:
 - Increasing security, safety and visibility at the parks
 - Resolving parking and ingress/egress issues at Maple Glen and Hickory Glen Parks
 - Providing space and facilities for soccer (practice and game fields)
 - Moving forward with County-recommended improvements at Byer’s Homestead Park
 - Improving aesthetics of park entries
 - Providing accessible, permanent restroom facilities at heavily used and programmed parks
 - Providing Universal Accessibility at all Township Parks
 - Continuing support of implementation of Safety Paths and Trails throughout the Township.
- The entrances of all Township Parks need overall aesthetic improvements including coordinated signage and landscaping treatment. The entrances should welcome people to the parks, be well-maintained, and communicate to the visitor that they have arrived at a Commerce Township facility.
- In conjunction with the Township Board, work to identify Township-owned, remnant, and/or unutilized properties for their potential sale (i.e. abandoned well sites, small vacant lots that are being maintained by the Township). Revenues from the sales could be utilized for Parks and Recreation improvements.
- Stay engaged with the Township Board and DDA in discussions regarding the Commerce Commons development to incorporate potential elements such as green space, trails, and other public open and gathering space.
- As needed, replace aging play equipment at Township Parks, particularly at Bicentennial Park and Maple Glen Park.

- Utilize environmentally-friendly, “green” design and construction standards, including Low Impact Development (LID) techniques and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) practices, and stormwater best management practices when making improvements to Township Parks.
- Seek opportunities to acquire land that:
 - Protects environmental features
 - Provides public waterfront access
 - Conserves open space
 - Is adjacent to or near existing parks
 - Provides linkages between destinations
 - Could provide increased and enhanced recreation opportunities
 - Provides locations for parks in currently underserved areas
- Further develop and promote nature paths in existing Township parks, including wayfinding and interpretive signage.

Programs

Goal
 In conjunction with other parks and recreation providers, make available high quality, comprehensive, and diverse recreation programs and events that meet the needs of the residents.

Guidelines

- Increase opportunities for outdoor/nature education programs utilizing Township park properties. Further develop nature trails and include trail maps, wayfinding and interpretive signage.
- Continue to discuss and move forward with opportunities to program activities and events at Byer’s Homestead to depict and interpret the history of Commerce Township.
- Investigate interest in establishing an Adult Soccer program in Commerce Township and support the program by offering practice and game space (currently very limited) as well as assistance with awareness and marketing.
- Investigate interest in establishing an Arts Program in Commerce Township and support the program by offering space at the Senior Center and/or Township Hall as well as assistance with awareness and marketing.



- Support awareness and marketing campaigns of the various athletic leagues and recreation-based programs organized and offered by other providers in the Township.
- Seek additional funds to increase the numbers served by the senior lunch program (currently a waiting list).
- Organize and offer an outdoor summer concert series once an appropriate location is available (i.e. at Dodge Park or Commerce Commons).
- See also "Partnerships and Collaboration".
- Coordinate with the Road Commission for Oakland County to improve non-motorized access and use along County roads (i.e. widen paved shoulders, improved pedestrian crossings, etc.).
- Work with the Township Planning Commission and Department to investigate the creation of a program where, based on their location and proximity to planned trails/safety paths, developers would contribute to a Non-Motorized Path Fund that the Township could use to design and build priority segments.

Accessibility and Connectivity

Goal

Support and encourage accessibility to and within Township parks, as well as development of the local and regional non-motorized systems.

