

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN FOR SAGINAW TOWNSHIP

Introduction

Saginaw Charter Township has a long standing and consistent commitment to providing recreation and recreational programming to its residents and the greater community. This plan is the culmination of months of effort by staff, the Recreation Commission and others in order to evaluate and study the characteristics of the Township and how these characteristics should be reflected and translated into recreation goals and objectives.

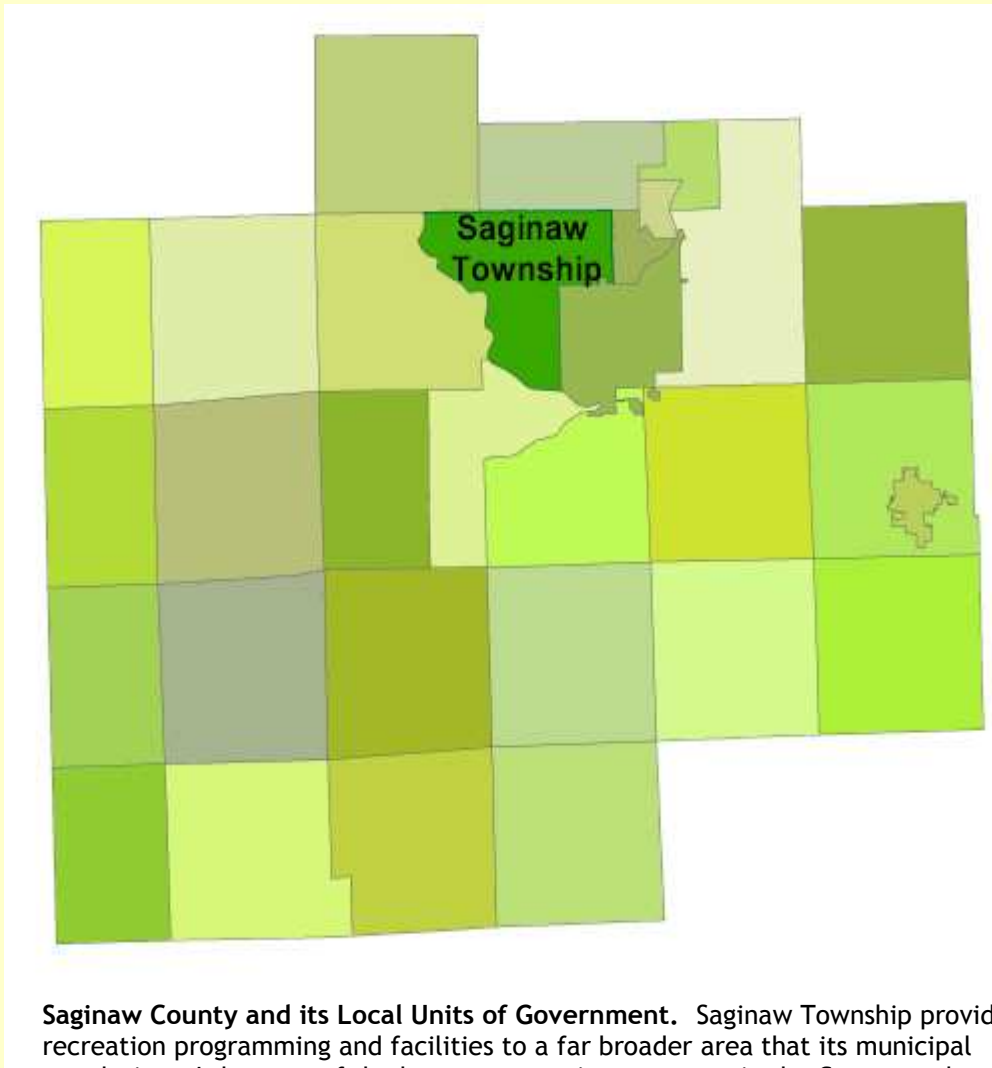
The Township has consistently maintained and updated its DNR approved Recreation Plan since 1974.

The Department of Natural Resources requires a community to have a completed and approved five year recreation plan on file in order to pursue State and certain federal grant assistance for recreation improvements. Saginaw Charter Township has consistently prepared a recreation plan since 1974. In 2001 the Township was awarded a grant from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for Center Courts.

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Community Description

Located in the northeast central section of Saginaw County, Saginaw Township is the seventh largest township in the State of Michigan. It is bordered to the north by Tittabawassee Township and Kochville Township, the City of Saginaw to the east and south, Thomas Township to the west and James Township to the south.



Saginaw County and its Local Units of Government. Saginaw Township provides recreation programming and facilities to a far broader area than its municipal population. It has one of the largest recreation programs in the County and regularly has participants from the City of Saginaw, Thomas and Tittabawassee Township and from as far away as Frankenmuth.

In terms of service area, Saginaw Charter Township routinely and without prejudice provides recreation programming to residents outside its defined municipal boundaries. When considering long term goals, maintenance and especially programming, the demand for quality

