



City of Rochester Hills

Parks & Recreation Plan

2023-2027



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Entrance to Innovation Hills playground



1. Community Profile

Introduction

The City of Rochester Hills, located in southeast Michigan in Oakland County, is a growing community with a wealth of recreation resources. A population's recreational needs can vary depending on age, ability, and socio-economic status, therefore it is critical to understand the demographic composition of Rochester Hills in the planning process. Without up-to-date data on demographic trends and associated shifts in preferences, park and recreation planning can fall behind, and as a result, not serve its community to the best of its ability. The demographic information in this chapter was sourced from the following locations, in this preferred order:

2020, 2010, 2000, and 1990 US Decennial Censuses

The decennial censuses are the most accurate source of demographic information in the United States. Mandated by the United States Constitution, the aim of the decennial census is to count 100% of the US population. Because the decennial census has been operating since 1790, it offers a valuable reference point to illustrate how populations have changed over time. Information collected in the most recent counts includes information about age, sex, race, the relationship between household members, and household tenure.

American Community Survey

The American Community Survey (ACS) replaced the "long-form" Census questions beginning in 2000, collecting the same types of information about social, economic, and housing conditions on a continual basis. The ACS is a sample; a random selection of households are sent the ACS every year and the Census Bureau uses the responses to create estimates for the rest of the population. Because the ACS is a sample, smaller communities require multiple years of sampling to create accurate estimates. Because Rochester Hills has a population of over 76,000, one-year ACS are estimates available; however, several of the comparison communities have populations that are under the threshold for one-year ACS estimates. For consistency purposes, all ACS estimates are five-year estimates.

ESRI Business Analyst

Business Analyst is proprietary software that presents privately generated market research data.

In addition, it estimates Census and ACS data for geographic configurations other than Census-defined tracts, blocks, and places.

Population

Similar to many other communities in the region, Rochester Hills has experienced population growth since 1990. In 2020, the decennial census counted 76,300 people living in Rochester Hills, a 7.5% increase from 2010 counts and a 24% increase from 1990.¹ In the past 30 years, Rochester Hills grew the fastest between 1990 and 2000 (11.4%). Between 2000 and 2010 growth remained positive (3.2%) but was significantly slower than the prior decade. The slowed growth may be partially attributed to the Great Recession of 2008 which hamstrung housing construction and mobility trends. Between 2010 and 2020, growth increased (7.5%) but did not return to the level witnessed at the turn of the 21st century.

The growth in Rochester Hills, from 1990 to 2020, outpaced the growth of Oakland County, indicating that Rochester Hills is one of the more attractive communities in the county. Of the comparable communities, which were selected due to their similar population size and location in Oakland County, only the City of Novi's growth outpaced that of Rochester Hills. The neighboring communities were selected to evaluate growth at an even more local level. Sharing a border with Rochester Hills, the growth or decline of these communities may have a greater impact on Rochester Hills population. All of the neighboring communities have seen substantial growth since 1990, a further indication of the attractiveness of the area.

Population Density

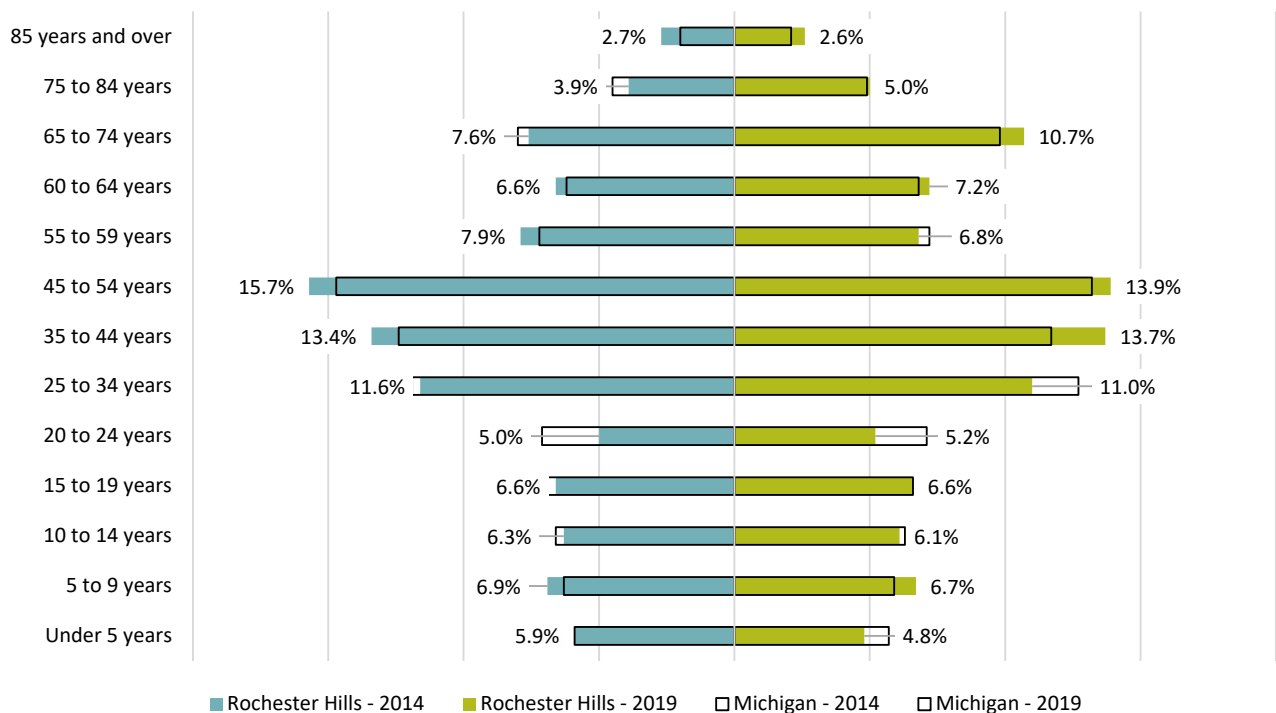
As a predominately suburban community, Rochester Hills does not have a defined core, which tends to be the densest area of a community. Therefore, population density in Rochester Hills is a function of neighborhood structure. As the map titled "Population Density" shows, the areas of Rochester Hills with more grid like street networks have higher population densities between 5 and 17 people per acre whereas the subdivision development with curvilinear street networks have lower densities below 5 people per acre. Areas with greater density are opportune for park development because of the comparative number of people they can serve.

Table 01: Population Change

Community	1990	2000		2010		2020	
	Count	Count	Change	Count	Change	Count	Change
Rochester Hills	61,766	68,825	11.4%	70,995	3.2%	76,300	7.5%
Oakland County	1,083,592	1,194,156	10.2%	1,202,362	0.7%	1,274,395	6.0%
Michigan	9,295,297	9,938,444	6.9%	9,883,640	-0.6%	10,077,331	2.0%
Comparable Communities							
Farmington Hills	74,652	82,111	10.0%	79,740	-2.9%	83,986	5.3%
Novi	32,998	47,386	43.6%	55,224	16.5%	66,243	20.0%
West Bloomfield Twp	54,516	64,860	19.0%	64,690	-0.3%	65,888	1.9%
Troy	72,884	80,959	11.1%	80,980	0.0%	87,294	7.8%
Neighboring Communities							
Auburn Hills	17,076	19,837	16.2%	21,412	7.9%	24,360	13.8%
Orion Twp	24,076	33,463	39.0%	35,394	5.8%	38,206	7.9%
City of Rochester	7,130	10,467	46.8%	12,711	21.4%	13,035	2.6%
Shelby Twp	48,655	65,159	33.9%	73,804	13.3%	79,408	7.6%
Sterling Heights	117,810	124,471	5.7%	129,699	4.2%	134,346	3.6%
Bloomfield Twp	42,473	43,023	1.3%	41,070	-4.5%	44,253	7.8%

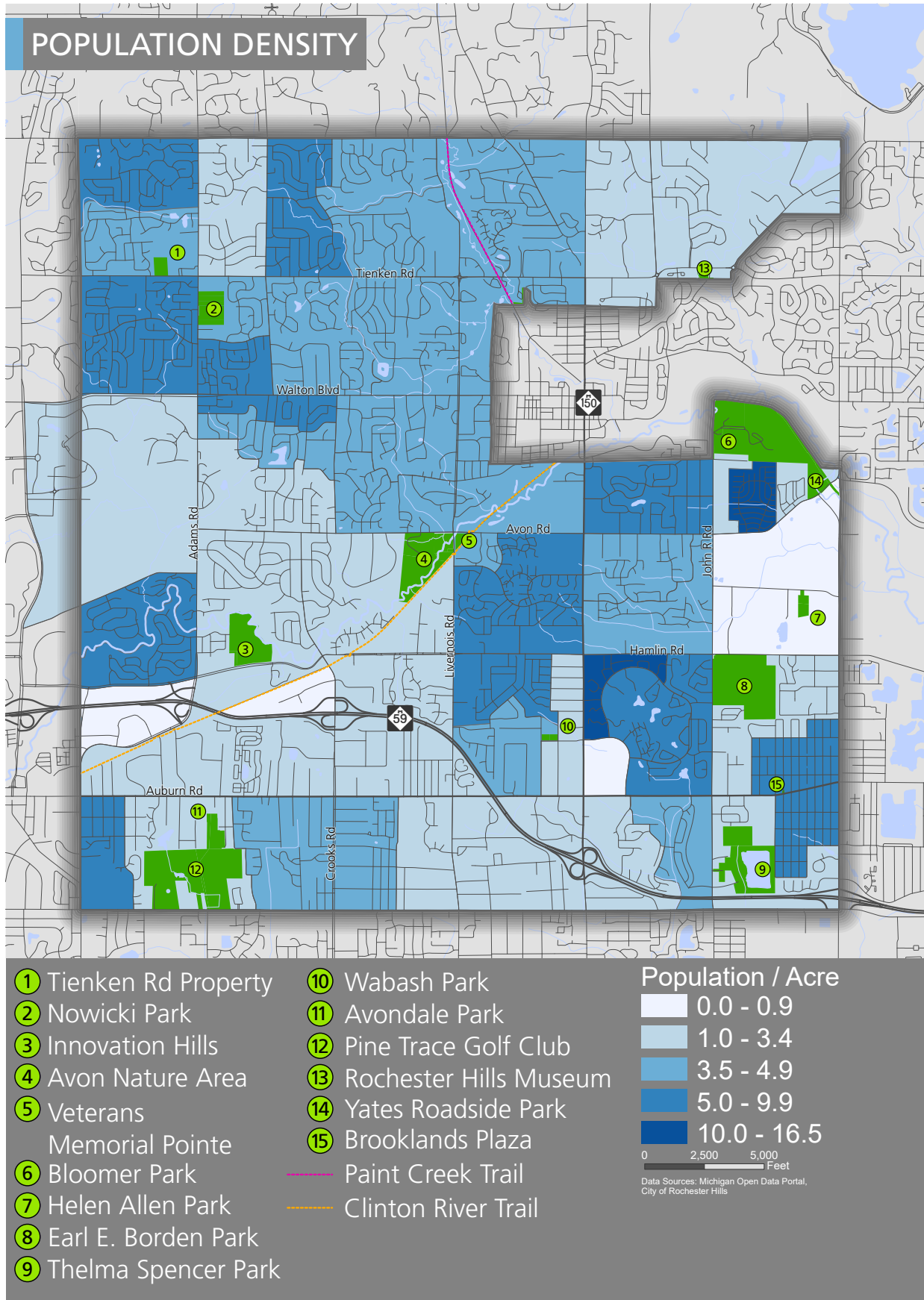
Source: 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020 Decennial Censuses

Figure 01: Population Pyramid



Source: American Community Survey 2014 & 2019 5-Year Estimates, DP05

Map 02: Population Density



Age

Compared to Oakland County and the State of Michigan, Rochester Hills has a slightly older population. In 2019, the median age in Rochester Hills was 42.2 years, slightly higher than Oakland County (40.9) and the State of Michigan (39.7). Additionally, the median age in Rochester Hills rose from 41.4 in 2014, indicating that the population is aging but not at a substantial rate, following similar trends as the county and the state.

As shown in the figure titled "Population Pyramid," Rochester Hills age distribution closely resembles the State. The largest age cohorts in Rochester Hills are those aged 45 to 54 (13.9%) and 35 to 44 (13.7%) in both 2014 and 2019. These are considered critical cohorts because of their likelihood to be households with children.

One challenge of using percentages to describe age distribution is that it can mask changes within each cohort. As shown in the figure titled "Age Cohort Change between 2014 and 2019" from 2014 to 2019, there was substantial growth in the age cohorts 65 to 74 and 75 to 84, growing by 43.5% and 32.4%, respectively. This indicates that there are substantially more people aged 65 to 84 in Rochester Hills compared to 2014. Also notable, is that the number of children aged under 14 also decreased. If these two trends were to continue, Rochester Hills could age at a faster rate over time. Fortunately, the number of people aged 15 to 24 grew in Rochester Hills; if they stay, within the next 10 years these age cohorts will likely form new households with children and balance the aging trend.

Further complicating matters is that populations naturally age, so comparing the same age cohort

at two different periods in time does not accurately measure who is entering/leaving the community. Estimating how populations age provides a better understanding of population migration. The table titled "Age Migration" breaks each cohort into migration figures.

To calculate the net change of each age cohort from 2014 to 2019, each cohort was "aged" by 5 years. For example, Rochester Hills residents 50 to 54 in 2014 would be 55 to 59 in 2019. The "naturally aged" population estimate is then compared to the census 2019 estimate to calculate how many people in each cohort immigrated, emigrated, or died. From 2014 to 2019, an estimated 6,278 people aged 25 to 44 moved into Rochester Hills. This large increase in young and middle-aged adults likely will result in increased recreation demands catered to this age range. Additionally, people in this age range tend to have children, meaning there will likely be a correlated demand for more young to teenage recreation offerings and programs. New and established families help to replenish an aging population so that age pyramid does not skew too heavily to one side, which will be important in an aging community.

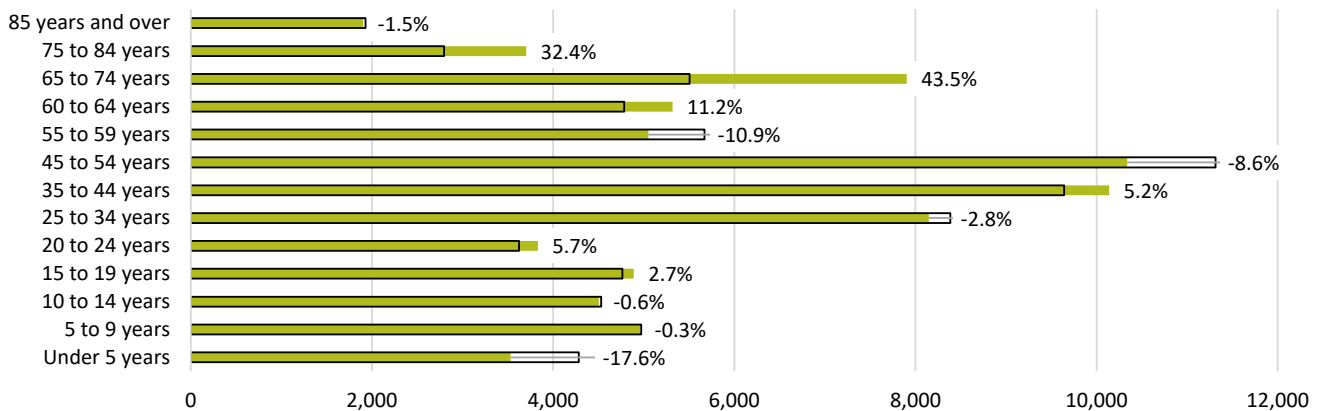
Gender

The population of Rochester Hills is slightly more female than male. Women represent 51.5% of the total population and men represent 48.5% of the population, similar to Oakland County. The State of Michigan is 50.8% female.²

Disability

Disability is another important demographic characteristic to account for in parks and recreation planning because it directly impacts how individuals

Figure 02: Age Cohort Change between 2014 and 2019



Source: American Community Survey 2014 & 2019 5-Year Estimates, DP05

Table 02: Age Migration

Age Cohort	2014	2019		
	Estimate	Naturally Aged	Estimate	Migration
Under 5 years	4,283	n/a	3,529	n/a
5 to 9 years	4,973	4,283	4,959	676
10 to 14 years	4,531	4,973	4,503	-470
15 to 19 years	4,763	4,531	4,890	359
20 to 24 years	3,623	4,763	3,831	-932
25 to 34 years	8,384	3,623	8,146	4,523
35 to 44 years	9,642	8,384	10,139	1,755
45 to 54 years	11,312	9,642	10,336	694
55 to 59 years	5,671	11,312	5,051	-6,261
60 to 64 years	4,783	5,671	5,317	-354
65 to 74 years	5,507	4,783	7,904	3,121
75 to 84 years	2,795	5,507	3,701	-1,806
85 years and over	1,928	n/a	1,900	n/a

Source: American Community Survey 2014 & 2019 5-Year Estimates, DP05

Table 03: Disability Characteristics by Age

Disability	Under 18	18 to 34 years	35 to 64 years	65 years or more	Total
Hearing Difficulty	0.4%	0.4%	1.7%	13.2%	3.2%
Vision Difficulty	0.1%	0.7%	0.8%	4.0%	1.2%
Cognitive Difficulty	2.3%	3.9%	2.3%	5.2%	3.1%
Ambulatory difficulty	0.6%	1.6%	3.4%	15.2%	4.6%
Self-care difficulty	1.1%	1.3%	1.2%	5.6%	2.0%
Independent living difficulty	n/a	4.2%	2.3%	11.0%	4.7%

Source: American Community Survey 2019 5 Year Estimates, S1810

Table 04: Race and Ethnicity

Race	Population	Percent of Total Population
One Race	72,727	98.0%
White	59,663	80.4%
Black or African American	2,991	4.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native	114	0.2%
Asian	9,311	12.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Some other race	648	0.9%
Two or more races	1,479	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	3,849	5.2%
Mexican	2,653	3.6%
Puerto Rican	305	0.4%
Cuban	57	0.1%
Other Hispanic or Latino	834	1.1%

Source: American Community Survey, 2019 5-Year Estimates DP05

can access and use facilities. The table titled “Disability Characteristics by Age” outlines the most common disabilities in Rochester Hills are independent living and ambulatory disability, both of which are concentrated among senior citizens.³ Children, on the other hand, have the highest proportion of “cognitive disability.” Disabilities are wide ranging and have different impacts on individuals, therefore it is important to ensure that parks and recreational facilities are accessible to all residents, regardless of type of disability. The practice of Universal Design, which focuses on designing and constructing parks and recreational facilities to be easy to use for all residents disabled or not, ensures that the whole community can equally participate in the parks and recreation offerings of Rochester Hills.

Race & Ethnicity

Race, like all other questions on the census, is self-reported meaning that individuals identify themselves in terms of the available racial categories on the census form. Individuals can also select more than one race. In Rochester Hills, 98% of the community identifies as one race, with the majority identifying as white. In total, roughly 20% of Rochester Hills’ population self-identified as a minority.⁴ Of the minority population, 13% identified as only Asian and 4% identified as only Black or African American. The remaining 2% of the population identified as two or more races. Compared to Oakland County and the State of Michigan, Rochester Hills is slightly less diverse. The minority population in Oakland County is roughly 25% and in the State of Michigan is roughly 22%.⁵ In 2014, the white population of Rochester Hills was 82% indicating that the city got slightly more diverse over the past five years.⁶

The census also differentiates between race and ethnicity. Hispanic or Latino is considered an ethnicity and is recorded separately from race. In 2019, an estimated 5.2% of Rochester Hills’ population identified as Hispanic or Latino, with the majority identifying as Mexican, reflecting a growing number of people who identify with this ethnicity witnessed locally and nationally.⁷

Household Composition

The average household size in Rochester Hills is 2.53 people, according to 2019 census estimates, a decrease from 2.56 in 2014. This decrease in average household size is likely a result of

the decline in households with children, which decreased to 30.4% in 2019 from 32.1% in 2014. The decrease in household size could also be explained by an increase in single person households but the number of householders living alone decreased from 26.1% in 2014 to 25.6% in 2019. Additionally, the number of households with someone over the age of 65 increased from 26.9% in 2014 to 32%, a substantial shift showing an increase in number of households with elderly individuals.⁸

Income

Income is an important demographic characteristic to consider as some recreational activities are income dependent. In 2013, the National Sporting Goods Association conducted a national survey of participants in 47 recreational activities and collected data on their age, race, and income. The data shows that some recreational activities have high levels of inequality based on participant’s income. Lacrosse, alpine skiing, cross country skiing, water skiing, and snowboarding all had the highest levels on income inequality among participants, with most of the participants earning high incomes. Fresh water fishing, walking for exercise, camping, hunting with firearms, and dart throwing all had the lowest levels of income inequality among participants. Also notable is that 51.7% of people who did not participate in any recreational activity earned below \$35,000.⁹

In 2019, the median household income in Rochester Hills was \$93,953, higher than both Oakland County and State of Michigan. Compared to 2014, the median household incomes, accounting for inflation, increased by 8.5%. Income growth lagged in the County and State. Additionally, compared to the comparable communities, only median household incomes in Farmington Hills grew at a slower rate than Rochester Hills.¹⁰

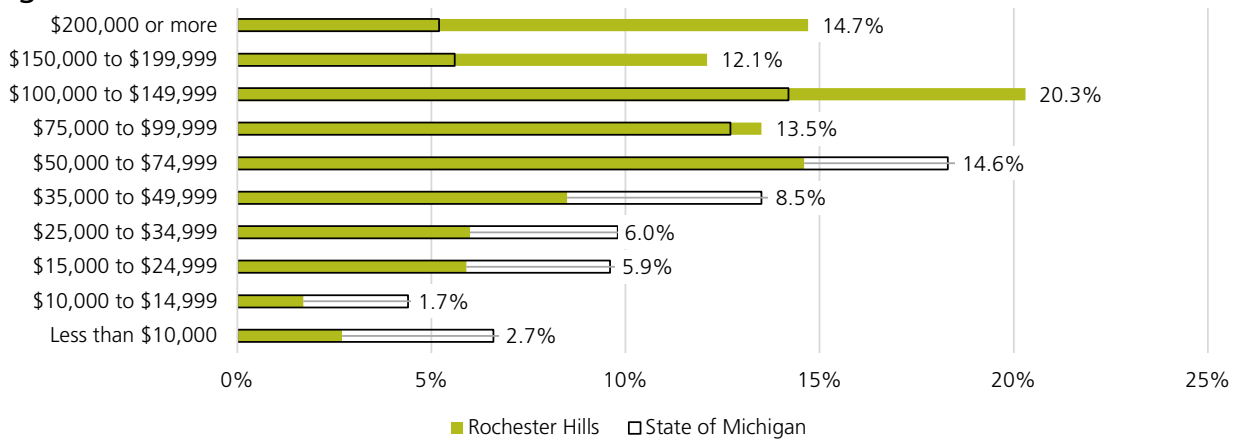
As shown in the figure titled “Rochester Hills Income Distribution,” the population is heavily skewed to the higher incomes, compared to State averages. Roughly, 47% of households in the city earn more than \$100,000 annually. The percentage of households earning more than \$75,000 in Rochester Hills is significantly higher than the State of Michigan, 60.6% to 37.7%. Conversely, the percentage of households in Rochester Hills earning less than \$75,000 is lower than the State

Table 05: Median Household Incomes

Community	2014		2019		Change	% Change
	Estimate	2022 \$	Estimate	2022 \$	Balance	Percent
Rochester Hills	\$80,806	\$96,967	\$93,953	\$105,227	\$8,260	8.5%
Oakland County	\$66,436	\$79,723	\$79,698	\$89,262	\$9,539	12.0%
Michigan	\$49,087	\$58,904	\$57,144	\$64,001	\$5,097	8.7%
Comparable Communities						
Farmington Hills	\$71,061	\$85,273	\$83,268	\$93,260	\$7,987	9.4%
Novi	\$80,299	\$96,359	\$98,020	\$109,782	\$13,424	13.9%
West Bloomfield Twp	\$90,317	\$108,380	\$104,368	\$116,892	\$8,512	7.9%
Troy	\$84,325	\$101,190	\$101,882	\$114,108	\$12,918	12.8%
Neighboring Communities						
Auburn Hills	\$52,949	\$63,539	\$64,186	\$71,888	\$8,350	13.1%
Orion Twp	\$80,955	\$97,146	\$96,323	\$107,882	\$10,736	11.1%
City of Rochester	\$76,133	\$95,292	\$89,904	\$104,200	\$8,908	9.3%
Shelby Twp	\$64,946	\$77,935	\$76,380	\$85,546	\$7,610	9.8%
Sterling Heights	\$58,800	\$70,560	\$64,833	\$72,613	\$2,053	2.9%
Bloomfield Twp	\$108,235	\$129,882	\$132,929	\$148,880	\$18,998	14.6%

Source: American Community Survey 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP03

Figure 03: Rochester Hills Income Distribution



Source: American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP03

of Michigan.¹¹ Roughly 16% of households in Rochester Hills earn less than \$35,000 annually, which makes them less likely to participate in recreational activities.

Recreation Trends

The recreation trends analysis was conducted by PROS Consulting concurrent with this plan. This analysis provides the Department of Parks and Natural Resources (“Department”) a better understanding of the types of parks, facilities, and programs / services that are trending in recreation in Rochester Hills compared to the nation. Local recreational trends data used for

the analysis was obtained from ESRI, the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. All data was acquired in March 2022 for the city’s geography outlined in the “Regional Map.”

Local Sport and Leisure Market Potential

ESRI’s Market Potential Index (MPI) measures the probable demand for a product or service within the defined service areas. The MPI shows the likelihood that an adult resident will participate in certain activities when compared to the U.S.

national average. The national average is 100; therefore, numbers below 100 would represent lower than average participation rates, and numbers above 100 would represent higher than average participation rates. The service area is compared to the national average in four (4) categories – general sports, fitness, outdoor activity, and commercial recreation. It should be noted that MPI metrics are only one data point used to help determine community trends; thus, programmatic decisions should not be based solely on MPI metrics.

The MPI demonstrates well above average recreation participation, especially pertaining to fitness and outdoor activities. When assessing each category market potential charts, all but one activity scored above 100. This becomes significant when the Department considers starting up new programs or building new facilities, giving them a strong tool to estimate resident attendance and participation.

General Sports Market Potential

Softball was the only activity below the national average and soccer meets the national average.

Fitness Market Potential

The City residents have a strong participation in this category; all activities score higher than the national average.

Outdoor Activity Market Potential

Assessing MPI scores for the Outdoor Activity category reveals that overall City residents are most likely to participate in activities/programs pertaining to Road Biking (125), Hiking (124), and canoeing/kayaking (121), when compared to the national average. This will be important for considering the implementation of multi-use paths.

Commercial Recreation Market Potential

This category of recreation is the broadest, or perhaps farther from what residents would consider traditional recreation. The higher than average MPI illustrates how residents spend their leisure time, which covers time invested in the arts, educational endeavors, and recreation equipment.

Figure 04: General Sports MPI

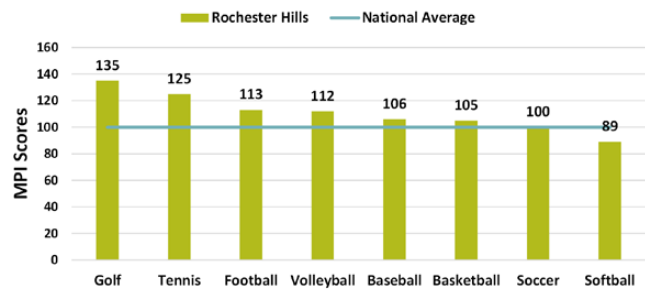


Figure 05: Fitness MPI

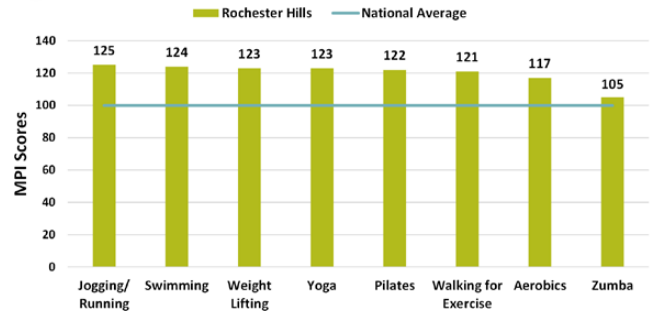


Figure 06: Outdoor Activity MPI

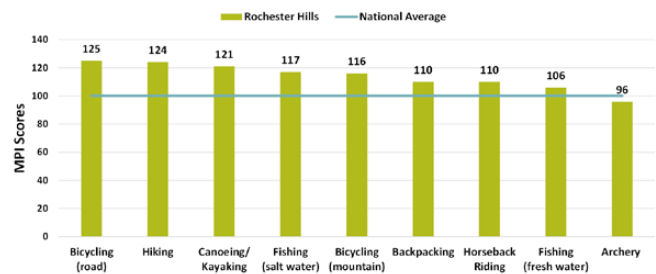
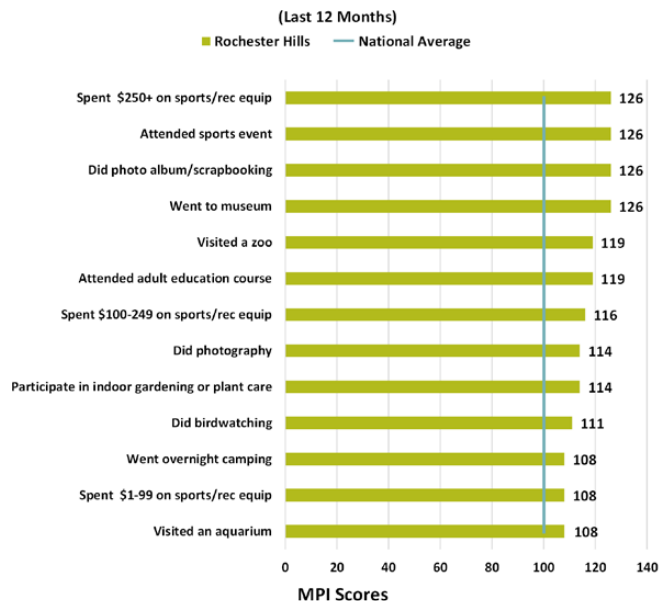


Figure 07: Commercial Recreation MPI



Physical Characteristics

Parks and recreation planning is also dependent on the existing physical environment including the transportation network, cultural and historic properties, existing land use trends, future development, and natural features. A thorough understanding of the physical environment can inform how well current parks and recreational facilities fit into the physical landscape and what areas may be appropriate for future recreation expansion.

Natural Features

The City has a diverse array of natural features including wetlands, forests, waterways, and open space. Sites with significant natural features are important to note when planning for parks and recreation because they offer an opportunity for the development of natural setting recreation facilities and preservation from commercial or residential development.

Natural features are distributed in a non-contiguous manner throughout the city, except along the Clinton River. The pockets of woodlands and wetlands are interwoven in subdivisions as designated open space. The suburban development of Rochester Hills leaves very few areas of large contiguous natural areas that are not designated as a park or acquired green space preservation land. In 2003, residents approved a millage to fund green space preservation. In total 138 acres of green space were preserved as a result of the millage or donation.

Transportation Networks

Like most communities across the United States, the transportation of Rochester Hills was designed and built for automobile traffic. Two state highways, M-59 and M-150 intersect the city and facilitate high volume and high traffic speeds. The traditional curvilinear suburban design of Rochester Hills' neighborhoods prioritizes travel on the major streets as opposed to inter-neighborhood travel. While there are some street connections between individual subdivisions that allow people to travel between subdivisions, the street design emphasizes travel via the major thoroughfares. This could have an impact on park planning and access. Typically, because subdivisions include larger yards and less direct access on foot to other destinations, parks are not embedded into neighborhoods like they are in more urban areas. However, there are many

common undeveloped areas in Rochester Hills' subdivisions. Unless the subdivision includes these "private" parks, then residents will likely have to drive to recreational facilities.

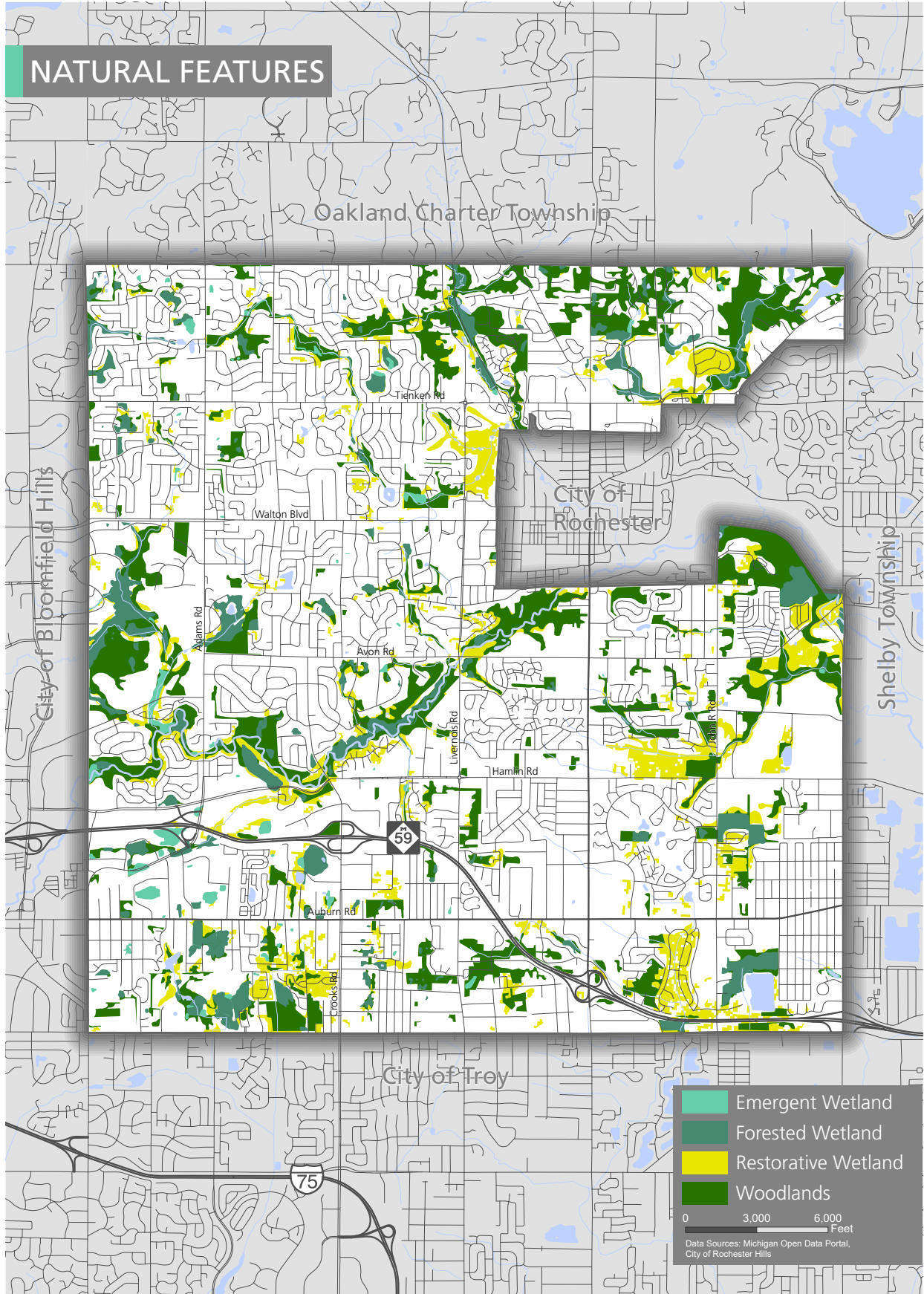
Nonmotorized Transportation

One of the most important aspects of transportation, when planning for parks and recreation, is the status and condition of the non-motorized transportation network. While non-motorized transportation networks can be defined recreational facilities, like a regional bike trail, undefined facilities such as sidewalks are used by residents for recreational purposes, such as exercise walking, running, and biking, and are an important aspect of the non-motorized recreation network. Rochester Hills is well served by non-motorized infrastructure. Most of the major roads have separated sidewalks or paths; however, few of the neighborhoods have internal sidewalks.