Guidelines

- Continue to implement Safety Paths along major corridors within the Township with particular focus on those segments that will connect users to civic centers, parks, neighborhoods and retail areas.
- Coordinate and support Oakland County Parks in efforts to implement a county-wide non-motorized system and encourage the development of non-motorized transportation system (safety paths, trails, improved roads, improved pedestrian crossings) throughout the Township.
- Work with Oakland County and the MDNR to provide pedestrian access to Proud Lake State Park from adjacent neighborhoods and the Safety Path system.
- Support and move forward with recommendations in the Oakland County Trails Master Plan that call for an expanded non-motorized system within Commerce Township in order to connect the West Bloomfield Trail, Lakes Community Trail and Huron Valley Trail systems.
- Support efforts to investigate the feasibility of converting the railroad that traverses Commerce Township into a rails-to-trails non-motorized system that would directly link the West Bloomfield Trail to the Huron Valley Trail. Outstanding issues regarding cost, ownership, and maintenance remain.
- Develop a Walkability Plan for the Commerce Village area (that complements the Commerce Village Overlay District) in order to improve pedestrian access, safety, circulation and accommodations. Include connections to park properties, hospitals, retail, and residential areas.
- Continue to focus on improving barrier-free and universal accessibility at all Township facilities and parks, including access to picnic tables, grills, paths, playing fields, parking areas, restrooms, play equipment, etc.
- Keep apprised of current state and federal recreation guidelines and standards, including barrier-free accessibility and safety requirements.

Funding

Goal

Seek alternative and creative funding sources to assist in implementing the goals, guidelines, and capital improvement projects in the 5-year Master Plan.

Guidelines

- Aggressively seek and secure alternative funding sources such as grants, endowments, donations, sponsorships, and fundraising, for improvements and maintenance.
- Ensure adequate funding to support the current parks and recreation system, including maintenance and staffing prior to expansion of facilities or offerings.
- Make improvements, expand offerings, programs, and events that will generate revenue for the community to invest back into the parks, recreation and senior programs and facilities.

- Investigate opportunity for a new or renewed millage or bond issue to fund improvements, acquisition, operation and maintenance.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

Priority capital improvements for this Master Plan have been established not only to provide a guide and foundation for decision makers, but also to enable the Township to be eligible and apply for grant funding assistance for proposed projects. The capital improvements priorities are not a fixed element and are neither all inclusive nor exclusive. As do the goals and guidelines, the capital improvements priorities reflect the results of synthesizing input from staff and the Parks and Recreation Committee, as well as input gathered from the public during the Master Planning process including the opinion survey, focus group meetings and public workshop. The priorities are listed by short-term (1-2 yrs), mid-term (3-5 yrs), long-term (greater than 5 yrs), as well as on-going priorities for those items that should be revisited/evaluated each year. While the priorities are identified as short-, mid-, and long-term, it's likely that priorities may shift due to unanticipated circumstances such as private donations, changing recreation trends, community opinion, the purview of the Township Board, and/or available funding.

The priorities should be considered in close conjunction with the goals and guidelines of the plan. **Table 9**, Capital Improvement Priorities, provides an outline and guide as to the desires documented during the development of the Plan. It is difficult to predict desires and funding availability in the years to come. However, it is important to note that parks and recreation capital projects undertaken by the Township should address the goals and guidelines previously set forth in this plan.

The capital priorities identified in this Master Plan reflect the desired improvements based on input gathered over the past eight months. Further analysis will be needed for each improvement to determine if funding can be secured, and if the project is feasible from a construction standpoint. Further data may include topographic surveys, soil assessments, and wetland delineations needed to establish constructability.

