



innovative *by* nature

City of Rochester Hills Parks and Recreation Master Plan

2016 – 2020

Adopted: February **XX**, 2016



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The participation and cooperation of community leaders and residents in the preparation of the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016 – 2020 is greatly appreciated. We particularly acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals:

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1 INTRODUCTION

In its continuing effort to provide quality recreational opportunities for its citizens, the City of Rochester Hills has created the Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2016-2020 as a guide for the management of City operated recreational facilities and programs over the next five years. This Parks and Recreation Plan is a continuing effort by the City to establish updated recreational goals and objectives for the community that will focus on organizational policies, maintenance, and facility development over the next five years and beyond. This plan will also make the City eligible for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to assist the City in reaching its recreational goals.

Mission Statement

The purpose of the City of Rochester Hills Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to ensure that a wide array of recreational opportunities, both passive and active, will be available in the most integrated setting, and for people of all age groups, interests and abilities of the community, while protecting and conserving the integrity of our natural and historic resources.

The City of Rochester Hills enjoys unique, long-standing relationships with its bordering communities and its two school districts for the provision of recreation programming. The Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA), established through the support of the City of Rochester Hills, City of Rochester, Rochester School District, and Avondale School District, has focused on the development, operation, and scheduling of classes for sporting and leisure time activities with the communities. RARA has the primary responsibility for recreation activity programming in the area.



The Older Persons Commission (OPC) provides recreation programming, education, enrichment and supportive services to adults 50+ in Rochester Hills, the City of Rochester, and Oakland Township. It is the OPC's mission to provide high quality programs and services that stimulate and advance active and healthy living for all ages of older persons.

The 2016-2020 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of Rochester Hills focuses on six critical areas as further elaborated on in *Chapter 6 Goals and Objectives*:

1. Preserve the quality of the current park system and enhance facilities to incorporate a broader array of active and passive recreational opportunities.
2. Continue to ensure the development of high quality parks facilities and strive for innovation in development at new facilities.
3. Improve the current park trail and pathway system with improved access, safety and amenities within and between the various recreation sites and other key destinations throughout the community.
4. Ensure the delivery of diverse, high-quality programming.
5. Ensure the preservation of significant nature features with the City and reduce impacts to the environment at existing facilities.
6. Continue to provide parks and recreation facilities in a fiscally responsible manner.



2 COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Regional Setting and History

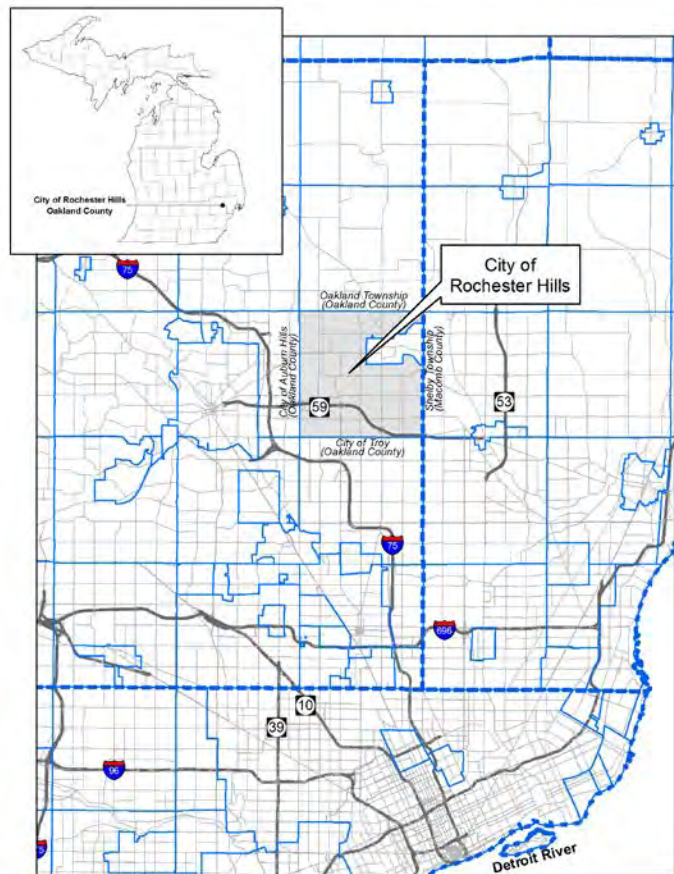
Location

The City of Rochester Hills is just over 32 square miles located east of the I-75 corridor in eastern Oakland County as illustrated in *Map 1*. The City is bordered by the City of Troy to the south, Shelby Township to the east, Oakland Township to the north, and the City of Auburn Hills to the west. Rochester Hills surrounds the City of Rochester on Rochester's northern, western, and southern boundaries.