Additionally, there are two regional trails that intersect the city, the Clinton River Trail and the Paint Creek Trail. The Clinton River Trail extends from Sylvan Lake, through Pontiac, and terminates in the City of Rochester where it merges with the Macomb Orchard Trail. In total the trail extends 16 miles through Oakland County.¹² The Clinton River Trail is a segment of the larger Great Lake to Lake Trail that connects the cities of South Haven, on the shore of Lake Michigan, to Port Huron, on the shore of Lake Huron/St. Clair River. Because the trail follows an old railway line, it has a very low grade and no sharp turns. There are two parking areas in Rochester Hills with convenient access to the Clinton River Trail, one along Livernois and the other at the intersection of South Adams Road and Leach Road. The Paint Creek Trail extends between the City of Rochester and the Village of Lake Orion. There are two trailheads for the Paint Creek Trail in Rochester Hills, one on Tienken Road and the other on Dutton Road, however the parking area along Dutton Road is on the Oakland Charter Township side of the road.¹³ These two trails, in addition to the sidewalks and paths, form a comprehensive non-motorized network in Rochester Hills that facilitates non-motorized travel and exercise.

Together, the nonmotorized routes and low-traffic streets allow some residents to access parks without a motorized vehicle. The Pedestrian Shed map shows half-mile routes that lead to the parks, as a half-mile is a likely maximum extent that local

Map 03: Natural Features



residents would travel to a park on foot. Some may travel beyond this distance by bike. The map shows that many of the areas within the City of Rochester Hills cannot easily access a city park on foot.

Cultural and Historic Properties

As a community that is roughly 200 years old there are significant cultural and historic resources in Rochester Hills. These resources are attractions for residents and visitors and are important to note as they may have a recreational component. The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm is a federally listed historic place that highlights a bygone era of farm stading. The farmhouse and furnishings are era-appropriate and offer a learning experience for visitors. The 16.7-acre museum property includes areas for fishing, picnicking, and other leisure activities.¹⁴ The property is owned by the City of Rochester Hills and is an important piece of the cultural history of the community.

Land Use Trends

As outlined in the Rochester Hills Master Plan, there are significant shifts in land use trends. Notably, the land use preference for retail has swung from larger “big box stores” to smaller establishments in downtowns and mixed-use developments. The rise of home-based work, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, has reduced the demand

for traditional office space. The rise of home-based work means people are spending more time in their communities than ever. Therefore, local and neighborhood parks are increasing in their significance as a recreational amenity. New community desires indicate an increased demand for the following:

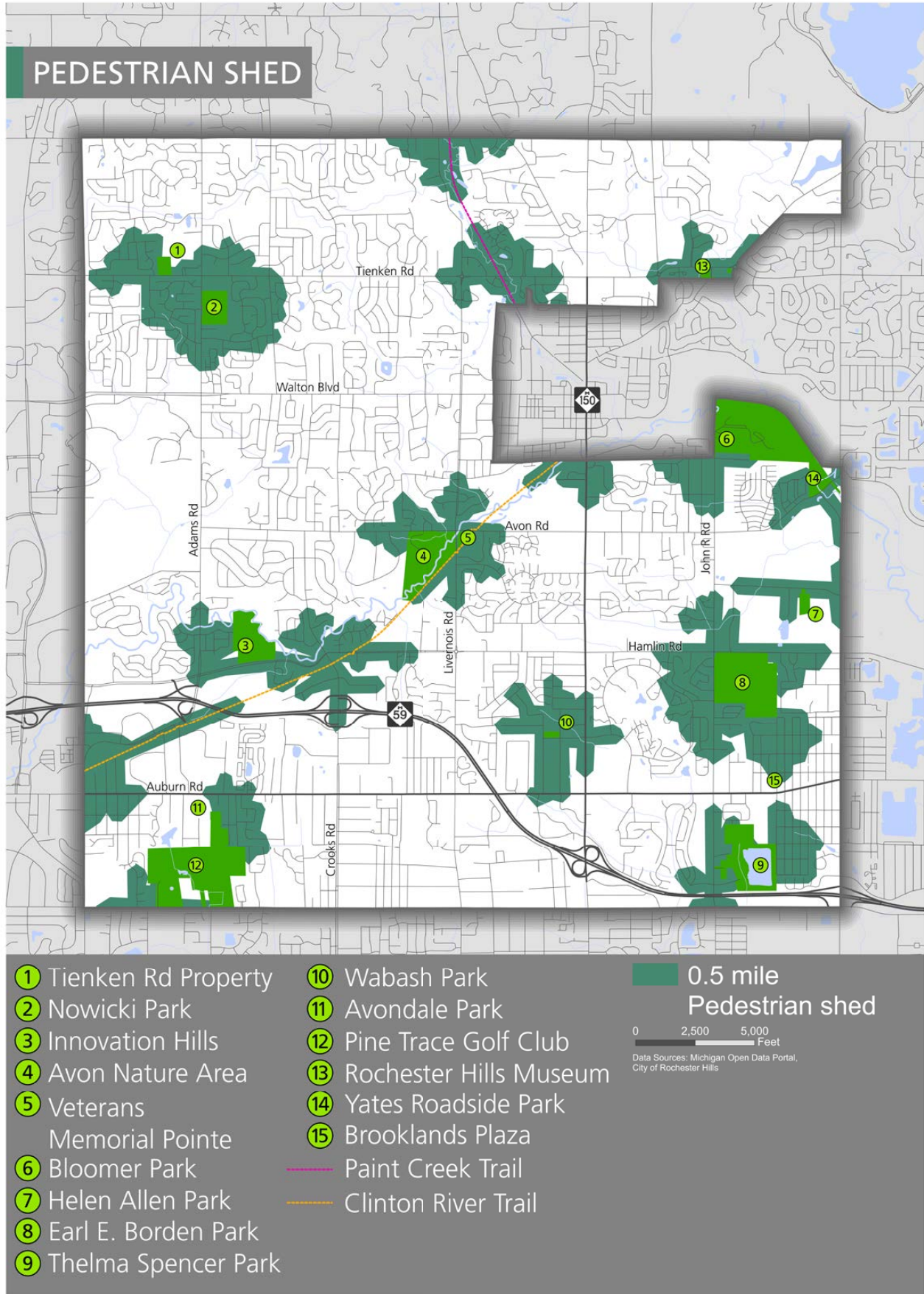
- » New housing options
- » Interactive and technology driven recreation and entertainment
- » Walkable environments
- » Recreational facilities and amenities

An analysis of the current level of recreational service based on Rochester Hills population can be found in the recreational inventory.

Future Development

The Rochester Hills Master Plan also outlined that the land use market in Rochester Hills can support an additional 2.1 to 2.3 million square feet of non-residential space by 2030, a significant increase over existing conditions. This large capacity indicates that there is market pressure on developable land in the city, and that additional available land for recreation is limited and expensive.

Map 04: Pedestrian Shed



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The Department of Parks and Natural Resources Staff

2. Administrative Structure

The City of Rochester Hills is governed by a seven-member City Council who are elected to four-year terms. Under the City Council is the Mayor who is responsible for the management of city functions.

Department of Parks and Natural Resources

Parks and Natural Resources Director

The Parks and Natural Resources Director is responsible for overseeing all department staff. The Department is split into four divisions, Parks,

Ground Maintenance, Natural Resources, and the Museum. The Director reports directly to the Mayor.

Administrative Staff

There are 2.5 administrative staff positions within the Parks and Natural Resources department including an Administrative Services Supervisor and two administrative assistants, one of which is shared with the Planning and Economic Development Department. The Administrative Services Supervisor reports to the Director.

Parks Manager

The Parks Manager is responsible for managing the park rangers, and seasonal staff. There are six permanent positions and 12.75 seasonal positions under the management of the Parks Manager.

Grounds Maintenance Manager

There are four permanent positions and nine seasonal positions under the management of the Grounds Maintenance Manager. The grounds crew is responsible for the maintenance of all city owned property and were recently created removing them from under the park management division. This division is also responsible for acquisition of park equipment and ensuring that all facilities are in working order.

Natural Resources Manager

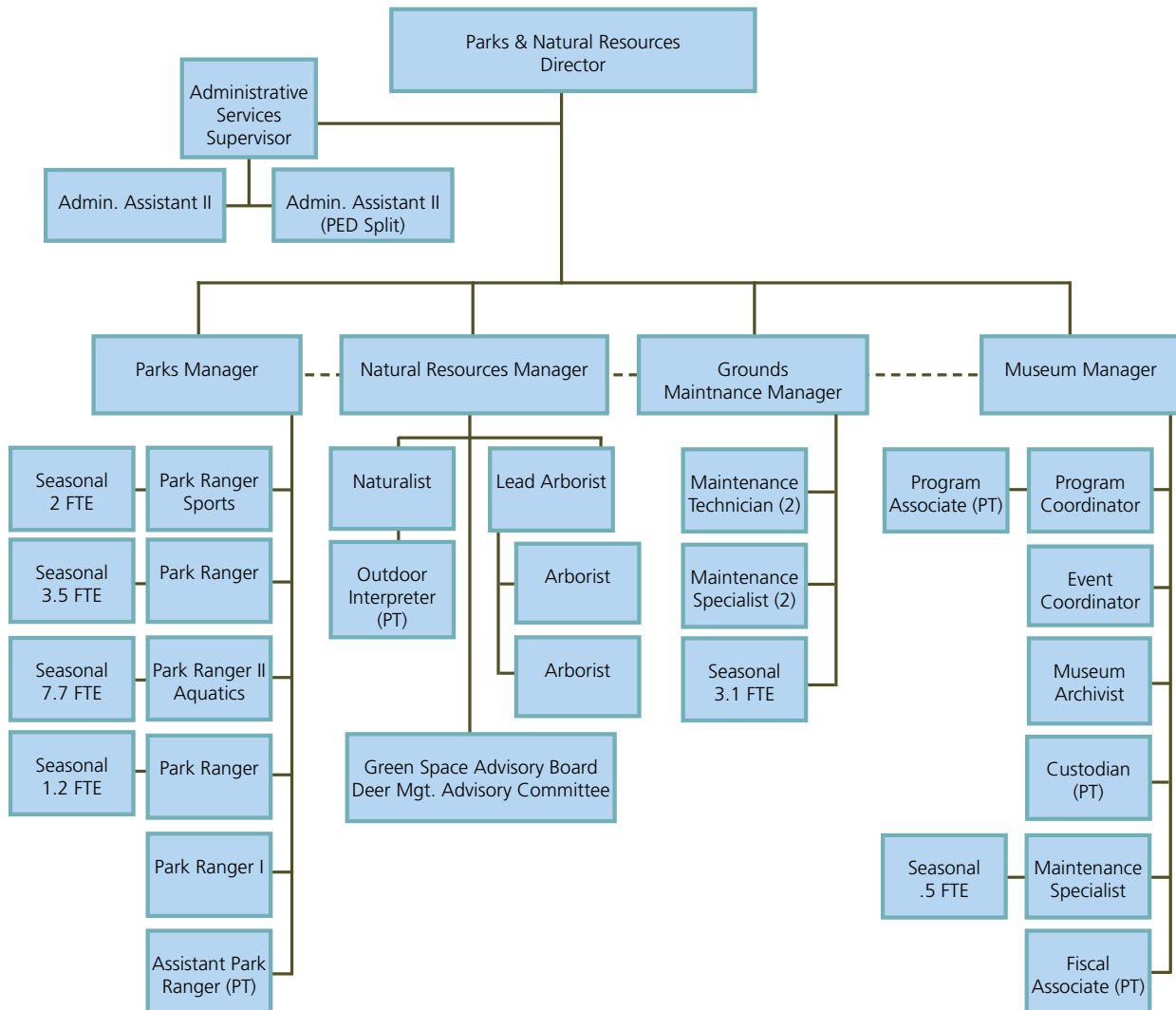
The Natural Resources Manager is responsible for maintaining the natural health and condition of

Rochester Hills’ parks and natural lands. Under the management of the Natural Resources Manager are three arborists, a naturalist, and a part-time interpreter. The Natural Resources Division conducts numerous outdoor engagement activities, manages the phragmites control program, invasive species control program, tree management, and deer management.

Museum Manager

The Museum Manager is responsible for the care and direction of the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. The Museum has a robust staff that includes program and event coordinators, an archivist, a farmhand, and a custodian. In total there are three full-time positions under the Museum Manager and 4.5 seasonal or part-time positions. Volunteers also support the work of the archivist and the Museum programs and operations.

Figure 08: Parks and Natural Resources Department Organization Chart



Boards and Commissions

A strength of Rochester Hills is the numerous boards and commissions that allow community members to have an active role in local government. There are several boards or commissions that have direct or indirect impact on parks and recreation in the city.

Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority

One of the most critical bodies that guide park and recreation planning and operations is the Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA). The purpose of the RARA is to provide recreational programming, enhance personal enrichment, and meet the community's leisure needs. The RARA is a joint body between the cities of Rochester Hills and Rochester, Rochester Community Schools, Avondale Schools, and RARA management staff also have representation on the Authority board.¹

Community Education

Rochester Community Schools and the Avondale School District provide a variety of recreation programs, activities, and enrichment classes for children and adults. These programs include swimming, music, drama, arts and crafts, tennis, martial arts, dance, and scuba. The two school districts also maintain close ties to the Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve, Rochester Community House, and the Oakland Township parks and recreation system.²

Green Space Advisory Board

The Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) is an advisory body that provides recommendations to City Council regarding the acquisition of natural green spaces, wildlife habitats, scenic views, woodlands, wetlands, and water bodies. The GSAB is also charged with expanding the Clinton River Greenway and other trail corridors. The board is comprised of a mix of citizen representatives, city staff, Council member, and Youth Council representatives. The millage that funded a substantial amount of land acquisition expired in 2015.³

Citizens Pathways Review Committee

The Pathway Committee was established in 2007 as a result of a pathways millage and is charged with reviewing pathway construction, rehabilitation projects, and pathway prioritization. The millage was assessed at 0.1858 mills and expires in 2026. This committee makes recommendations to City Council. The committee is comprised of citizen representatives, a Planning Commission

member, Mayor appointee, and Youth Council representative.⁴

Paint Creek Trailways Commission

The Paint Creek Trailways Commission is a regional body that is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the Paint Creek Trailway which extends through five communities. Each community that the trailway connects (Village of Lake Orion, Orion Township, City of Rochester, Oakland Township, and the City of Rochester Hills) has representation on the board in addition to trailway staff.⁵

Clinton River Trail Alliance and Friends of the Clinton River Trail

The Clinton River Trail Alliance (CRTA) is comprised of representatives from the City of Rochester, City of Rochester Hills, City of Auburn Hills, City of Pontiac, and Sylvan Lake. The first actions of the CRTA were to purchase property for the trail and develop a trail master plan. Ongoing relationships with organizations such as the Friends of the Clinton River Trail are essential to the continued promotion of the trail as a valuable natural, aesthetic, cultural, and economic resource.

Rochester Hills Museum Foundation

The Rochester Hills Museum Foundation forms the Board of Directors for the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. They are responsible for acquiring private funding to support the Museum's activities and programs. The Board is comprised of two city administration representatives, a City Council member, and six at large citizen representatives.⁶

Older Persons' Commission

While not directly involved in parks and recreation planning, the Older Persons' Commission (OPC) is an important body to involve in the process because they represent the interests of Rochester Hills' elderly population. The OPC can provide valuable information and connections for the recreational needs of the senior population. The OPC is a joint body between the City of Rochester Hills, City of Rochester, and Oakland Township that serves area residents over the age of 50 years. Residents over the age of 50 are eligible to become members of the OPC facility that includes a fitness center, pool, art studios, café, dining room, computer, and auditorium.⁷

Diversity Equity & Inclusion Committee

This Committee is tasked with advising the Mayor and City on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and examining the role the municipal government can play in strengthening the connections and understanding among diverse communities. For parks and recreation this may include issues of equitable access, participation in leadership/management, and messaging and communication.⁸

Deer Management Advisory Committee

The Deer Management Advisory Committee was created in 2009 to review the Deer Management Policy (2008) and provide recommendations to City Council for implementing the management plan. This committee works closely with the natural resources division and other parks and natural resources staff. The committee is comprised of seven citizens members, two council members, two parks and natural resources staff, and one Youth Council member.⁹

Budget

Each division within the Parks and Natural Resources Department is supported by the General Fund. The following tables illustrate revenues to the General Fund from the Parks and Natural Resources Department and expenses by each division. In 2022, revenues from Parks and Natural Resources services and facilities are budgeted to be \$981,020, 17% of the total expenses anticipated in the same fiscal year. This means that a substantial portion

of the funding for parks and natural resources is covered by other contributions from the general fund.

Partnerships

One of the most important partnerships in Rochester Hills is that with the neighboring jurisdictions. The Cities of Rochester and Rochester Hills are under a singular Recreation Authority, and other partnerships with Oakland Township and the Village of Lake Orion and Orion Township are essential to the ongoing operation of the regional trailways.

The Community Foundation of Greater Rochester is a non-profit charitable organization that provides grants for projects in the community and manages charitable donations. They have previously given grant funding to the Rochester Hills Museum and collaborated with the city to establish a Museum Foundation, which serves as the fundraising board.¹⁰

Volunteers

Volunteers contribute in several ways to the operations of the Parks and Natural Resources Department. Volunteers assist the Museum Archivist by cataloging and digitizing archival material that allows the Museum archives and collections to be accessible online. Volunteers also support daily Museum operations such as staffing the front desk, serving as tour guides, maintaining Museum grounds and special event support.



A group of kids participate in a PlayBall program at Borden Park

Table 06: General Fund Revenues: PNR Department (Fund 101)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
License & Permits	\$500	\$500	0.0%
Interfund Charges	\$125,000	\$125,000	0.0%
Charge for Forestry Service	\$5,000	\$5,000	0.0%
Sales	\$29,190	\$29,190	0.0%
Fees	\$341,000	\$341,000	0.0%
Park Rentals	\$475,330	\$478,530	0.7%
Miscellaneous Revenues	\$5,000	\$5,000	0.0%
Total	\$981,020	\$984,220	0.33%

Table 07: Parks Millage Fund (Fund 208)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Revenues Total	\$648,520	\$678,810	4.7%
Tax (0.1645 Mill)	\$648,520	\$678,810	4.7%
Expenses Total	\$648,520	\$678,810	4.7%
Transfer Out – Facilities Fund	\$648,520	\$678,810	4.7%

Table 08: Tree Fund (Fund 232)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Revenues Total	\$164,000	\$164,000	0.0%
Fund Balance to Balance	\$111,290	\$102,940	-7.5%
Fees	\$50,000	\$50,000	0.0%
Interest	\$2,710	\$11,060	308.1%
Expenses Total	\$164,000	\$169,000	3.0%
Supplies	\$4,000	\$4,000	0.0%
Professional Services	\$160,000	\$165,000	3.1%

Table 09: Green Space Fund (Fund 299)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Revenues Total	\$530,070	\$522,520	-1.4%
Fund Balance to Balance	\$220,430	\$0	-100.0%
Interest	\$80	\$80	0.0%
Transfer in: Green Space Trust Fund	\$309,560	\$522,440	68.8%
Expenses Total	\$530,070	\$572,030	7.9%
Personnel Services	\$39,070	\$41,030	5.0%
Professional Services	\$281,000	\$331,000	17.8%
Capital Outlay	\$210,000	\$200,000	-4.8%

Table 10: Parks Division Expenses (Fund 756)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Personnel Services (Wages, Benefits, Insurance)	\$1,580,740	\$1,640,520	3.8%
Operating Supplies (tools, equipment, concessions)	\$63,700	\$61,000	-4.2%
Professional Services	\$950,270	\$838,380	-11.8%
Interfund Charges	\$773,790	\$773,790	0.0%
Other Expenses	\$14,020	\$14,110	0.6%
Total	\$2,608,730	\$2,554,010	-2.1%

Table 11: Ground Maintenance Division Expenses (Fund 759)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Personnel Services (Wages, Benefits, Insurance)	\$672,810	\$698,020	3.7%
Operating Supplies (tools, equipment, concessions)	\$19,750	\$19,750	0.0%
Professional Services	\$2,650	\$2,650	0.0%
Interfund Charges	\$93,110	\$93,110	0.0%
Other Expenses	\$75,020	\$75,020	0.0%
Total	\$863,340	\$888,550	2.9%

Table 12: Green Space Perpetual Care Trust Fund (Fund 761)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Fund Balance	\$7,509,360	\$7,346,390	-2.2%
Revenues Total	\$380,390	\$538,440	41.5%
Fund Balance to Balance	\$0	\$162,970	n/a
Interest Earnings	\$380,390	\$375,470	-1.3%
Expenses Total	\$309,560	\$522,440	68.8%
Fund Balance to Balance	\$54,830	\$0	-100.0%
Professional Services	\$16,000	\$16,000	0.0%
Transfer Out	\$309,560	\$522,440	68.8%

Table 13: Natural Resources Division Expenses (Fund 774)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Personnel Services (Wages, Benefits, Insurance)	\$826,160	\$862,070	4.3%
Operating Supplies (tools, equipment, concessions)	\$20,550	\$20,550	0.0%
Professional Services	\$102,000	\$101,000	-1.0%
Interfund Charges	\$100,790	\$100,790	0.0%
Other Expenses	\$3,200	\$3,200	0.0%
Total	\$1,052,700	\$1,087,610	3.3%

Table 14: Museum Division Expenses (Fund 802)

	2022 Adopted	2023 Proposed	2022/2023 Change
Personnel Services (Wages, Benefits, Insurance)	\$680,980	\$711,300	4.5%
Operating Supplies (tools, equipment, concessions)	\$44,500	\$42,500	-4.5%
Professional Services	\$32,450	\$32,450	0.0%
Interfund Charges	\$349,130	\$349,130	0.0%
Other Expenses	\$10,300	\$10,300	0.0%
Total	\$1,117,360	\$1,145,680	2.5%

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Youth play at the Brooklands Plaza splash pad

3. Recreation Inventory

Introduction

To understand the condition and status of recreational facilities in Rochester Hills, an inventory of existing facilities was conducted in July 2022. The intent of the inventory is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current recreational offerings to recreational users. While multiple agencies and groups in the City have recreational facilities, only City facilities were inventoried.

The inventory was conducted in the summer of

2022 by visiting each park and taking note of all existing recreation facilities and amenities. In addition to detailing the type and quantity of amenities at each recreation facility, the condition of amenities was recorded. Condition was assessed on a "poor", "fair", "good", to "excellent" scale. Each amenity was rated, and that rating was converted condition percentage, poor: 0% condition, fair: 33% condition, good: 66% condition, excellent: 100% condition. The condition of all amenities was averaged, and the average amenity condition is listed for each park.

A park accessibility assessment was performed by Beckett & Raeder, Inc, referencing the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and the US Access Board Outdoor Developed Areas guidebook. Accessibility was evaluated on the DNR's scale of 1 to 5:

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

It should be noted that a rating of 4 meets accessibility requirements, and a rating of 5 would go above and beyond those requirements to achieve the principles of universal design.

The City of Rochester Hills also underwent a detailed accessibility evaluation of the parks in 2010 and an ADA transition plan was created, and the executive summary is located in the appendix of this plan. The City continues to implement accessibility improvements each year.

Classification

Parks were classified in accordance with national standards as follows:

District Parks

District Parks are larger acreage than a typical community park, however much smaller than the thousands of acres in traditional regional parks. However, these district parks typically fulfill several similar functions as a regional park, which may include nature based activities such as hiking, fishing, small-scale boating, sports tournaments or larger events. District Parks have much larger attendance than other local parks, and a significant portion of that attendance is from outside the local community. District Parks in the City of Rochester Hills include Spencer Park, Bloomer Park, Earl E. Borden Park, and Innovation Hills.

Community Parks

Community parks are typically up to 50 acres in size and generally serves neighborhoods up to 3 miles in distance. Community Parks typically contain a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents from several neighborhoods. Community Parks may include areas for intense recreation facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools. These parks usually contain other facilities not commonly found in neighborhood parks such as nature areas, picnic pavilions, lighted athletic fields, and concession facilities. The City has two community parks: Avondale Park and Nowicki Park.

Neighborhood Parks

Approximately 5–10 acres in size and generally serves neighborhoods ¼ to ½ mile in distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. The City has four neighborhood parks including Helen V. Allen Park, Tienken Road Park Property, Yates Roadside Park, and Wabash Park.

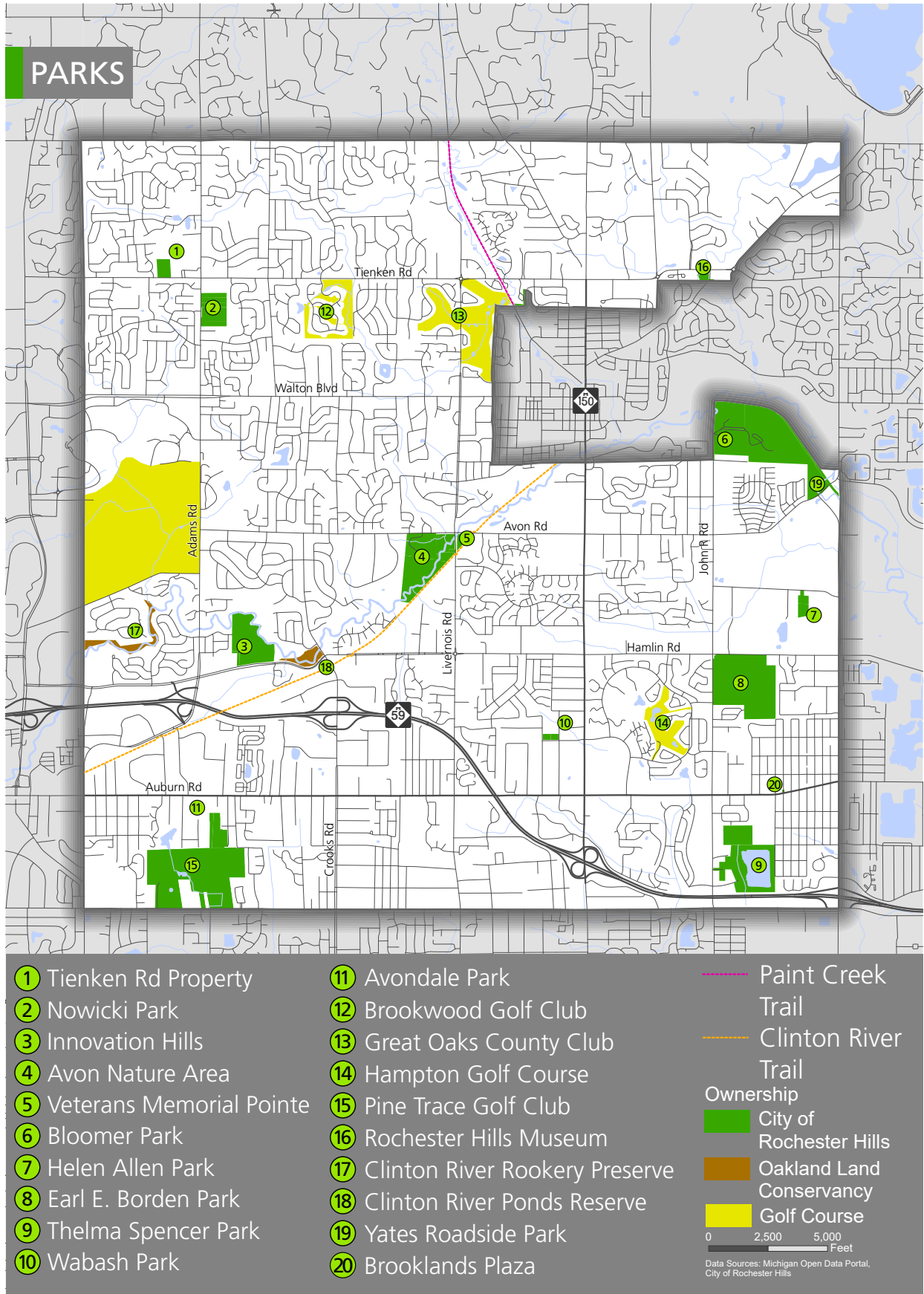
Special Use or Conservancy Parks

Vary in size and location but are typically single-purpose recreation facilities, such as golf courses, nature centers, outdoor theaters, interpretative centers, or facilities for the natural feature preservation. Protection and management of the natural/cultural environment may be the primary focus with recreation use as a secondary objective. The City has multiple special use or conservancy parks including Avon Nature Study Area, Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Veterans Memorial Pointe, Pine Trace Golf Course, Brooklands Plaza, and the multiple green space properties.

Linear Parks

Vary in size and location, and are any area developed for one or more modes of recreation travel, such as hiking, bicycling, in-line skating, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, canoeing, horseback riding, and pleasure driving. The Clinton River and Paint Creek Trails are the City's two linear parks.

Map 05: Parks



Bloomer Park District Park

The largest park in the City, Bloomer Park totals 206.9 acres and is located in the eastern portion of the City. Bloomer Park was formerly a state park and was transferred to the City of Rochester Hills. The park supports numerous recreational activities including several play structures, swings, volleyball courts, and a general sports field. Some unique features include a cricket field, sledding hill, mountain biking trails, and velodrome. Located throughout the park are picnic shelters, some of which have restrooms, grills, and fireplaces. The size and number of amenities at Bloomer Park support day-long activities.

Overall, the park is in fair condition; the velodrome is abandoned and needs to be torn down or replaced to prevent safety issues. The parking lots are in need of repair and redesign, the main parking lot is very long and has no island cuts making it difficult to navigate through the parking lot. The stone picnic structure with picnic tables and a fireplace is in need of repair. One of the bathrooms in the park is inoperable due to a plumbing issue. The park has some accessibility features provided; there are a few paved ramps from the paths to the play equipment, but some features cannot be accessed via a path.

- » **Average Condition Rating: 56%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 2**



Picnic Shelter



Play Structure



Sledding



Mountain Bike Trails

Earl E. Borden Park District Park

Borden Park is located in the eastern/central portion of the city at the intersection of John R Rd and Hamlin Rd. The park totals 143 acres and provides significant active recreation opportunities. The park has four lighted baseball fields, two roller hockey rinks, two tennis courts, eight pickleball courts, batting cages, three basketball courts, 12 soccer fields, a general sports field, play equipment, and swings. The park also has one picnic shelter near the soccer fields. In addition, berms within the park are used as sledding hills in the winter and attract a large number of residents. The park has a natural area to support passive recreation, but the focus of the park is on the active recreation opportunities.

The park is in good to excellent condition; the parking lot and all pathways have been recently reconstructed and are in excellent condition. Several benches throughout the park need to be replaced. The park has moderate accessibility, most of the viewing areas around the soccer fields are not accessible and there is no ramp access to the play equipment. The roller rink, tennis courts, and pickleball courts have no shade nearby and likely get extremely hot in the peak summer months.

- » **Average Condition Rating: 76%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 3**



Basketball Court and Ballfields



Pickle Ball Courts



Playground



Roller Hockey

Innovation Hills District Park

Innovation Hills is the newest recreational facility in Rochester Hills and has quickly become one of the most popular parks. The park was formerly known as Riverbend Park, and over the past few years has been improved with boardwalks, a large play area, and walking paths. The park improvements were possible due to extensive public-private partnerships between the City and numerous agencies, community groups, and citizens.

The park totals 62.38 acres and is a mix of active and passive recreation. The defining feature of Innovation Hills is the play area which includes several types and sizes of play equipment. The play equipment is adventure/nature themed with a large tree house that allows children to climb up and down inside with several slides. There is also musical play equipment and a water play facility interspersed within the playground. Throughout the play area are tables with umbrellas, pavilions, and benches, making it comfortable for adults to socialize or relax while supervising children.

Outside the play area there are walking paths and a boardwalk that allow users to travel through the wetland adjacent to the playground. Along the river is an accessible canoe/kayak landing. In the center of the developed area of Innovation Hills is a retention pond that is fed by a water feature. The pond is circumnavigated by a paved path creating a walking loop in the park which features aggregate that glows after dark. On the western side of the walking loop is a seating area with lawn games.

Overall, the park is in excellent condition, a result of its recent construction and intentional design. The park is also very accessible, most of the play equipment is designed to be accessible and all of the surfaces in the play area are accessible. Across the river is a 48 acre green space owned by the City.

- » **Average Condition: 99%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 4**



Green Pavilion Picnic Shelter



Kayak Landing



Playground

Thelma G. Spencer Park District Park

Located in the southeastern corner of the City, Thelma G. Spencer Park is a unique facility in Rochester Hills, as no other facilities offer lake access. The 113 acres park includes Carter Lake which is widely used for swimming, boating, and fishing. The park is heavily used in the summer by RARA youth camps and visitors from across the region. In addition to the swimming beach, the park has several play structures, a fishing pier, picnic shelter, boat rentals, two tennis courts, sand volleyball, soccer fields, walking trails, and a central building with restrooms, concessions, and a first aid station. In the winter the park is used for ice-skating, ice fishing, and hockey.