**Table 9
Capital Improvement Priorities**

	Magnitude of Cost				Potential Funding Sources			
	Short-Term (1-2 yrs)	Mid-Term (3-5 yrs)	Long-Term (5+ yrs)	On-Going	Short-Term (1-2 yrs)	Mid-Term (3-5 yrs)	Long-Term (5+ yrs)	On-Going
Dodge Park								
Complete Phase I Improvements (drive, parking, 2 soccer fields, play structure, pavilion)				\$1.3 M	X			Park Millage, GF
Repair Maintenance Building for Secure Storage (doors, roof)				To Be Determined	X			GF
Complete Phase II Improvements (concession/restrooms, 2 soccer fields, dog park, ice rink)				To Be Determined		X		Park Millage, LWCF
Recreation Center, Spray Park, Parking, Amphitheater				To Be Determined			X	Park Millage, GF, Donations
Hickory Glen Park								
Develop Concept Master Plan to incorporate numerous improvement ideas including ingress/egress, parking, restrooms, lighting, signage etc				\$5,000 - \$10,000	X			GF
Implement improvements based on Concept Plan				To Be Determined		X		Park Millage, GF, Donations, LWCF
Replace floating bridge with freestanding bridge				\$100,000 - \$150,000		X		GF, MDNR Trust Fund, LWCF
Security lighting at kiosk, restrooms, parking lot				To Be Determined	X			GF
Sheltered picnic areas/grills/tables				\$100,000 - \$175,000 each		X		GF, MDNR Trust Fund, LWCF
Maple Glen Park								
Develop Concept Master Plan to incorporate numerous improvement ideas including ingress/egress, parking, lighting, signage, replacement of play equipment etc				\$5,000 - \$10,000	X			GF
Implement improvements based on Concept Plan				To Be Determined		X		GF, Park Millage, LWCF
Sheltered picnic areas/grills/tables				\$100,000 - \$175,000 each		X		GF, MDNR Trust Fund, LWCF
Bicentennial Park								
Develop Concept Master Plan to incorporate numerous improvement ideas including replacement of play equipment, reuse of tennis area, lighting, grading, connectivity to neighborhood, etc				\$5,000 - \$10,000	X			GF
Implement improvements based on Concept Plan				To Be Determined		X		GF, Park Millage, LWCF
Byer's Homestead Park								
Begin implementation of County recommendations with focus on ensuring sound buildings, improved parking and circulation, improved entry, screened outhouses, ADA compliance, and drinking water				To Be Determined		X		GF, Millage
Mill Race Park								
Improve Signage, Parking & Awareness				\$5,000 - \$10,000	X			GF
Replace Bridge				\$60,000 - \$100,000		X		GF
Ralph C. Richardson Park/Center								
Provide additional overflow parking area with grass pavers (or similar) and appropriate signage				\$4 - \$5 per square foot	X			GF, LWCF
Fitness Trails with stations				\$15,000 - \$40,000	X			GF

Costs are derived from a variety of sources and illustrate magnitude of costs for the purpose of conceptual level planning only. Detailed site specific surveys and design are needed to obtain more accurate estimates of construction. Costs do not include survey, design, construction documents, inspection, etc.



**Table 9
Capital Improvement Priorities**

Project Description	Magnitude of Cost				Potential Funding Sources			
	Short-Term (1-2 yrs)	Mid-Term (3-5 yrs)	Long-Term (5+ yrs)	On-Going	Short-Term (1-2 yrs)	Mid-Term (3-5 yrs)	Long-Term (5+ yrs)	On-Going
Robert H. Long Nature Park								
Conduct Flow Routing Hydrology/Hydraulics Study to determine fluctuations in water levels in order to locate facilities and reduce maintenance costs	X				GF			
Develop Concept Master Plan to incorporate numerous improvement ideas including parking lot expansion, hydrology issues, improved trails, improved fishing access, kayak/canoe launch, etc	X				GF			
Implement improvements based on Concept Plan					GF, Park Millage, MDNR Trust Fund			
Stabilize/Improve Trail System					GF, Park Millage, MDNR Trust Fund			
Designate/Install Kayak/Canoe Launch					GF, Park Millage, MDNR Trust Fund			
Expand/Improve Parking Area and Entry (expand parking lot, improve aesthetics, landscaping, signage, security lighting)	X				GF, Park Millage, MDNR Trust Fund			
Other								
Develop design for new, coordinated park entry signs and landscaping	X				GF			
Install new signs at Township Parks (Dodge, Long, Maple Glen, Hickory Glen)	X				GF			
Install new signs at Township Parks (Bicentennial, Byer's, Mill Race, Richardson)		X			GF			
Install Pet Pick Up Stations at Township Parks					GF			
Develop Forest Management & Stewardship Plan for Township Parks					GF			
Sledding Hill at Treatment Plant Property (parking, signage, restroom)	X				GF, WWTP			
Seek Opportunities to Acquire Land That:								
∞ Protects Environmental Features								
∞ Provides Public Waterfront Access								
∞ Conserves Open Space								
∞ Is Adjacent to or near Existing Parks								
∞ Provides Linkages Between Destinations								
∞ Could Provide Increased and Enhanced Recreation Opportunities								
∞ Provides Locations for Parks in Currently Underserved Areas								
Work with Planning Dept to Develop Walkability Plan for Commerce Village Area								
Prepare New 5-Year Master Plan		X			General Fund			
					General Fund			