Development History

The City of Rochester Hills, in the form it is known today, was essentially created by its original layout on the section lines as Avon Township. The seven major east-west roads and six major north-south roads form the edges for 33 roughly one-mile sections, defining the City's framework. The grid structure of

Map 1 Regional Location



Source: City of Rochester Hills



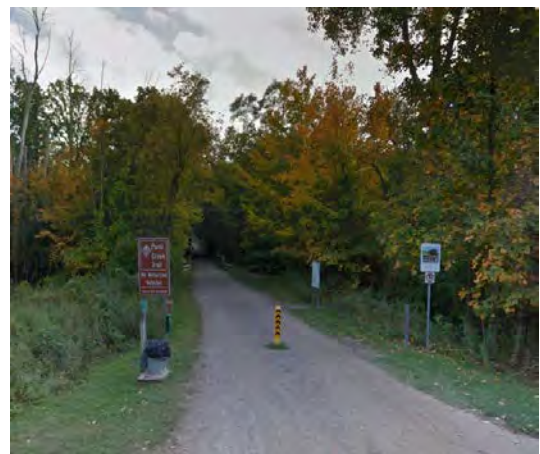
the City is intersected by three natural systems: the Clinton River, Paint Creek, and Stoney Creek. The existing natural systems provide opportunities for recreational and open space amenities.

By and large, the City of Rochester Hills is now a mature community, with few large tracts of vacant land available for development. Further, the vacant land that is left often contains natural features such as steep slopes, wetlands, or floodplains that serve as development constraints. In terms of parks and recreation planning, these natural feature areas provide great opportunities for enhancing the City's green infrastructure through conservation and development of wildlife corridors and greenways.

The City of Rochester Hills Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) was established by the City Council in 2005 for the purpose of developing strategies and recommendations to City Council regarding the expenditure of millage funds to permanently protect natural green spaces, wildlife habitats and scenic views; protect woodlands, wetlands, rivers and streams; and expand the Clinton River Greenway and other trail corridors.

The City of Rochester Hills owns and maintains over 1,000 acres of parks and trails in 14 parks and two trail systems. The developed parks range in size and scale from small neighborhood parks to a 207 acre former state park. The facilities and amenities provided in these parks are diverse and include traditional playgrounds and ball fields as well as more specialized facilities including roller hockey rinks, a velodrome, and golf course. In addition, the City owns two undeveloped parks and a number of green space properties.

Building upon the extensive 82-mile bike path system along major roadways in Rochester Hills, two segments of multi-jurisdictional trailways are located within the City's boundaries. A 1.2-mile portion of the Paint Creek Trail is located in the City which connects to the City of Rochester and to the Village of Lake Orion. The 8.9-mile non-motorized recreational trail is located in the former Penn Central Railroad right-of-way and follows Paint Creek through fields, prairies, woodlands, and marshes. The trail accommodates walkers, runners, mountain bikers, and cross-country skiers, and is surfaced with limestone fines.





The 15.6-mile Clinton River Trail, with a 4.5-mile portion bisecting the City of Rochester Hills, spans five communities in Oakland County, and directly connects to the West Bloomfield Trail to the west, the Macomb Orchard Trail to the east, and to the Downtown River Walk, leading to the Paint Creek Trail to the north. The Rochester Hills portion of the trail is the longest segment and generally follows the Clinton River on land previously owned and used by the Grand Trunk Railroad. The trail is used by bikers, joggers, walkers, and cross-country skiers. The trail also serves as excellent access points to area parks as well as a regional wildlife corridor. The trail is surfaced with rolled, pulverized, recycled asphalt.