Spencer Park is in good condition; however, the parking lot is in disrepair and need of reconstruction. The park is mostly accessible: there is paved access to the main building, the fishing pier and boat rental are both connected to paths, and there is paved access to the swimming beach. The play equipment has a few opportunities near the ground and some of the play equipment is accessible. The park is heavily used in the summer months, but the restroom building is relatively small for the level of use.

- » **Average Condition: 71%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 3**



Gaga Ball Pit



Boat Rental



Pond hockey



Beach and Swimming Area

Avondale Park Community Park

Located in the southwest section of the City, Avondale Park totals 18.5 acres and can be accessed off of Bathurst Avenue. The park is surrounded by neighborhoods and borders the Pine Trace Golf Course on the south. The park offers two sand volley ball courts, two sets of play equipment, two tennis courts, two basketball courts, two sets of swings, a baseball field, and a large multipurpose field. The park also has a picnic shelter and portable restroom providing an opportunity for larger gatherings.

Overall, the park is in good condition, the play equipment is aging and needs to be painted and the wood safety surface around the equipment needs maintenance. The plastic surface of the tennis courts and basketball court has some cracks and weeds are growing through the surface. There are some accessible features at the park, like an accessible swing and paved ramp to one of the play structures, but overall the park is limited in accessibility and most of the play equipment is not designed for accessibility.

- » **Average Condition: 63%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 2**



Picnic Shelter



Sand Volleyball



Play Structure



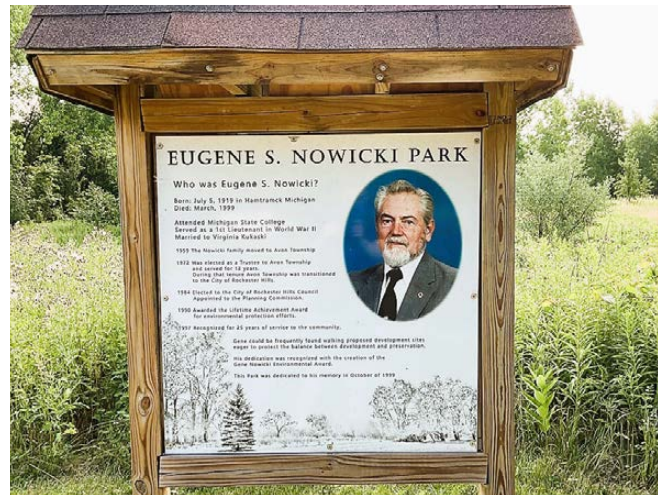
Baseball Diamond

Eugene S. Nowicki Park Community Park

Located in the northwest portion of the City along Adams Rd, Nowicki Park is 34.6 acres in size. Nowicki Park is currently a minimally developed property that has had a basic gravel parking lot recently added for limited access. The park is named after Eugene S. Nowicki, a community leader and conservationist. The only currently developed recreation offering at the park is a mowed path through an open meadow and wooded area.

At the parking areas there is a sign, map, and pet waste bag dispenser all of which are in good to excellent condition. The parking lot is gravel with five bumper blocks. The park currently has very limited accessibility, as it has not been substantially developed.

- » Average Condition: 83%
- » Accessibility Rating: 1



Park Signage



Parking Lot



Mowed Trail

Helen V. Allen Park Neighborhood Park

One of the smaller parks in Rochester Hills, Helen V. Allen Park totals 9.9 acres and is located in the eastern section of the City. The park hosts two baseball fields, a portable restroom, gravel parking lot, and drinking fountain. The park is in fair to good condition; the drinking fountain needs to be replaced and the parking lot needs upkeep. The park does not appear to be heavily used by the community or adjacent neighborhoods. Accessibility in this park is low; the park does not have access paths connecting the activity elements or designated accessible parking.

- » **Average Condition: 54%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 1**



Ball field

Yates Roadside Park Neighborhood Park

Located along Avon Road, Yates Roadside Park is a 4.3-acre facility bordered by the Clinton River. The park has eight picnic tables, three grills, a restroom, and parking lot. The park provides direct access to the Clinton River supporting fishing and canoe/kayak launching. There is a sign notifying users to swim at their own risk. Given that the park is located across the street from Yates Cider Mill, the park likely is heavily used in the fall by patrons of the cider mill. The park is in good condition but has limited accessibility. There is no accessible route to the picnic facilities or river and the path from the bathroom to the parking lot does not meet ADA standards.

- » **Average Condition: 67%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 2**



Wooded Area

Wabash Park Neighborhood Park

Located along Wabash Rd between Norton Lawn Rd and Hickory Lawn Rd, Wabash Park is a 3.7-acre park with a playground, community garden, and small parking lot. The playground has a structure and a swing set. The community garden has 96 total plots and is only accessible to those with a plot. The western section of the park is open space with a picnic table.

The park is in fair to good condition. The play structure and wood safety surface are in need of maintenance and the picnic tables will likely need to be repaired or replaced soon. While one of the swings is accessible, there is no path connecting the parking lot to the swing set. Additionally, the play structure has no accessible play options.

- » **Average Condition: 53%**
- » **Accessibility: 2**



Play Structure

Tienken Road Park Property Special Use or Conservancy Park

The Tienken Road Park Property is located adjacent to Rochester Adams High School in the northwest section of the City. The property totals 10 acres and is heavily wooded. There are several informal footpaths, but no intentional paths are delineated, as it is undeveloped open space.

The area has poor accessibility, the only accessible area of the park are the sidewalks on the south and eastern sides of the property but neither provide access to the interior of the property. As no amenities have been developed, the condition is unrated.

- » **Average Condition: Unrated**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 1**



River's edge

Avon Nature Study Area Special Use or Conservancy Park

Avon Nature Study Area is one of the larger parks in the City, totaling 102.5 acres. The park has two miles of hiking trails, scenic overlooks, picnic areas, and a carry-down canoe/kayak launch point (Eagle's Landing). The park can be accessed at several points: the Rochester Hills City Hall, the Clinton River Watershed Office, and Eagle's Landing off South Livernois Rd.

There are benches and picnic tables located at the trail heads, most of which are in good condition. Sections of the trails are maintained well, however the boardwalk north of the Clinton River Watershed Office is in poor condition. Other boardwalks throughout the park are in varying conditions. The carry-down canoe/kayak launch area is in good condition and is indicated as a stopping point along the Clinton River Water Trail. The park also offers opportunities for fishing at several points in the park.

There are no accessible features in the park, the parking lots have no accessible routes to nearby benches, picnic tables, or other park features.

- » **Average Condition: 61%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 1**



Overlook



Stone Seats



Signage

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm Special Use or Conservancy Park

The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm (the Museum) is one of the most unique recreational facilities in southeast Michigan. Located in the Stony Creek Historic District, the Museum serves as a cultural, educational, and recreational facility. The farmhouse was built in 1840 by the Taylor Family, and the descending Taylor-Van Hoosen Family lived on the farm for the next 120 years. In 1979, Michigan State University, which acquired the property in 1954, donated the Van Hoosen Farmhouse and surrounding three acres to Rochester Hills. Over the past 40 years the City of Rochester Hills and its partners have been restoring the property to a premier museum and educational facility. The Van Hoosen Farm is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The facility serves a number of community functions including school trips, community events, facility rentals, and tours.

The average condition of amenities was good to excellent, as several improvement projects have recently been completed. The Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm Division Plan 2021-2026 has been developed and governs operations and improvements over the next five years. Overall accessibility was good and many of the historic buildings have been retrofitted to improve accessibility. Any future improvements for the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm should follow the Museum Division Plan (see appendix).

- » **Average Condition: 74%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 3**



Dairy Barn



Gazebo



Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival

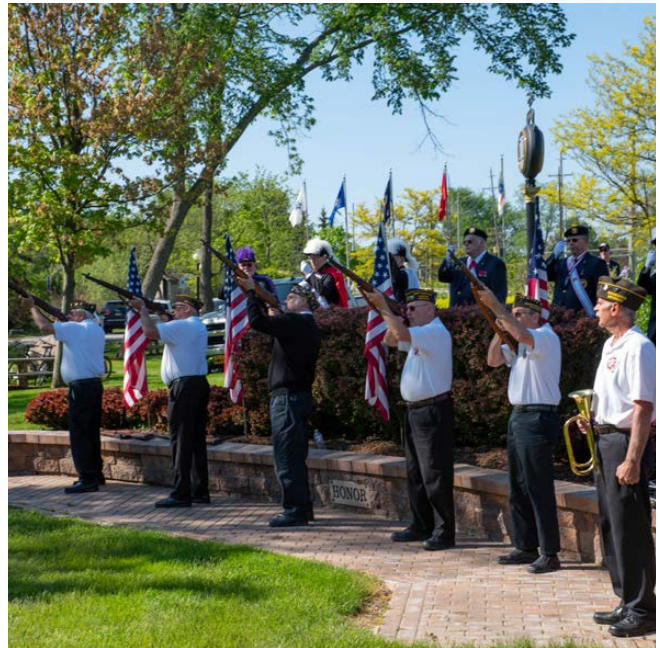


Wet and Wild Event

Veterans Memorial Pointe Special Use or Conservancy Park

Located at the intersection of West Avon Road and South Livernois, Veterans Memorial Pointe is a 5.1-acre facility with numerous memorials, a plaza, vault toilet, and gazebo. The brick paved path presents accessibility challenges because it has become uneven. The path will be challenging to replace because many of the brick pavers signify donors to the park. Also impacting accessibility is the gazebo, while it has a ramp there is no transition plate from the ramp to the path. There are no accessible picnic tables, but the benches generally meet accessibility guidelines. The structures at Veterans Memorial Pointe are showing some age and could use some general upkeep (cleaning and painting).

- » **Average Condition: 79%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 2**

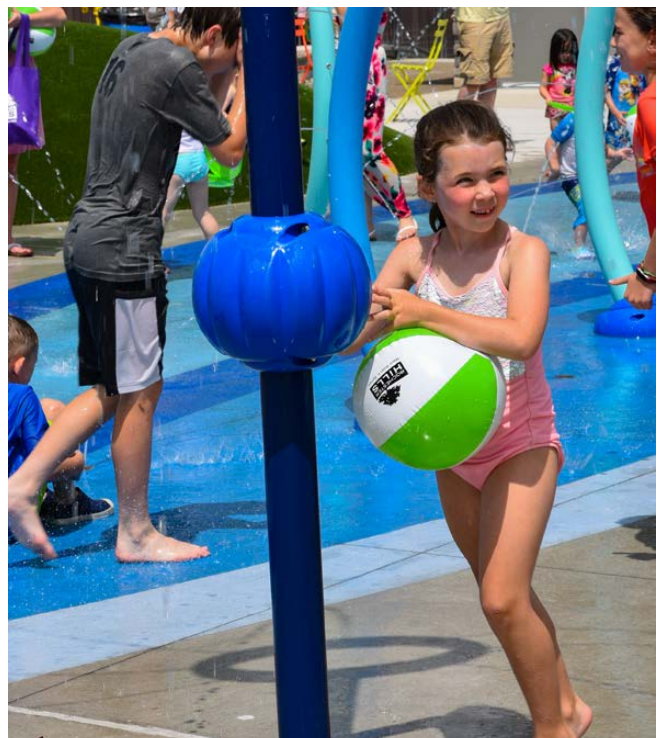


Memorial Day Observance

Brooklands Plaza Special Use or Conservancy Park

Located on Auburn Road near the Culbertson Avenue intersection, Brooklands Plaza is the newest addition to the City of Rochester Hills parks system. It is nestled within the recently completed Auburn Road Corridor, which transformed the area into a more walkable business district. The park itself features a splash pad, a modern restroom building, café tables and benches, and additional amenities such as charging stations and a Little Free Library. The plaza has an aesthetically pleasing design mimicking a river running between hills, which are formed landscape features covered with artificial turf. Adding to the ambiance of the space are overhead festoon lights and in-ground colorful accent lighting. The splash pad and restrooms are open May 1st through September 30th, weather permitting. The park opened in 2021, and is in excellent condition, with amenities meeting accessibility requirements.

- » **Average Condition: 100%**
- » **Accessibility Rating: 4**



Splash Pad

Green Space Properties Special Use or Conservancy Park

The City owns a total of eight green space properties that total 138 acres, most of which are along the Clinton River. These properties are not identified as parks and serve more of a natural resource preservation purpose. However, some people may use these properties for passive recreation, but they are not promoted as recreational facilities.

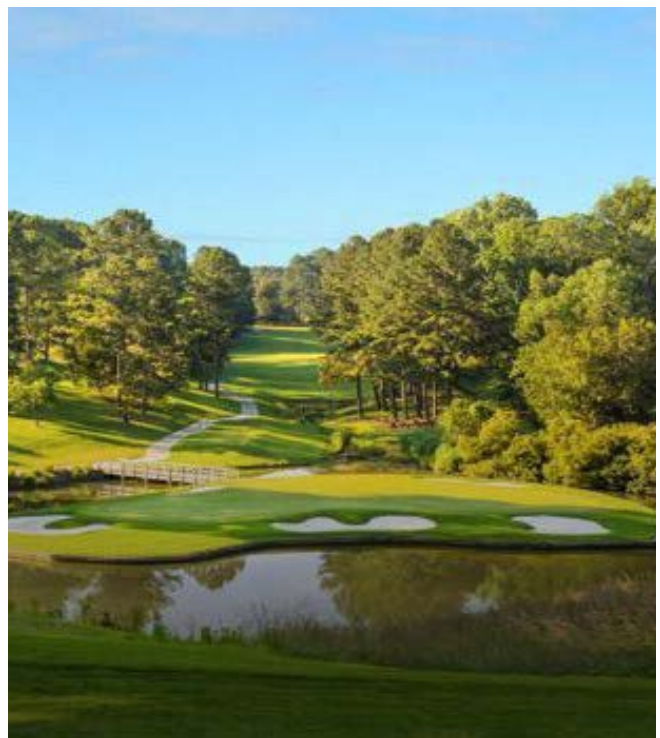
- » Rivercrest Green Space
- » Childress Green Space
- » Harding Green Space
- » Cloverport Green Space
- » Clear Creek Green Space
- » Innovation Hills Green Space
- » Ruby Green Space
- » Auburn Green Space



Green Spaces

Pine Trace Golf Course Special Use or Conservancy Park

The Pine Trace Golf Course is a privately owned facility that leases the land from the City of Rochester Hills. The course was designed by Arthur Mills and constructed in 1989. The course features 18 holes, 60 acres of wetlands, and 193 acres of wooded space. The City has no involvement in the management or operation of the Pine Trace Golf Course so this facility was not inventoried or assessed in detail.

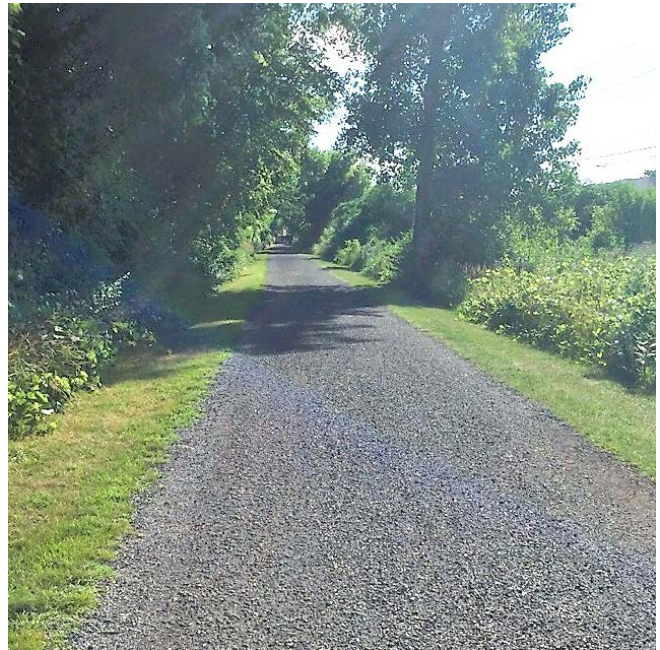


Golf course

Clinton River Trail Linear Park

The Clinton River Trail runs east-west across the City of Rochester Hills beginning near the intersection of South Adams Rd and Auburn Rd and ending near the intersection of M-150 and the border of Rochester. There are two trailheads for the Clinton River Trail located in the City but the trail can be accessed at every road crossing. The two trailheads have restrooms, signage, and parking. Of the 15.6 miles of the trail, 4.5 miles are in Rochester Hills. The surface is comprised of recycled pulverized asphalt and is in good condition. Sections of the trail near sidewalks are paved.

- » **Average Condition: 73%**
- » **Accessibility: 4**

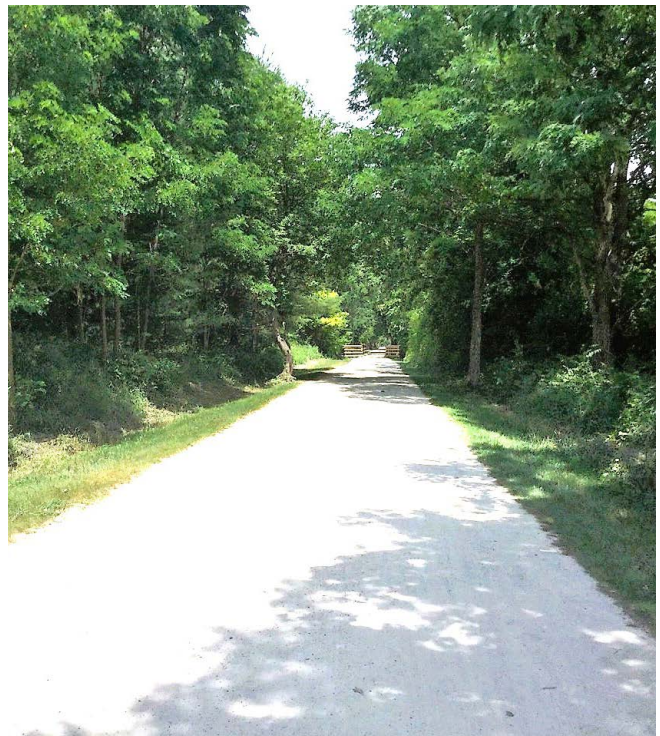


Gravel Trail

Paint Creek Trail Linear Park

A segment of the 8.9 mile Paint Creek Trail crosses a northern portion of the City. In total, 1.5 miles of the trail are in located in Rochester Hills. The trail originates in Rochester and follows the Paint Creek. The trail can be accessed from the trail head along Tienken Rd or from Dutton Rd. The parking lot at Dutton Rd is in Oakland Charter Township. The Tienken Rd Trailhead has a portable restroom, signage, and picnic facilities. The trail is surfaced with limestone fines and is in excellent condition. Paint Creek can be accessed at several points along the trail, supporting fishing or swimming. Most river access points are informal, and some are in poor condition and could be formalized.

- » **Average Condition: 81%**
- » **Accessibility: 4**



Trail

Grant History

The City of Rochester Hills has a proven track record with successful implementation of grants. Table 15 Grant History lists the grants the City has received from the MDNR along with the activities that were completed with each grant.

Note that the City has successfully completed all projects from previous years, is moving forward steadily with grant project from 2019, and looks forward to working with the State in the future to continue to bring world-class recreation to Rochester Hills.

Table 15: Grant History

Park	Grant Number	Year	Grant Amount	Activity	Status
Spencer Park	26-01023 N	1977	\$125,000	Acquisition of 91 acres of land	Completed
Spencer Park	26-01060 F4	1978	\$70,000	Walkway, boat dock & storage building with electrical service, bathhouse/comfort station, access road & parking, fencing for ball diamond, fishing pier, park signs	Completed
Spencer Park	26-01104 P1	1980	\$30,000	2 tennis courts, jogging/physical fitness course, playscape	Completed
Pine Trace Park & Golf Course	TF396	1980	\$620,000	Acquisition of 187.8 acres of land (Ulbrich Tract)	Completed
Spencer Park	26-01347	1984	\$21,000	Multi-purpose sports field, access road & parking	Completed
Earl E. Borden Park	BF90-255	1990	\$500,000	4 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, playground equipment, site furnishings, landscaping, roads, parking & walks, restroom/concession, utilities, softball fields & 5 soccer fields with irrigation, lighting (fields/parking)	Completed
Avondale Park	TF90-256	1990	\$200,000	Ball field, playground, 2 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, fencing, paved parking & drives, picnic shelter, soccer field, paved walks, landscaping	Completed
Van Hoosen Dairy Barn Renovation	CM99-316	1999	\$500,000	Renovation of dairy barn interior, heating/cooling system, plumbing, silo repair/display area, road & parking, fire & lightning protection	Completed
Clinton River Trail Acquisition	TF01-068	2001	\$1,900,000	Acquisition of 54 acres (4.5 miles) of railroad right-of-way	Completed
Bloomer Park	RP12-479	2012	\$45,000	Velodrome track surface renovation	Completed
Riverbend Park (Innovation Hills)	26-01744	2016	\$150,000	Development of 500 linear feet of wetland boardwalk with trail signage & benches, universally designed restroom, extending water and electric into the park, 50' paved connection from park system to city pathway system allowing for connection to the Clinton River Trail	Completed
Riverbend Park (Innovation Hills)	26-01788	2017	\$150,000	500 linear feet of boardwalk, accessible canoe/kayak launch, connecting trails, signage, benches.	Completed
Innovation Hills	26-01838	2019	\$300,000	Accessible playground development with four play structures, walkways, native landscaping, solar powered pathway lights.	PA Executed

Table 16: City Owned Existing Recreation Facilities Inventory

FACILITY NAME	ACRES	Parking Lots	Concessions	Restrooms	Meeting Rooms	Swimming Beach	Unimproved Water Access	Basketball Courts	Roller Hockey Rink	Tennis Courts	Tables/Benches	Fishing	Pathways	Pavilion/Shelters	Picnic Areas
District Parks															
Bloomer Park	206.9	PV		X							X		X	4	X
Earl E. Borden Park	143.0	PV		X				3	2	2	X		X	1	
Innovation Hills	62.38	PV		X			X				X	X	X	2	X
Thelma G. Spencer Park	113.0	PV/GR	X	X		X				2	X	X	X	1	X
Community Parks															
Avondale Park	18.5	PV		PT				2		2	X		X	1	X
Eugene S. Nowicki Park	34.6	GR													
Neighborhood Parks															
Helen V. Allen Park	9.9	GR		PT											
Wabash Park	3.7	GR									X				X
Yates Roadside Park	4.3	PV		VT			X				X	X	X		X
Special Use or Conservancy Parks															
Avon Nature Study Area	102.5	PV					X				X		X		X
Brooklands Plaza	0.5	PV		X							X				X
Pine Trace Golf Course	190.0	PV	X	X									X		
Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm	16.77	PV		X	3		X				X	X		1	X
Tienken Road Park Property	10.0												X		
Veterans Memorial Pointe	5.1	PV		VT							X		X	1	
Green Space Properties	138														
Linear Parks															
Clinton River Trail	54.0	GR		VT							X	X			
Paint Creek Trail	17.8	PV		PT							X	X		X	
TOTAL	1,130.95				3	1		5	2	6				11	

Legend

- » PV = Paved
- » GR = Gravel
- » X = One or more units
- » PT = Portable Toilet
- » V = Vending
- » VT = Vault Toilet
- » WF = Engineered Wood Fiber
- » AT = Artificial Turf Safety Surface

Table 17: City Owned Existing Recreation Facilities Inventory, Continued

Baseball Fields	Softball Fields	Lighting	Multi-Purpose Fields	Volleyball Courts	Soccer Fields	Play Areas	Safety Surface	CONDITION RATING	ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT	OTHER
			X	2		4	WF	56%	2	Sledding hill, velodrome, cricket, grass volleyball courts, mtn bike trails
2	2	X	X	1	12	1	WF	76%	3	15 irrigated fields, batting cage, Festival of the Hills, sledding, 30 ac wooded wetlands, pickle ball (8)
						X	AT	99%	4	Sensory garden
				1	2	X	WF	71%	3	40-acre lake, ice skating, heated shelter
	1		X	2		2	WF	63%	2	Sand volleyball
								83%	1	Undeveloped
	2							54%	1	
						1	WF	53%	2	Community garden
								67%	2	Clinton River frontage, Yates Cider Mill
								61%	1	Clinton River frontage, pond
		X						100%	4	Splash pad; paved parking lot adjacent to the plaza
								N/A	3	Championship golf course, clubhouse, restaurant, driving range
			X					74%	3	Historic farm complex, children's garden, school house, interpretive displays, programs, events
								N/A	1	Undeveloped
								79%	2	Memorial, Clinton River frontage, connected to Clinton River Trail
								N/A	N/A	Multiple parcels (including the Childress, Clear Creek, Cloverport, Harding, Rivercrest, Innovation Hills, Ruby, and Auburn properties) all with Clinton River frontage & woodlands, many with steep slopes, wetlands, ponds and/or scenic views
								73%	4	4.5 miles, connected to regional trails
								81%	4	1.5 miles connected to regional trails, trout stream
2	5			6	14	8				

Accessibility Assessment Scale

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

Other Recreation Opportunities

Schools

The City of Rochester Hills and surrounding area benefit from the facilities provided by both the Rochester Community Schools and Avondale School District. Rochester School District is the main school district in the community and has three high schools, four middle schools, and 13 elementary schools. Local universities also provide community recreation amenities, including Oakland University's two golf courses and Lake Norcentra Park on the campus of Rochester University.

City of Rochester

The City of Rochester contains numerous recreational facilities, including parks, schools and three distinct creek/river areas. The City maintains seven parks, totaling eighty-two acres, including Municipal Park, Scott Street Park, Halbach Field, Memorial Grove, Howlett Park, Elizabeth Park, and Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve. The creek/river areas include Paint Creek, Stoney Creek and the Clinton River.

Private Facilities

In addition to the multitude of publicly owned parks and recreation facilities in the area, Rochester Hills residents have some of the recreation needs fulfilled by privately-owned open spaces and recreation facilities that have been made available as the result of development in the community. These privately-owned areas offer access to nature and active recreation such as athletic fields or courts, golf courses, gyms and yoga studios, playgrounds and swimming pools that are available for use. One example in the community is Lifetime Fitness, which has a large facility including fitness equipment and an indoor pool. Classes are offered for both children and adults.

Neighborhood Open Space or Parks

Neighborhood open spaces are areas set aside by subdivision developers to meet the requirements of the City's Open Space Development option. These areas vary in size, are owned and maintained by the subdivision's homeowners association, and are part of the Subdivision Plan or Condominium Plan. Some of these areas are wooded natural areas or wetland areas; others offer play areas or play equipment for children. The City provides technical support and best management practices for these areas as requested. As part of this requirement, a 24-acre parcel has been deeded to the Oakland

Land Conservancy and designated as the Heron Rookery along the Clinton River in the City's western neighborhoods.

Regional Facilities

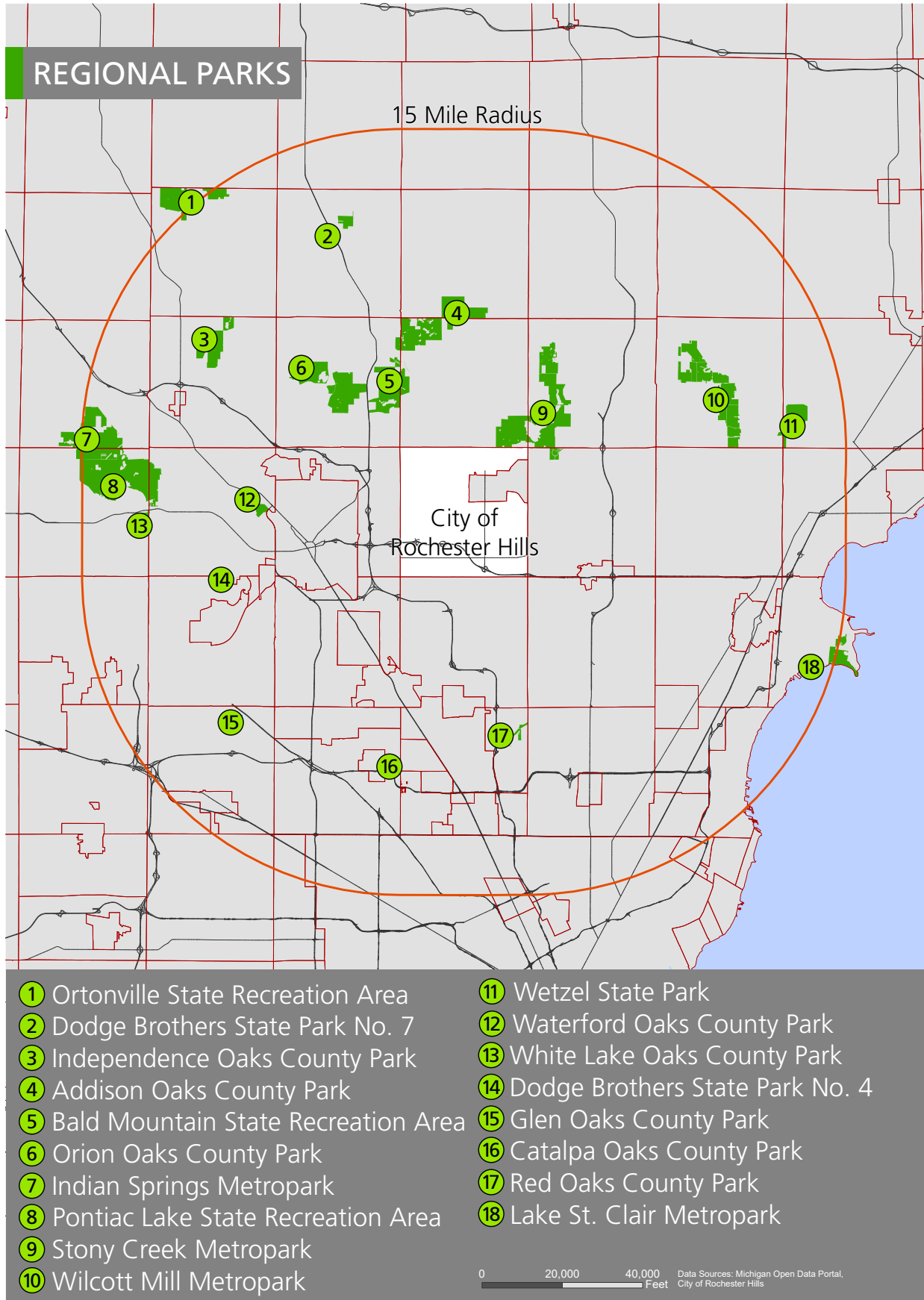
Regional parks offer unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, fishing, boating, hiking, and trail use. Many also include active play areas such as ball fields or courts. While these parks are not used for formal programming by the City of Rochester Hills, they provide active and passive recreation opportunities to Rochester Hills residents. There are several regional recreation opportunities located within a roughly a 15 mile or 20-minute driving radius of the City as depicted in the map "Regional Parks" and as described below.

Oakland County Parks

The Oakland County park system consists of thirteen parks covering 6,700 acres of land as listed below. These parks offer year-round recreational activities including camping, hiking, swimming, boating, golfing, picnicking, cross-country skiing, ice-skating and fishing. The wide variety of parks include trails, water parks, nature centers, dog "bark" parks, golf courses, and outdoor entertainment venues, among other things. Five of the parks located near Rochester Hills are Addison Oaks, Independence Oaks, Orion Oaks, Red Oaks and Waterford Oaks.

- » Addison Oaks (Addison Twp., east of Lake Orion)
- » Catalpa Oaks Park (Southfield)
- » Glen Oaks Golf Course (Farmington Hills)
- » Groveland Oaks (Groveland Twp., between the Villages of Holly and Ortonville)
- » Highland Oaks (Highland Twp.)
- » Independence Oaks (Independence Twp., northeast of Clarkston)
- » Lyon Oaks (Wixom)
- » Orion Oaks (Orion Twp., west of Lake Orion)
- » Red Oaks (Madison Heights)
- » Rose Oaks (Rose Twp.)
- » Springfield Oaks (Springfield Twp., southeast of Holly Village)
- » Waterford Oaks (Waterford Twp., northwest of the City of Pontiac)
- » White Lake Oaks (White Lake Twp.)

Map 06: Regional Parks



Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Facilities

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA) operates more than a dozen regional recreation areas in southeast Michigan totaling 24,000 acres of parkland. These parks provide facilities for a wide range of recreational opportunities, which include picnicking, playgrounds, hiking, swimming, boating, fishing, golf, court games, cross-country skiing, ice-skating, and sledding, among others. Four HCMA parks are located near Rochester Hills as follows:

- » Indian Springs Metropark (Springfield and White Lake Twps.)
- » Lake St. Clair Metropark (Harrison Twp)
- » Stony Creek Metropark (Shelby Twp.)
- » Wolcott Mill Metropark (Ray Twp.)

Michigan State Facilities

Seventeen State parks and recreation areas are located in southeast Michigan. These parks exceed 50,000 acres and provide a wide range of facilities. Common recreation opportunities available at these sites include hiking, swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, camping, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling, among others. There are eight state facilities in Oakland County, with Pontiac Lake State and Bald Mountain State Recreation Areas both located within a short distance of Rochester Hills. Ortonville State Recreation Area and Dodge Brothers State Park No. 7 are also located within a 15-mile radius. The majority of the other facilities are located in nearby Washtenaw and Wayne Counties and are reasonably accessible to Rochester Hills residents.

- » Bald Mountain State Recreation Area (Lake Orion)
- » Belle Isle Park (Detroit)
- » Dodge No. 4 State Park (Waterford Twp.)
- » Highland Recreation Area (White Lake Twp.)
- » Holly State Recreation Area (Holly)
- » Horseshoe Lake State Game Area (Oxford)
- » Island Lake Recreation Area (Brighton)
- » Maybury State Park (Northville Twp.)
- » Metamora-Hadley State Recreation Area (Metamora)
- » Ortonville State Recreation Area (Ortonville)
- » Pontiac Lake Recreation Area (Waterford Twp.)
- » Proud Lake Recreation Area (Commerce Twp.)
- » Seven Lake State Park (Holly)

- » St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area (Harsens Island)
- » St. Johns Marshland Wildlife Area (Harsens Island)
- » Wetzel State Recreation Area (New Haven)
- » William G. Milliken State Park (Detroit)

Recreation Programs

Rochester Hills

The Department of Parks and Natural Resources offers cultural and educational programs through the Outdoor Engagement and the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. In addition to traditional programming, the City hosts a number of special events throughout the year. The annual Festival of the Hills at Borden Park is the largest special event held in Rochester Hills. Pine Trace Golf Course hosts the innovative Special Olympics of Golf each year. A listing of the programming offered by the City is provided below.