Costs are derived from a variety of sources and illustrate magnitude of costs for the purpose of conceptual level planning only. Detailed site specific surveys and design are needed to obtain more accurate estimates of construction. Costs do not include survey, design, construction documents, construction administration, inspection, etc.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Potential funding sources from outside entities for parks, recreation, and non-motorized projects change and evolve on a regular basis. Understanding available funding programs, their requirements and deadlines requires continuous monitoring. A few of the more common funding sources have been detailed here as a reference and resource. These are in addition to traditional funding methods such as the general fund, millages, bonds, Community Development Block Grants, DDA's, etc.

Transportation Enhancement Funds (MDOT)

Transportation Enhancements (TE) activities are federally funded, community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic and environmental aspects of the transportation infrastructure. To be eligible, a project must fall into one of the 12 TE activities and relate to surface transportation. Activities that relate to the implementation of this Master Plan include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles.
 - Includes new or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps, bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking, bus racks, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges and underpasses.
 - Paved shoulders four or more feet wide
 - Curb lane width greater than 12 feet
 - Bike lanes
 - Pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks
 - Shared use paths 10 feet wide or greater
 - Path/trail user amenities
 - Grade separations
 - Bicycle parking facilities
 - Bicycle accommodations on public transportation
 - Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists.
 - Programs designed to encourage walking and bicycling by providing potential users with education and safety instruction through classes, pamphlets and signage.
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian and bicycle trails).

- Acquiring railroad rights-of-way; planning, designing and constructing multi-use trails; developing rail-with-trail projects; purchasing unused railroad property for reuse.

A minimum 20% local match is required for proposed projects and applications are accepted on an on-going basis.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

The MNRTF provides funding for both the purchase of land (or interests in land) for recreation or protection of land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty and the appropriate development of land for public outdoor recreation use. Goals of the program are to: 1) protect Michigan's natural resources and provide for their access, public use and enjoyment; 2) provide public access to Michigan's water bodies, particularly the Great Lakes, and facilitate their recreation use; 3) meet regional, county and community needs for outdoor recreation opportunities; 4) improve the opportunities for outdoor recreation in Michigan's urban areas; and, 5) stimulate Michigan's economy through recreation-related tourism and community revitalization.

Any individual, group, organization, or unit of government may submit a land acquisition proposal. However, only state and local units of government can submit development proposals. All proposals for grants must include a local match of at least 25% of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum for acquisition projects. For development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$500,000. Applications are due in April and August for acquisition projects and April (only) for development projects.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a federal appropriation to the National Park Service who distributes funds to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for development of outdoor recreation facilities. The focus of the 2007 program was on trailway systems and other community recreation needs such as playgrounds, picnic areas, skate parks, ballfields, soccer fields and walking paths. Minimum grant requests were \$30,000 and maximum grant requests were \$75,000. The match percentage must be 50% of the total project cost. Applications are typically due in June or July.

Bikes Belong

The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Their mission is to put more people on bikes more often. The program funds projects in three categories:

- Facility
- Education
- Capacity Building

Requests for funding can be up to \$10,000 for projects such as bike paths, trails, lanes, parking, and transit, and safe routes to school. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis. More information can be found at www.bikesbelong.org.

Detroit Edison Tree Planting

The Detroit Edison Tree Planting program is conducted in partnership with the MDNR. The program began as DTE joined the US Department of Energy's voluntary Climate Challenge Program to address greenhouse gas emissions.

Cost-share funds are available to municipalities in Detroit Edison's service area on a competitive basis for tree planting projects. A total of up to \$4,000 may be granted to eligible tree planting projects on public and school property with a 50-50 local match. Applications are typically due in February.

Michigan Department of Environmental Quality : Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Grants - Clean Michigan Initiative and 319 Program

The mission of the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Nonpoint Source (NPS) Program is to: (1) proactively reduce and prevent nonpoint sources of pollution in order to provide for healthy and diverse aquatic ecosystems, protect public health, and enhance environmentally compatible recreation opportunities, (2) develop public recognition of the value of Michigan's lakes, streams, wetlands and groundwater, and (3) encourage stewardship of these resources.