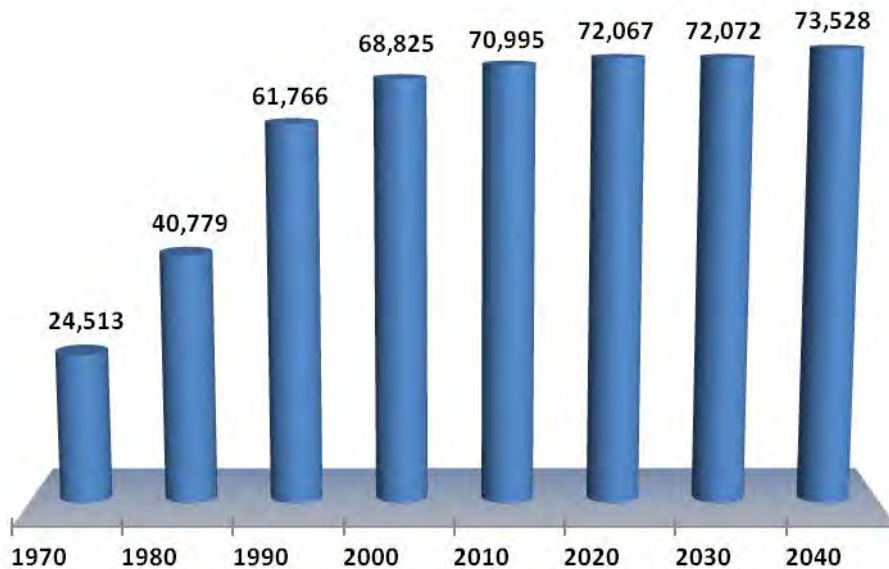
Social Characteristics

The amount of park facilities and level of recreational programming required in Rochester Hills is a result of demand. An understanding of existing and future demographics helps to identify trends, emerging needs, and deficiencies in the system.

Population

The City of Rochester Hills had periods of rapid growth between 1970 and 2000, at which point the pace of development plateaued. In 2010, the population of the City of Rochester Hills was 70,995, representing a 3.2% increase in the number of residents since 2000. However, population is once again on the rise as evidenced by the most recent Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) estimates, which estimates the City's population to be 73,257 as of July 2015, a population growth of 3.2% since 2010. This resident population is approaching the forecasted population for 2040 as illustrated in *Figure 1 Population Trends*. Assuming a consistent population growth rate, the City can realistically expect to have a population of over 75,000 by 2040.

Figure 1 Population Trends



Source: SEMCOG

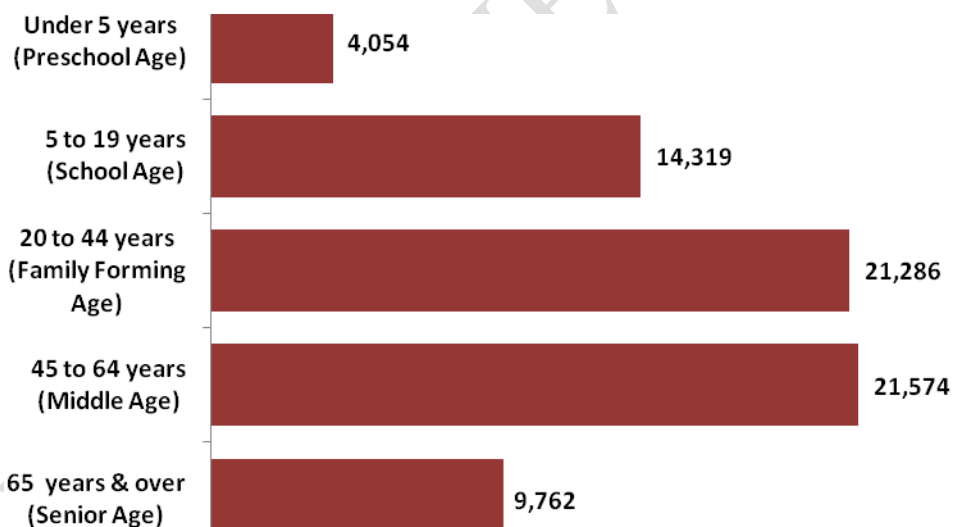


Age

Age characteristics are a useful demographic indicator for recreation planning purposes, as a community's age composition helps determine the appropriate mix of needed recreation services and facilities. The types and location of recreation facilities and programs will depend, in part, upon the age structure of the population.