Outdoor Engagement Program List

- » Animal Archaeology
- » Antler Amble
- » Antler Jewelry Making
- » Archery
- » Campfire and Night Hikes
- » Fishing for Beginners
- » Fishing Tournament
- » Fly Fishing
- » Fly Tying
- » Fossils and Campfire
- » Holiday Hike
- » Hoot N Howl
- » Kayaking 101
- » Making Maple Syrup
- » Nature Discovery Camp
- » Nature on Wheels
- » OAK in the Hills
- » Outdoor Adventure Camp
- » Outdoor Survival for Teens
- » Paddlepalooza
- » Reptile Roundup
- » Sap to Syrup
- » Wild Edibles
- » Partner programs e.g. RARA adaptive Programs

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
General Public Programs*

- » February Film Festival
- » March Lecture Series
- » Earth Day Documentary Screening
- » Tea Program
- » Scanning Sessions
- » Open Hours Tour
- » Veteran's Day speaker
- » Walking Tour - Historic Landscape
- » Walking Tour - Stoney Creek Village
- » Women's History speaker
- » Cider: Pressing & History
- » Hard Cider: Tasting & History

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
Collaborations*

- » Founder's Day Celebration
- » Sap To Syrup
- » Garden Walk
- » Adult Garden Series
- » Pedal the Past
- » Young Leaders Annual Fundraiser
- » Rochester Grangers Vintage Base Ball
- » Bee Program - Honeybee Hangout
- » Bee Program - Honey Harvest
- » Brown Bag Lunch
- » Smart Town Lecture Series
- » Fairies & Dragons in the Garden
- » Art of Plein Air - PCCA
- » Clinton-Kalamazoo Canal Walking Tour
- » Scarecrows in the Village

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
Offsite Tours*

- » Downtown Walking Tour
- » Cemetery Tour
- » Bike Tour

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
Youth & Curriculum Driven Programs*

- » Stream Science
- » Summer Camp
- » Terrific Tuesdays in the Garden
- » Open House - Stony Creek Schoolhouse
- » Widgets, Gizmos, Gadgets
- » Stories in Stone
- » SCSH - 1 hour program

- » SCSH - 3 hour program
- » Red House - 1st grade
- » Downtown Walking Tour - 2nd grade
- » Farmhouse & Exhibits - 3rd grade

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
Large Special Events*

- » Wet & Wild Wednesday
- » Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival
- » Visit with Santa
- » Old Fashioned Christmas
- » Trains Exhibit
- » Volunteer Appreciation Night
- » Christmas Candlelight Tours
- » Smithsonian Day

*Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm -
Outreach Multimedia Programs*

- » Leaders, Legend, and Liars
- » Women Leaders of Rochester
- » Rochester in 1920s
- » Rochester in 1930s
- » Rochester in 1960s
- » Spectacular Rochester!
- » The Summer of 1816
- » The Ten Most interesting Tid Bits of Local History
- » The 17 Most Interesting Archival Photographs

Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority

The Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) offers a large range of programs from pre-school activities; numerous sports activities including basketball, golf, gymnastics, hockey, ice-skating, and volleyball; fitness classes, dance, educational activities, and community wide events. Participants' ages range from youth to senior citizens. The programs are offered at their main headquarters, schools and municipal facilities as well as a number of facilities located within the community, such as indoor sports centers, the local ice arena, and athletic clubs.

RARA also offers a variety of other special events throughout the year. These events include daddy/daughter sweetheart dance, mother/son date night, family magic show, fun run/walk in conjunction with the annual Rochester Heritage Festival, teddy bear picnic, mother/daughter picnic, pee-wee Olympics, and special holiday events for Easter, Halloween and Christmas.

Older Persons' Commission

The Older Persons' Commission (OPC) also provides programming for City residents aged 60+. The Health & Wellness programs at OPC provide resident members age 50+ with a welcoming and relaxed environment to achieve their fitness goals. They offer a complete line of strength and cardiovascular machines, a combination of land and aquatic classes, programming that promotes healthy aging, and personal training for persons desiring a uniquely designed fitness program. In addition, the OPC provides nutritional meals, services, social and educational activities, transportation, adult day services, and community outreach opportunities.

Paint Creek Center for the Arts

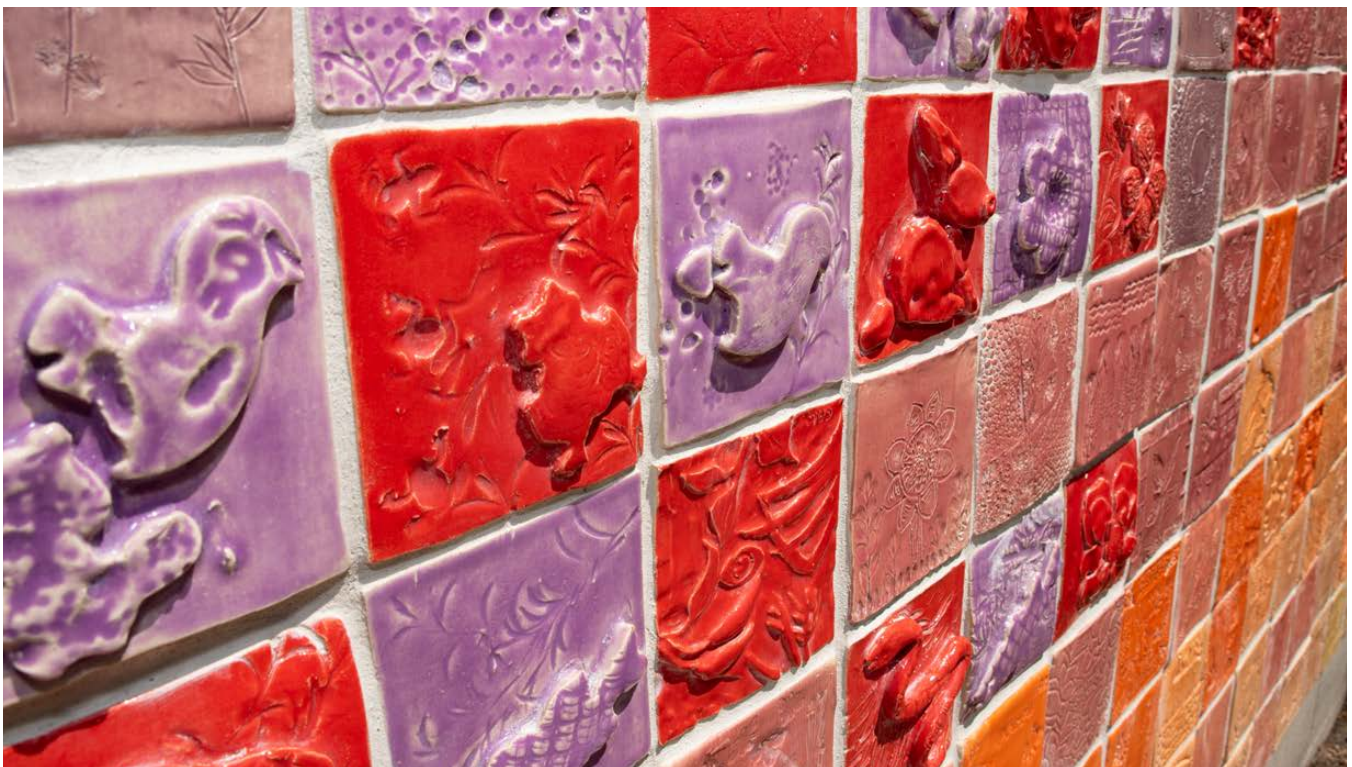
Since 1982, Paint Creek Center for the Arts (PCCA) has been dedicated to promoting the arts and artistic excellence through a full range of cultural programs including exhibitions, studio art classes, outreach programs and community involvement projects. Art education classes are offered in a variety of media for all ages and levels of experience. Drawing, painting, ceramics, photography, and summer camps are the core of PCCA's programming. PCCA programs reach many different segments of the region and serve as tools for community enhancement and economic development by improving quality of life and

drawing visitors to the area. Paint Creek Center for the Arts is an important cultural resource and destination, and a vital presence in the greater Rochester community.

PCCA may be best known for presenting the Art & Apples Festival, a nationally acclaimed fine art fair held annually the weekend after Labor Day. A source of pride for the Greater Rochester Community, the Festival has enjoyed the ranking as one of the top 20 rated art fairs in the nation.

Other Agencies

In addition to the City, RARA and OPC, a number of organized recreation programs are made available to City residents by local organizations. Programs are offered by many not-for-profit organizations including, but not limited to: Rochester Youth Soccer League, North Oakland Baseball Federation, and Rochester Hills Little League.



Spencer Park Mural - A joint project with OPC-Paint Creek Center for the Arts and Paint a Miracle



Department of Parks and Natural Resources staff meet together

4. Planning Process

Planning Process Overview

The City of Rochester Hills Department of Parks and Natural Resources undertakes a recreation planning process every five years to review what has changed in the community in the past five years, the status of each park, check in with the community about recreation needs and desires, and determine what goals, objectives, and action items will be pursued in the next five years. This process was dovetailed into a longer-range comprehensive

planning effort for the Department of Parks and Natural Resources, which clarified some of the goals and objectives in this plan. Community engagement was a critical component of this process.

The community engagement strategy included a statistically valid community needs mail-in survey, an online public survey, focus groups and interviews with stakeholders and key leaders, and

a pop-up open-house engagement event. Focus groups and stakeholder interviews were conducted in April 2022. A statistically valid community needs analysis survey was conducted by mail in the summer of 2022, which was also available online during a similar timeframe. On Saturday, October 8, a pop-up engagement session was held at the Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. Through that event, 14 survey responses were collected and many more community members engaged in conversation with the consultants.

To review the draft plan and additional content, a leadership team was developed comprising of the leaders within the Parks and Natural Resources Department. The leadership team met once a month, throughout the duration of the planning process. A final draft plan was approved for distribution and the 30-day public review period began on December 9, 2022.

After the 30-day public review period concluded, a public hearing was held at the January 9, 2023 City Council Meeting. The public hearing was advertised on the City's website. Following the public hearing, the plan was adopted by the City Council on [\[redacted\]](#).

A summary of the survey results, stakeholder interviews, and community input session is highlighted on the following pages.

Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups

Focus groups and interviews were held in April 2022 to assist the city in determining priorities for parks, trails, recreation facilities, programs, and services. Focus groups consisted of recreation-related non-profit organizations, neighbors to parks, youth sports programs, government officials, and the Youth Council. Interviews were also conducted with the Leadership Team, Parks and Natural Resources staff, city staff, and City Council. In addition, four individuals were interviewed by phone who were not able to attend the arranged focus groups, including representatives from the Youth Council, North Oakland Baseball Federation, a business representative from Fanuc Robotics, and the Green Space Board.

The interviewees were encouraged to be candid in their answers and were told their names would not be used in the Master Plan. The questions spanned program priorities, park uses, management of

the parks and how the parks play a role in the community.

The views of stakeholders vary widely, and add qualitative input to the planning process, as opposed to statistically valid input derived from the public survey. In general, stakeholders enjoy the innovative and unique amenities offered by the City including Innovation Hills and the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. There is a desire for more high-quality and unique spaces. Undeveloped parks such as the Tienken Property and Nowicki Park are valued for the contribution of green space, but could provide additional value with development that provided better public access. Outdated amenities such as older bathroom facilities, shelters in need of replacement, and the Velodrome were seen as areas in need of improvement. Stakeholders interviewed were generally in favor of a dog park.

A full reporting from the interviews and focus groups can be found in the appendix.

Community Input Survey

In the summer of 2022, a statistically valid community needs analysis survey was conducted on behalf of the City of Rochester Hills by ETC Institute. The survey was administered to a random sample of households within the city, and a total of 563 surveys were returned. The results have a precision of at least +/-4.1% at the 95% level of confidence. The following are some key findings from the survey. A full reporting of survey results can be found in the document entitled "2022 Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment Findings Report" as prepared by ETC Institute. An abridged version of this report (without full tabular data) is located in the Appendix.

The survey found that the most frequently used parks are Innovation Hills, the Paint Creek Trail and Clinton River Trail, Borden and Bloomer Parks. The least visited park was Helen V. Allen Park. As for the condition of the parks, highly rated parks included those with recent improvements, such as Innovation Hills, Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Brooklands Plaza, as well as Veterans Memorial Pointe. Some of the lowest rated parks were Nowicki Park, Helen V Allen Park, Wabash Park, and Yates Park.

Households were asked if they had a need for 28 amenities/facilities and rate how well their needs

for those amenities are currently being met. ETC was able to analyze this data and estimate the number of households that had the greatest unmet need for various recreation amenities. It was found that outdoor swimming pools and unleashed dog parks were the two facilities with the greatest unmet need in the community.

Survey respondents were also asked which recreation amenities/facilities were most important to them. The top six most important amenities/facilities to households were paved walking and biking trails, natural parks and preserves, restrooms, outdoor swimming pools, unleashed dog parks, and playgrounds.

When asked which types of programs were most important to their household, top choices included hiking and walking, health & wellness based programming, kayaking, senior outdoor/nature programs, youth outdoor/nature day camps, environmental education, and large community events. However, the majority of survey respondents (85%) had not participated in a City of Rochester Hills program in the last 12 months, and most (80%) had also not participated in programs at the Museum in the last 12 months.

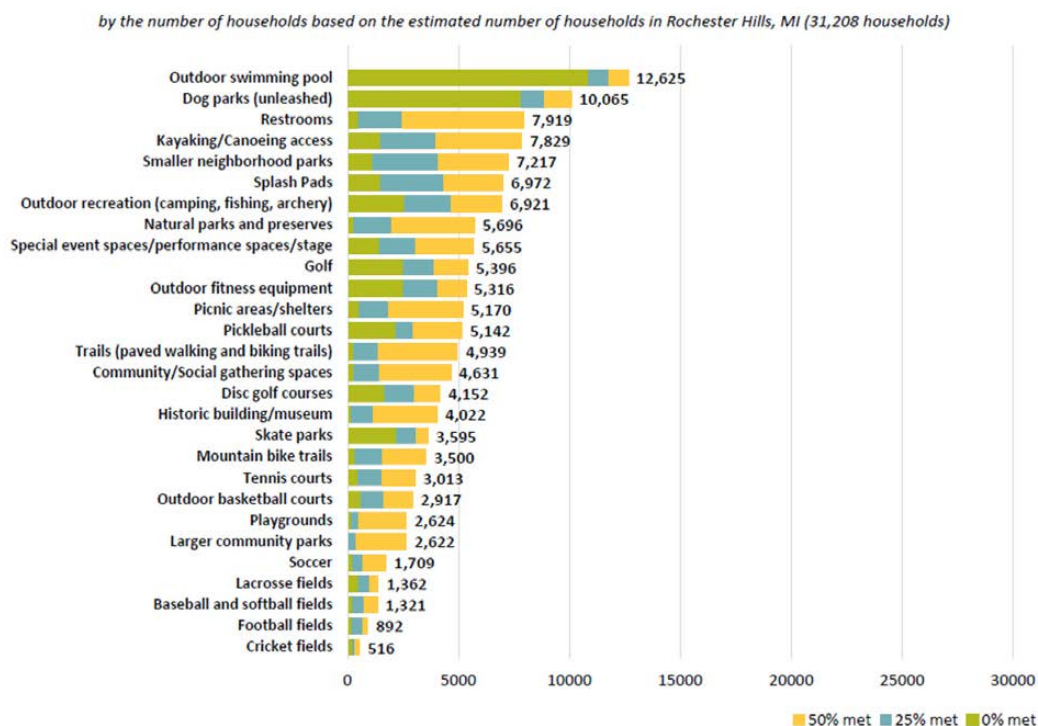
Survey respondents were most satisfied with the maintenance of parks/facilities, customer assistance by staff, connectivity of trails & pathways, and the amount of open green space. They were least satisfied with the amount of open green space, amount of available indoor recreation space, and fees charged for park entry and recreation programs.

In the next five years, survey respondents think that the areas that should receive the most attention are connectivity of trails and pathways, the amount of open green space, and maintenance of parks/facilities.

Survey respondents typically wanted the City of Rochester Hills to fund future parks, recreation, trails, and open spaces by maintaining existing funding levels (53%) and a smaller portion wanted to increase funding (45%).

In addition to the need for each amenity/facility, the survey also evaluated the importance that households placed on each one. The six most important amenities/facilities to households are paved walking and biking trails, natural parks and preserves, restrooms, outdoor swimming pools, unleashed dog parks, and playgrounds.

Figure 09: "How well are your needs being met?"



Source: ETC Institute (Olathe, KS)

When asked what four items the City of Rochester Hills should fund, top choices from the mail-in survey were develop a new outdoor aquatic facility (31%), develop new walking trails (30%), develop a dog park (27%), improve existing trail system (increasing connectivity/accessibility) (25.7%), develop a new community recreation center (22%) and develop new neighborhood parks (21%). The lowest priorities were to develop new synthetic turf fields, add additional sports fields, and improve existing athletic fields.

ETC Institute concluded the report with recommendations to sustain and/or improve in the following categories of amenities/facilities: outdoor swimming pools, paved walking and biking trails, unleashed dog parks, restrooms, and natural parks and preserves.

Open House

After draft goals and objectives for the five-year parks and recreation plan had been prepared, the consultant team had a pop-up public engagement event in concert with the Stone Wall Pumpkin Festival on Saturday, October 8 at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. The team had

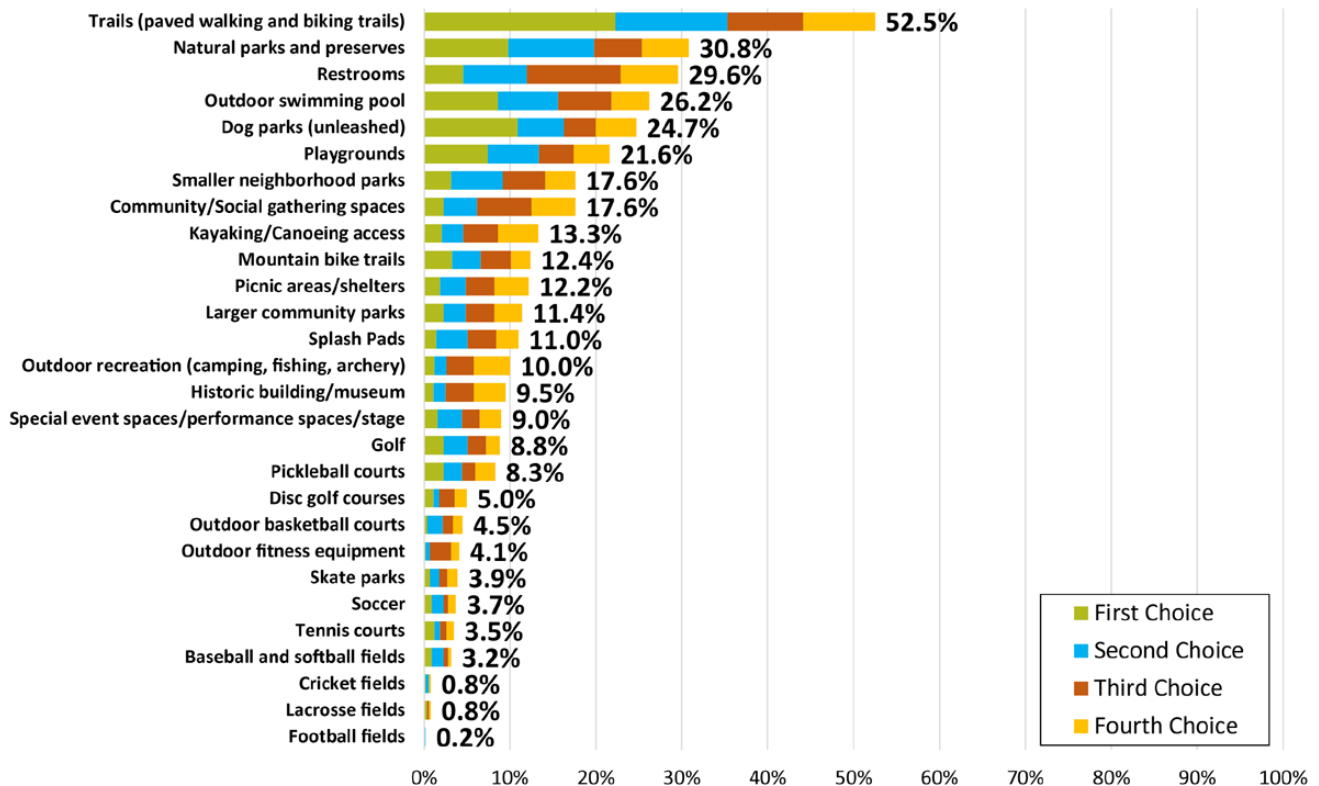
brochures available that described the planning process, listed the draft goals and objectives, and had a QR code to link to an online survey asking if survey respondents agreed or disagreed with the goals and objectives, as well as details on why. The consultant team also had iPads available so that the survey could be taken on-site during the event, or the brochures could be taken home to answer the survey at a convenient time. In addition, the consultant team engaged in conversations with community members as they enjoyed the pumpkin carving event.

A total of 14 survey responses were collected. For each draft goal presented, most respondents either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed, and a smaller portion had no opinion.

A small number of comments were collected as part of the feedback survey. These included:

- » “Please find a better product for trails than what has been used on Paint Creek Trail also in Bear Creek, Oakland Township. Currently the surface is not conducive to wet or winter conditions.”

Figure 10: “Which Four Amenities/Facilities are Most Important to Your Household?”



Source: ETC Institute (Olathe, KS)

- » “Suggest IF a dog park is planned to consider asking educated dog residents to be involved. Also, study Orion Oaks Dog Park and see how the multiple double gates do offer safe entrance and exit.”
- » “Dog Park!”
- » “I am disheartened over the building on every square inch of land in Rochester Hills. The green spaces that are no longer in the city of the last 30 years are just sad. While the tax base has increased I think we have lost so much natural & wildlife settings. Too much development & not enough preservation of why I moved here.
- » “[Goals 5 and 6] are important ways to increase community involvement and value for parks.”
- » “We love and use the parks all the time.”

When asked if there are any goals or objectives that should be added to the list, three comments were received:

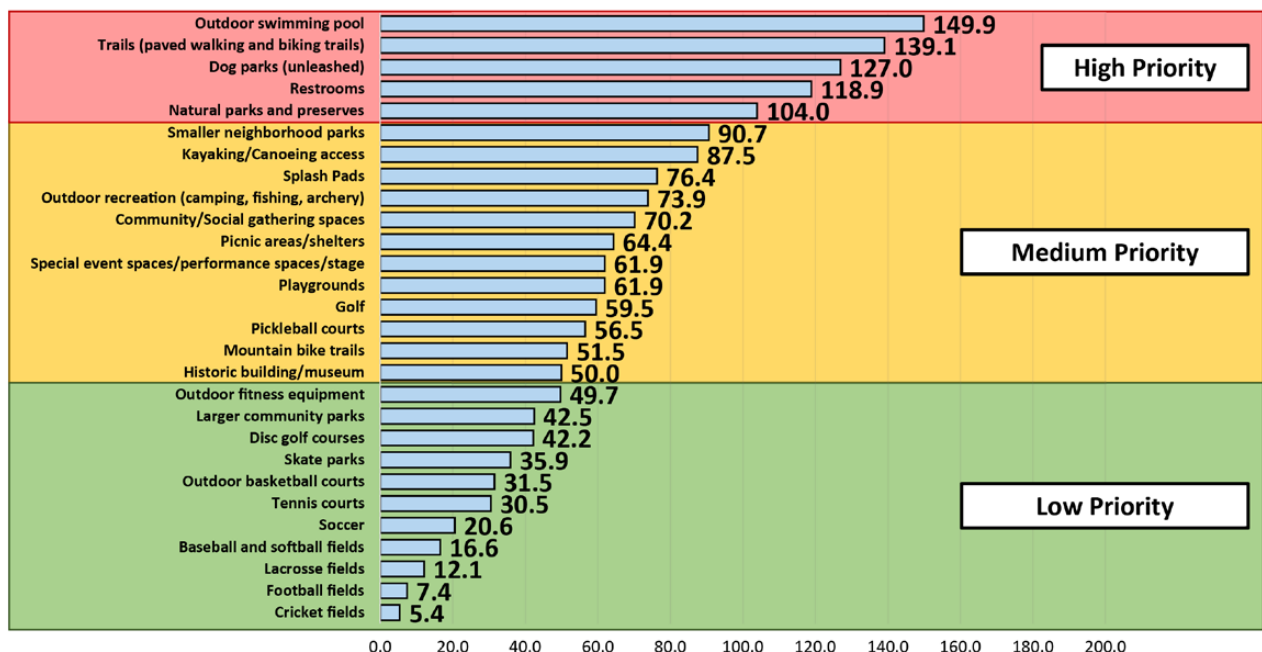
- » “I think restoring is much better for the environment than creating new things.”
- » “Update mountain biking trails.”
- » “I’d like to see a skate park as a future goal.”

When asked if any goals or objectives should be removed from the list, one comment suggested shifting goals to be more eco-friendly.

Public Hearing

The draft plan was available for public review and comment for thirty days from December 9, 2022 to January 8, 2023. The plan was available both online on the City’s website, as well as in-person at the local library. Public comments were collected and reviewed. After that public review period, a public hearing was held prior to the plan adoption at the first City Council meeting in January 2023.

Figure 11: Priority Investment Ratings for Parks and Recreation Amenities / Facilities



Source: ETC Institute (Olathe, KS)

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Park construction activities

5. Implementation

Introduction

The culmination of the planning process is the implementation strategy – this is how the data and ideas captured through the inventory, analysis, and public engagement processes are brought together and distilled into broad goals, reasonable objectives, and specific actions to be targeted within the next five years. The mission of the Department of Parks and Natural Resources is at the heart of it all:

“We build connections in our community: Neighbor to Neighbor; Neighbor to Nature; and Neighbor to History. We do this by preserving our history, conserving our green infrastructure, and engaging our community in the outdoors.”

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives offer broad policy direction for the Department of Parks and Natural Resources and local officials. The goals and objectives were developed to be realistic for the City of Rochester Hills financial, social, and physical realities.

Goal 1: Provide high-quality outdoor spaces through maintenance or replacement of existing facilities.

Objectives

- » Develop a maintenance operations plan that aligns staffing levels to best practice expectations and national standards.
- » Remove the velodrome and re-purpose the area.
- » Continue parking lot and asphalt court replacement program.
- » Replace outdated restroom facilities.
- » Continue stewardship planning and improvement of natural areas in Green Space & Parks.
- » Continue enhancing high quality sports fields.

Goal 2: Provide new, diverse outdoor recreation and cultural amenities.

Objectives

- » Consider development of an aquatic recreation facility, youth-oriented facilities/amenities, and community gathering spaces.
- » Develop site plans for Bloomer Park and Spencer Park to guide future development.
- » Develop a dog park in the community.
- » Develop and implement a site plan for Nowicki Park.

- » Explore possible recreational activities near the Brooklands Plaza splashpad area with additional adjacent park land.
- » Consider future enhancement of historic Museum campus.
- » Explore inclusion of art & culture amenities in parks and around the community.

Goal 3: Increase access to natural resource-based recreation.

Objectives

- » Enhance existing parks with accessible walking trails that allow access to nature without detracting from it.
- » Develop consistent wayfinding signage system-wide.
- » Work with MIS to develop technology-based mapping in the park system.
- » Increase percentage of trails with hard surfacing.
- » Identify high-quality viewsheds and natural resources to target with trails.
- » Continue to pursue purchase of medium- to high-quality recreation or conservation land parcels as they become available.

Goal 4: Engage the community through improved outreach and citizen involvement.

Objectives

- » Expand access to Museum artifacts and stories.
- » Create a structure that supports philanthropic opportunities.
- » Develop a communications/marketing plan for the Department.
- » Improve ease of access to parks information, including online and social media outlets.



Children play at Innovation Hills

Goal 5: Increase community events and programming.

Objectives

- » Analyze staffing needs to produce additional community events.
- » Explore partnerships with community organizations for programming and staffing events.
- » Explore and develop art in parks locations and partnerships.
- » Increase programming, whether guided or self-led, and walking opportunities in the community.

Goal 6: Operate the Parks and Natural Resources Department in a fiscally sustainable manner.

Objectives

- » Increase funding for park operations through all available sources.
- » Ensure equitable access to outdoor recreation by offering discounted park admission to qualifying residents and visitors.
- » Create a pricing policy that reflects individual/private benefits.
- » Increase Department cost recovery.

Action Steps

Action steps are action-oriented and specific in nature and used as an organizational strategy to achieve the goals listed in the plan. The action plan is created as a guide for the budgeting process for the next five years. The action plan is divided into two sections, the Operations Action Plan and the Construction Action Plan.

Potential Funding Sources

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources administers a variety of recreation grants to municipalities to finance parks improvements, which the City of Rochester Hills could pursue. Table XX shows the MDNR’s major grant programs in more detail, displays which types of projects would qualify for the grant, and explains how much localities must match the State’s grant funding.

Table 18: Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grant Funding

Grant	Eligible Projects	Match Requirements	Grant Request Amount
Trust Fund	Development for public outdoor recreation such as: trails, ball fields, tennis courts and restrooms	Minimum 25%	\$15,000 - \$300,000
Land and Water Conservation Fund	Development for public outdoor recreation such as: trails, picnic areas, beaches, boating access and fishing areas.	Minimum 50%	\$30,000 - \$500,000
Recreation Passport	Development for public outdoor and indoor recreation such as: trails, picnic areas, beaches, boating access and fishing areas. Renovation of existing facilities is emphasized.	Minimum 25%	\$7,500 - \$150,000

Table 19: Operations Action Plan

Responsible Division	Project	Related Goal
Parks	Create a master list of park infrastructure and a schedule for replacement of outdated facilities in coordination with the Facilities Division	Upgrade
Grounds	Enhance two ball fields per year, using the ABI Force to level the playing field	Upgrade
Grounds	Upgrade park benches by adding brick paving pads	Upgrade
Grounds	Redo two goal mounts a year, removing damaged turf and replacing it with artificial turf	Upgrade
Grounds	Enhance one soccer field per year, utilizing Fraze mower for turfgrass improvement	Upgrade
Natural Resources	Develop Natural Resources Stewardship Plan for Bloomer Park	Upgrade
Parks	Develop site plans for Bloomer Park, Spencer Park, Nowicki Park, and Brooklands Plaza.	New
Parks	Explore possible recreation activities near the Brooklands Splash pad on adjacent grass area	New
Museum	Put together plan to move forward with fundraising the Big Barn at the Museum	New
Natural Resources	Develop Outdoor Engagement pop-up program near Brooklands Splash Pad	New
Natural Resources	Develop trail system for Innovation Hills Green Space from river Rope Bridge	New
Parks	Develop consistent wayfinding for trails system wide	Access
Parks	Identify remaining gaps in trail and walking path connectivity and connect them in coordination with DPS	Access
Museum	Improve pedestrian access to the Museum site	Access
Museum	Utilize the Museum as a demonstration site for bioswales, native gardens and stream edge protection	Access
Parks / Natural Resources	Develop park and green space trail improvement plan identifying key viewsheds and timelines for improvement	Access

Table 20: Operations Plans Continued

Responsible Division	Project	Related Goal
Natural Resources	Develop virtual City-wide arboretum map	Access
Natural Resources	Apply for grant to purchase nominated Green Space property	Access
Natural Resources	Develop Citizen led programs (e.g. citizen science, walking groups)	Outreach
Museum	Develop new programs for Museum artifacts out in the community	Outreach
Natural Resources	Develop Tree Planting Program for HOA commons areas	Outreach
Natural Resources	Organize weekly hiking program	Outreach
Natural Resources	Expand Outdoor Engagement camp program	Programming
Natural Resources	Implement Oak in the Hills Event	Programming
Natural Resources	Develop text-based scavenger hunt	Programming
Natural Resources	Expand archery program	Programming
Natural Resources	Develop outdoor engagement programming for RARA Camps that are housed at Rochester Hills Parks	Programming
Parks	Apply for at least one major construction grant every other year	Fiscal
Parks / Grounds	Review mowing operations for labor savings in implementing "grow don't mow" areas	Fiscal
All	Review all programs, events, and offered activities to align costs of operation with fees charged	Fiscal
Parks / Museum	Evaluate need for fundraising/marketing function to create and sustain philanthropic connections in the community	Fiscal
Natural Resources	Revise tree removal permit pricing to include site visits and re-reviews	Fiscal

Table 21: Construction Action Plan

Year	Facility	Project	Estimated Cost	Listed	Related Goals
2023	All	Replace roofs	\$1,700,000	CIP	Upgrade
2023	All	Upgrade entrance signs	\$500,000	CIP	Upgrade & 3
2023	Bloomer Park	Cricket pitch rehabilitation	\$150,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
2023	Bloomer Park	Demolish velodrome	\$100,000	Master	Upgrade
2023	Bloomer Park	Create Site Development plan	\$100,000	Master	New
2023	Bloomer Park	Reconstruct parking lot	\$3,500,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
2023	Bloomer Park	Stone building updates	\$500,000	CIP	Upgrade
2023	Bloomer Park	Replace Brickhouse restroom	\$1,000,000	CIP	Upgrade
2023	Borden Park	Replace batting cages	\$100,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
2023	Brooklands Plaza	Create Site Development Plan	\$10,000	Master	New
2023	Clinton River Trail	Construct an Adams Rd crossing	TBD	CIP	Access
2023	Innovation Hills	Bridge to Greenspace	\$750,000	CIP	Access
2023	Innovation Hills	Year-round restroom	\$1,000,000	CIP	Upgrade
2023	Nowicki Park	Create Site Development plan	\$100,000	Master	New
2023	Paint Creek Trail	Resurface	\$100,000	CIP	Upgrade & Access
2023	Spencer Park	Create Site Development plan	\$150,000	Master	New
2023	Undetermined	Determine feasibility of aquatic recreation facility	\$100,000	Master & CIP	New
2023	Wabash Park	Replace playground	\$300,000	CIP	Upgrade
2024	Bloomer Park	Add disc golf course	\$100,000	CIP	New
2024	Bloomer Park	Implement Site Development plan	TBD	Master	New
2024	Borden Park	Expand maintenance building	\$500,000	Master & CIP?	Upgrade
2024	Brooklands Plaza	Develop adjacent land	\$400,000	Master	New