The CMI and 319 programs are water quality grants offered by the Environmental Science and Services Division (ESSD) of the MDEQ utilizing funding from Section 319(h) of the federal Clean Water Act, and from the Clean Michigan Initiative Nonpoint

Source Pollution Control Grants and Clean Water Fund. Completed proposals for funding are typically due to the MDEQ in March. The programs cover three categories of project types:

1. Projects for the development of watershed management plans. Plans developed under this category must meet DEQ and United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) criteria on watershed management planning.
2. Projects implementing elements of approved watershed management plans which control nonpoint sources of pollution. Watershed plans must meet USEPA criteria and be previously approved under the Clean Michigan Initiative criteria.
3. Projects implementing water quality elements contained in plans developed under a Watershed-Based Municipal Storm Water Permit (Voluntary Storm Water Permit).

Safe Routes To School Program

The Safe Routes To School Program is a national movement to make it safe, convenient and fun for children to bicycle and walk to school. When routes are safe, walking or biking to and from school is an easy way to get the regular physical activity children need to succeed. In Michigan, the program is sponsored by the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and has gained momentum over the past few years. With the passage of the federal transportation legislation in 2005, Michigan's SR2S program will make schools eligible for transportation enhancement funds, providing for infrastructure improvements and education campaigns. The purpose of the program as defined in the federal legislation is:

1. To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
2. To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
3. To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

The program authorizes \$612 million over the 5 fiscal years beginning with 2005. The Michigan



Department of Transportation estimates that Michigan's total apportionment over the 5 years will be roughly \$19 million. Schools must be registered, attend a day long training session, and develop a Walking Audit in order to be eligible to apply. SR2S funding is 100 percent federal; no match is required. 70% of the funding must be used for infrastructure projects, 10% for non-infrastructure projects, and 20% for either. www.saferoutesmichigan.org



A

APPENDIX



Focus Group Meetings Summary
Public Workshop Summary
Opinion Survey Results

Commerce Township Focus Group Meetings
October 7, 2008
Ralph C. Richardson Center

MEETING NOTES

Commerce Township held several focus group meetings with various user groups and stakeholders to assist in identifying specific needs, desires, and concerns related to Recreation over the next 5 years. Input from the various focus group meetings is noted on the following pages.

3:00 p.m.

Township Staff

- Long Park – trails are eroding away; 5 yards of gravel place, but still eroding; approximately 8 – 10 feet in length
 - Trails need redone all together
 - Water levels fluctuate quite a bit
 - Hydrology is changing
 - Curb parking area all around
 - Parking lot needs to be expanded
 - Encroachment of phragmites
 - Lighting – security only
 - Improvements to entire 14 Mile frontage including landscaping
 - Kayaking, ice skating and fishing improvements
- Pet pick up stations at all parks
- Interlakes clean/supply restrooms at Maple Glen Park? Township owns portion of building and needs to stay maintained by Township
- More room for parking at Maple and Hickory Glen
- Maple Glen Park parking is a mess
- Concrete slabs for bleachers to reduce maintenance
- Generally need increased visibility at parks – remove brush – increase visibility from street
- Vandalism is high in parks
- Bicentennial
 - Resurface tennis courts and new nets – is there enough demand? Or maybe roller hockey?
 - Need new lighting – at least security at courts and pavilion
 - Replace outdated play equipment – smaller kids
 - Most people walk to this park
- Dodge Park
 - Garage doors are in bad shape – would like to store equipment or picnic tables in it but can't due to poor doors. And new roof – concrete block building – need access to building and small parking area.
 - Flag pole and light at new concession stand at Dodge Park.
- Lot at Gulf Manor that Township owns – only people that benefit are residents at Gulf Manor – maybe responsibility should be moved to Association. Used to be an old well site. Kids use it to cut through to school.
- Another lot off of S. Commerce Road and Polvadera Street – empty lot that is being maintained by Township

- Resurface and enlarge Richardson Center parking – weekends and rentals need larger parking area.
- Floating bridge at Hickory Glen – pull out and put in freestanding bridge - dangerous for bikers.
- Replace bridges at all parks – Mill Race (both in bad shape), Dodge Park, not covered
- Library has John Deere bat wing mower – owned by Oak Management. Has 11' cutting area. \$50k machine. Oak Management would sell for \$11k – would save a lot of time in mowing.
- Signage for all parks
- General aesthetics improvements to all parks
- Look at Haggerty and Maple Commerce Township sign – nice example with some up lighting.