A more meaningful picture of the City's age distribution is possible when individual age categories are combined into a smaller number of groups that more closely resemble identifiable stages of a normal human life cycle. Selected categories and the ages that they represent include: preschool, school, family formation, middle age and senior as illustrated *Figure 2 Age Distribution*. The Family Forming and Middle Age segments are nearly equal categories and when combined represent over 60% of the City's population. Seniors represent nearly 14% and this age group is expected to grow in size as the "baby boomer" generation matures and improvements in medical technology help people live longer, which is also reflected in the increasing older median age of residents, up from 38.1 years in 2000 to 40.9 years in 2010.

Figure 2 Age Distribution



Source: U.S. Census, 2010

The age structure of the City of Rochester Hills also indicates that the greatest immediate need is for recreation facilities that serve all ages. This would include neighborhood and miniature parks to service a wide range of youth-related activities. Young children need diverse programming offering a wide range of activities and events. Children learn the fundamentals of sports through organized baseball, softball, basketball, and soccer leagues. Day camps bring children together to create arts and crafts, go swimming, or learn about nature. The 25- to 49-year-old age group needs family-related programming that targets



people their age. Organized softball and volleyball leagues are popular in many communities. This group may also desire access to other forms of recreation, like golf, hockey, and basketball. Demand for recreation facilities for senior citizens will increase as well, due to the retirement of the “baby boomer” generation, and translate into a need for more passive park areas. Bicycle and walking paths provide an excellent opportunity for an entire family to participate in a recreational activity.

Disabled Population

Approximately 9.2% of the City’s population reported some type of disability. As one would expect, as people age, the percentage of the population that is disabled also increases, with nearly one-third of the City’s senior population having a disability as indicated in *Figure 3 Disabled Population*. This figure will continue to increase as the City’s population continues to age.

Figure 3 Disabled Population	
Age Range	Percent
Under 5 years	0.8%
5 to 17 years	3.3%
18 to 64 years	6.7%
65 years & over	31.8%

Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Although persons with disabilities make up a small portion of the City’s population, other citizens may face some form of temporary disability or physical challenges during their lifetime, including seniors, young children, pregnant women, individuals with broken bones, and individuals with crutches.

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination, both intentional and unintentional, against individuals with disabilities in all programs, activities, and services provided by public entities. It applies to all state and local governments, their departments and agencies, or special purpose districts of state or local governments.

The implications of the ADA for the City of Rochester Hills are significant. Parking lots, sidewalks, picnic tables, play equipment, playground surfaces, wayfinding, and other recreation facilities within parks must be examined regularly to determine if their design creates a barrier that prevents use by all segments of the population. Programs must be examined to be certain they provide recreation and leisure opportunities to all residents, regardless of their social, economic, or physical status.

Household Size and Composition

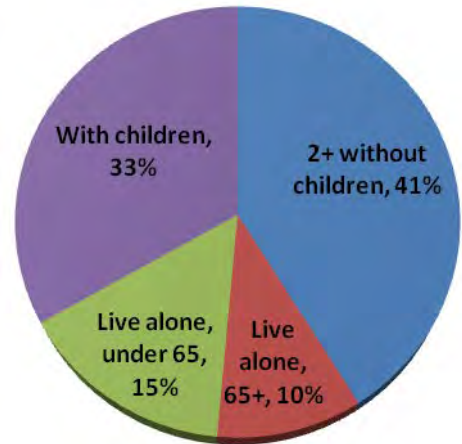
Household size describes the number of people living in a dwelling unit. Household sizes have been steadily declining across the U.S. and in Rochester Hills, which had a 2010 average household size of 2.53 people, a decrease of 0.05% since 2000. The decline has been a product of several different trends including lower birth rates and a growing number of people who live alone, accounting for nearly one third of the households as illustrated in



Figure 4 Household Types. SEMCOG predicts that household size will be down to 2.46 persons per household by 2040.

Household size is important as it impacts the population and population density of communities, especially those like Rochester Hills that have little land left to develop. Even with new housing growth, decreases in household size tend to cause a decrease in population density unless land use patterns are changed to increase development intensity. From a recreation standpoint, this means a wider geographic service area for park use.