Table 22: Construction Action Plan Continued

Year	Facility	Project	Estimated Cost	Listed	Related Goals
2024	Clinton River Trail	Resurface	\$1,000,000	Master	Access
2024	Undetermined	Develop dog park site plan	\$25,000	Master	New
2025	Avon Nature Study Area	Bridge to Avon Nature Study Area?	\$750,000	Master	Access
2025	Bloomer Park	Replace Pinetop shelter	\$750,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
2025	Bloomer Park	Replace Hilltop Shelter	\$750,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
2025	Nowicki Park	Implement Site Development plan	TBD	Master	New
2025	Yates Roadside Park	Add a playground	\$400,000	CIP	New
2026	Yates Roadside Park	Construct kayak route around dam	\$500,000	Master	Access
2026	Yates Roadside Park	Kayak launch	\$300,000	Master	New
2027	Innovation Hills	Construct crescent overlook	\$1,500,000	Master	New
2027	Veterans Memorial Pointe	Gazebo replacement	\$200,000	CIP	Upgrade
Every year	All	Playground replacement program	\$300,000	Master & CIP	Upgrade
Ongoing	All	Playground upgrade program	\$50,000	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	All	Evaluate eliminating porta potties at all parks	TBD	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	All	Court rehabilitation program	\$300,000	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	All	Increase trail access and improvements	\$75,000	Master	Access
Ongoing	Clinton River	Wood debris cleanup	\$25,000	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	Clinton River	Erosion control and habitat improvement	TBD	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	Greenspace Properties	Invasive species removal/habitat improvement	\$250,000	Master	Upgrade
Ongoing	Greenspace Properties	Purchase high quality properties	TBD	Master	Access
Ongoing	Innovation Hills	Add art and sculptures	\$400,000	Master	Programming
Ongoing	Parks	Purchase & development neighborhood park property	TBD	Master	New & Access

Sources - Community Profile

- 1 United States Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020, 2010, 1990, P1.
- 2 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimate, DP05.
- 3 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimate, S1810.
- 4 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimate, DP05.
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- 6 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014 & 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP05.
- 7 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014 & 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP05.
- 8 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014 & 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP02.
- 9 National Sporting Goods Association, Sports Participation in the United States, 2013, <https://cdn.ymaws.com/bca-pool.com/resource/resmgr/imported/Sports%20Participation%20in%20the%20United%20States%20-%202013%20Edition.pdf>
- 10 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP03.
- 11 United States Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2019 5 Year Estimates, DP03.
- 12 About, Clinton River Trail, <http://www.clintonrivertrail.org/about.html>
- 13 About, Paint Creek Trail, <http://paintcreektrail.org/wordpress/>
- 14 Museum Grounds, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/departments/parks_and_natural_resources/museum/museum_site_and_its_history/the_museum_grounds.php

Sources - Administrative Structure

- 1 Rochester Avon Recreation Authority, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/rochesteravonrecreationauthority.php
- 2 Summer 2022 – Enrichment Brochure, Rochester Community Schools, <https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1652184587/rochesterk12mius/vl2efdtxl6t6mfk1hmu/SUMMER2022EnrichmentBrochure.pdf>
- 3 Green Space Advisory Board, City of Rochester Hills, [https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/greenspaceadvisoryboard\(gsab\).php](https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/greenspaceadvisoryboard(gsab).php)
- 4 Citizens Pathways Review Committee, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/citizenspathwayreviewcommittee.php
- 5 Trailways Commission, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/trailwayscommission.php
- 6 Rochester Hills Museum Foundation, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/rochesterhillsmuseumfoundation.php
- 7 Older Persons' Commission, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/olderpersonscommission.php
- 8 Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/diversityequityinclusioncommittee.php
- 9 Deer Management Advisory Committee, City of Rochester Hills, https://www.rochesterhills.org/government/committees,_boards___commissions/deermanagementadvisorycommittee.php
- 10 Rochester Hills Museum, Division Plan 2021 – 2026



Appendix

2022 PARKS AND RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT - FINDINGS REPORT (ABRIDGED)

STAKEHOLDER AND FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW SUMMARIES

NOTICE OF PLAN PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

COMMENTS RECEIVED DURING PLAN REVIEW

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING TO PASS A RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

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2022 PARKS & RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Findings Report

Prepared By
ETC INSTITUTE
OLATHE, KS

Presented To The
ROCHESTER HILLS, MI
PARKS & RECREATION
DEPARTMENT

SEPTEMBER
2022



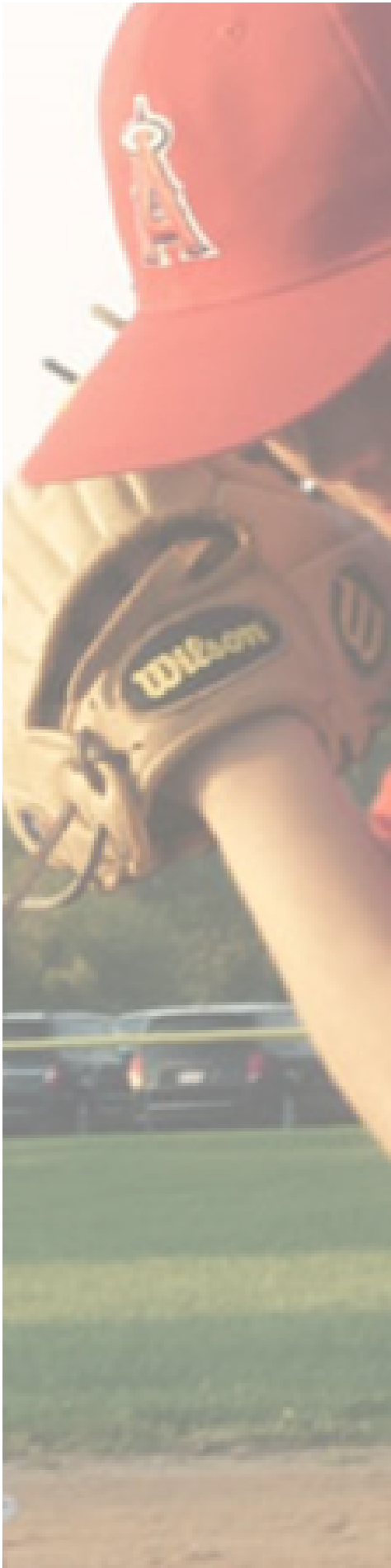


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01	Executive Summary	Page i
02	Charts & Graphs of Survey Results	Page 1
03	Priority Investment Analysis	Page 37
04	Importance-Satisfaction Analysis	Page 41
05	Tabular Data	Page 45
06	Survey Instrument	Page 100

The graphic consists of a white square on the left containing the number '01' in a large, bold, black font. To the right of this square is a horizontal green bar with the words 'Executive' and 'Summary' stacked vertically in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

01 Executive Summary

2022 City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan Survey Executive Summary Report

Purpose & Methodology

Purpose

ETC Institute administered Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan Survey on behalf of the City of Rochester Hills, MI. The purpose of the survey was part of the process of updating the Parks and Recreation Department's Master Plan. The data compiled from the survey will be used to help decision-makers determine programs, park facilities, and museum priorities for the future. The Master Plan sets yearly goals for developing and renovating areas based on resident's input.

Methodology

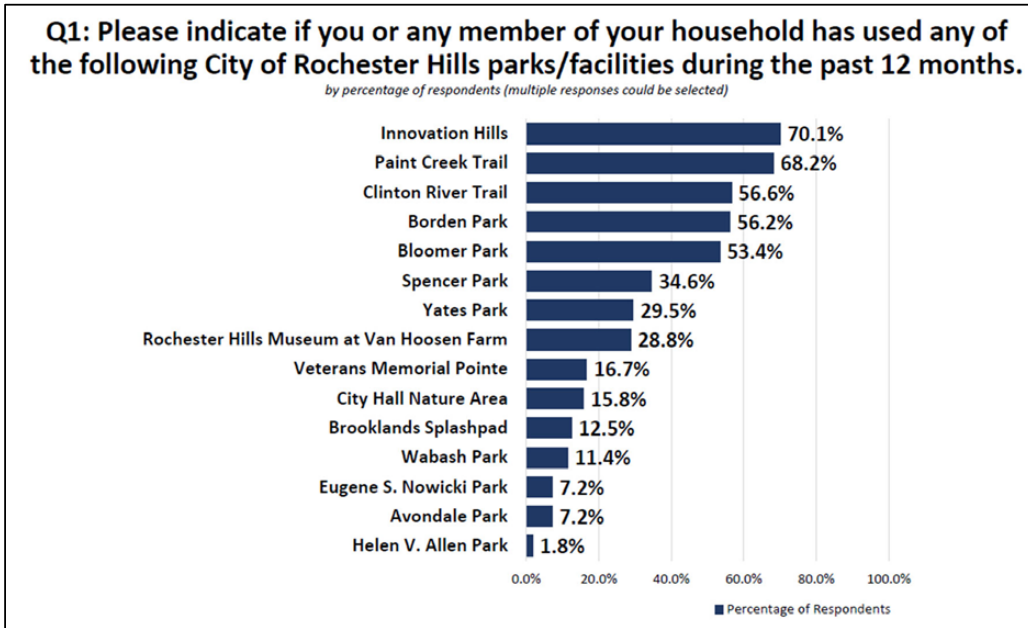
The survey was administered to a random sample of households in Rochester Hills, MI. A total of 563 surveys were completed by households in Rochester Hills. The results of the random sample of 563 households have a precision of at least +/-4.1% at the 95% level of confidence.

The seven-page survey, cover letter, and postage paid return envelope were mailed to a random sample of households in Rochester Hills. The cover letter explained the purpose of the survey and encouraged residents to either return their survey by mail or complete the survey online. Once households received the survey, in the mail, ETC Institute sent follow-up reminder communications to encourage participation. The communication methods contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it convenient for residents to complete. For verification purposes, residents were asked to enter their home address at the end of the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered with the addresses originally selected for the random sample. If the address entered online did not match with an address on the random sample, that online survey was not counted.

Survey findings are presented on the following pages.

Parks, Facilities, & Amenities

- During the past year, the majority of households have used the following parks/facilities most:
 - Innovation Hills (70%)
 - Paint Creek Trail (68%)
 - Clinton River Trail (57%)
 - Borden Park (56%)
 - Bloomer Park (53%)



- During the past year, the majority of households have used the following parks/facilities most:
 - Innovation Hills (70%)
 - Paint Creek Trail (68%)
 - Clinton River Trail (57%)
 - Borden Park (56%)
 - Bloomer Park (53%)

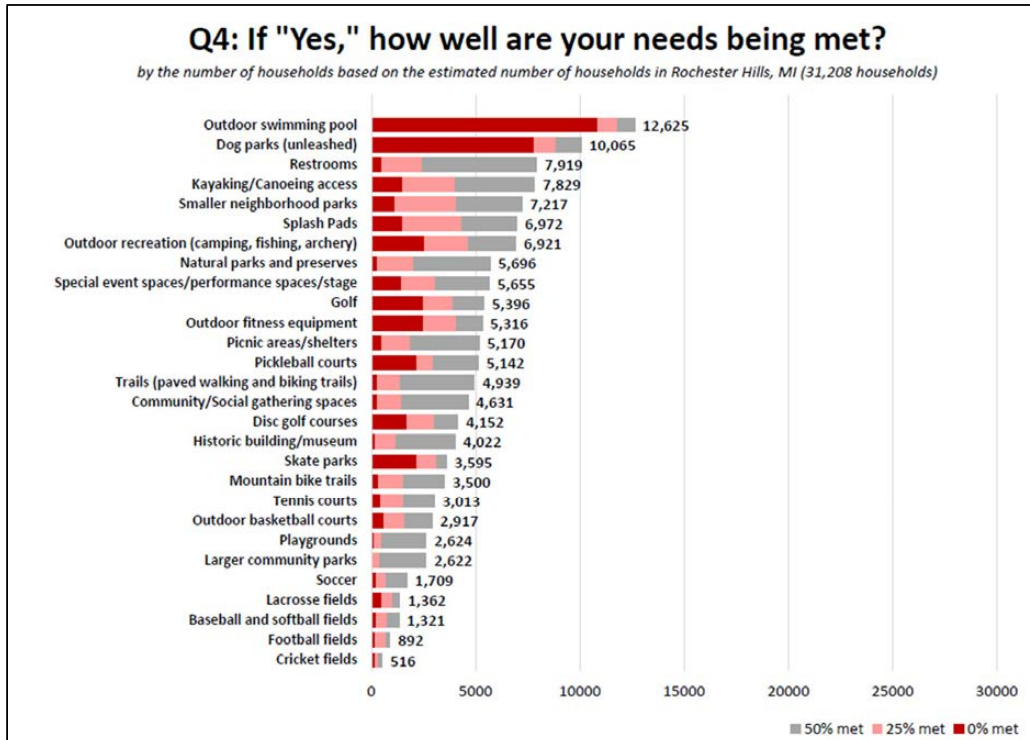
Parks, Facilities, & Amenities - Needs

Households were asked to identify if they had a need for 28 amenities/facilities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the City of Rochester Hills that had the greatest “unmet” need for various parks and recreation facilities and amenities.

The two amenities/facilities with the highest percentage of households whose needs are currently not being met (0%), somewhat met (25%), or partly met (50%) are listed below.

- Outdoor swimming pool (12,625 households)
- Unleashed dog parks (10,065 households)

The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 28 amenities/facilities are shown in the graph below.

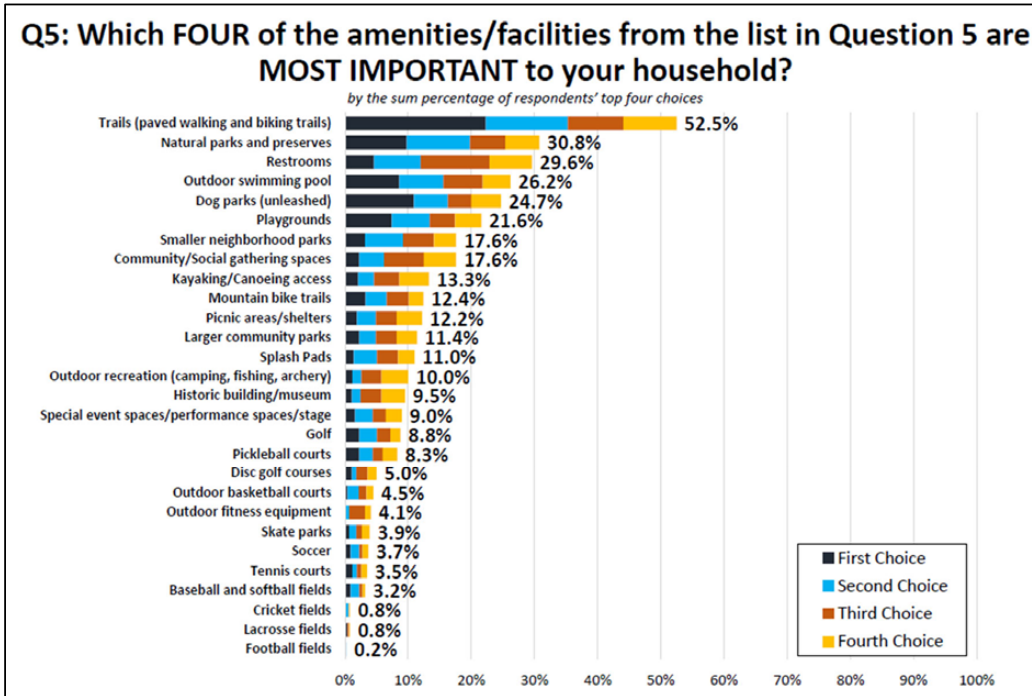


Parks, Facilities, & Amenities - Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each amenity/facility, ETC Institute also evaluated the importance that households placed on each one. Based on the sum of households' top four choices, the top six most important amenities/facilities to households are listed below.

- Paved walking and biking trails (53%)
- Natural parks and preserved (31%)
- Restrooms (30%)
- Outdoor swimming pool (26%)
- Unleashed dog parks (25%)
- Playgrounds (22%)

The percentage of households that selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in the graph below.



Parks, Facilities, & Amenities – Investments

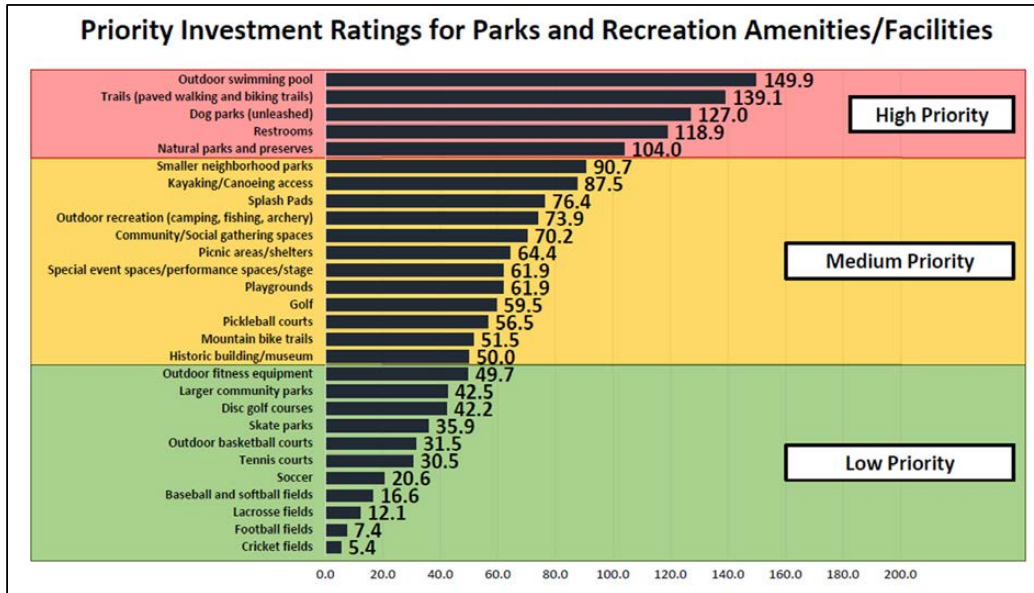
The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs:

- the importance that households place on each facility/amenity
- how many households have unmet needs for the facility/amenity

Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report. Based on the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the five facilities/amenities that were rated as high priorities for investment are listed below.

- Outdoor swimming pool (PIR=149.9)
- Paved walking and biking trails (PIR=139.1)
- Unleashed dog parks (PIR=127.0)
- Restrooms (PIR=118.9)
- Natural parks and preserves (PIR=104.0)

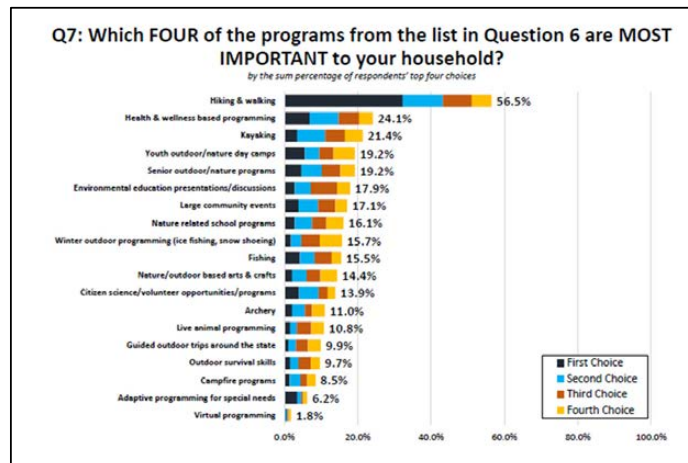
The Priority Investment Ratings for each park and recreation facility/amenity is shown in the graph below.



Programs

- Fifteen percent (15%) of households indicated that they have participated in Outdoor Engagement programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills during the past year. Of these households, the majority (54%) participated in two or more programs and 95% gave these Outdoor Engagement programs an *excellent* or *good* rating.
- The cultural and education/historic programs that households would be most interested in participated in are community festivals (73%), walking tours (59%), gardening (57%), and special events (56%). Based on the sum of households' top four choices, the top three cultural/educational programs most important to households were community festivals (46%), gardening (35%), and walking tours (34%).

- Most (82%) of households have an interest in hiking and walking programs. Based on the sum of households' top four choices, hiking and walking programs are most important to them. See graph to the right.



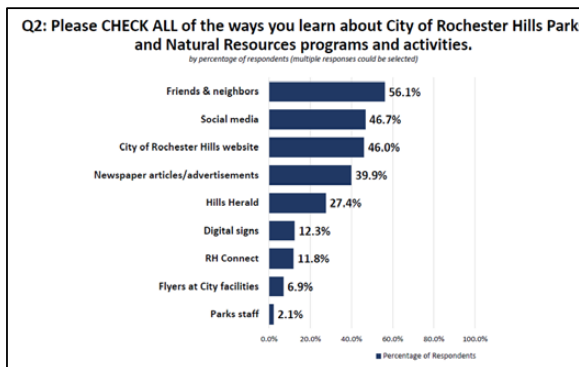
Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm

- Nineteen percent (19%) of households indicated that during the past year they had participated in programs, offered by the City of Rochester Hills Museum. Of those households, 47% participated in two or more programs. Nearly all of these households (94%) gave these programs an *excellent* or *good* rating.

Other Findings

- Eighty-one percent (81%) of households indicated that they are satisfied with the overall value they receive from the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department.
- The Parks and Natural Resources Department services that households are most satisfied with are the maintenance of parks/facilities (86%), connectivity of trails and pathways (78%), quality/number of outdoor amenities (73%), and the amount of open greenspace (69%).
- Parks and Natural Resources Department services that households think should receive the most attention over the next five years is listed below.
 - Connectivity of trails and pathways (33%)
 - Amount of open greenspace (33%)
 - Maintenance of parks/facilities (32%)

- The top four methods households use to learn about City programs and activities are through;
 - Friends and neighbors (56%)
 - Social media (47%)
 - City website (46%)
 - Newspaper articles/advertisements (40%)



- The top two reasons that prevent households from using parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City more often are because they do not know what is being offered (30%) and they do not have enough time (30%).
- Given the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, 68% of households indicated that their households' perception of value of parks, trails, and open spaces has *significantly* or *somewhat increased*. Forty-five percent (45%) of households indicated that they would want the City of Rochester Hills to increase funding for future parks, recreation, trails, and open space needs.

- Households were asked to rate their level of support for various actions that the City could take to improve the parks system. Based on the sum of *very supportive* and *somewhat supportive* responses, the following actions had the highest ratings of support:
 - Develop new walking trails (78%)
 - Improve existing park restrooms (77%)
 - Improve existing trail system (77%)
 - Repurpose aging and underutilized amenities/spaces (74%)
- Based on the sum of households' top four choices, the actions that households could take to improve the parks system, that households think the City should fund are listed below.
 - Develop a new aquatic facility (31%)
 - Develop new walking trails (30%)
 - Develop a dog park (27%)
 - Improve the existing trail system (26%)

Recommendations

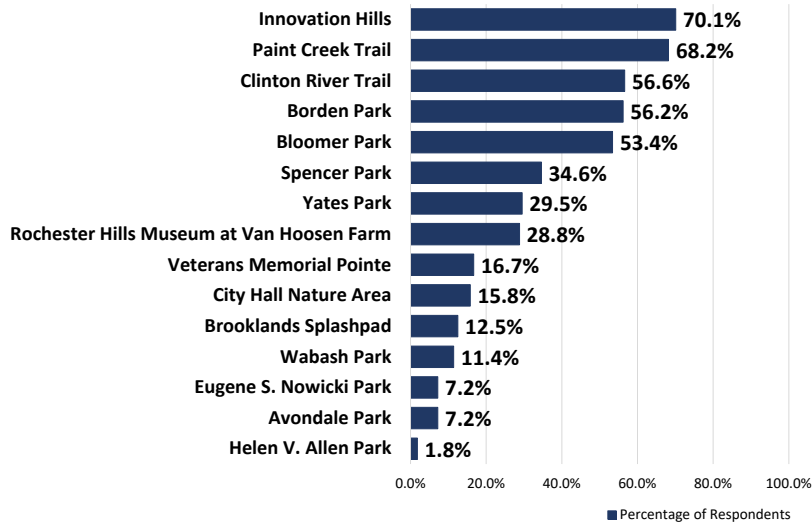
- In order to ensure the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department continues to meet the needs and expectations of their service area, ETC Institute recommends that they sustain and/or improve the performance in areas that are identified as “high priorities” by the Priority Investment Rating (PIR). The amenities/facilities with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.
 - Outdoor swimming pool
 - Paved walking and biking trails
 - Unleashed dog parks
 - Restrooms
 - Natural parks and preserves
- To help the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department to identify areas to emphasize over the next year, ETC Institute conducted an Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) analysis. This analysis examined the importance of items based on the percentage of importance and the percentage of satisfaction with each service. ETC Institute has based their recommendations on the Importance-Satisfaction analysis to objectively assess the priorities for the Parks and Natural Resources Department. By identifying services of high importance and low satisfaction, the analysis identified which services will have the most impact on overall satisfaction with City services over the next year. Based on the results of the Importance-Satisfaction Analysis, ETC Institute recommends the following:
 - Top Priorities for Parks and Natural Resources Department services. To increase the overall satisfaction with these services, the Department should emphasize improvements in the following areas over the next year: the amount of indoor recreation space and the amount of open greenspace.

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02 Charts & Graphs

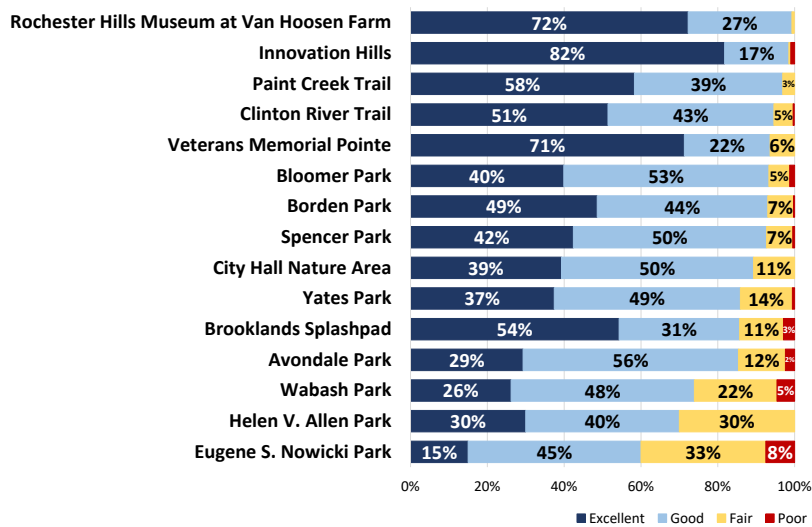
Q1: Please indicate if you or any member of your household has used any of the following City of Rochester Hills parks/facilities during the past 12 months.

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



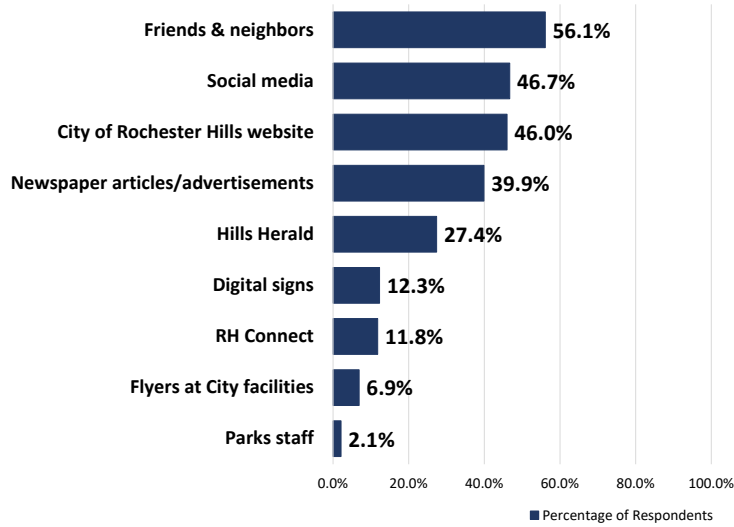
Q1: If "Yes," please rate the condition of the park/facility.

by percentage of respondents that used the respective park/facility in the past 12-months



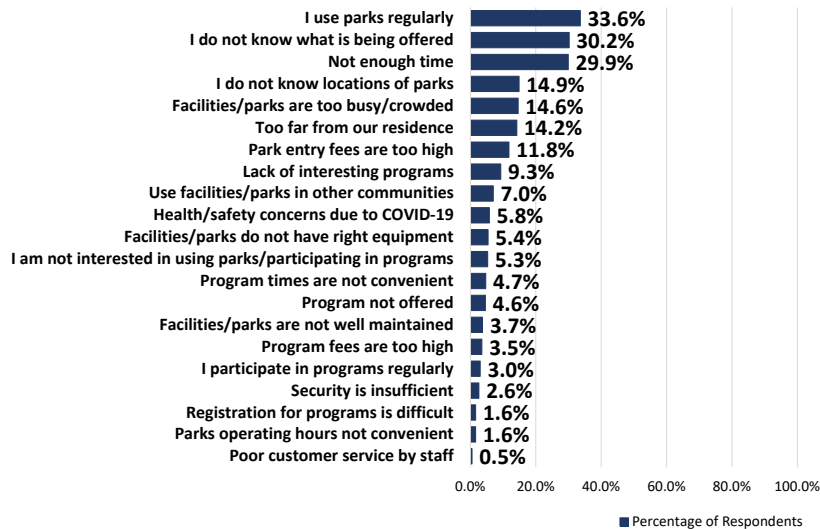
Q2: Please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources programs and activities.

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



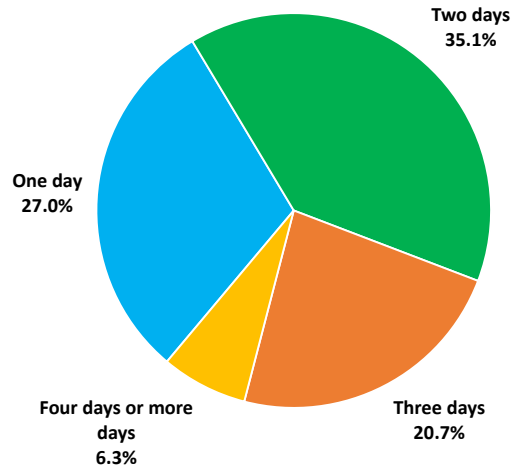
Q3: Please CHECK ALL of the following reasons that prevent you or other members of your household from using parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City of Rochester Hills more often.