4:00 p.m.

Township Staff and Seniors

- More bike paths are wanted throughout the Township particularly in NW area of Township. Commerce Road needs bike lanes/paved shoulder
- Fitness trails with stations for seniors – at Richardson Park
- Need to be able to afford improvements
- Funds all come out of general fund – no dedicated parks and recreation money
- Current millage isn't for operations and maintenance
- Possibly sell open lots and use money for parks and recreation improvements, abandoned well sites throughout, evaluate Township properties (remnants) and Parks Committee make recommendation for sale
- Clear low brush along main corridors at parks for appearance and safety – don't clear cut edges – preserve views
- S. Commerce Road undergrowth along bike path needs to be cleared to increase security feel
- Phragmites control and purple loosestrife
- More and more people are in the senior center and it's not big enough. Need more tables for card playing and could use a larger room – possibly use space at new Township Hall
- Sledding hill at treatment plant property is a good idea
- Potential option for old Township Hall – seniors? community use? Need to keep visibility at park and building. What's feasible to use due to condition?
- Currently a waiting list for senior lunches – more funds would be able to serve more.
- Possibly have meal drivers volunteer rather than paid? Tough due to gas prices. Maybe give \$10 gift cards for gas instead of pay. Might be more work to get volunteers together – coordination. Probably wouldn't be as successful of program if drivers weren't paid.

- Current code required 8' concrete paths along major roads, but no other roads. Possibly create a program where developer contributes to path fund and Township builds where priorities are.
- Township Trail Master Plan needs routes prioritized.
- Identify gaps in trails that are out there
- Public space at Commerce Commons? Can committee provide input into type of improvements? i.e., trails, etc. Let the Parks and Recreation Plan guide the DDA's ideas for Commerce Commons.
- Community gathering space would be nice at the Commerce Commons development.

6:00 p.m.

Athletic Leagues

- Interlakes Girls Softball – Commerce Little League – Maple Glen
 - Parking is terrible – cow path for cars – need to relocate parking, need separate ingress/egress into park
 - Cooperation with Twp is great
 - Maintenance, restrooms, toilets and sinks were never improved even though money was budgeted for it. Interlakes also does some maintenance and cleaning of the restroom.
 - Better lighting in the parking area.
 - Dust control in the parking area.
 - Weed killer under bleachers may work
 - Big issues with parking and people getting blocked in, needs to be better managed.
 - Replace aging play structure at Maple Glen
 - CLL is looking at extending fence at Henderson Field which would take up part of the informal parking area. Looking to make it 300' all around, but can't give up parking area.
 - CLL is looking into constructing restrooms and concessions
- CW3 Soccer – Richardson and Bicentennial
 - Goals at Richardson Center – aren't uniform – can't play a game at the field
 - 900 kids playing soccer – rent space from school district
 - No quality fields – rent all game space from schools
 - No practice space
 - Bicentennial is hard, dirty and dusty in August
 - Rent 8 fields per season – spring and fall – biggest portion of budget. School prices are going up. \$90/hour for use of school district fields; tryouts cost \$5,000 for two days.
 - Rented fields from Commerce Little League in the past while schools were working on fields
- Leagues contract to have fields inside of fences maintained. Anything outside of the fence is maintained by the Township.
- Lakes Athletic Association – Hickory Glen
 - Vandalism on Hickory Glen fields – 4 torched porta-johns \$10k insurance pay out for replacement
 - Need evening police presence at parks to help combat vandalism
 - Hickory Glen needs security lighting and improved visibility from Glengary Road.
 - Each league has a clean up day – use their help to clean low growth to improve visibility
 - Video surveillance? Video repeat system.
 - Baseball league pays to have Hickory Glen dust control