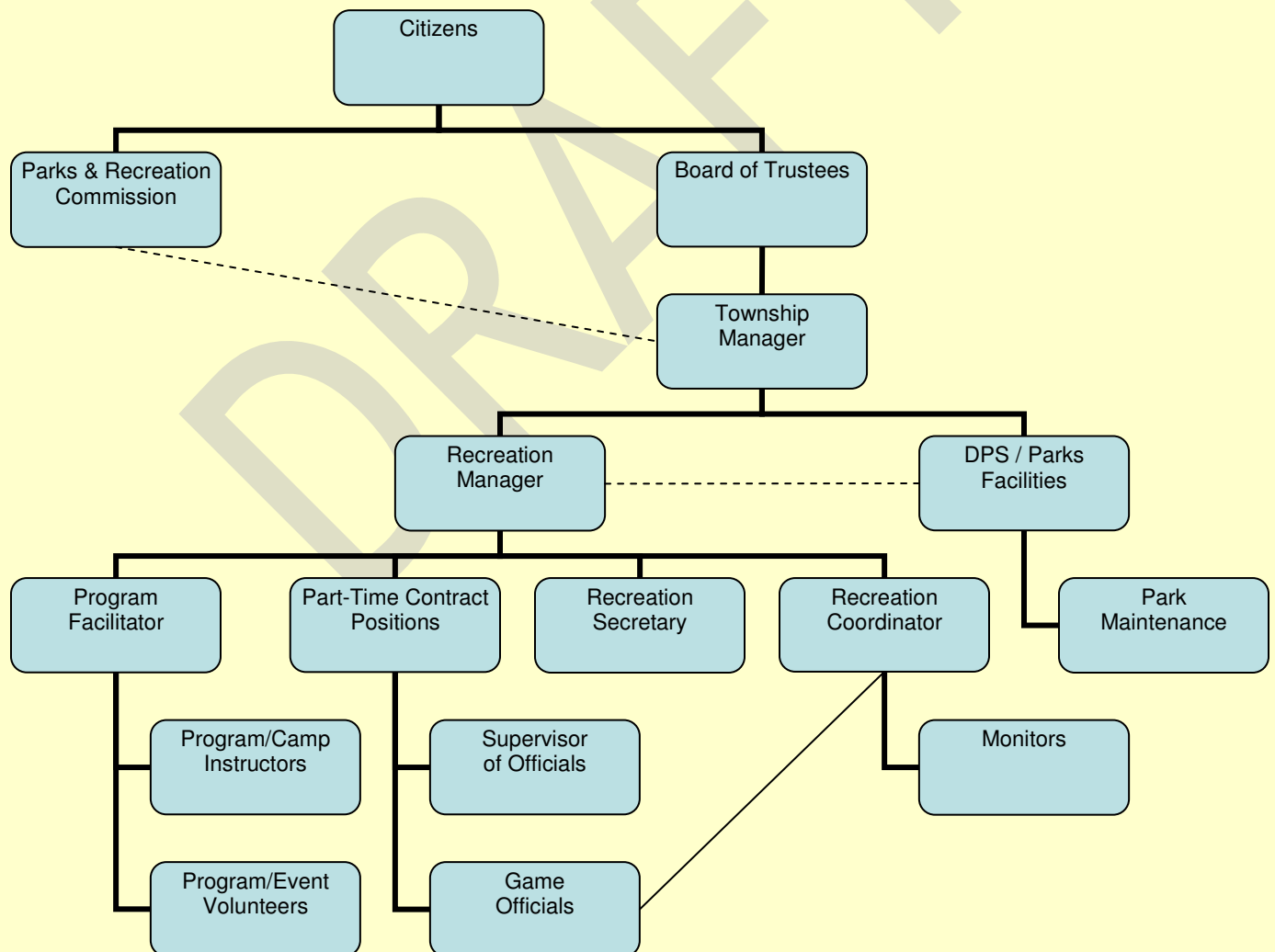
recreation programming from outside the Township itself is an important factor. In developing the plan, it has been important to note that Saginaw Charter Township provides de facto recreation services and facilities to a population greater than its residential population.

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Administrative Structure

Saginaw Charter Township Parks and Recreation is administered by a full-time Recreation Manager, one full-time secretary, a full-time coordinator, a part-time program facilitator, an umpire coordinator, seasonal assistance and volunteers as needed. With the increasing level of program participation and events the help of volunteers has proven to be beneficial to this organization. Volunteers have assisted the Recreation Department in providing additional services and improving the quality of life to its citizens.

The Parks and Recreation Commission was formed in 1962 pursuant to Act 156 of the Public Acts of 1917. This group was created to assist in the general administration and development of organized, useful parks and recreation programs.



The actual budget for 2010-2011 for Parks & Recreation totaled \$984,722. Of this budgeted amount, \$908,430 was allocated toward programming, salaries, supplies, and other miscellaneous expenses. A total of \$76,292 was budgeted for maintenance and repairs, including chemical applications for weeds, fence repairs, sign replacement and other similar activities. The recreation programming and activities are underwritten in part by the fees charged for registration but the bulk of the funding is through the Township's general fund.

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Parks and Recreation Inventory

Saginaw Charter Township's Parks and Recreation Inventory includes both private and public facilities. General information is provided in the charts on the following pages. The Township has jurisdiction over the following outdoor recreational facilities:

- George Olson Park
- North Little League
- South Little League
- Harvey Randall Wickes North
- Harvey Randall Wickes East
- Berberovich Park
- West Michigan Park
- Lathrup Park
- Can Amera Park
- Burkhaven Park
- Leonard Boers III Park
- Sandhill Park
- Briarwood Park
- Playscape
- Saginaw Charter Township Soccer Complex

The Township's indoor recreation center, Center Courts, provides year round recreational opportunities and programming and is the location of parks and recreation staff.

The charts on the following pages provide a description of the purpose and use of each park and the type and number of recreation and support facilities.

REGIONAL RECREATION

Saginaw County provides six county parks with a variety of recreational activities for residents and visitors. Price Nature Center and Ringwood Forest focus more on passive recreation and woodland activities with nature trails and hiking. Imerman Park and Haithco Recreation Area provide more active recreational activities such as ball diamonds, swimming, fishing, and tennis. The Saginaw Valley Rail Trail is a 10-mile vertical park that runs from St. Charles to Saginaw. Veterans Memorial Park is primarily used for its boat launch and fishing opportunities along the Saginaw River.