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



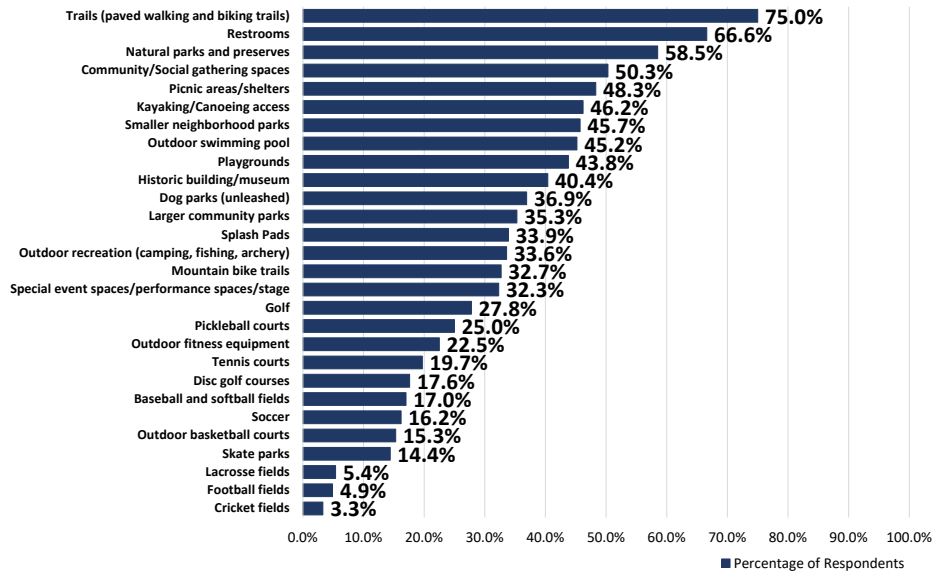
Q3: How many days in a week do you regularly use parks?

by percentage of respondents who use parks regularly (excluding "not provided" responses)



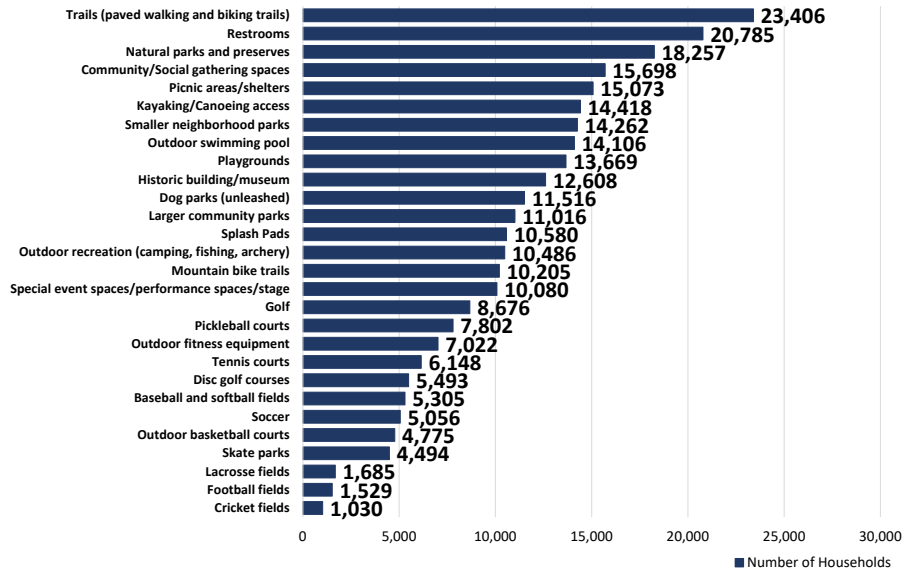
Q4: Percentage of Households That Have an Interest in Amenities/Facilities

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



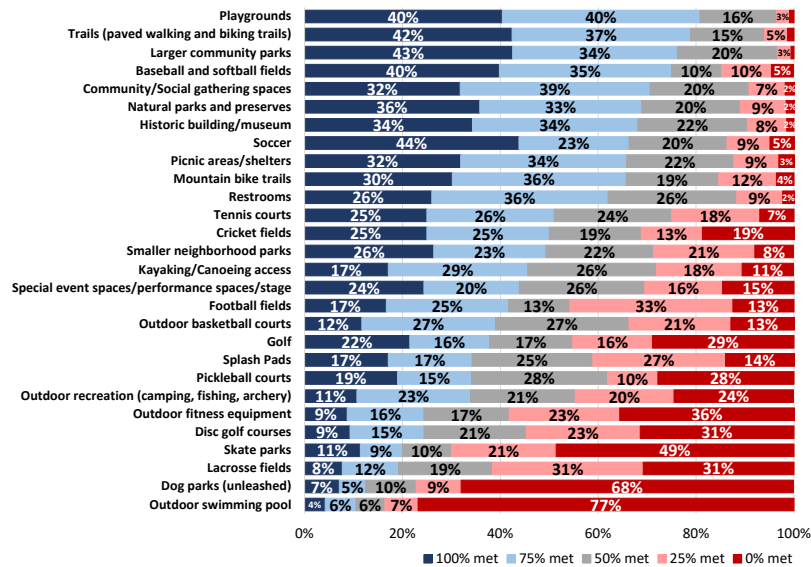
Q4: Estimated Number of Households That Have an Interest in Amenities/Facilities

by the number of households based on the estimated number of households in Rochester Hills, MI (31,208 households)



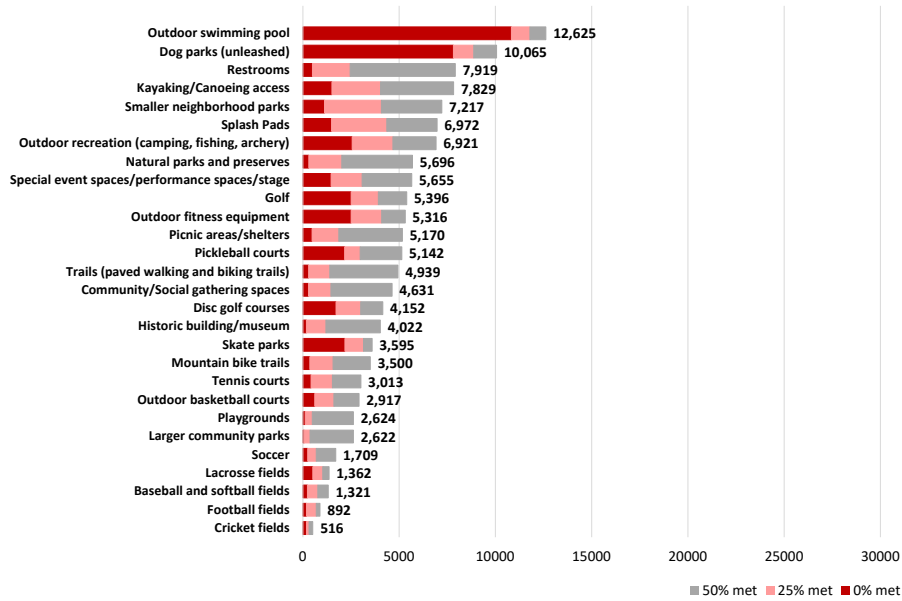
Q4: If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?

by percentage of respondents that have an interest in the following amenities/facilities



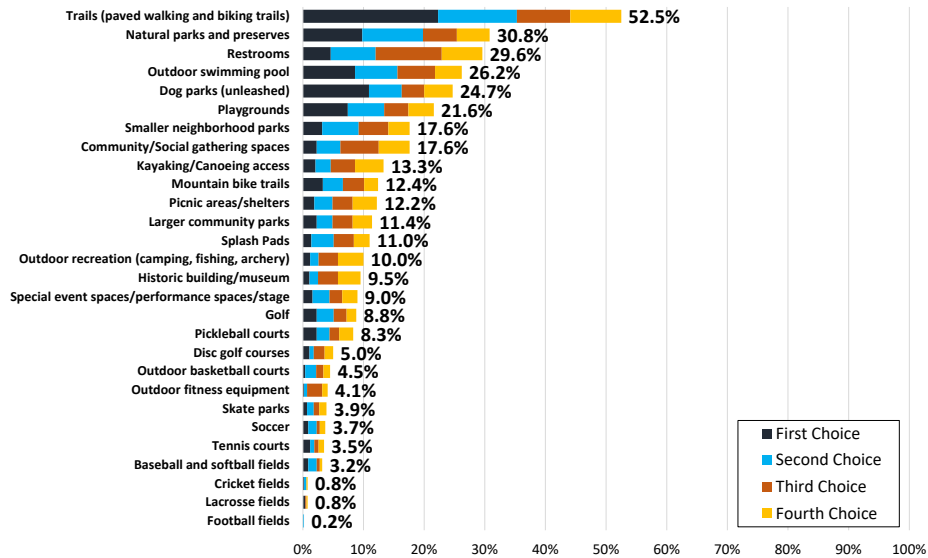
Q4: If "Yes," how well are your needs being met?

by the number of households based on the estimated number of households in Rochester Hills, MI (31,208 households)



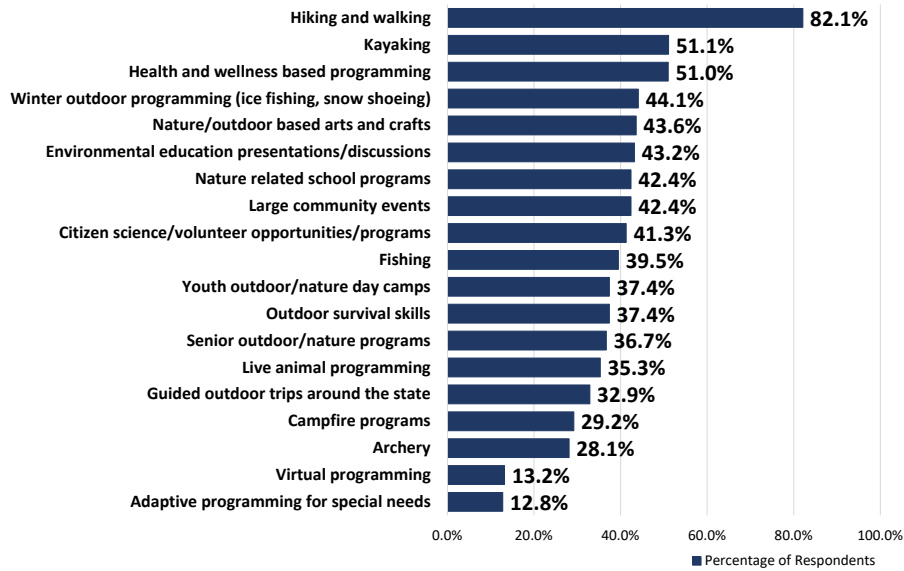
Q5: Which FOUR of the amenities/facilities from the list in Question 5 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?

by the sum percentage of respondents' top four choices



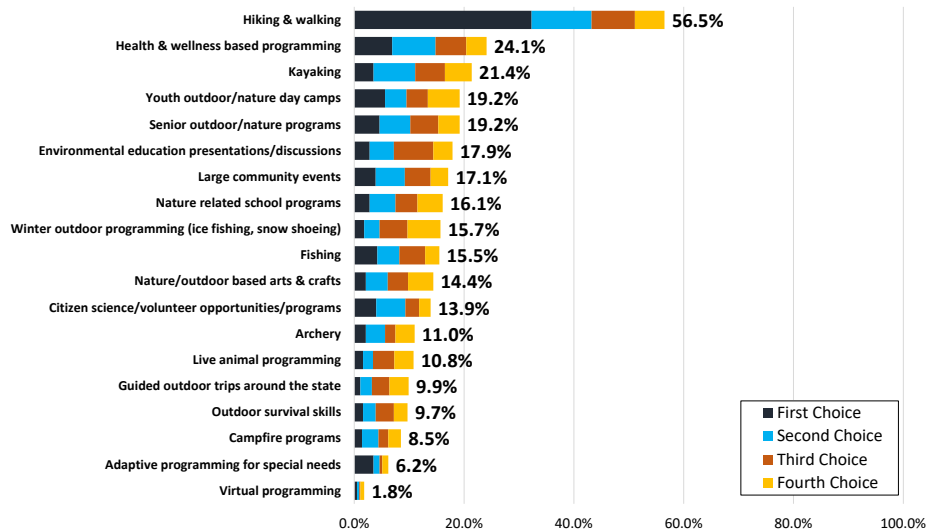
Q6: Please indicate if you or any member of your household has an interest for each of the outdoor engagement programs listed below.

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)

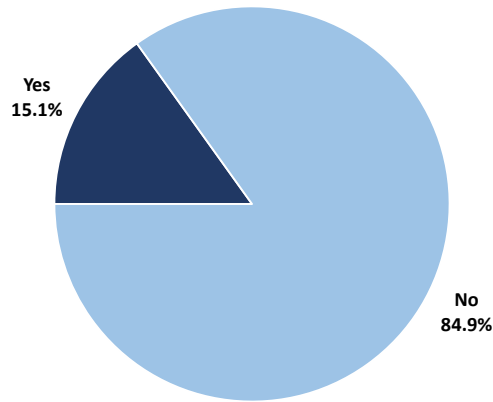


Q7: Which FOUR of the programs from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?

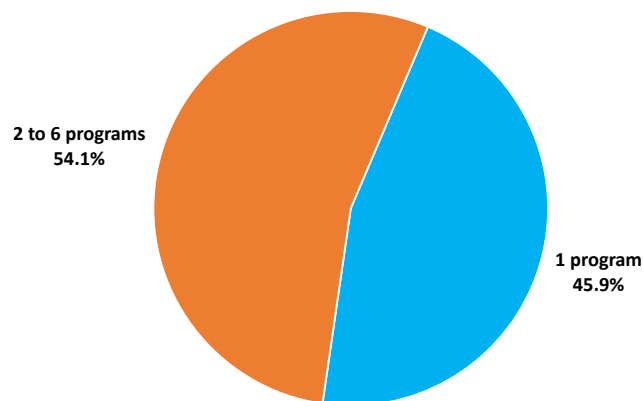
by the sum percentage of respondents' top four choices



Q8: Have you or other members of your household participated in any Outdoor Engagement programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills during the past 12 months?
by percentage of respondents

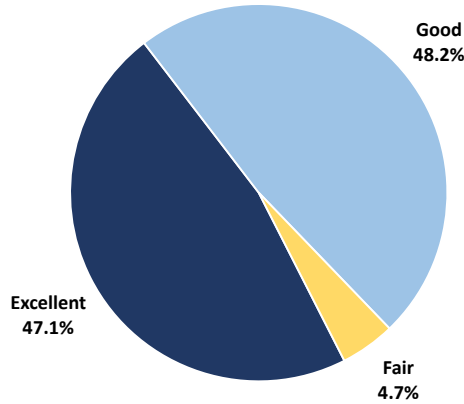


Q8a: Approximately how many different Outdoor Engagement programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?
by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



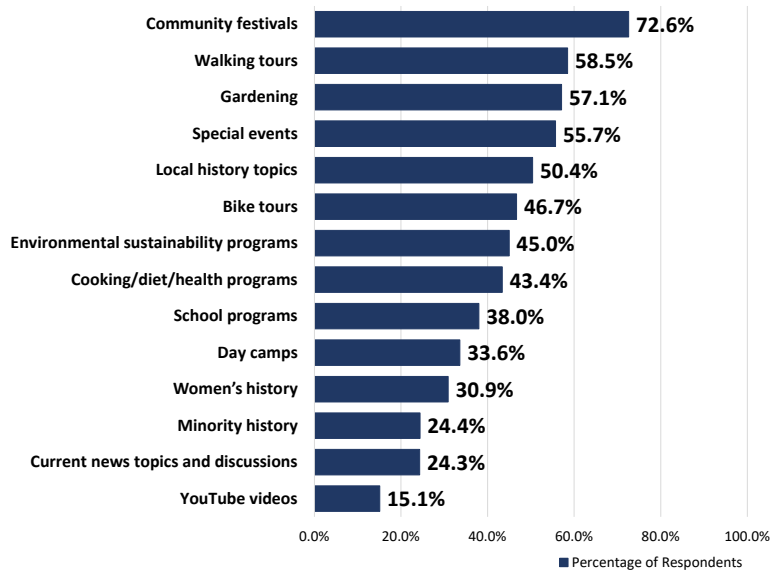
Q8b: How would you rate the overall quality of the City of Rochester Hills Outdoor Engagement programs that you and members of your household have participated in?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)

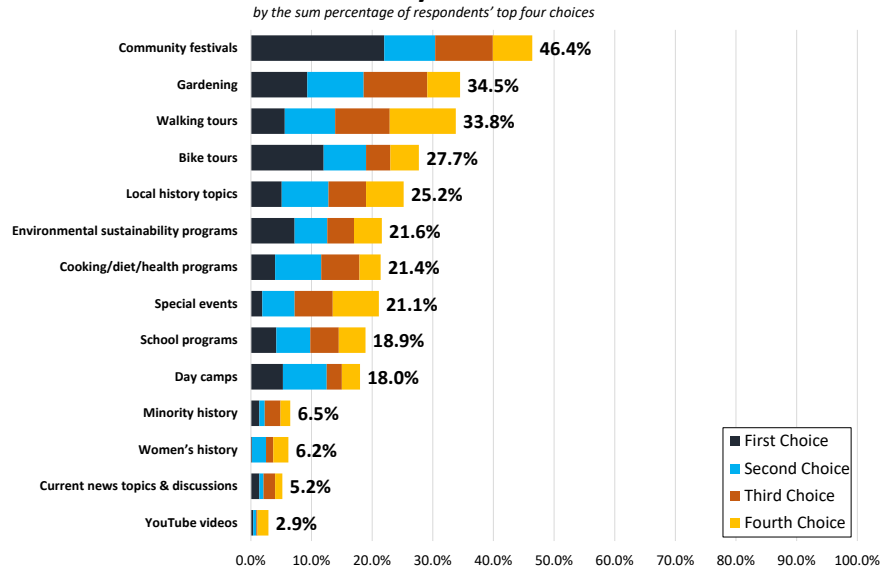


Q9: Please indicate if you or any member of your household has an interest for each of the cultural education or historic programs listed below.

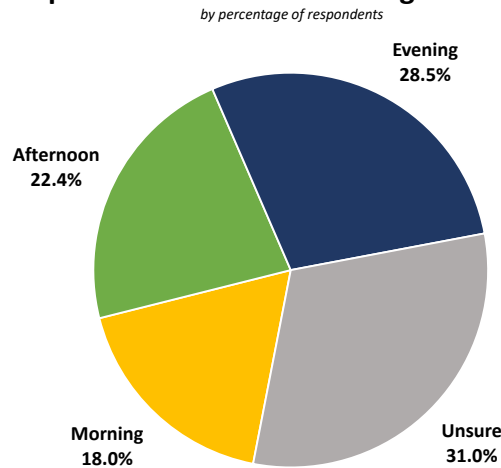
by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



Q10: Which FOUR of the programs from the list in Question 9 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household?

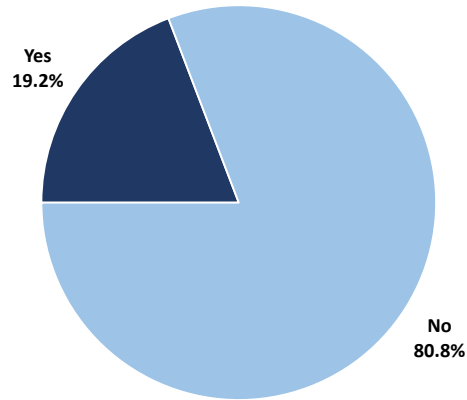


Q11: Please circle the time of day that members of your household would most prefer to use the Museum grounds and buildings.



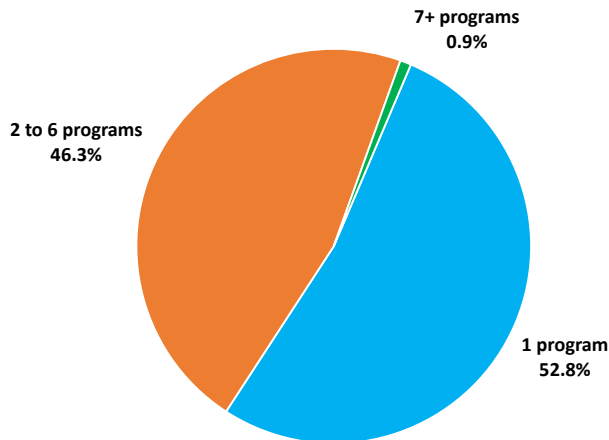
Q12: Have you or other members of your household participated in any programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills Museum during the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents



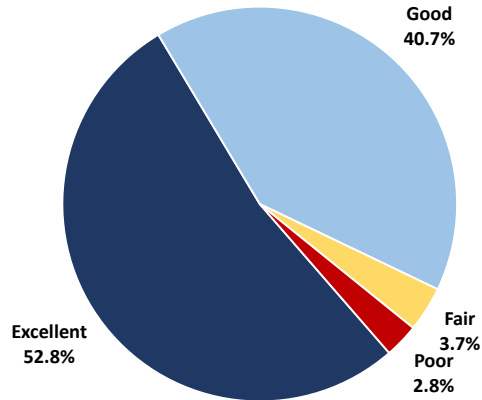
Q12a: Approximately how many different programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills Museum have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



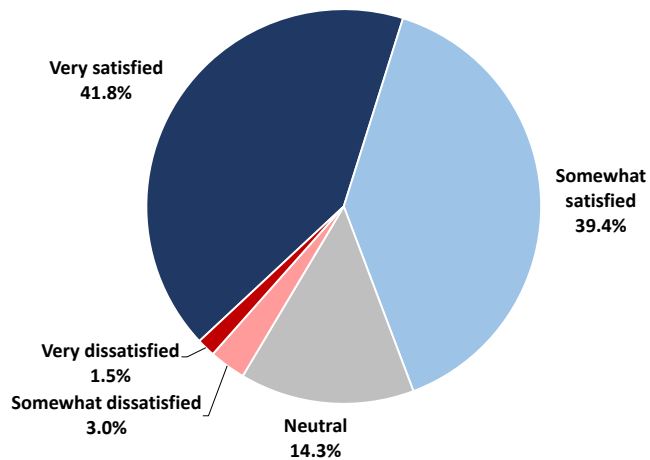
Q12b: How would you rate the overall quality of the City of Rochester Hills Museum programs that you and members of your household have participated in?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



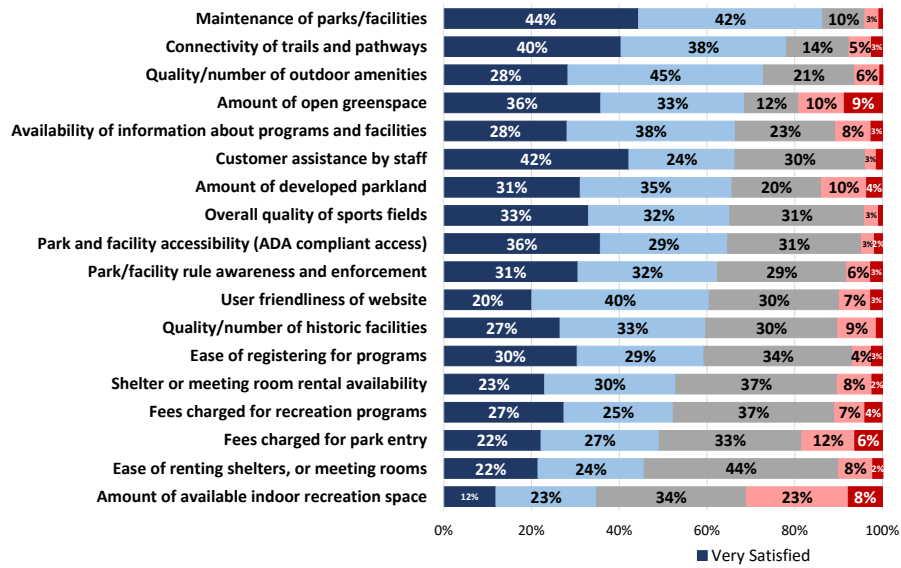
Q13: Please rate your level of satisfaction with the overall value your household receives from City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department.

by percentage of respondents (excluding "don't know" responses)



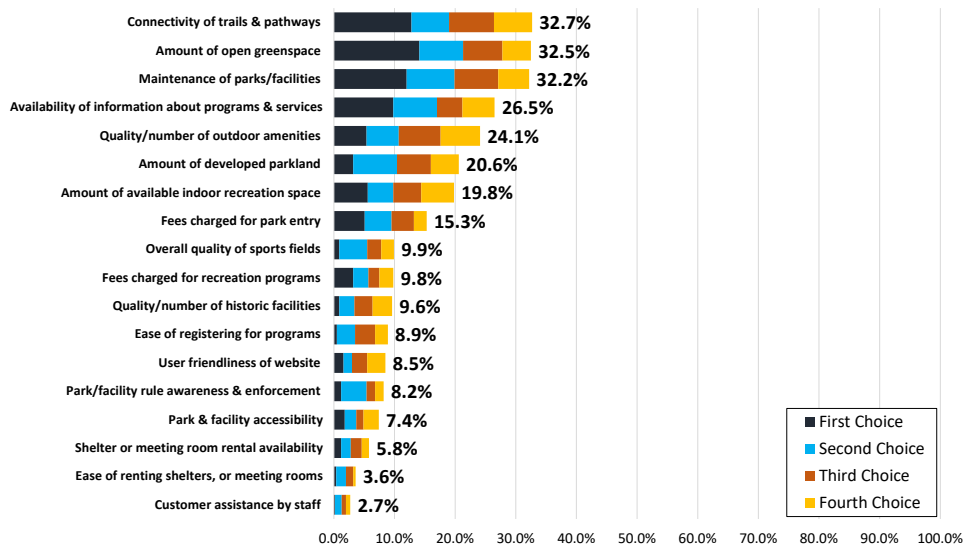
Q14: Rate your satisfaction with the following services provided by the Department.

by percentage of respondents, using a 5-point scale where 5 means "very satisfied" and 1 means "very dissatisfied" (excluding "don't know" responses)



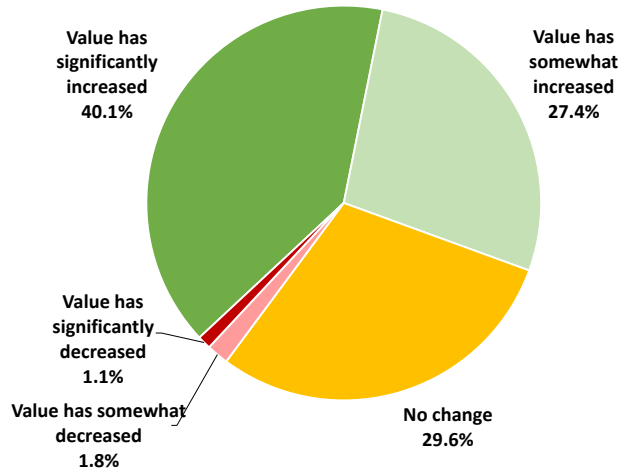
Q15: Which FOUR services listed in Question 14 do you think should receive the MOST ATTENTION from Rochester Hills over the next FIVE years?

by the sum percentage of respondents' top four choices



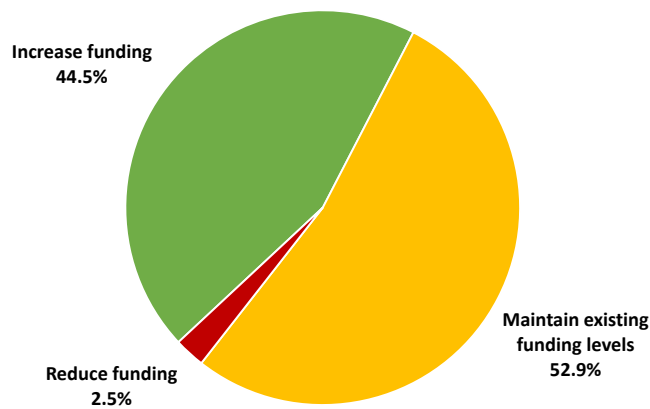
Q16: Given the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, how has you and your household's perception of the value of parks, trails, and open spaces changed?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)

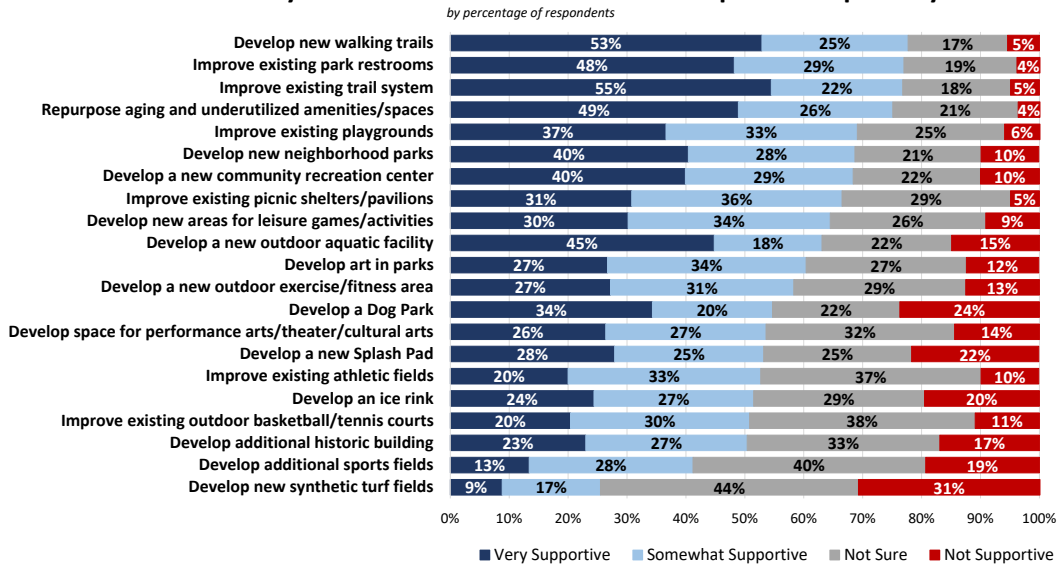


Q17: How do you want the City of Rochester Hills to fund future parks, recreation, trails and open space needs?

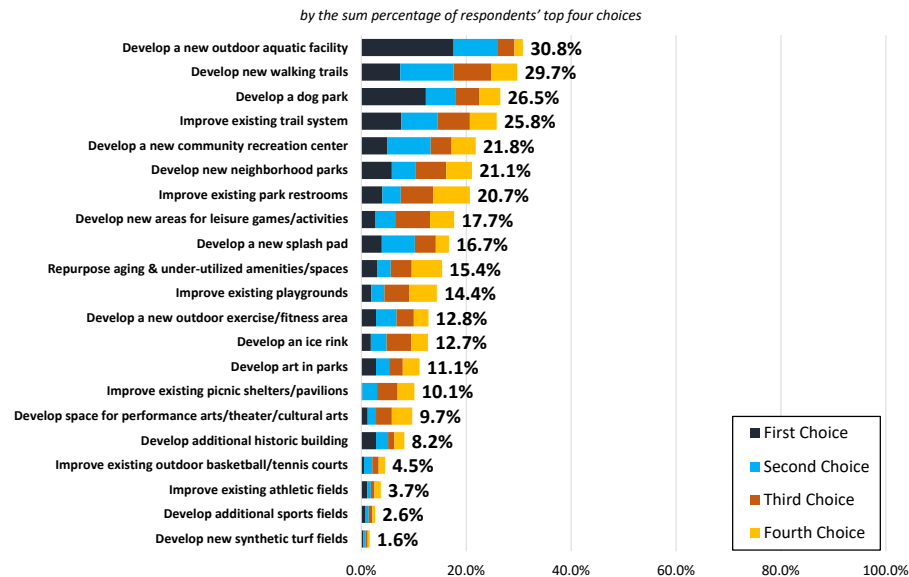
by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



Q18: Please indicate how supportive you would be of each of the following major actions that the City of Rochester Hills could take to improve the parks system.

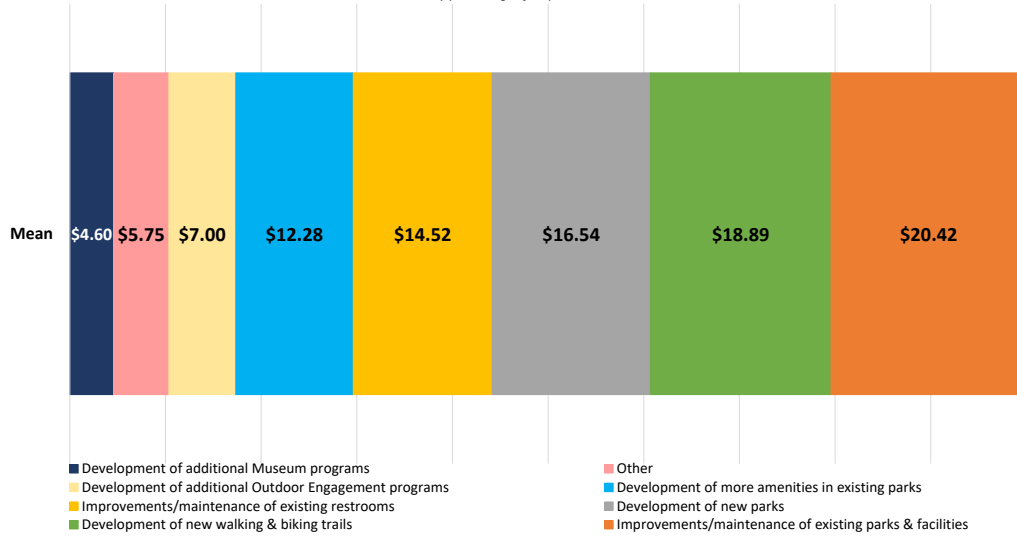


Q19: Which FOUR of the items listed in Question 18 should the City of Rochester Hills fund?



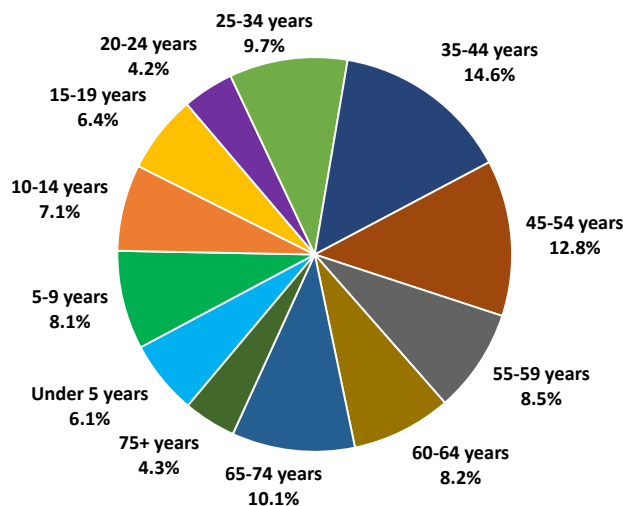
Q20: If you had a budget of \$100 for services provided by the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department, how would you allocate the funds among these categories?

by percentage of respondents



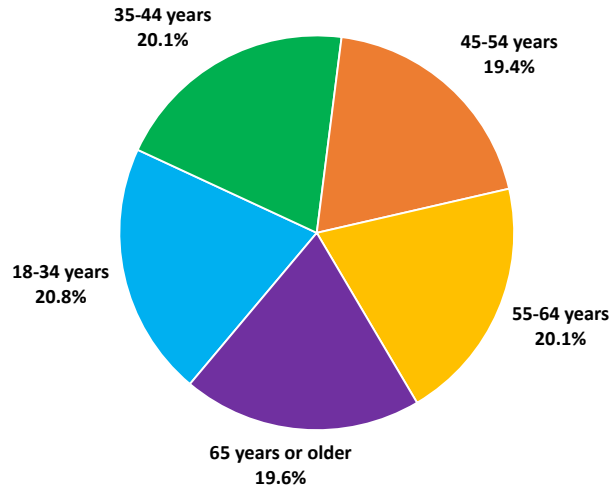
Q21: Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

by percentage of respondents



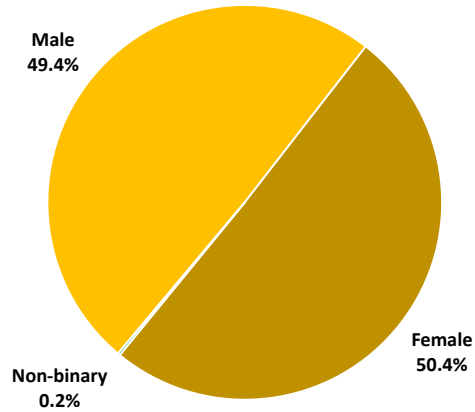
Q22: What is your age?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



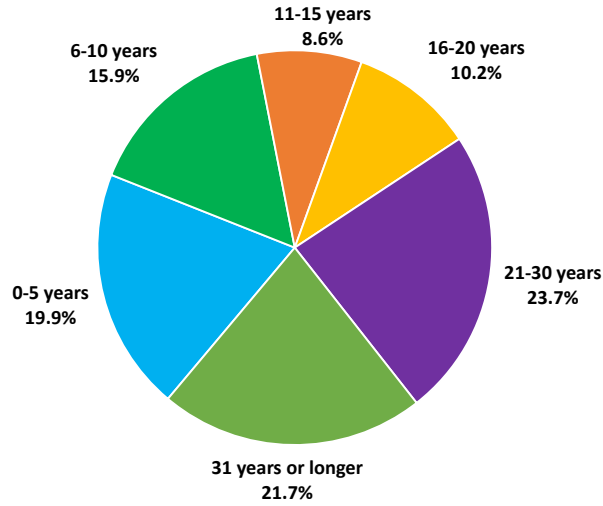
Q23: Your gender...

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



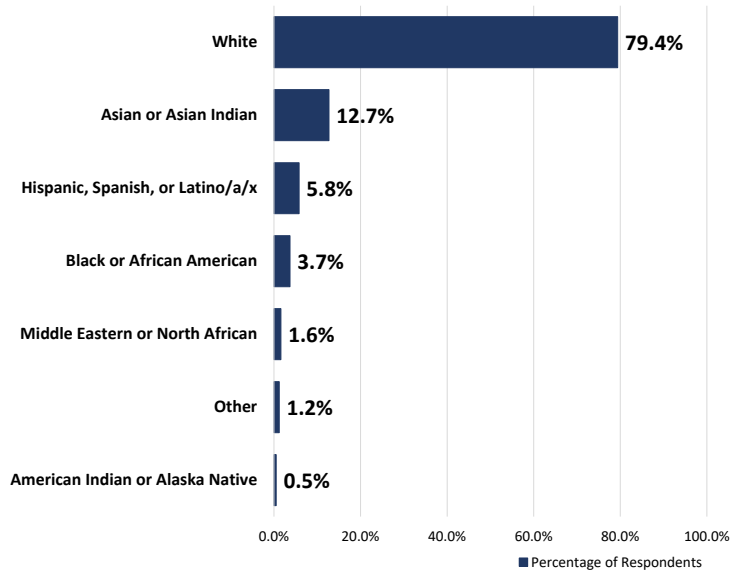
Q24: How many years have you lived in the City of Rochester Hills?

by percentage of respondents (excluding "not provided" responses)



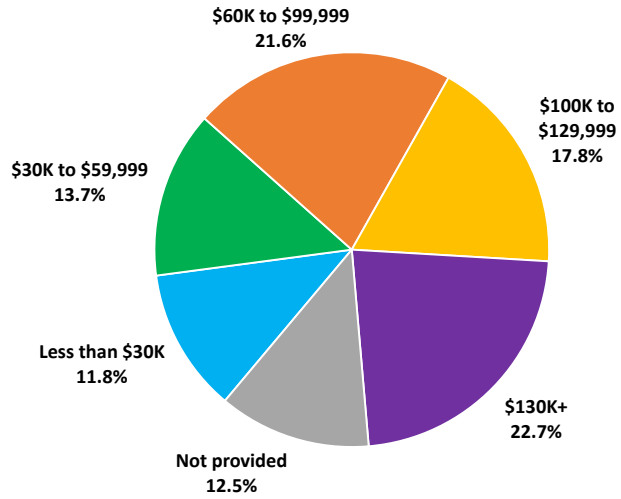
Q25: Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity?

by percentage of respondents (multiple responses could be selected)



Q26: What is your annual household income?

by percentage of respondents





03

Priority Investment Ratings Analysis

Priority Investment Rating Analysis Summary

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide government leaders with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The primary purpose of the Priority Investment Rating is to identify the facilities, amenities, and programs households think should receive the highest priority for investment. The Priority Investment Rating has two components:

- the importance households place on items (sum of top four choices) and
- households' unmet needs (needs that are only being 50% or less).