Figure 4 Household Types



Source: U.S. Census, 2010

Natural Features

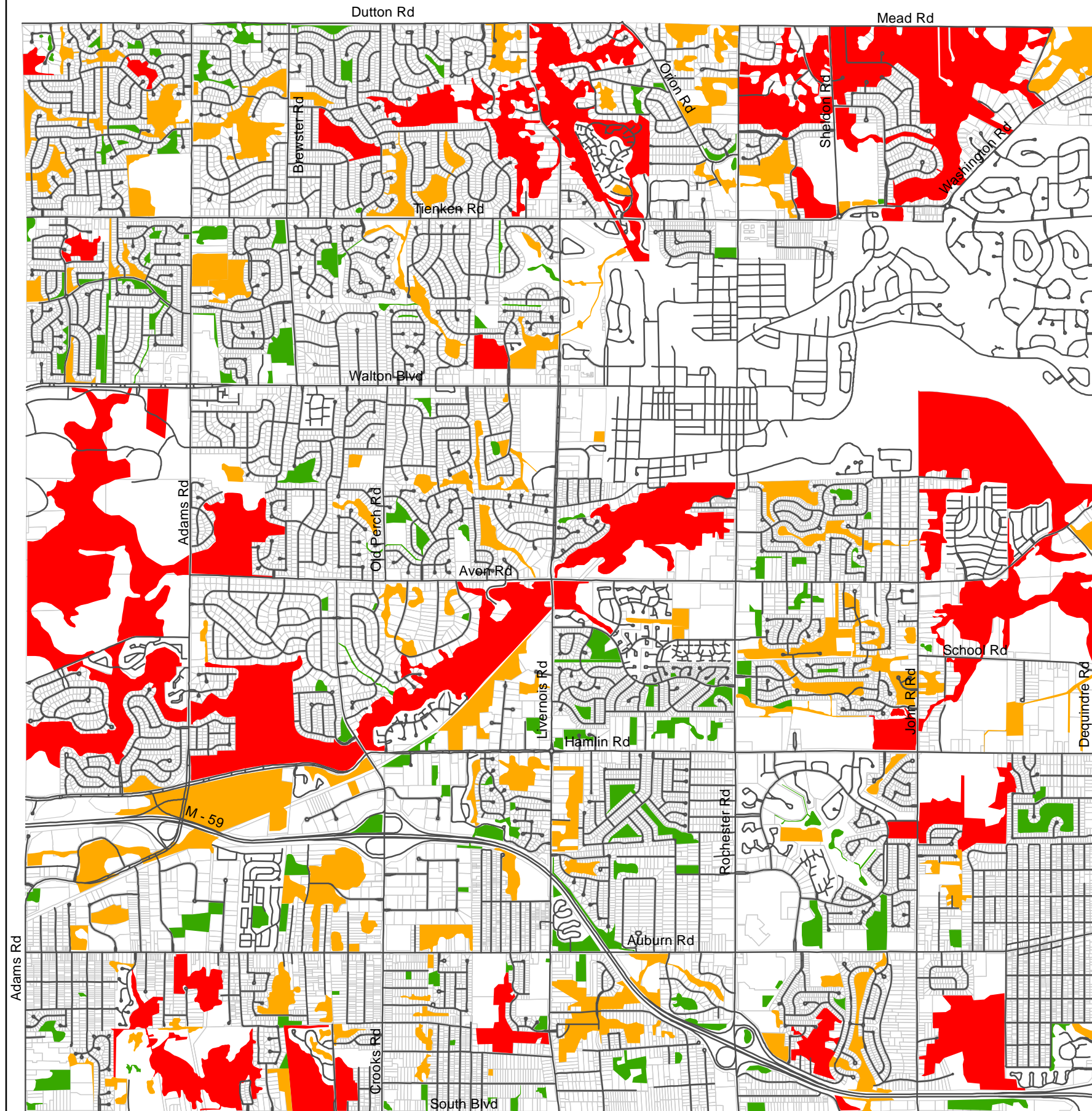
Niswander Environmental conducted a Natural Features Inventory for the City of Rochester Hills to identify steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, watercourse, woodlands, and natural areas as identified on *Map 3 Natural Features Inventory*. The inventory was conducted not only to identify existing natural features but also to provide a tool for City planners, engineering, and parks staff to evaluate projects and their potential impacts on natural resources and potential ordinance changes in the future, and is used to prioritize purchases of land under the Green Space Millage Program.