The Crow Island State Game Area encompasses 3,465 acres and includes portions of Saginaw and Bay counties along the lower Saginaw River in east-central Lower Michigan. A small part of this Department of Natural Resources Game Area lies within Buena Vista Township. The Crow Island State Game Area is presently a complex of wetlands, diked croplands and agricultural uplands that provide habitat for a wide variety of migratory birds, as well as associated invertebrate and mammalian wildlife. The area present provides public hunting, trapping and limited fishing opportunities and is capable of providing additional recreational opportunity.

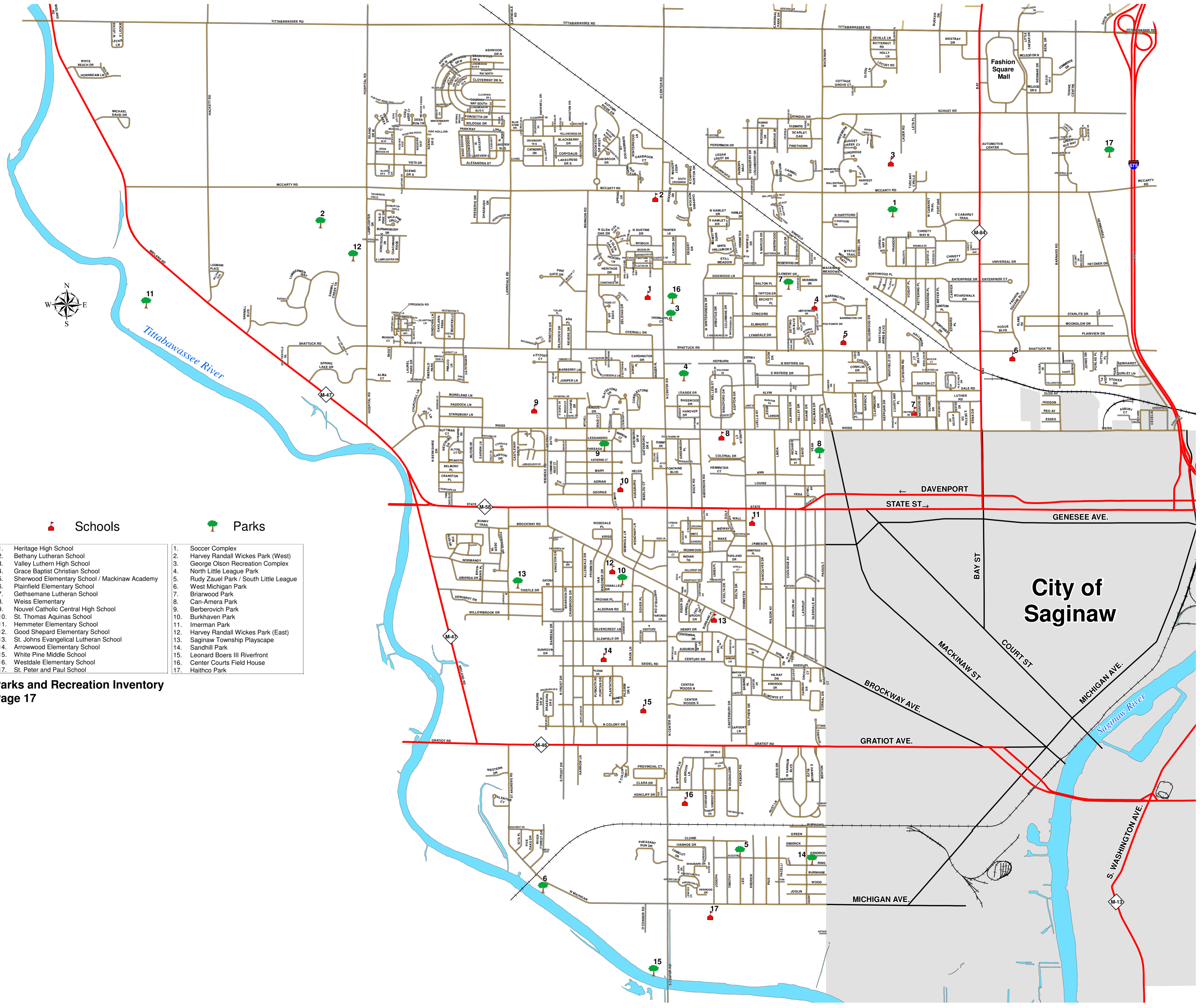
Saginaw County provides six county parks with a variety of recreational activities of the regional parks are within Saginaw Township

The Michigan State Park that is closest to Saginaw Charter Township is the Bay City State Recreation Area. It contains a 193-site campground, a nature center, swimming, fishing, hiking trails, and picnicking facilities.

OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES INVENTORY

PARKS	Symbol	Acreage	Ball Diamonds	Basketball	Football/Soccer	Tennis Courts	Picnic Area	Playground Equipment	Playfield (open)	Nature Trails	Waterfront Property	Shelter	Boat Launch	Restrooms	Classification	Comments
Saginaw Twp. Soccer Park	1	80.2													CP	
Harvey Randall Wickes West	2	68													CP	new pavilion, pond area, beach volleyball
George Olson Park	3	36													CP	new children's playground w/ fountain, shuffleboard courts, horseshoe pits
North Little League	4	12													CP	
South Little League	5	8.09													CP	
West Michigan Park	6	7.35													NP	new barrier free fishing pier
Briarwood Park	7	4.25													MP	horseshoe pit
Can Amera Park	8	8.98													NP	
Berberovich Park	9	3.1													NP	outdoor ice skating
Burkhaven Park	10	3.57													MP	
Harvey Randall Wickes West	12	68													CP	new pavilion, pond area, beach volleyball
Playscape	13	3													MP	mini shelters
Sandhill Park	14	2.4													MP	horseshoe pit
Leonard Boers III Park	15	18													CP	barrier free fishing pier
County Parks																
Imerman Park	11	101.6													RP	canoe launch/rental horseshoes
Haithco Recreation Complex	17	78.3													RP	lake access, swimming, horseshoes
Bark Park (Imerman Park)	11	0.46													RP	dog park with obstacle course
Public Schools																
Arrowwood School		18.7														outdoor ice skating
Hemmeter School		7														outdoor ice skating
Heritage High School		55														
Plainfield School		20														
Sherwood School		23.2														
Weiss School		20														
Westdale School		20.8														
White Pine Middle School		62.7														
Golf Courses																