Since decisions related to future investments should consider both the level of unmet need and the importance of facilities, amenities, and programs, the Priority Investment Rating weights each of these components equally. Essentially, the equation for the Priority Investment Rating is the sum of the Unmet Needs Rating (UNR) and the Importance Rating (IR) as shown in the equation below:

$$\text{PIR} = \text{UNR} + \text{IR}$$

For example, suppose the Unmet Needs Rating for dog parks is 79.7 (out of 100) and the Importance Rating for dog parks is 47.2 (out of 100), therefore the Priority Investment Rating for dog parks is 127.0 (out of 200). A Priority Investment Rating of 127.0 would indicate dog parks are a high priority for investment.

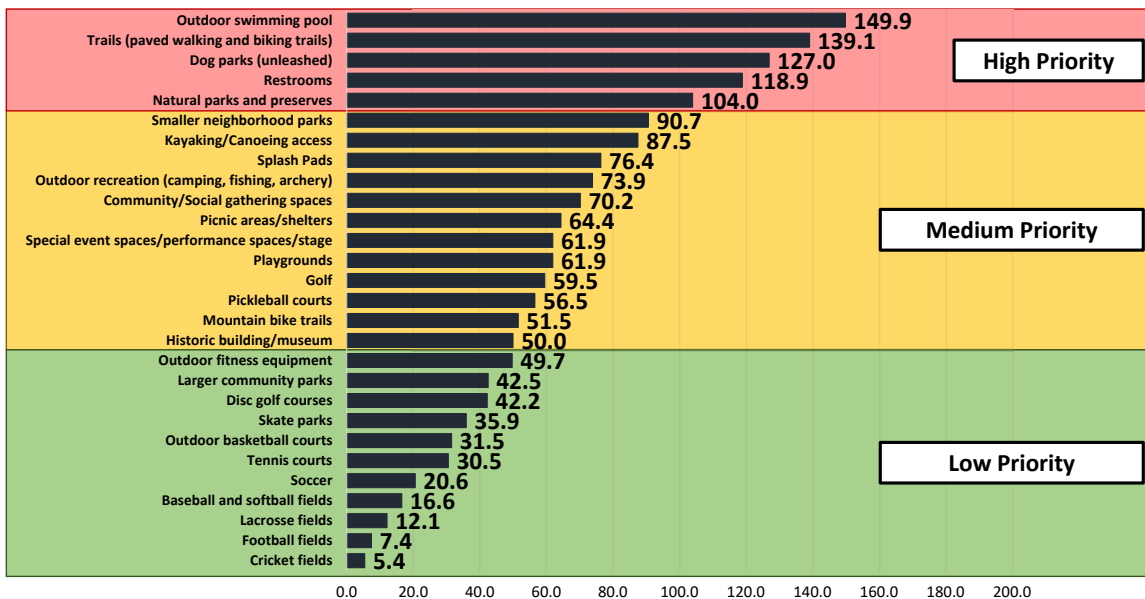
Priority Investment Rating Analysis Summary (Continued)

How to Analyze the Chart:

- High Priority Items are those with a PIR of at least 100. A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high level of unmet need and households generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements in this area are likely to have a positive impact on the greatest number of households.
- Medium Priority Items are those with a PIR of 50-99. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of households generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.
- Low Priority Items are those with a PIR below 50. A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and households do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

The following page shows the Priority Investment Rating (PIR) for Parks and Recreation amenities and facilities.

Priority Investment Ratings for Parks and Recreation Amenities/Facilities



04

Importance- Satisfaction Analysis

Importance-Satisfaction Analysis

Overview

Today, decision-makers have limited resources which need to be targeted to services that are of the most benefit to their residents. Two of the most important criteria for decision making are;

1. to target resources toward services of the highest importance to residents and
2. to target resources toward those services where residents are the least satisfied.

The Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) rating is a unique tool that allows public officials to better understand both highly important decision-making criteria for each of the services they are providing. The Importance-Satisfaction (I-S) rating is based on the concept that public agencies will maximize overall resident satisfaction by emphasizing improvements in those areas where the level of satisfaction is relatively low, and the perceived importance of the service is relatively high.

The rating is calculated by summing the percentage of responses for items selected as the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth most important services for the City to provide. The sum is then multiplied by 1 minus the percentage of respondents who indicated they were positively satisfied with the City's performance in the related area (the sum of the ratings of 4 and 5 on a 5-point scale excluding "don't know" responses). "don't know" responses are excluded from the calculation to ensure the satisfaction ratings among service categories are comparable.

$$\text{I-S Rating} = \text{Importance} \times (1 - \text{Satisfaction})$$

Example of the Calculation

Respondents were asked to identify major categories of services that they think are most important for the City to provide. Twenty percent (19.8%) of respondents selected the *amount of available indoor recreation space*, as one of the most important parks and recreation services for the City to provide.

Importance-Satisfaction Analysis (Continued)

Regarding satisfaction, 34.8% of respondents rated the City's overall performance regarding the *amount of available indoor recreation space* as a "4" or "5" on a 5-point scale (where "5" means "very satisfied") excluding "don't know" responses.

The I-S rating for the *amount of available indoor recreation space*, is calculated by multiplying the sum of the most important percentages by one minus the sum of the satisfaction percentages.

In this example, 19.8% was multiplied by 65.2% ($0.652=1-0.348$). This calculation yielded an I-S rating of 0.1291 which ranked first out of the 18 categories of Parks and Recreation services analyzed.

The maximum rating is 1.00 and would be achieved when 100% of the respondents select an item as one of their top three choices to emphasize over the next two years and 0% indicate they are positively satisfied with the delivery of the service.

The lowest rating is 0.00 and could be achieved under either of the following two situations:

- If 100% of the respondents were positively satisfied with the delivery of the service
- If none (0%) of the respondents selected the service as one of the four most important areas for the Parks and Recreation Department to emphasize over the next two years.

Interpreting the Ratings

Ratings from 0.10 to 0.20 identify service areas that should receive increased emphasis and ratings less than 0.10 should continue to receive the current level of emphasis.

- Definitely Increase Emphasis (IS \geq 0.20)
- Increase Current Emphasis (0.10 \leq IS < 0.20)
- Maintain Current Emphasis (IS < 0.10)

The results from the analysis is provided on the following page.

Importance-Satisfaction Analysis Ratings

2022 City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan Survey

Rochester Hills, MI

Category of Service	Most Important %	Most Important Rank	Satisfaction %	Satisfaction Rank	Importance-Satisfaction Rating	I-S Rating Rank
High Priority (I-S = 0.10-0.20)						
Amount of available indoor recreation space	19.8%	7	34.8%	18	0.1291	1
Amount of open greenspace	32.5%	2	68.6%	4	0.1021	2
Medium Priority (I-S < 0.10)						
Availability of information about programs & facilities	26.5%	4	66.5%	5	0.0888	3
Fees charged for park entry	15.3%	8	49.1%	16	0.0779	4
Connectivity of trails & pathways	32.7%	1	78.1%	2	0.0716	5
Amount of developed parkland	20.6%	6	65.7%	7	0.0707	6
Quality/number of outdoor amenities	24.1%	5	72.9%	3	0.0653	7
Fees charged for recreation programs	9.8%	10	52.3%	15	0.0467	8
Maintenance of parks/facilities	32.2%	3	86.4%	1	0.0438	9
Quality/number of historic facilities	9.6%	11	59.7%	12	0.0387	10
Ease of registering for programs	8.9%	12	59.3%	13	0.0362	11
Overall quality of sports fields	9.9%	9	65.2%	8	0.0345	12
User friendliness of website	8.5%	13	60.5%	11	0.0336	13
Park/facility rule awareness & enforcement	8.2%	14	62.4%	10	0.0308	14
Shelter or meeting room rental availability	5.8%	16	52.9%	14	0.0273	15
Park & facility accessibility (ADA compliant access)	7.4%	15	64.7%	9	0.0261	16
Ease of renting shelters, or meeting rooms	3.6%	17	45.7%	17	0.0195	17
Customer assistance by staff	2.7%	18	66.4%	6	0.0091	18

Note: The I-S Rating is calculated by multiplying the "Most Important" % by (1-'Satisfaction' %)

Most Important %:

The "Most Important" percentage represents the sum of the first, second, third, and fourth most important responses for each item. Respondents were asked to identify the items they thought should receive the most emphasis over the next two years.

Satisfaction %:

The "Satisfaction" percentage represents the sum of the ratings "4" and "5" excluding 'don't knows.' Respondents ranked their level of satisfaction with the each of the items on a scale of 1 to 5 with "5" being very satisfied and "1" being very dissatisfied.



06 **Survey Instrument**

June 2022

Dear Rochester Hills Resident,

I'm asking for 15 minutes of your time to help us determine our community driven priorities for projects and programs over the next 5 years.

We are developing an updated Department Master Plan, working with PROS Consulting, Inc. to gather community input and put together the plan. As part of this effort, we need your opinion to help us determine programs, park facilities, and museum priorities for the future. The plan sets yearly goals for developing and renovating areas based on your input and also allows us to apply for grants to support these projects.

Your household has been selected randomly to take part in the survey and your feedback is critical to understand the community's desires. We know your time is valuable and appreciate the 10-15 minutes it will take to answer all the questions in the enclosed survey.

Please help us out by completing all the survey questions and return the survey within the next two weeks in the enclosed postage pre-paid envelope addressed to ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Lane, Olathe, KS 66061. If you have any questions, you may reach out to Esther Campbell, ETC Institute's Senior Research Analyst, at esther.campbell@etcinstitute.com or (913) 254-4528. PROS Consulting will compile the data while keeping all your responses confidential.

Your feedback is important and if you would prefer to complete the survey over the web the address is: RHParksSurvey.org.

Once we have collected the survey responses, we will be hosting several public meetings to go over the results of the survey and get any additional feedback from our residents. If you have any questions regarding this survey or the master plan process please contact me.

Thank you for your time and opinion to determine our community priorities going forward.



Ken Elwert
Director, CPRE
Parks and Natural Resources Department
248-841-2552,
elwertk@rochesterhills.org



City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Master Plan Survey

The City of Rochester Hills would like your input to help determine recreation and parks priorities for our community. This survey will take 10-15 minutes to complete. When you are finished, please return your survey in the enclosed postage-paid, return-reply envelope. If you prefer, you can complete the survey online at RHParksSurvey.org. We greatly appreciate your time!

- 1. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has used any of the following City of Rochester Hills parks/facilities during the past 12 months by circling either "Yes" or "No". If "Yes," please rate the condition of the site by circling the corresponding number to the right.**

Name of Park/Facility	Do you use this park/facility?		If "Yes", please rate the condition of the park/facility			
	Yes	No	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
01. Avondale Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
02. Bloomer Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
03. Borden Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
04. Brooklands Splashpad	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
05. City Hall Nature Area	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
06. Clinton River Trail	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
07. Eugene S. Nowicki Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
08. Helen V. Allen Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
09. Innovation Hills	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
10. Paint Creek Trail	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
11. Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
12. Spencer Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
13. Veterans Memorial Pointe	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
14. Wabash Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1
15. Yates Park	Yes	No	4	3	2	1

- 2. Please CHECK ALL of the ways you learn about City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources programs and activities. [Check all that apply.]**

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) City of Rochester Hills website
<input type="checkbox"/> (02) Newspaper articles/advertisements
<input type="checkbox"/> (03) Digital signs
<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Flyers at City facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> (05) Friends and neighbors | <input type="checkbox"/> (06) Social media
<input type="checkbox"/> (07) RH Connect
<input type="checkbox"/> (08) Parks staff
<input type="checkbox"/> (09) Hills Herald
<input type="checkbox"/> (10) Other: _____ |
|---|---|

- 3. Please CHECK ALL of the following reasons that prevent you or other members of your household from using parks, recreation facilities, and programs of the City of Rochester Hills more often. [Check all that apply.]**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (01) Facilities/Parks are not well maintained
<input type="checkbox"/> (02) Program not offered
<input type="checkbox"/> (03) Facilities/Parks do not have the right equipment
<input type="checkbox"/> (04) Security is insufficient
<input type="checkbox"/> (05) Lack of interesting programs
<input type="checkbox"/> (06) Too far from our residence
<input type="checkbox"/> (07) Program fees are too high
<input type="checkbox"/> (08) Park entry fees are too high
<input type="checkbox"/> (09) Program times are not convenient
<input type="checkbox"/> (10) Use facilities/parks in other communities
<input type="checkbox"/> (11) Poor customer service by staff
<input type="checkbox"/> (12) I do not know locations of parks | <input type="checkbox"/> (13) I do not know what is being offered
<input type="checkbox"/> (14) Parks' operating hours not convenient
<input type="checkbox"/> (15) Registration for programs is difficult
<input type="checkbox"/> (16) Not enough time
<input type="checkbox"/> (17) Facilities/Parks are too busy/crowded
<input type="checkbox"/> (18) Health/safety concerns due to COVID-19
<input type="checkbox"/> (19) I use parks regularly, if so: _____ days/week
<input type="checkbox"/> (20) I participate in programs regularly
<input type="checkbox"/> (21) I am not interested in using parks/participating in programs
<input type="checkbox"/> (22) Other: _____ |
|---|--|

4. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has an interest for each of the amenities/facilities listed below by circling either “Yes” or “No”. If “Yes,” please rate the amenities/facilities of this type in the City of Rochester Hills using the scale in the chart below.

Type of Amenity/Facility	Do you have an interest for this amenity?		If “Yes,” how well are your needs being met?				
	Yes	No	100% Met	75% Met	50% Met	25% Met	0% Met
01. Baseball and softball fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
02. Community/Social gathering spaces	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
03. Disc golf courses	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
04. Dog parks (unleashed)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
05. Golf	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
06. Historic building/museum	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
07. Kayaking/Canoeing access	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
08. Larger community parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
09. Smaller neighborhood parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
10. Mountain bike trails	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
11. Natural parks and preserves	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
12. Outdoor basketball courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
13. Outdoor fitness equipment	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
14. Outdoor recreation (camping, fishing, archery)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
15. Outdoor swimming pool	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
16. Pickleball courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
17. Picnic areas/shelters	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
18. Playgrounds	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
19. Restrooms	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
20. Skate parks	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
21. Soccer	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
22. Lacrosse fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
23. Football fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
24. Cricket fields	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
25. Special event spaces/performance spaces/stage	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
26. Splash Pads	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
27. Tennis courts	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
28. Trails (paved walking and biking trails)	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1
29. Other: _____	Yes	No	5	4	3	2	1

5. Which **FOUR** of the amenities/facilities from the list in Question 4 are **MOST IMPORTANT** to your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 4, or circle “NONE.”]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

6. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has an interest for each of the outdoor engagement programs listed below by circling either “Yes” or “No”.

Type of Program	Do you have an interest for this program?	
	Yes	No
01. Adaptive programming for special needs	Yes	No
02. Archery	Yes	No
03. Campfire programs	Yes	No
04. Citizen science/volunteer opportunities/programs	Yes	No
05. Environmental education presentations/discussions	Yes	No
06. Fishing	Yes	No
07. Health and wellness based programming	Yes	No
08. Hiking and walking	Yes	No
09. Kayaking	Yes	No
10. Large community events	Yes	No
11. Live animal programming	Yes	No
12. Nature/outdoor based arts and crafts	Yes	No
13. Outdoor survival skills	Yes	No
14. Guided outdoor trips around the state	Yes	No
15. Nature related school programs	Yes	No
16. Senior outdoor/nature programs	Yes	No
17. Virtual programming	Yes	No
18. Winter outdoor programming (ice fishing, snow shoeing)	Yes	No
19. Youth outdoor/nature day camps	Yes	No
20. Other: _____	Yes	No

7. Which FOUR of the programs from the list in Question 6 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 6, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

8. Have you or other members of your household participated in any Outdoor Engagement programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills during the past 12 months?

____(1) Yes [Answer Q8a-b.] ____ (2) No [Skip to Q9.]

8a. Approximately how many different Outdoor Engagement programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

____(1) 1 program ____ (2) 2 to 6 programs ____ (3) 7+ programs

8b. How would you rate the overall quality of the City of Rochester Hills Outdoor Engagement programs that you and members of your household have participated in?

____(4) Excellent ____ (3) Good ____ (2) Fair ____ (1) Poor

Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm

The Parks and Natural Resources Department operates the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Museum encompasses sixteen acres, two furnished houses, a schoolhouse, gardens, five barns, community archives, community and private rental space, and exhibits. The Museum grounds are open 24/7/365.

9. Please indicate if you or any member of your household has an interest for each of the cultural education or historic programs listed below by circling either “Yes” or “No”.

Type of Program		Do you have an interest for this program?	
01.	Bike tours	Yes	No
02.	Community festivals	Yes	No
03.	Cooking/diet/health programs	Yes	No
04.	Current news topics and discussions	Yes	No
05.	Day camps	Yes	No
06.	Environmental sustainability programs	Yes	No
07.	Gardening	Yes	No
08.	Local history topics	Yes	No
09.	Minority history	Yes	No
10.	School programs	Yes	No
11.	Special events	Yes	No
12.	Walking tours	Yes	No
13.	Women’s history	Yes	No
14.	YouTube videos	Yes	No
15.	Other: _____	Yes	No

10. Which FOUR of the programs from the list in Question 9 are MOST IMPORTANT to your household? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 9, or circle “NONE.”]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

11. Please circle the time of day that members of your household would most prefer to use the Museum grounds and buildings.

____(1) Morning ____ (2) Afternoon ____ (3) Evening ____ (9) Unsure

12. Have you or other members of your household participated in any programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills Museum during the past 12 months?

____ (1) Yes [Answer Q12a-b.] ____ (2) No [Skip to Q13.]

12a. Approximately how many different programs offered by the City of Rochester Hills Museum have you or members of your household participated in over the past 12 months?

____ (1) 1 program ____ (2) 2 to 6 programs ____ (3) 7+ programs

12b. How would you rate the overall quality of the City of Rochester Hills Museum programs that you and members of your household have participated in?

____ (4) Excellent ____ (3) Good ____ (2) Fair ____ (1) Poor

13. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the overall value your household receives from City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department.

(5) Very Satisfied (3) Neutral (1) Very Dissatisfied
 (4) Somewhat Satisfied (2) Somewhat Dissatisfied (9) Don't Know

14. Please rate your satisfaction with the following services provided by the Department using a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 means "Very Satisfied" and 1 means "Very Dissatisfied."

Services	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
01. Availability of information about programs and facilities	5	4	3	2	1	9
02. Customer assistance by staff	5	4	3	2	1	9
03. Ease of registering for programs	5	4	3	2	1	9
04. Fees charged for recreation programs	5	4	3	2	1	9
05. Fees charged for park entry	5	4	3	2	1	9
06. Maintenance of parks/facilities	5	4	3	2	1	9
07. Park and facility accessibility (ADA compliant access)	5	4	3	2	1	9
08. Park/facility rule awareness and enforcement	5	4	3	2	1	9
09. Overall quality of sports fields	5	4	3	2	1	9
10. Quality/number of outdoor amenities	5	4	3	2	1	9
11. Shelter or meeting room rental availability	5	4	3	2	1	9
12. Ease of renting shelters, or meeting rooms	5	4	3	2	1	9
13. User friendliness of website	5	4	3	2	1	9
14. Amount of open greenspace	5	4	3	2	1	9
15. Quality/number of historic facilities	5	4	3	2	1	9
16. Amount of developed parkland	5	4	3	2	1	9
17. Amount of available indoor recreation space	5	4	3	2	1	9
18. Connectivity of trails and pathways	5	4	3	2	1	9

15. Which FOUR services listed in Question 14 do you think should receive the MOST ATTENTION from Rochester Hills over the next FIVE years? [Write in your answers below using the number from the list in Question 14, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

16. Given the recent COVID-19 Pandemic, how has you and your household's perception of the value of parks, trails, and open spaces changed?

(5) Value has significantly increased (2) Value has somewhat decreased
 (4) Value has somewhat increased (1) Value has significantly decreased
 (3) No change

17. How do you want the City of Rochester Hills to fund future parks, recreation, trails and open space needs?

(1) Increase funding (3) Reduce funding
 (2) Maintain existing funding levels (4) Not Sure

18. Please indicate how supportive you would be of each of the following major actions that the City of Rochester Hills could take to improve the parks system.

How supportive are you of having the City of Rochester Hills...		Very Supportive	Somewhat Supportive	Not Sure	Not Supportive
01.	Develop additional historic building	4	3	2	1
02.	Develop art in parks	4	3	2	1
03.	Develop a new outdoor aquatic facility	4	3	2	1
04.	Develop a new community recreation center	4	3	2	1
05.	Develop a new outdoor exercise/fitness area	4	3	2	1
06.	Develop a new Splash Pad	4	3	2	1
07.	Develop a Dog Park	4	3	2	1
08.	Develop additional sports fields	4	3	2	1
09.	Develop an ice rink	4	3	2	1
10.	Develop new areas for leisure games/activities (e.g., bocce, horseshoes, ping pong)	4	3	2	1
11.	Develop new neighborhood parks	4	3	2	1
12.	Develop new synthetic turf fields	4	3	2	1
13.	Develop new walking trails	4	3	2	1
14.	Develop space for performance arts/theater/cultural arts	4	3	2	1
15.	Improve existing athletic fields	4	3	2	1
16.	Improve existing outdoor basketball/tennis courts	4	3	2	1
17.	Improve existing park restrooms	4	3	2	1
18.	Improve existing picnic shelters/pavilions	4	3	2	1
19.	Improve existing playgrounds	4	3	2	1
20.	Improve existing trail system (increasing connectivity/accessibility)	4	3	2	1
21.	Repurpose aging and underutilized amenities/spaces	4	3	2	1
22.	Other: _____	4	3	2	1

19. Which FOUR of the items listed in Question 18 should the City of Rochester Hills fund? [Write in your answers below using the numbers from the list in Question 18, or circle "NONE."]

1st: ____ 2nd: ____ 3rd: ____ 4th: ____ NONE

20. If you had a budget of \$100 for services provided by the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources Department, how would you allocate the funds among these categories? [Please be sure your total adds up to \$100.]

- \$ _____ Development of new parks
- \$ _____ Development of new walking and biking trails
- \$ _____ Development of additional Outdoor Engagement Programs
- \$ _____ Development of additional Museum Programs
- \$ _____ Development of more amenities in existing parks
- \$ _____ Improvements/maintenance of existing parks and facilities
- \$ _____ Improvements/maintenance of existing restrooms
- \$ _____ Other: _____

\$100 TOTAL

Demographics

21. Counting yourself, how many people in your household are...

Under 5 years: ____ 15 - 19 years: ____ 35 - 44 years: ____ 60 - 64 years: ____
 5 - 9 years: ____ 20 - 24 years: ____ 45 - 54 years: ____ 65 - 74 years: ____
 10 - 14 years: ____ 25 - 34 years: ____ 55 - 59 years: ____ 75+ years: ____

22. **What is your age?** _____ years
23. **Your gender:** ____ (1) Male ____ (2) Female ____ (3) Prefer to self-describe: _____
24. **How many years have you lived in the City of Rochester Hills?** _____ years
25. **Which of the following best describes your race/ethnicity? [Check all that apply.]**
____ (01) Asian or Asian Indian
____ (02) Black or African American
____ (04) White
____ (06) Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino/a/x
____ (09) Middle Eastern or North African
____ (99) Other: _____
26. **What is your annual household income?**
____ (1) Less than \$30,000
____ (2) \$30,000 to \$59,999
____ (3) \$60,000 to \$99,999
____ (4) \$100,000 to \$129,999
____ (5) \$130,000 or more
____ (6) Prefer not to respond
27. **Last and most importantly, please share any other comments...**

This concludes the survey. Thank you for your time!
Please return your completed survey in the enclosed return-reply envelope addressed to:
ETC Institute, 725 W. Frontier Circle, Olathe, KS 66061

Your responses will remain completely confidential.
The address information printed to the right will
ONLY be used to help identify areas with specific
needs. Thank you.

Stakeholder Interviews and Focus Groups - Summary

Focus groups and interviews were held in April 2022 to assist the city in determining priorities for parks, trails, recreation facilities, programs, and services. Focus groups consisted of recreation-related non-profit organizations, neighbors to parks, youth sports programs, government officials, and the Youth Council. Interviews were also conducted with the Leadership Team, Parks and Natural Resources staff, city staff, and City Council. In addition, four individuals were interviewed by phone who were not able to attend the arranged focus groups, including representatives from the Youth Council, North Oakland Baseball Federation, a business representative from Fanuc Robotics, and the Green Space Board.

The interviewees were encouraged to be candid in their answers and were told their names would not be used in the plan. The questions spanned program priorities, park uses, management of the parks and how the parks play a role in the community.

The views of stakeholders vary widely, and add qualitative input to the planning process, as opposed to statistically valid input derived from the public survey. In general, stakeholders enjoy the innovative and unique amenities offered by the City including Innovation Hills and the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. There is a desire for more high-quality and unique spaces. Undeveloped parks such as the Tineken Property and Nowicki Park are valued for the contribution of green space, but could provide additional value with development that provided better public access. Outdated amenities such as older bathroom facilities, shelters in need of replacement, and the Velodrome were seen as areas in need of improvement. Stakeholders interviewed were generally in favor of a dog park.

The following is a summary for each group type. A full reporting from the interviews and focus groups can be found in the appendix.

Methodology

City Officials have a business and budget relationship with the park system, as well does the City Council. Council members are individuals working with legislation in the city including the parks and natural resources department. Key

Leaders and Stakeholders are individuals in the City that own businesses, are chairpersons of groups, and leaders of organizations that use the parks as citizens (both park / non-park users). Interviews were held in April of 2022 on site and by telephone.

Up to nineteen questions were asked of the individuals during the interviews and the participants were encouraged to answer candidly and told that no names would be used in any documentation for the Master Plan process. The interview questions for each group and the participants' answers were melded into a brief compilation found in Appendix B.

The overall summaries that follow below are comprehensive characterizations of all answers from the groups that were interviewed.

Interview Summary – Government Officials

The expectation of the City's increasing population resulted in answers related to the need for the park system to grow as the community grows. Park users enjoy greenspace now and obtaining more parkland would be difficult adjacent to most parks. Vacant parks have potential for a variety of uses, but many participants were unaware of them or had no idea where they were located. People are interested in bringing new and trendy programming and amenities for residents forward in existing parks. A minority of participants felt the parks were in okay or adequate shape, but they were the ones that also said they haven't been to a park in a long time or had only visited one or two parks in the system ever. Spencer Park is operated well while there is a lot of activity at the beach. The beach is unique from the perspective there are no other beaches in parks surrounding Rochester Hills. Answers from the majority felt the parks needed a facelift or even major overhauls to update them now and make them presentable for more visitors in the future.

Many park amenities were mentioned during the interviews and one that come up many times was the need for a dog park. Opposition to a dog park was extremely low, and a need for a dog park was mentioned in many responses throughout the interviews. Proponents of a dog park had locations in mind where they felt a dog park would not be bothersome to others. The parks they mentioned had adequate room, and for the most part the community likes dogs.

Innovation Hills is well known by everyone, and the community is proud that it is in Rochester Hills. Innovation Hills was used as an example of what could be included as new and trendy amenities to incorporate into future parks. The Museum at Van Hoosen Farm had similar appeal, including adding a few farm animals as a good idea. The school programs at the Museum are popular and the programming is performed well by the staff.

Nowiki and Tienken park sites have been vacant for a considerable amount of time. Some of the participants were unaware of their location and only knew them by name. Those two park sites are overgrown and those who have seen them had ideas to keep them in a natural state or develop trails through them.

Participants would like the Master Plan to demonstrate how the parks system needs to communicate more with the residents so they know more about the parks and what programming and events are being offered. Updating the system and learning about what is occurring in the parks and what more visitors to the parks would mean to the system are issues the Master Plan should address.

Interview Summary – City Council

Participants responded well to all questions and some topics generated collaborative conversation, suggestions, and many answers. Clean and well-maintained parks are noticed and appreciated, yet there are areas in the parks that need updating. Adding a dog park was nearly unanimous as an amenity that interviewees thought should be in one park in the system. Three parks were mentioned as locations for a dog park, and Nowicki and Tienken parks were the most popular parks mentioned. Wabash Park was also a possibility, but few others agreed. A better use of Nowicki and Tienken would be to partially develop them with a minimal number of recreation amenities but keep the majority of the sites in a natural state since they are overgrown. Greenspace, nature and trails are highly valued by Rochester Hills residents and participants had many ideas for using the two sites. Since the sites have not been used as parks, many participants did not know their locations or the names of the property.

Residents are proud of the Museum at Van Hoosen Farm and the reputation it has in the community. It has successful programming and with Innovation Hills as a progressive park with many unique

amenities helps Rochester Hills to be a well-known community. Innovation Hills Park projects a trendy atmosphere and includes educational experiences for visitors. The staff at these facilities need to keep pace with technology and a younger visitor base to avoid doing things the “same old way”. The beach at Spencer Park is another unique park amenity where residents enjoy being outside with a mix of food areas, kayaking and swimming.

Throughout the parks in the system there are a variety of experiences and events for all ages and as the community grows maintenance will need to take care of what is already in the parks and prepare for new amenities and more visitors to the parks. The community values their parks and the natural areas to relax and gather. They are confident the system will adapt to meet the recreation needs of a growing community.

Interview Summary – Key Leaders

These interviewees were residents that had similar views about the system as did the other groups that were interviewed. For the most part, they were users currently or previous users and felt the parks were good for the community, were well taken care of, and located well with good access throughout the community. Predominant amenities that were wanted by participants in the groups were a dog park and more green space for passive recreation and picnicking. Also, in discussing future amenities, they felt more innovation and more amenities would be needed in the future as the community grows. Innovation Hills Park is an amenity enjoyed by residents in Rochester Hills and also visited by individuals and groups from other communities. Revolutionary concepts are displayed in the park that provide insight to ideas that could become reality in the future. The Rochester Hills Museum at the VanHoosen Farm is another amenity of interest in the Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources system that looks back at farm life in years gone by and demonstrating life for early settlers and Native American Indians.

Of the two vacant sites owned by the park system, the Nowicki and Tienken properties were thought to be the only real things that had no or minimal value. Two amenities were probable non-value amenities: the velodrome and cricket fields because they would be good locations for an amphitheater or other amenity that the entire community would enjoy. Spencer Park is another unique site, and

the beach is a great spot to enjoy water amenities, food booths and swimming.

Participants realize the need for updates and contemporary amenities throughout the park system will be favored. However, a growing community with a growing park system will need a larger staff and specifically a larger maintenance staff.

Interview Summary – Stakeholders

Participants in the stakeholders group had a very personal view of the park as residents and were faithful users of the system. Their comments were barely sprinkled with negative comments and nearly all were concerned about how the population growth in Rochester Hills would affect the park and how it operates in the upcoming years. They were proud to make comments on behalf of other residents that were their friends or comment about what they heard from others in the community. The Museum and Innovation Hills Park were praised for being well visited focal points in the city. Because Innovation Hills Park has so many visitors the site may be a good location for other small amenities and it certainly needs more parking. The two unused park properties should remain mostly in natural areas with minimal amenities since they are not large areas and have been overgrown for years. The much wanted dog park could be a possibility at either of those sites and only a few comments included other locations. Looking at the large picture of the system, more and better restrooms are important in the parks and other facilities need better maintenance or should be updated. Conversation about growth in the city came up often and it will be inevitable that additional staff will be needed to care for the system as more people will use the parks.

Stakeholder Interview Data

Government Officials Questions and Answers

Question 1. What are your general perceptions of the parks, recreation facilities and opportunities available in the city of Rochester Hills?

As in the first question, answers were predictably short: particularly good, kept up well, a lot to offer, but were also mixed with more detailed answers. Participants felt the parks were doing a good job and have made positive changes and provide events that support what kids and young families are looking for in the park system. The beach is a unique amenity that the community enjoys. Maintenance in the parks is good and they are well kept and kept nice for users. Interviewees that enjoy sports felt those activities were appropriately represented in the parks. Those that had visited parks in other communities commented on the good mix of amenities and trails that are not found elsewhere.

Question 2. What do you feel people value most about the park facilities in Rochester Hills?

Answers to this question were similar indicating the Rochester Hills parks have many options and are well kept the participants said. Most all amenities are good, Innovation Hills is something well-liked by residents, and there is room for more trendy amenities at other parks. The parks are easy to find and are accessible to everyone.

Question 3. What do you feel people value most about the parks system's recreational facilities and opportunities? (neighborhood and community parks, trails, beaches, and other amenities)

Some interviewees had answers similar to question 2 and said they felt “facilities” meet the recreational needs of residents. Recently it seems there is more public time set aside for park activities; cultural events and gathering in park areas were two examples. Park locations are highly valued with community parks in locations that are easy to get to, yet the beach was not mentioned as highly valued. Outside passive recreation: picnic tables and seating areas are much appreciated by park users.

Question 4. What amenities, facilities or activities do you feel are most needed in the system? Please discuss current parks, recreation or museum trends, or gaps in facilities to meet those trends and thoughts on short term and long-term development.