Steep Slopes

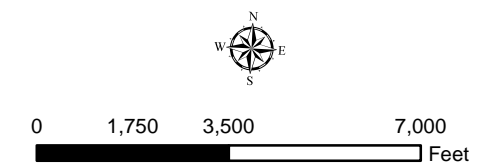
The Clinton River has created a deep river valley with steep slopes in the City. These steep slopes are often highly erodible sandy soils. Many are experiencing significant erosion as a result of development that has taken place too close to the top of the slopes. Protection of the Clinton River and adjacent property is of utmost importance to the City. Many of the City's steep slope areas are in need of restoration and/or protection from further erosion. The City established a Steep Slope Ordinance and continues to consider the acquisition of property along the Clinton River corridor a priority. Prevention and repair of existing slope

Map 3 Natural Features Inventory



-  Priority One Area
-  Priority Two Area
-  Priority Three Area

Source: Niswander Environmental, 2005
1/13/2016
Published by MIS Dept.





degradation is a serious concern and the City is working with various interest groups and organizations to address these issues.

Floodplains

Significant floodplain areas exist along the Clinton River valley as well as Paint Creek, Stoney Creek, Galloway Creek, and Sargent Creek. The City currently has a Floodplain Ordinance that protects floodplains and requires permits for any activities within the floodplain. The City will maintain updated FEMA maps as they become available.

Wetlands and Watercourse

The Natural Features Inventory identified 1,839 acres of wetland within the City, accounting for 10% of the total land. Of the 1,310 acres of the City's designated open space, approximately 40% of it is wetland. The City adopted a Wetland and Watercourse Ordinance to protect natural features by prohibiting development within a lake or stream or within a wetland that is greater than two acres in size or continuous to a lake or stream without a permit. Given the amount of protected and available vacant wetland area, the ordinance is providing significant protection to the wetlands.

Woodlands

The woodland areas in the City make up roughly 3,190 acres, or 17% of the City's total land. Of the 1,310 acres of the City's designated open space, approximately 45% is woodland. The areas identified in the City are valuable assets and are protected by the City's existing Tree Conservation Ordinance and Street Tree Ordinance.

Natural Areas

Natural areas are public and private lands that are primarily undeveloped and include land devoted to passive recreational use or lands retained for visual or natural resource protection purposes. Natural areas typically contain wetlands, woodlands, watercourses, floodplains, or passive recreation areas. The City currently maintains many acres of natural areas, and is continues to pursue acquisition of significant areas identified in the inventory. A large portion of these areas is associated with the Clinton River and its tributaries.

The natural areas were ranked and prioritized by Niswander Environmental based on a number of factors, such as size, connectivity, existing corridors, wetlands, woodlands, and ability for parcel assemblage. The top five priority sites are:

1. Bloomer Park
2. Oakland University
3. Riverbend Park
4. Northeast Stoney Creek
5. the Clinton River Corridor



These five areas should be protected to the greatest extent possible, as these sites are an integral part of protecting the City's remaining natural resources. For more information on the Natural Features Inventory, please refer to the City's Master Land Use Plan.

Climate

The climate in Michigan is classified as sub-humid temperate. In winter, average low temperature is 18° Fahrenheit. In summer, the average high temperature is 82° Fahrenheit. The average annual precipitation (rainfall) is 30.97 inches, with the greatest percentage falling between April and August. Climate affects recreation opportunities in Rochester Hills and recreation programs must account for rain and snow and take advantage of the diversity of seasons. Also, park design should take into account year-round maintenance costs and seasonal variations.