PARKS	Symbol	Acreage	Ball Diamonds	Basketball	Football/Soccer	Tennis Courts	Picnic Area	Playground Equipment	Playfield (open)	Nature Trails	Waterfront Property	Shelter	Boat Launch	Restrooms	Classification	Comments
Golf Courses																
Sawmill Golf Course																18 hole golf course
Saginaw County Club																18 hole private golf course, pool
Pleasant View Golf Club																9 hole golf course
Regional Recreation																
Shiawassee Natl. Wildlife Refuge		9,293													RPR	wildlife viewing
Price Nature Center		186													RP	
Shiawassee State Game Area																
Ringwood Forest		160													RP	
Apple Mountain																local downhill skiing
Bay City State Park															RP	Saginaw Bay frontage, camping
Indoor Recreation																
Center Courts		n/a													RPR	indoor track, courts, locker rooms, etc.



Schools

Parks

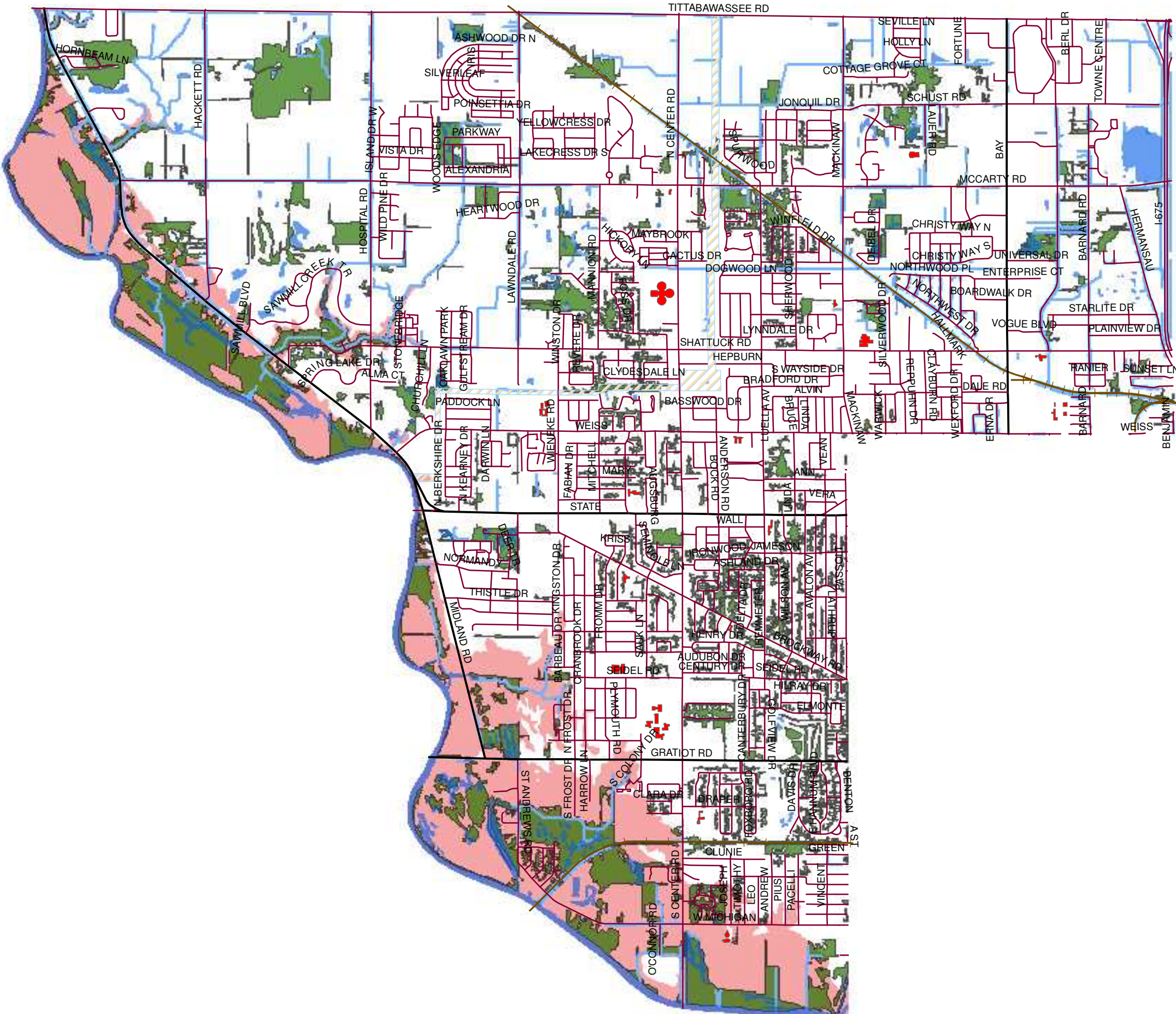
1. Heritage High School
2. Bethany Lutheran School
3. Valley Lutheran High School
4. Grace Baptist Christian School
5. Sherwood Elementary School / Mackinaw Academy
6. Plainfield Elementary School
7. Gethsemane Lutheran School
8. Weiss Elementary
9. Nouvel Catholic Central High School
10. St. Thomas Aquinas School
11. Hemmeter Elementary School
12. Good Shepard Elementary School
13. St. Johns Evangelical Lutheran School
14. Arrowwood Elementary School
15. White Pine Middle School
16. Westdale Elementary School
17. St. Peter and Paul School