Some answers contained a long wish list of amenities and others looked to the future when answering. Sports activities, nature experiences, interactive activities and passive recreation were categories that many specific answers fit into. One commonality present was the need for open space gathering areas to enjoy with families and friends. A dog park was an answer by two individuals, while many others expressed value in quality maintenance to keep the parks presentable and enjoyable. Dividing their answers to now and the future were more restroom access, local music performances, create a focal point in the parks, and more convenient times for public events. Moving to needs in the future; activities for boy scouts and girl scouts, a skateboard park, WIFI in the parks, job fairs, and more green and open space were given as answers. This question gave participants an opportunity to think of amenities and activities they had experienced elsewhere and hope the park system would seriously consider them in the future of the parks.

Question 5. Are there amenities or facilities within the park system that you do not see value in?

Only a few participants gave answers to this question, while others said there was not anything they considered non valuable. The vacant land where signs indicate it is a park are useless. Rochester Hills is not a beach town, so beaches aren't considered a real value.

Question 6. What park or recreation facilities should be developed or expanded to meet the needs of the community in the future?

Individuals that were interviewed provided answers that were identifiable as facilities that would be used by the younger age segment of residents. A pool was given as an answer as quick as the question was asked. Sports that are growing in popularity: cricket, skateboard park, and youth sports fields were given as answers. Including non-motorized transportation to visit the park was an answer that was park related but utilized outside of park property. Additional green space is needed and affordable for the City. Versatility in park

amenities is present now and should continue to be a priority in the future. Stoney Creek Park has most everything that could be duplicated to make a nice park. The comment was made that it is difficult to please everyone so deciding on what should be done may be hard to do.

Question 7. What additions or improvements should be made to the museum at Van Hoosen Farm in the City?

Some interview participants had not been to the museum or didn't know where it is. It was evident that people felt it was operated well and had good programming, but communication with other parks seems to be deficient. The school programs were an example of good programming and museum operations. The museum could partner with other historic homes in the area and expand on history of the Rochester Hills area. Answers from some interviewees were simple, positive, and short, "It's good." or "Pretty good."

Question 8. How would you like to see the undeveloped Tienken Property developed?

The property could be developed properly and made into a useable park if the right decisions were made. The previous idea to put a water tower there did not materialize so the property is vacant and overgrown. Answers included using the property for sports fields, a pool or dog walking. A dog park would not be right in that area. With the school nearby, the system should partner with the school district for more joint use of athletic space. Some thought as a park, trails and community friendly areas would be good for residents living nearby.

Question 9. How would you like to see the undeveloped Nowicki property be developed?

The land already belongs to the city and should be used instead of setting vacant. As answers, participants suggested several recreation activities for the property. Outdoor youth activities were mentioned, such as a skateboarding park, X-country skiing, and sledding, but most answers were more about passive activities. With the property located near the mall, it could be used for picnics or left as passive space with the property remaining in a natural state.

Question 10. What would you like to see done with Spencer Park?

It is a unique park with the lake and beach. Participants that have been there thought it was operated well and has a swimming and kayak area that people enjoy. Users could benefit from more signage and information about the park and locations of various amenities. Because the park is continually active and used by many, more restrooms could be added. Two interviewees felt nothing had to be done, the beach and other areas were adequate.

Question 11. What do you think would be a good location for a dog park?

Interviewees in this group had mixed feelings about a dog park. Two participants expressed their dislike for dog parks or that dogs in other parks can be dangerous. Dogs being walked on Hamblin Road are not wearing muzzles and can pose a danger to others. Those in favor of a dog park in the system thought Tienken or Nowiki Parks would be a good location, and Borden Park may also have potential. The dog park should be in a park centrally located in the city to make it more accessible to everyone. The dog park should only be a small area and fit into property at Innovation Hills.

Question 12. How do you feel about the Rochester Avon Recreation Authority (RARA Organization) and how well they are meeting the needs of city residents?

RARA is fading in its usefulness to the community. Some interviewees were not familiar with what the organization does but had heard of them throughout the years. One interview participant has worked with them in his capacity as an assistant coach and knows the community provides them funding even though they are a private organization. The same participant extended his answer to say that RARA has control over all school field operations and their method has gone on too long.

Question 13. Do you feel there should be a better partnership between the Park and Natural Resources system and the RARA organization?

Participants were vague about what they knew about RARA. Those that did have and answered said there could be a better relationship between the Parks and Natural Resources system and RARA or keep them separate from the system. For the

involvement RARA has with sports in Rochester Hills, knowledge about them was minimal.

Question 14. What value do you place on technology within the park system? (Wi-Fi or other technology needs or wants?) Please explain.

Technology did play a part in answers of the participants, and most were about diverse types to fit specific user's needs. An indirect value to the park system was to include cell towers on parkland. The towers could be placed in the parks and will generate funds for the system by a land lease to cell providers. Wi-Fi was a common answer since it is popular most everywhere else, was an answer came as no surprise. QR codes on signs throughout the parks would provide information to park visitors, along with comments that QR codes are now used by park visitors and easily provide information since most everyone has a cell phone. Charging stations for electric cars would have potential as more of them are on the roads everywhere. Participants that were unsure about technology may be good in the parks, said they did not know much about it and really couldn't provide any answers.

Question 15. How does your organization engage the parks system? (rentals, health, education programs, recreation programs)

Some participants were not able to answer because there was no direct connection to the park system. Some interviewees were on committees involved in park events, activities, or provide operational assistance. One participant helped develop QR codes that visitors were starting to use in parks, and comments were made about renting sports fields for team competition.

Question 16. Please finish this statement. "My vision for Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources is _____ within the next ten years.

Answers from this question were straightforward and expressed the importance the park system has to the community. The park system should reach out to the public and let them know they are growing with the City through more events and many different amenities. More aggressive marketing would inform people that parks provide programs and services for all ages and the needs of many residents in Rochester Hills.

Question 17. What challenges to you see for the park system as the city grows and changes? (such as general maintenance, replacement of existing facilities and amenities, staffing requirements, partnership need / requirements, capital needs or other park operations)

Some answers were a take-off from the examples provided. A growing city will mean more park visitors and present additional needs for staffing, maintenance, all park operations and definitely funding to support park expansion. Much of the park visitors are comprised of families or retired individuals and better marketing would reach out to the middle-aged residents, as well as the community as a whole would appreciate knowing about activities in the parks. Obtaining funds locally by offering naming rights for buildings, fields, amenities to business and organizations would provide them name recognition and generate funds for the system. Security will most likely need to be evaluated, increased with more technology added to provide security for the safety of park users. Young people will be a large part of the growing community and events should include experiences they want, as well as active experiences in addition to the family-oriented amenities.

Question 18. What are the key outcomes you would like to see come from this Master Plan?

A pinpoint conclusion from this question would be parks and the community. People in the community want to know more about what the park system provides so more people could enjoy new experiences and events. Adding new amenities and programs would also bring more people to visit the parks and gather in natural surroundings and areas.

Question 19. What are the best ways to pay for the identified outcomes of the Master Plan? (general taxes, user fees, sales tax, grants or other)

Participants commented that funding is a major issue in all things today, including parks. Growth of the community will take more funding to expand park operations, maintenance, amenities, and programs. Utilizing sponsorships for existing sports fields and other amenities should be implemented by the system as more facilities are developed in the future. In addition to sponsorships from local sources, fundraising events will draw businesses and organizations to participate and utilize crowd exposure to raise money for the system. Managing funds and operating within the constraints of

the budget will be necessary. Effective spending should be a priority for the parks to provide good programs and park upkeep. Raising taxes is never popular with the public, so the system should investigate additional government resources for state and national funding opportunities. Grants and existing bonds to support CIP and other major park expenses are other ways the system should investigate.

What questions have I not asked you that you would like to have represented in the Master Plan?

“The interview was good. No questions from me.”

“How is the plan being completed and implemented?”

“You should ask more about playgrounds and trails.”

“How does this Master Plan process work?”

“You didn’t ask much about Bloomer Park or pocket parks – what could be added there?”

“No. Thanks for interviewing me.”

Participants were happy to be a part of the interview process and asked what the Master Plan process will progress. There were specific topics they would have liked to be a part of the interview, since they had comments, they wanted to contribute. With the interviews done individually by phone instead of a group, there was no interaction of participants to build upon answers that were given.

City Council Questions and Answers

Question 1. What are your general perceptions of the parks, recreation facilities and opportunities available in the city of Rochester Hills?

All participants provided answers that the park system is particularly good, has great amenities, and offers a wide selection of enjoyable experiences. They did comment that updates in some areas are needed and on physical structures, seasonal employees may help but part time employees are not easy to hire. Additional full-time staff would be valuable in the day-to-day operations of the system but hiring and retaining them is an economic problem also. Residents love the parks, and with attendance over one million visitors per year including Innovation Hills as a

state-of-the-art amenity, the staff needs to avoid the “old park” mentality, move forward, and pursue trends in the parks and recreation industry. Bloomer Park is recognized as a park that truly needs redone.

Question 2. What do you feel people value most about the parks and park facilities in Rochester Hills?

Although some areas in the parks need updating, they have something different for all families and individuals. Sports activities, nature, trails, soccer, the beach, and areas for people to relax and gather are important to interviewees. Participants mentioned Innovation Hills for its creativity and how well people like to visit and use the boardwalk and playgrounds for kids. The parks have plenty of trees and create an “away from city” feel for general recreation as well the comforting feel of the outdoors.

Question 3. What amenities, facilities or activities do you feel are most needed in the parks? Please discuss current parks, recreation or museum trends, or gaps in facilities to meet those trends and thoughts on short and long-term development.

Participants said the parks were a mix of sports, recreation amenities, natural areas, and activities for everyone to enjoy. An aging population will encourage activities suited to their age segment. Additional programming and the Arts would engage residents to the parks and would increase attendance. Popular answers included how park visitors widely use playgrounds and trails. A dog park would be good to have at one of the parks. The parks have plenty of trees making the playgrounds and other areas feel like they are not in an urban setting. There are areas and facilities that need updates and for now, they are just above average and will require reinvestment to keep them fresh and attractive. A variety of sports activities are present in the parks, and more pickleball courts are needed to accommodate the growing demand by players. Disc Golf would be a low-cost sport that would complement existing sports as well as encourage other trending sports. New ideas should bring out new park opportunities like Innovation Hills as well as passive areas that are ADA accessible will become needed as the City grows.

Question 4. Are their amenities or facilities within the park system that you do not see value in?

Everyone that participated had the same overall response that the parks don’t have any amenities or facilities that are of no value. The parks were praised for the variety of choices for program and services to align with the needs of all residents as well as visitors from nearby communities. One interviewee had not visited some parks in the system, but they still felt the parks are well used by the community.

Question 5. What future parks or recreation facilities should be developed or expanded to meet the needs of the community for the future?

This question incited participants to express their desire for a dog park to be built in the system as answers to this question. Nowicki was a location that was brought up as a good location for a dog park and nature trails and would also be a location. Team sports fields were thought to be a positive addition to parks with more pickleball courts developed and possibly converting more tennis courts to pickleball courts. A strategic plan should guide suggestions to become realistic additions in the future, and possibly merge the RARA organization into a Strategic Rochester Hills Recreation Authority. Nowicki, Borden and Bloomer parks were brought up as potential locations for multiple uses: outdoor recreation, sports, greenspace, trails, disc golf, a dog park, and an area for people to gather. Park land is difficult to acquire so a concentrated effort needs to be made to increase the size of parks for all uses, especially for green space or to preserve land from development. Pine Trace does need some investment and operation of the park and the property lease should be re-evaluated since opportunities exist for event space in the future. Paint Creek Trail is managed by three municipalities and a Master Plan should provide guidance regarding redevelopment and governance of that site. As the City grows and the senior age segment increases, the park system should be more welcoming to them and make efforts to meet their specific needs. Including a petting zoo at the Museum at Van Hoosen Farm and adding a similar amenity at Cedar Mills would be an enjoyable new experience for families should.

Question 6. What additions or improvements should be made to the museum at Van Hoosen Farm in the City?

The museum is well known and considered “the jewel” of the city and a considerable amount of money has been spent to make it a great destination. As a historical destination, more signage internally and externally would help people locate it easier, navigate its features better, and even promoting the name of the park more on entrance signs may create additional interest and help extend interest to more visitors. Participants said that funding will need to continue through endowments or government contributions, but the museum is at near full capacity so in the future additional structures may be needed.

Question 7. How would you like to see the undeveloped Tienken Property be developed?

Some interviewees were not aware of the location of the property and those that knew said it was small but had natural elements and would like development to be minimal. Greenspace and trails were ideas given as answers and the small size could make it a candidate for a pocket park with a small playground. One person indicated uncertainty about the location, yet overall, it was felt that it should be partially developed, keep the property oriented for kids and yet contrary to not developing the property, it was mentioned a small amphitheater would be one amenity that could be added in the future.

Question 8. How would you like to see the undeveloped Nowicki property developed?

Many answers from participants would like to include a dog park on a portion of the property and since the property is undeveloped, it would be a good addition to the parks in Rochester Hills. With the property undeveloped and in a natural state, trails and greenspace were mentioned as long as the area was left for enjoying nature. Sports use was included in answers where multiple uses were mentioned. A minimal number of fields were suggested in order to avoid taking up too much property and causing issues with neighbors. Passive use on greenways and trails would not require the amount of parking that would be needed for sporting events so most of the property would be used as valuable natural areas, greenways, or trails.

Question 9. What would you like to see done with Spencer Park?

Questions asked about potential uses for parks in previous questions, participants made similar comments about Spencer Park and how the community enjoys the beach. Multiple amenities associated with the beach such as the boathouse area and other facilities need updates that were described as minor to massive. The pier, shore area, stations around the lake were included in answers as positive features in the park. The park has several amenities that are well used by visitors to the beach area, yet interviewees thought a floating play feature in the lake, hammocks in shaded areas, and spaces to relax under sunshades would be additions people would like. Private management of the park may benefit operations and improve maintenance. There are changes participants mentioned such as removing the fitness trails that are not used. Additional ball fields may be worth considering and the interviewee thought sports would not interfere with neighbors of the park.

Question 10. What do you think would be a suitable location for a dog park?

The question for which park would be a good location for a dog park brought forth a variety of locations. Nowicki, Tienken and Wabash were individual parks given as answers with exceptions of minor obstacles that would need attention. Most parks are dog friendly and people that have dogs bring them to walk in parks. Yates and Innovation Hills were definitely labeled as a no, while Borden, Wabash, and Bloomer were considered an alternative. However, Wabash used to have a frisbee golf course and a dog park might work well there. Comments were raised that even with the desire for a dog park getting a lot of attention, it can be a challenge to create and maintain, and that dogs allowed to run inside a fenced in area could create a liability. Aside from two participants, all others provided locations that were opportunities for a dog park.

Question 11. Please finish this statement. “My vision for Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources is _____ within the next 10 years.”

All participants had answers that challenged the system to be better and pursue amenities that will make the parks state of the art. Building on a historical foundation and moving forward will

continue to mix natural resources with trendy recreational offerings the community wants, residents will enjoy and will be accessible and inclusive for all. The system should expand by 10% in all areas, services offered, and become nationally and internationally recognized while reinvesting in and maintaining what they already have. New trends should be discovered and introduced to the system to keep it fresh and modern as they move into the future.

Question 12. What challenges do you see for the park system as the city grows and changes? (such as general maintenance, replacement of existing facilities and amenities, staffing requirements, partnership needs, requirements, capital needs or other park operations).

When interviewees answered, they discussed maintenance, taking care of what is present now, and how to obtain the necessary funding for these areas. It is important to fund and manage capital improvement projects effectively. Parking throughout the park system and especially at Innovation Hills was provided as an answer to new challenges. Others discussed how technology would continue to be a major interest of park visitors. As the city grows, more residents will use the parks and more sports fields and amenities will be required. One participant said RARA is indecisive and there were not sure if they operate for the benefit of residents or if they should be run by the city. Some challenges will be to provide more maintenance that will be needed as parks will be used more by the increasing population, adding technology that the community will want, and adding more staff in all park departments to operate the parks successfully.

Key Leaders Questions and Answers

Question 1. What are your general perceptions of the parks, recreation facilities and opportunities available in the city of Rochester Hills?

Participants said they thought the parks are good for the community, and were pleased a new park was recently opened, while another interviewee stated they did not know much about the park system but enjoyed the events provided. The parks have a lot to offer and there is plenty for families and children who desire to use the parks system and they also have amenities, trails, and activities not found in other park systems. Comments that participants heard in the community usually included how well the parks were maintained and that they are clean. A unique amenity is the beach at Spencer Park, and it has many amenities residents enjoy in addition to the water activities of the lake. As a park and natural resource system, they are making positive changes to add to nature areas and yet there is more that parks could do in the future for the community. Overall, those interviewed felt the Department does a good job operating the parks.

Question 2. What do you feel people value most about the parks and park facilities in Rochester Hills?

Interviewees had answers that the community enjoys the parks because they are fun to visit, have good amenities and they are easily accessible. Innovation Hills Park was mentioned as a positive and interesting park in the system and there are other options throughout the parks that are great to visit. New and different amenities would be appreciated and could compliment what Innovation Hills Park has to experience. The parks are located well through the city in existing neighborhoods, but there are not any parks associated with areas where apartment complexes and new residential developments are located or being built.

Question 3. What amenities, facilities or activities do you feel are most needed in the parks? Please discuss current parks, recreation or museum trends, or gaps in facilities to meet those trends and thoughts on short- and long-term development.

Outdoor activities were mentioned as a plus to the parks. Especially trails, places to gather and also the cultural events the parks provide. Social use of the parks would benefit from the addition

of picnic areas and places for families to relax and eat. The community has a real interest for a dog park to be added to one of the parks in the system. The beach was not an amenity one participant felt that is needed in the system. As in the previous question, ease of access was also mentioned as a positive attribute. Parks are well managed by the Department and good maintenance keeps them presentable to park visitors.

Question 4. Are there amenities or facilities within the park system that you do not see value in?

Only one comment was made that Rochester Hills is not a beach town, so in that participants eyes, the beach is actually not an amenity needed or required by the system. This was a personal comment and others felt the beach was good for the City and residents like it. Vacant property that is not a park but has park signs is not valued for the system yet could possibly be converted to parks and could be a good asset of the Department if the locations were promoted to the public. The general feeling by participants is there is not anything they feel not valuable for the parks at this time. They are happy with amenities in the parks and how they serve the public.

Question 5. What future park and or recreation facilities should be developed or expanded on to meet the needs of the community in the future?

More biking at the velodrome, and a skateboard park were activities that would be good to improve on in the future. Parks should have more variety of amenities, including green space, safe trails, and general use. Stoney Creek Metro Park is an example of what future parks should be like. Trying to determine what could be wanted by the residents in the future would be difficult to do since Rochester Hills has varied demographics that value recreation in different ways. A pool and cricket fields would be great additions as Rochester Hills moves into the future.

Question 6. What additions or improvements should be made to the Museum at Van Hoosen Farm in the City?

Some of those interviewed had not visited the museum, and those that had been there were pleased with their experience. Since the museum is historical in nature, it was mentioned that old and original homes in Rochester Hills could be included in a tour to highlight how the houses

played a part in the community in the past and add historical exposure about the area for park visitors. The school program is extremely popular and attended well by kids in the community, as well as the programs, exhibits, and spaces in the museum provide interesting information. The museum is managed very well, is good for the system, and if they would communicate more effectively with other parks in the system it would help them understand more about what park visitors are saying about other experiences that residents want in programs.

Question 7. How would you like to see the undeveloped Nowicki property be developed?

Some interviewees were not even aware of the property at Nowicki or its location still voiced an opinion when they heard it was undeveloped and not being used. They felt if the property is vacant, there is something that the Department could use it for since other parks are so well developed. Since it is undeveloped and not maintained, leaving it in a natural space with some passive areas for picnicking or quiet relaxing is a possibility throughout spaces in the property. With the property undeveloped it may be a good opportunity to start with an empty slate and develop amenities that are not currently present in other parks in the system or amenities that fit the surrounding neighborhood residents.

Question 8. How would you like to see the undeveloped Tienken property be developed?

Participants had more ideas for this undeveloped property in the park system. Sports fields and activities were given as possibilities for the park or utilize a partnership with the school district to provide them with additional access to compliment sports fields the schools already have. It was questioned why the property was acquired initially, while plans were in place to put a water tower there, or to keep someone else from buying it and to have it available for park use if they every decided they need more parkland. With nothing on the property, it could be left primarily alone, or used more extensively with a pool built there. Community spaces and open areas are valued by residents in the Rochester Hills community so minimal development would provide spaces and areas to gathering and add natural trails for dog walking though the undeveloped sections of a new park.

Question 9. What would you like to see done with Spencer Park?

Spencer Park is a unique park in the system, and it is fine the way it exists with the food offerings that complement the beach, swimming, fishing, and kayak areas. It seems ironic that a park with a beach and enjoyed much by the community that there were two participants that were unaware of their location. As with other properties that were asked about, some participants were unaware of where Spencer Park was located. Activities and food booths there are good compliments for time spent swimming, on the beach sunbathing, or fishing. It's a highly active location and the community really enjoys it as a part of the park system.

Question 10. What do you think would be a good location for a dog park?

A dog park has been mentioned as a need several times during the interviews. The two previous properties (Nowicki and Tienken) and other parks were given as answers for a good location of a dog park. There were several parks given as location of where not to have a dog park and followed with reasons about why not. While answers were nearly all positive to adding a dog park to the system, some did not want a large area for dogs to run unleashed, but just a small area where a limited number of dogs could use it. Dogs without muzzles are walked in many areas of the parks now, and a dog park may give dog owners a solution to dogs being a danger in areas of the park that other residents like to use for walking or relaxing.

Question 11. Please finish this statement: "My vision for Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources is _____

__ within the next ten years."

The blank space in this sentence gave free reign for participants to mix their answers about what the parks need now and how those needs would increase and evolve in the future as the city population continues to rise. Answers were about the community needs, park opportunities, and how the park system needs to align with population growth and that better marketing inform residents of what parks are offering. Including more off-season recreation was mentioned to increase use of the parks and provide new activities residents would enjoy. In order for parks to grow, the city must also believe that system should grow and

be willing to invest financially to assist with new amenities, programs and facilities new residents want.

Question 12. What challenges do you see for the park system as the city grows and changes? (such as general maintenance, replacement of existing facilities and amenities or staffing requirements)

With growth of the city in this question, more answers were given of how parks would be affected by a larger population and more park use. For parks to be maintained well there will need to be a larger staff to keep parks clean, care for amenities, provide programs as well as more security to keep parks safe for everyone. Obtaining and utilizing revenue from sponsorships will provide businesses name recognition and will help with the expenses of the parks, especially sports fields. Reaching more people and especially middle age young adults will need to be a focus for marketing and programming will also need to be adjusted to serve more people and a more diverse population.

Stakeholders Questions and Answers

Question 1. What are your general perceptions of the parks, recreation facilities and opportunities available in the city of Rochester Hills?

Overwhelmingly, interview participants had positive comments about the parks, they are pleased with what the parks offer to the community, and there is diversity in what is offered at each of the parks with trails, playgrounds, biking, green space, the beach, the museum, sports and Innovation Hills Park. The parks are well used and some amenities in the system are beyond what other nearby communities offer, yet some comments suggested new types of amenities and services that the Department should consider offering. Regarding the condition of the parks, the majority commented the parks are inviting, well maintained, and enjoyed by the community. There were a limited number of answers regarding the outdated condition of some buildings and facilities, therefore making necessary improvements should be a priority.

Question 2. What do you feel people value most about the parks and park facilities in Rochester Hills?

This question prompted answers a bit broader than question one, and by inquiring how “people” feel about the parks, not just how the participant feels. This can refer to what they hear from others, or what they think is the impression of the parks by the community in general. Enjoyment of nature, open space and trails were the most prevalent answers, while others mentioned easy accessibility to the parks as well as the presence of good amenities as important. Cleanliness and safety in the parks are valued by park visitors and given as answers by some interviewees. Two participants mentioned they like the beach area and that it is unique to the area and a great place to go in the summer. During the interviews, Innovation Hills Parks and the Museum were said to be distinct features people like and are what the Department is known for.

Question 3. What amenities, facilities or activities do you feel are most needed in the parks? Please discuss current parks, recreation or museum trends, or gaps in facilities to meet those trends and thoughts on short- and long-term development.

While the museum is well liked, having more staff would allow the museum to be open all year.

Parking there is not sufficient while the same lack of parking problem exists in areas near trailheads where people need to park and walk. Some participants miss the Nature Center that was closed over 10 years ago, yet realize it was a lot to take care of. The declining condition of the seldom used Velodrome was mentioned, as well as the need for upgrading the restrooms. There are facilities and amenities in the parks that need to be better maintained, kept cleaner, and the aging Bloomer Yates Park was given as an example for updating. Looking to the future, a dog park, adventure related amenities, and modern activities should be included in the parks to keep them fresh for young adult residents and park users.

Question 4. Are there amenities or facilities within the park system that you do not see value in? Please explain.

The majority of participants said the parks have nothing they see that has no value and are pleased with existing amenities and facilities. The Velodrome and seldom used cricket fields were referred to negatively and were said to require staff that could be used elsewhere in the parks and possibly a larger venue for events and concerts. Sports fields and shelters require considerable resources to manage reservations, and they also need to be updated. One interviewee thought museum tours are declining and different hours should be considered since attendance is decreasing.

Question 5. What future park or recreation facilities should be developed or expanded to meet the needs of the community for the future?

Of all parks in the system, the Nowicki property needs to be developed and additional trendy programs could be included there. Since Innovation Hills Park has the most attendance, more parking and restrooms should be added, and creating more outdoor space would also be a benefit to the visitors. Nearly everyone interviewed thought a dog park should be added as well as sports fields for soccer and lacrosse, and even a driving range and adventure / fitness park could be added attractions. With the growth of the city and increasing attendance at parks, traffic will be an ongoing issue and local pocket parks could be added to reduce people driving across town to use a park. Better signage will be required to guide many first-time visitors using the park system.

Question 6. What additions or improvements should be made to the Museum at Van Hoosen Farm?

Answers about the museum included comments that it is operated very well and retaining the historic aspect is important to those questioned. Some participants thought returning Van Hoosen Farm to a working dairy would be interesting, however there were a few that felt nothing else needed to be developed. Some felt the Department was doing as well as it could with what is available for the museum, yet most feel there needs to be some updates to buildings on the farm. Other uses could include using space there for various social events to expand the capabilities of the facilities, and also that shelters in outdoor areas could be used during special events. In addition to updating buildings, more parking would be useful, and repairs need to be made on the driveways and entrances would improve the appearance of the property.

Question 7. How would you like to see the undeveloped Nowicki property be developed?

The property is large and overgrown where trails could be developed in some areas and include workout stations so most of the site could be left intact or leaving it completely undeveloped may be best. One participant answered that the Nowicki property would be a good place to establish a disc golf course, while others suggested some basic amenities including a playground, bathrooms, and areas to relax without interrupting the natural feel. Those that mentioned a dog park in previous answers thought this property would be ideal because it is not developed, and a dog park could be added with the foliage creating a natural barrier to the few neighbors near the property.

Question 8. How would you like to see the undeveloped Tienken property be developed?

This park property is not as large as the Nowicki property and was not known by some interview participants. Others provided answers that the park is in a natural state and any developments should be minimal and consume only small spaces such as a small playground, shelter house, dog park, possibly a skate park, or leave it untouched. There would certainly be more maintenance to control invasive species and manage trees on the property

due to overgrowth present now. The proximity to the school could be an opportunity for some youth type amenities and place for them to gather.

Question 9. What would you like to see done with Spencer Park?

The beach is popular and mentioned in most answers. The bathrooms there need updating, and the gravel parking lot needs to be paved. Most interviewees thought the Spencer Park is enjoyable and widely used, yet wheelchair access to the beach should be added. The areas around the beach need an updated look as well as enhancing and expanding the picnic area to reduce overcrowding were other suggestions. The beach has some rock areas that wash out and need repairs to fix the erosion. The trail around the lake is used but repaving it would make it better for foot traffic, bikes and baby strollers, and encourage more use. An inflatable floating feature would be a great play amenity, or possibly develop a water park with a partner for those visiting the beach would be a great experience. Water activities have seasonal appeal to users, as does hockey and a skate night for families. Other activities could be included to increase use in all seasons.

Question 10. What do you think would be a good location for a dog park?

The request for a dog park has come up in answers to many of the interview questions, and nearly all participants thought that the Nowicki property would be a good location. Tienken Park was occasionally included in answers with the Nowicki property, and Helen Allen Park as another possibilities. There was additional conversation with that prompted answers about the real desire for a dog park to be added to the system, yet there was an adamant reply that a dog park should not be a part of the Tienken property but maybe in sections of Bloomer Yates Park. One participant expressed concern that a dog park may create liability issue to the park system.

Question 11. Please finish this statement: "My vision for Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources is _____ within the next ten years."

Answers to this question ranged from maintaining what exists to the addition of trendy amenities in the parks. Minor updating, but not major improvements are needed and maintaining sports

areas should be ongoing to support more field use as the population of the City grows. Bringing more outdoor opportunities, trails and small amenities will also be needed for more residents using parks. In order to use parks during more seasons, there will be challenges including more staff, modifying restrooms that are not designed to be open in the winter, as well as providing non-seasonal programming. It was mentioned that in order to meet the increased use of parks by a growing community, acquiring more park land may be needed. However, updating facilities, amenities, and park property was a common theme from participants.

Question 12. What challenges do you see for the park system as the city grows and changes? (such as general maintenance, replacement of existing facilities and amenities or staffing requirements)

The most common answers were regarding the lack of staffing throughout the system. Seasonal staff is difficult to find and keep due to the strained economic times and as the City grows, more park users will require additional staff to perform additional parks maintenance and

update areas where ongoing repairs are definitely needed. The population growth will include varied demographics that will create needs for new types of cultural amenities. One interviewee mentioned how population could be affected if too much business and companies move to Rochester Hills and consume residential space that would be for housing, so the population may not increase but park use could diminish. Answers were specific about some areas that need updating are restrooms, parking lots, facilities, and amenities. An aging population will present a need for a Senior Center. Upkeep and renovation in the parks are noticed by residents and will need to be done before amenities and facilities become in poor condition or usable by visitors. This work, as well as replacement of various amenities will require adequate funding. Answers were mixed with comments regarding the current and future need for funding which will be mostly used for repairs that are needed as well as maintaining what exists in the parks now. Staffing will become more of an issue and with expanding services it is difficult to get new hires and maintain a full staff beyond what is available now.

NOTICE OF PLAN PUBLIC REVIEW PERIOD

12/9/22, 12:13 PM

PNR Master Plan



PNR Master Plan

The draft City of Rochester Hills Parks and Recreation Plan 2023–2027 is now available for public review and comment until January 8, 2023. It is also available at the Rochester Hills Public Library and Parks and Natural Resources Office for review and comment. Please review the plan below and provide your comments on the form below.



[CLICK HERE TO GIVE COMMENTS](#)

COMMENTS RECIEVED DURING PLAN REVIEW

Timestamp	Do you believe the Master Plan reflects a direction the Parks and Natural Resources Department should be moving towards in the next five years?	Please provide any comments, concerns or kudos about the Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources 2023-2027 Master Plan	Are there any questions about the plan that you would like to hear back on from someone within the Parks and Natural Resources Department? If yes, what is the question?
12/19/2022 8:58:38	Yes	Happy to hear a dog park is in the high priority section. Year round restroom at Innovation is another positive item. Happy to hear there is a plan for more green space purchases. This city is getting better and better. Also like the plan for the hard surfaces for trails. As we age, uneven surfaces are just more potential for injury.	Where is the potential site for a dog park? Also, my yard backs up to the Ruby green space. Is there any plan to replace the fencing along our lot lines? The fence is old and barely there and people have hoped it into our yard from the Ruby green space.
12/19/2022 9:15:52		is there any plans for a dog park?	
12/19/2022 11:07:25	somewhat		Now that cement work is complete at Borden park, I would like to know if lights can be added near the walking paths (around the soccer fields) in Borden park for safety purposes. Many of us walk year-round at this park daily around 4-7pm (dusk). Lighting around the pathways would be helpful. Also some type of salt or maintenance for ice/snow to make walking pathways safer during winter months

COMMENTS RECIEVED DURING PLAN REVIEW

Timestamp	Do you believe the Master Plan reflects a direction the Parks and Natural Resources Department should be moving towards in the next five years?	Please provide any comments, concerns or kudos about the Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources 2023-2027 Master Plan	Are there any questions about the plan that you would like to hear back on from someone within the Parks and Natural Resources Department? If yes, what is the question?
12/19/2022 11:17:49	Yes	The development of a trail system for Innovation Hills Green Space from river Rope Bridge (p. 56 of PNR Master Plan Draft) is not proper stewardship of green space -- "properties are not identified as parks and serve more of a natural resource preservation purpose," at p. 37 of the PNR Master Plan Draft. Connecting a busy park to a place earmarked for passive recreation is not proper stewardship. Many residents in RH want the beautiful wildlife and natural features preserved--adding additional traffic of people in woodlands where animals and native species are present will destroy habitats. Spend funds on enhancing/improving the many miles of trails within our existing parks or add new trails in parks, not in greenspaces.	
12/19/2022 22:29:50	for the most part	Report says interview & focus group info is in the Appendix, but there is nothing in the Appendix. Also, where is "2022 Parks & Rec Needs Assessment Findings report" to be found?	Some confusion & concerns about Survey. Example: people said "most satisfied" with amount of green space, and also "least satisfied" with amount of green space. Another place says a dog park was one of the "least supported" ideas, yet it is recommended by ETC.
12/20/2022 12:04:45	Yes		Will the updated plan account for the potential issue of invasive spotted lantern flies? They've been reported in Oakland county, have they been found in Rochester Hills?
12/22/2022 14:35:05	Yes	As a resident of Shadow Woods Subdivision, bordering Nowicki Park, I fully concur with your plan to maintain the natural and passive setting of the park in alignment with conservationist Eugene Nowicki.	No

COMMENTS RECIEVED DURING PLAN REVIEW

Timestamp	Do you believe the Master Plan reflects a direction the Parks and Natural Resources Department should be moving towards in the next five years?	Please provide any comments, concerns or kudos about the Rochester Hills Parks and Natural Resources 2023-2027 Master Plan	Are there any questions about the plan that you would like to hear back on from someone within the Parks and Natural Resources Department? If yes, what is the question?
12/23/2022 19:15:02		Pave the Spencer Park Lake trail with asphalt to give better access for wheelchairs, strollers, and year round hikers without the stones and mud to contend with.	
12/26/2022 19:31:05		Pave the Spencer Park Lake trail with asphalt to give better access for wheelchairs, strollers, and year round hikers without the stones and mud to contend with.	
1/3/2023 9:38:05	Yes	Save \$100,000- Leave Nowicki Park Alone	NO

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

MINUTES FROM THE MEETING TO PASS A RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