- Hickory Glen #2 – turn into 10-under field and move T-ball off-site
 - Wolverine Lake is now charging for field use at parks
 - Need more parking on Glengary side – will have trouble with residents
 - LAA is looking into building new concessions and restrooms
 - Not seeing leash law use – dogs run free in ball fields off leash
 - Township needs dog park
 - \$30k/year into fields on a yearly basis – loose money on tournaments –baseball has two tournaments
- For soccer have major scheduling issues at schools
 - If baseball field at Bicentennial is leveled off, it would make a good practice site. However, there is competition for the Bicentennial fields between baseball and soccer.
 - Soccer fields at Sara Banks – nets are cut every weekend
 - More trails needed throughout Township– connect to other things past Gilbert Willis where trail currently ends
 - Lacrosse and flag football are huge sports right now and schools are being overburdened
 - Need more of a police presence in all parks – better coordination with Oakland County Sheriff
 - Use County WAMS Program – can't run equipment but could help with brush removal

7:00 p.m.

User Groups

- Michigan Mountain Biking Association – Hickory Glen Park
 - Kiosk is now built – any user group can post to it
 - Need light at kiosk area for security
 - Bridge to get to unused area of Hickory Glen – big bridge and wetland crossings
 - New Proud Lake property – MMBA would like to use for hike/bike uses
 - Walled Lake school property near Hickory Glen – would like to include MMBA west of cell tower
 - ATV issues are down on Mountain Bike trails
 - Turn railroad right-of-way into trail
- Byers Homestead – Friends of Byers
 - Do a lot of maintenance and events. Were removed from property and haven't been as involved. Property has been left to rot in the past ten years – needs a lot of work. Particularly the buildings – structural and foundation issues.
 - County staff is doing a site visit this week and will be developing a plan for property usage, repairs, prioritizing what needs addressed, etc. First priority is to make sure buildings don't fall down. Friends group wants to give input and help where needed.
 - Parking has always been a problem.
 - Entrance to park needs to be improved.
 - Restoration of Byers building is priority.
 - Improved out house facilities instead of blue porta-john that is visible from the road. Possibly use a screening shelter for the porta-john.
 - ADA compliance for outside facilities – no running water on property.
 - Maybe incorporate a lean-to on duck barn building
 - Get water on property for gardens and drinking water
 - A well is in the area – can it be uncapped and used?

- Vision for Byers – no asphalt – just foot paths, maybe ice skating rink where June’s house was. No big buildings – use for museum – tours – pictures of historic Commerce Township
 - Educational opportunities at Byers property and Mill Race property
 - Needs to stay quaint and charming
 - Needs security lighting and activity
 - Byers can be focal point for eco-tourism area in the County
 - Walkability of Village area – needs to be improved – connect Village areas and connect to nearby properties, parks, hospitals, etc.
 - Pedestrian connection between Byers and Mill Race is needed.
 - OCC is working with Oakland County Parks on eco-tourism educational activities.
- Look for multiple uses as much as possible but avoid conflicting uses. Need cooperation of planning.
 - With property values low – open space and parks are essential for marketing.
 - Coordinate with Chamber and real estate vendors to improve accessibility
 - Make road crossings safer for pedestrians – improve access to lands, businesses, homes, etc.
 - Acquisition priority for Proud Lake property for parks and recreation use.
 - Partnerships with other units of government is essential.
 - Focus on how to use historic designation so small group of people don’t have to be the only ones – hope to partner with working groups – Byers needs maintenance schedule and budgeted funds for O & M
 - Too much money being spent on Dodge Park and can’t have money for other parks – concerned about financial stability of Township
 - Concerned with traffic patterns at Dodge Park and in/out of Dodge Park
 - Bike path on Commerce Rd is great
 - Update brochure of park facilities
 - Need dog parks in community
 - River erosion at Byers Park
 - Sheltered picnic areas are needed in Township
 - Outdoor ice rinks – Long Nature Park?
 - Increase awareness of parking at shopping center near Mill Race Park
 - Park next to Fire Station No. 2?
 - Need security and lighting at Dodge Park and Long Nature Park
 - Need improved signage and better impression of Long Nature Park