1. Soccer Complex
2. Harvey Randall Wickes Park (West)
3. George Olson Recreation Complex
4. North Little League Park
5. Rudy Zauel Park / South Little League
6. West Michigan Park
7. Briarwood Park
8. Can-Amera Park
9. Berberovich Park
10. Burkhaven Park
11. Imerman Park
12. Harvey Randall Wickes Park (East)
13. Saginaw Township Playscape
14. Sandhill Park
15. Leonard Boers III Riverfront
16. Center Courts Field House
17. Haithco Park

City of Saginaw

Accessibility
The Township's pa

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Legend

-  Utility Corridors
-  Rail Road
-  Schools
-  Hydrography
-  Drains
-  Woodlots
-  100 Year Flood Plain

Resource Inventory Map

Description of the Planning Process

This plan was updated based on a variety of public input platforms. Input was obtained from the public through surveys, program evaluations, Recreation Commission Meetings and input from the Township Board of Trustees. In addition, the Township Manager has been instrumental in the process of building, working and revising the plan as each suggestion and idea was received. In summary, the following methods were utilized to solicit public input and assess park and recreation needs for the Recreation Planning Process:

Comparison to Recreation Standards

In general, the Township rates well compared to the MDNR suggested facility development standards with regard to the more popular uses in the Community (basketball, baseball, soccer, tennis and volleyball). In some cases, a more qualitative assessment is utilized for determining whether the Township has a deficiency. For instance, when assessing playgrounds, we include school facilities because the courts are generally accessible to the public, when not in use by the school. In some situations, while the Township meets the standard, the desire, due to the sport's popularity, requires an increase so it is accessible to residents on a neighborhood level.

PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM AND COMPARISON TO STANDARDS

A recreation inventory is the foundation for developing an action program. An inventory provides a snapshot of all the available facilities within a community along with detail about the types of activities and features. The following classification system is adapted from the national Recreation and Parks Association guide. It recognizes types of parks abased on size, service area, facilities and use groups. Furthermore, it lists definitions and sets standards for the various park levels established for use in this plan. These standards are based on nationally accepted criteria. These standards are based upon recommended acreage per 1,000 residents. Each park is classified as a mini park, a neighborhood park or a community park.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Saginaw Charter Township</i>	<i>Deficiency</i>
Mini Parks	.25 to .50/1000	10.25	-
Neighborhood Parks	1.5/1000	22.5	3.5
Community Parks	6.5/1000	222	38

Based on 2010 population estimate of 40,811.

Classification system based on recommendations from the National Recreation and Parks Association.

All standards and deficiencies are described in terms of acres.

MINI PARKS

Parks in this classification are typically specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as small children or senior citizens. The service area is a one-quarter mile radius or less; the park size is an acre or less.

Mini parks are ideally located within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouses or housing for the elderly. The standard acreage for mini parks is .25 to .50 acres per 1,000 populations. In Saginaw Charter Township there are three identified mini parks – Briarwood, Sandhill and Burkhaven Parks. These three parks are larger than the one acre or less national standard but their service area and function is the same as a mini park. Using national criteria as a guide, the Township should have approximately .25 acres of mini park land for every 1,000 residents or 10 acres. The Township currently has 10.25 acres designated for use as mini parks. Though the acreage exceeds the national standards, the Township should continue to pursue the need for additional mini parks as the population grows and shifts and as new housing development is located further away from existing mini-park and neighborhood park space. The lack of mini-parks has the potential to impact three special population groups: senior citizens, low-to-moderate income households, and apartment dwellers. Quality of life for each of these groups is improved when they have nearby access to open space and mini-parks.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Parks in this classification are normally suited for more intense development. That is, they are designed for more intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground equipment, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.

Neighborhood parks are easily accessible to neighborhood populations and geographically centered within safe walking distance and bike access. Typically neighborhood parks are 15 or more acres in size and can easily service a population of approximately 5,000 residents. National standards recommend 1.5 acres of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents. Saginaw Charter Township provides 22.5 acres of neighborhood park spaces, which is consistent with national standards. As the Township grows, it is important to plan additional park facilities and ensure that they not only provide the necessary neighborhood park space but that the park space is found in conjunction with developing residential areas.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Parks in this classification serve several neighborhoods and usually serve a broad range of uses. The typical park size is 25 acres or more. In the Township several parks classified as community parks are smaller than the nationally recognized standard of 25 acres, however they are included because of the broad population base they serve and their intense use.

The majority of parks within Saginaw Charter Township, a total of just more than 222 acres, are classified as community parks. The national classification system recommends 6.5 acres per 1,000 residents or in terms of the Township's population, 260 acres of park land. When compared to national standards, it appears that Saginaw Charter Township may be deficient in terms of community parks. This apparent deficiency though needs to be balanced in view of all the parks, other public facilities and the demonstrated needs and wants of the community.

REGIONAL PARKS

Regional parks are typically classified as serving several communities and being large in size, typically 200 acres or more. Saginaw County Parks and Recreation provides the regional parks identified in the Township's park inventory. Though smaller than 200 acres, these regional parks provide the variety and intensity of outdoor recreational activities and draw from a regional population just as orthodox regional parks.

SYSTEM APPROACH TO PLANNING

This planning approach, as reviewed on page 9 of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management Booklet, suggests that there be an incorporation of information gained from surveys, meetings and detailed recreation inventories. There have been several monthly Recreation Commission meetings (posted and open to the public) that noted points of interest of residents who attended and spoke their view and opinion. In developing the plan, it has been important to note that Saginaw Charter Township provides de facto recreation services and facilities to a population greater than its residential population. Due to that fact, it is important to consider this broader need in terms of demand and not just classification standards for park land per 1,000 residents. Of importance, especially during the past five years, has been the substantial development of the Township's pathway system.

As a significant portion of the Township's population gets older, making parks universally accessible becomes critical.

During the past five years the Township constructed its initial mile of pathway behind Center Courts (one mile), constructed a pedestrian bridge and a quarter mile pathway system along South Center Road to connect to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail and secured a grant to construct an additional two miles of pathway north from McCarty Road to Tittabawassee Road. This commitment to consistent and comprehensive planning for pedestrian connections has been identified to continue through the desires of the Recreation Commission, elected Township officials and opinions reflected in the submitted surveys.

The Township has committed to taking a steady and consistent approach to developing parks facilities and programming that provides life long recreation. A prime example of this is the development of the disc golf course at Wickes Park. This activity is attractive to both seniors and younger people.

Other discussed and identified activities include continued upgrades to existing parks facilities, especially improvements focused on improved safety (especially play equipment) and accessibility; adapting existing programs to continually changing needs; and meeting new and evolving trends both in terms of space, capital improvements and programs. Specifically identified improvements included pathways or trails; lacrosse; programs geared toward teens; and specific programs geared toward seniors.

Public Input Process

SURVEY RESULTS

In early 2012, the Parks and Recreation Department developed a survey to gauge the needs and desires of those residents and community members using recreation facilities in the Township. Distribution of the survey was handled in two ways. First, residents and others were able to self select to complete the survey. Surveys were made available at the Township Hall and at the Township's indoor recreation facility, Center Courts. An additional set of surveys were mailed to a randomly generated sample of five percent of the Township's households. A total of 575 surveys were mailed and 200 were returned, resulting in a 34.7% return rate. Residents and others were also able to complete the survey at Township Hall or at Center Courts. These two distribution methods were chosen in order to attempt to reach the broadest cross section in terms of age and use of the different township facilities.

Respondents returning mailed surveys were typically 50 years and older, which is not surprising, given that the median age in the township is 42.4 as of 2010. When respondents rated the parks and recreation facilities in the Township, the average rating was between very good and good (calculated at 2.47 with 2 being very good and 3 being good). No respondents rated the parks and recreation facilities as poor. The most often selected answer was "very good."

A number of questions requested respondents opinions regarding need for additional programming geared toward families, arts and humanities and personal development. Respondents most often identified a need for family nutrition classes and CPR/first aid classes.

When asked if there was a need for after school programs and activities, 62.3% of respondents said yes. Respondents were asked to rank potential projects and investments. The potential projects and improvements identified were:

- Winter recreation opportunities like sledding, etc.
- Additional services and facilities offered at Center Courts
- Expanded Picnic Area/Gazebo for Special Family Events
- Upgrading/adding playground equipment within the parks
- Updating tennis courts with the potential for offering programs for children

- Additional entertainment/cultural opportunities such as jazz/classical concerts

The most often identified projects that respondents selected as “high priority” were winter recreation opportunities, expanded services and facilities at Center Courts and additional entertainment and cultural opportunities. The remaining projects, which focus on improving existing parks and renovations, were rated solidly in the middle with each selection earning on average, a “3” or “4” in terms of priority.

The survey also sought to determine respondents opinions regarding the potential to expand facilities and services at Center Courts with such things as fitness equipment and specialized workout facilities if there were a membership fee. The survey did detail that existing services as the walking track will remain cost free to Township residents. A total of 64.9% of respondents said that they would join and pay a membership fee if those additional facilities and services were provided.

Respondents were also asked if they would approve of a public private partnership developed between organizations in our community to improve recreational offerings. A total of 74.76% said they would approve, 9.71% said they would disapprove and the remaining 15.53% remarked that they either were unsure of the impact or had no opinion.

Survey respondents also had the opportunity to review and rank potential park improvements. The respondents selected the following, in order of top priority:

- Construction of a nonmotorized/multiuse trail or pathway
- Upgrading or adding new playground equipment in existing parks
- Expanding picnic areas and/or gazebos for family and special events

Respondents also had the opportunity to identify age groups in need of additional programming. Seniors, those 55 years and older, were those most often mentioned for additional programming, followed by teen (11 through 17) and toddlers (1 to 5 years). Specific programs mentioned ranged from specific time requests for existing programs (such as afternoon yoga) to younger youth basketball.

Fee Based Membership

As with other communities throughout Michigan and throughout the US, the state of the economy in the past several years has led to reduced budgets and higher costs for certain items like utilities. During the past year, the Township has begun investigating the impact and potential success of offering a fee based membership program for Center Courts. While there does appear to be a potential interest from the survey respondents to a membership fee based center, it would require additional investment to make a membership attractive, such as fitness equipment and additional facilities. During discussions many staff and township officials commented that while a fee based membership will provide an influx of dollars to offset costs associated with Center Courts, there would need to be an investment made in terms of the space, equipment and overall facilities at Center Courts so that there would be added value to a membership. **Talk about responses from survey**

Partnerships

Public review

On January 20, 2012 a notice of plan availability was released to the press and posted at Township Hall and Center Courts. The plan was also available on the Township's website.

During the 30 days published comment **AWAITING COMMENTS.**

Public Meeting

A public hearing was held on February 21, 2012 at Center Courts. The minutes of the meeting are included within the appendix. A brief review of the plan and planning process was given. Awaiting Public Hearing. On February 27, 2012, the Saginaw Township Board of Trustees reviewed the plan. Resolutions of adoption (if approved) will be included.

Goals and Objectives

This chapter describes the goals and objectives of the five-year recreation plan. Three main sources were used to formulate goals and objectives – the results of the public input process, a comparison of Saginaw Charter Township’s facilities with published community standards, and the observations of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

RECREATION DEFICIENCIES

Township residents are fortunate in that they have a wealth of outdoor and indoor facilities for parks recreation and leisure. As the recreation inventory details, the Township has 16 public parks including Center Courts, the indoor recreation center.

The Township offers many opportunities for recreation and leisure through its facilities and programming. The Parks and Recreation Commission along with input from Township staff, elected officials and the public provided strong insight into what the Township’s residents considered deficient in terms of parks and recreation facilities and services. These comments and recommendations, combined with the infrastructure project list, established a strong framework from which the Parks and Recreation Department administrative staff was able to develop the five-year action plan.

In assessing the deficiencies of Saginaw Charter Township, an evaluation of existing programs and facilities combined with public input was considered the most efficient way of determining need. Programming for the Township park facilities is extensive with activities for youth and adults with varying levels of skill development. Analysis of public input received revealed many requests for improved programming including more basketball, volleyball and baseball for women and seniors. Overwhelmingly, the issue of maintaining and improving existing infrastructure was a recurrent theme. Additionally important is the fact that the Township is in essence a regional recreation provider in terms of programs and organized activities. The demand for programming and facility needs has been recognized to be far greater than would typically be expected for a community of this population.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION OBSERVATIONS

The Parks and Recreation Commission has identified the following facilities as being needed – either through directly observing over-use,

by input from Township residents, or by their expert knowledge of the community's needs.

Invest in Improving Existing High Use Facilities: Saginaw Charter Township has a long history of high quality recreation programming and recreation facilities. Many of the Township's facilities are aging and approaching or have passed, their expected life cycle. Detailed maintenance and repairs have prolonged the life of many of the Township's facilities beyond the typically expected 20 years. Facilities receiving high use, such as the tennis courts, are in need of substantial renovations. A prime example of how the Township's diligence and high standards for maintenance have prolonged the usefulness of the parks system is Olson Park. The Park was granted two DNR recreation grants in 1975 and 1977. The grants used to originally improve the park are over 35 years old. The facilities themselves are in decent condition but trends and needs, such as universal design, have changed the way in which parks are used and perceived. Additionally,

Pathways: Dozens of respondents to the mailed survey identified pathways and trails as a desired amenity. During the course of the past several years the Township has worked to improve connectivity between parks and residential areas as well as making connections to pedestrian destinations like the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail and Center Courts. In 2012, a pathway will be constructed from McCarty Road north to Tittabawassee Road, to connect with Kochville Township. Additionally paved pathways to and from activity areas within existing parks are important and needed, and will only increase in importance as the Township's population continues to age.

Play Equipment: Much of the existing play equipment in the Township is outdated. As part of an effort to improve safety and accessibility at the Township's existing playgrounds, old and sometimes dangerous equipment has been removed. Oftentimes though, the dollars have not been available to replace this outdated equipment with safe new equipment leaving a void.

Outdoor Inline Skating / Ice Skating: There are currently no public facilities in the area especially set up for outdoor inline skating. Many requests have been received for a skating area which could be used seasonally for both inline skating and roller hockey and ice skating and ice hockey. A safe and well designed facility would no doubt receive extensive use.

Expanding Trends: The Commission and others in the community have taken an interest in Lacrosse. Though currently there is not a large demand for lacrosse, there has been interest from local residents as well as local service providers, such as the Saginaw Township Soccer Association. Trends such as this will be monitored with the opportunity for programs and/or facilities if there is an identified demand.

Mission

The Saginaw Charter Township Parks and Recreation Commission has identified the following as key to the development of parks and recreation in the Township:

- To provide safe and healthy recreational opportunities to meet the diverse interests and needs of Township residents.
- To develop and provide recreational programs and facilities for Saginaw Township residents based on desire.

Goals and Objectives

In order to accomplish this mission, the following goals have been developed. These goals are based on feedback from Township residents, from the results of the recreation survey, from observed deficiencies, and from comparisons with existing standards. The goals themselves are stated in broad terms and then discussed more fully in terms of objectives, tasks and actual implementation.

1 . General Improvements to Saginaw Township's Existing Parks.

The existing Township Parks are heavily used and in constant need of improvements. Recommended improvements during the next five years include: renovations and expansion of the tennis courts, modernized play equipment, improved accessibility for persons with disabilities, and other general improvements to the buildings and grounds of the parks. The Township as a whole is substantially built out in terms of patterns of residential and commercial development. Much of the Township's growth occurred in the past 50 years. At the same time as housing was booming, so was dedication of township park land and improvements. As parks and equipment age beyond 30, 40 even 50 years, it is necessary to thoroughly review how the park facilities are being used and examine any changing trends. The Township tennis courts for example have consistently received heavy use from teens and older residents. However during the past two years, programming has

focused on encouraging young children. During 2011, a total of 172 children between the ages of three and 17 participated in tennis programming. The volume of children for programmed tennis is higher than any year in memory. This is an opportunity for the Township to provide programming and facilities for all age levels. Tennis is a sport that can be played across a lifetime and facilities can be designed to be accessible. The location of the tennis courts at the hub of the Township's governmental center make it even more attractive for ongoing use throughout the day and night.

2 . Continued Development of Nonmotorized Pathways. The Township completed construction of it's first mile of pathway in 2007. Ongoing implementation of a system of nonmotorized pathways will require joint coordination between the Township Parks and Recreation Department and the Department of Community Development. This entire project will take multiple years to complete and as use expands and demand grows, future links and phases will most likely grow as well. Specific interest has been shown on the north-south utility corridor which would help to connect Saginaw Charter Township to Kochville Township to the north and to the Saginaw Valley Rail Trail to the south. As the Township begins to age, connectivity and pathways as actual alternative forms of transportation will become more important, as well connectivity between and among parks and activity areas within parks.

3. Continued adaptation and good service to the users of the parks system and the recreation programs. During the past five years, local trends relative to recreation services have changed dramatically with the addition of the Freeland Sports Zone. Five or ten years ago, many Township residents would not have expressed an interest in a membership based facility or the potential to partner with other organizations to provide expanded recreation services. Today however, the changing landscape of parks and recreation make the potential for partnering with other like minded organizations and potentially expanding services so much so that a fee based membership becomes realistic, are potential items to consider. Any partnership at a minimum should be mutually beneficial, provide a tangible cost savings and return on investment, and meet the needs and standards of the Township and its residents.

4. Continuous consideration of land acquisition for potential park facilities. As the Township continues to grow, so will the need for open space and recreational opportunities. Properties to be considered should be consistent with the Township Recreation and Open Space

Plan, as well as the Township's Future Land Use Plan. Purchase of land, purchase of easements or acceptance of land donations should all be given consideration. Priority should be given to potential park sites which contain one or more of the following: water access; significant natural features such as woodlands, wetlands or habitat for rare species; links or corridors for trail development; suitable areas for active recreation; and sites which provide opportunities for underserved populations.

5 . Provide unlimited recreational opportunities for the people of Saginaw Charter Township based on citizen interest. The Parks and Recreation Commission is dedicated to expanding existing programs to accommodate all who want to participate. The results of the citizen survey showed that there is a strong desire for programs which are aimed at specific ages and profiles: teen programs, family programs, senior programs and children programs all scored very high. The Township should constantly try to develop new programs to meet these needs. Substantial growth occurred in the Township between 1970 and 1980, growing by more 11,000 residents. As the population has increased, the population has also changed in terms of density, distribution and age. The median age of the Township's residents in 1970 was 28 years old. In 1980 the median age was 31.3, in 1990 it was 37.5, and in 2000 the population had a median age of 42.3. The Township is aging and is now second only to Frankenmuth in terms of the highest median age in Saginaw County. The fact that the median age of the township is higher than that of the county and is continuing to age is a significant factor to consider in terms of recreation improvements and programming. With such a divergent group of park users in the Township, it is a goal of the Township to provide lifelong recreational opportunities. New improvements like the disc golf course that is currently under construction help diverse user groups – from middle school children to young adult to seniors, play and participate in the same sport.

6. Encourage the dedication of park land in new residential developments. Although the evaluation of the Township's recreational resources did not find a deficiency when comparing existing neighborhood park acreage to generally accepted standards, it is clear when evaluating the inventory map that almost all neighborhood parks are within older neighborhoods, and that newer subdivisions generally do not provide parks. It is recommended that the Township encourage subdivision and condominium projects to provide dedicated park land, open space, trails and/or sidewalks as an integral part of the

development. In addition, the Township could work with developers to encourage innovative land development practices, such as planned unit developments, open space developments and conservation subdivisions which could provide parkland, open space and the preservation of natural areas in exchange for density bonuses or other considerations.

Consistent Capital Improvements Planning

In order to consistently work toward long term implementation of these goals and the action plan contained on the following pages, the Parks and Recreation Commission will, in the winter of each year, establish key items to pursue within the next fiscal year. With the assistance of the Director of the Department of Public Services and the Recreation Manager, the Parks and Recreation Commission will work to review its action plan, including new items that may become apparent and needed as the implementation of the Recreation Plan continues. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Township staff will work to adjust the action plan through the yearly prioritization of tentative expenditures. These expenditures will include their relationship to goals and action items included in this plan and review any other necessary improvements that may need to take place in terms of programming, capital improvements or changes in maintenance, etc. A sample form for this purpose is included in the appendix.

Action Program

This section of the plan is intended to detail how the Township plans on meeting and working toward the goal and objectives detailed on the previous pages during the course of the next five years.

Goal	General Improvements to Saginaw Township's Existing Parks		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Replace outdated/unsafe playground equipment at neighborhood parks	\$30,000	Donations General Fund
	Renovate tennis courts at Olson Park	\$350,000	Donations, General Fund, Grants
	Develop conceptual plan for passive development of land adjacent to Center Courts, specifically including winter recreation	\$4,000	General Fund
Goal	Continue Developing a Network of Nonmotorized Pathways		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Work with neighborhoods to develop connections between their areas and the existing pathways	\$50,000 (varies)	Grants Force Account Labor General Fund
	Work with Pathway Committee to prioritize paved connections to park facilities	Varies	General Fund, Grants
	Identify and implement the best way finding system to connect the Township's neighborhoods and park systems to the system of pathways	\$15,000	General Fund Grants Donations
Goal	Continued adaptation and good service to the users of the parks system and the recreation programs.		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Investigate partnership and collaboration with other agencies to provide quality programming and facilities	unknown	General Fund, Donations

	Determine feasibility and difficulties with pursuing improvements at Center Courts which would make membership structure feasible	\$5000	General Fund
	Upgrade park facilities to meet barrier free requirements. Budget annually for improvements.	Ongoing, average \$15,000 per park	General Fund Grants Force-Account Labor
	Launch a pilot program for Lacrosse in conjunction with the Saginaw Township Soccer Association.	Unknown	General Fund Soccer Association
Goal	Continuous consideration of land acquisition for potential park facilities.		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Consistently investigate opportunities to purchase property adjacent to existing township facilities and parks.	Unknown	General Fund Grants Donations
	Work to identify potential property for acquisition, especially in the northwest portion of the Township.	Unknown	General Fund
Goal	Provide unlimited recreational opportunities for the people of Saginaw Charter Township based on citizen interest.		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Determine feasibility and associated costs and difficulties with pursuing improvements at Center Courts which would make membership structure feasible	\$5000	General Fund
	Look for opportunities to collaborate with other agencies, specifically in terms of ways to provide arts and cultural activities	Unknown	Fees General Fund
Goal	Encourage the dedication of park land in new residential developments.		
	Task	Probable Cost	Funding Source
	Work to identify potential property for acquisition, especially in the northwest portion of the Township.	Minimal	General Fund

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