3 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

City of Rochester Hills

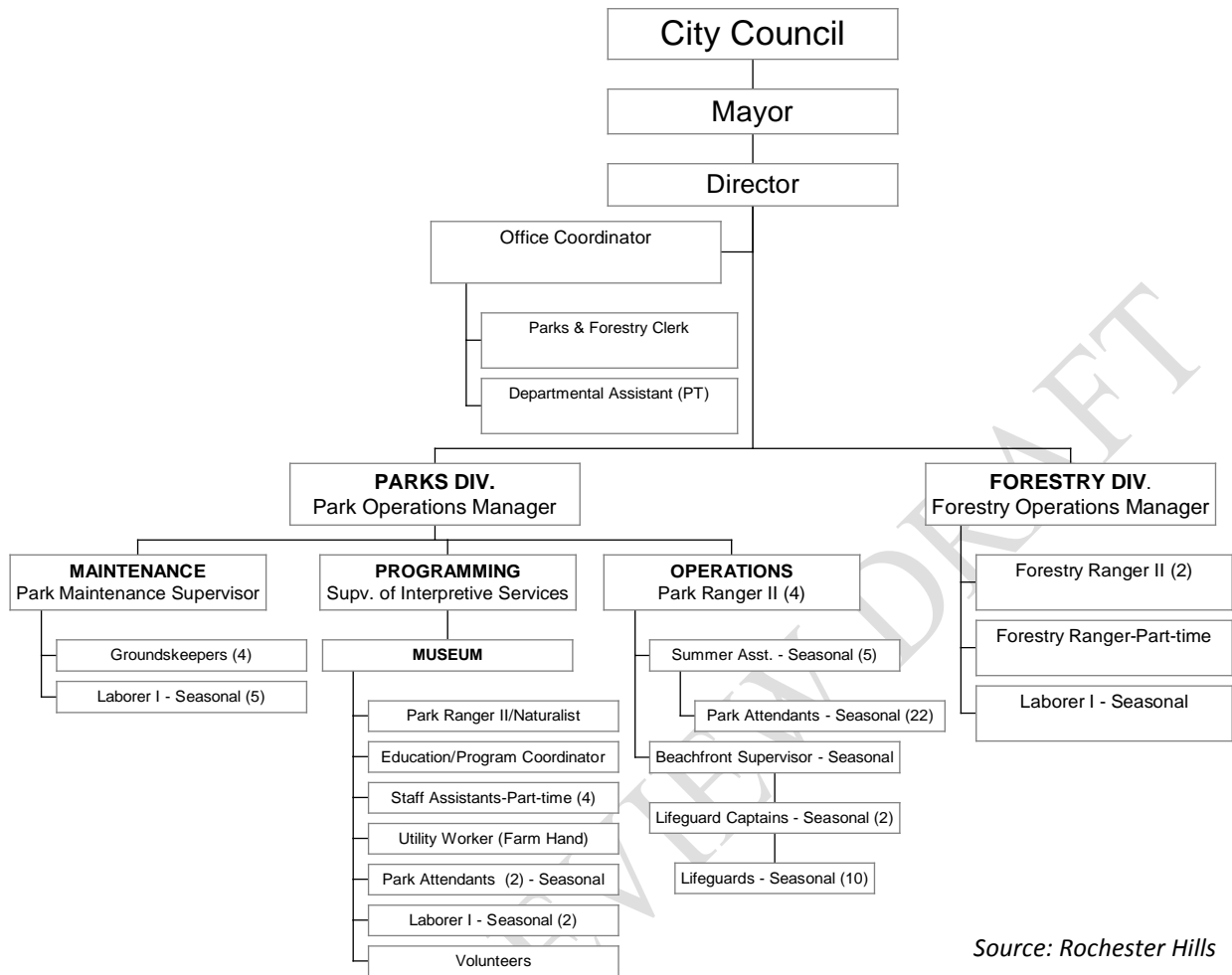
The City of Rochester Hills has a strong Mayoral form of government with a City Council that reviews and approves the budget annually in lieu of a Parks Commission.

The Parks and Forestry Department is responsible for the administration, operation, and maintenance of the City-owned parks and recreation facilities. The department also provides technical support to the City Council, aids in developing policies and plans for recreation opportunities, and makes recommendations to City Council concerning operating and capital expenditures for recreation purposes.

The Parks and Forestry Department consists of 18 full-time and 7 permanent part-time staff as illustrated in *Figure 5 Organizational Chart* on the following page. The Parks Division oversees the maintenance and supervision in the City parks and the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm. There are 51 seasonal workers employed as park attendants, lifeguards, and maintenance workers. The Forestry Division oversees the planning, maintenance, and installation of street trees and landscaping areas on right-of-ways and City-owned properties.



Figure 5 Organizational Chart



Source: Rochester Hills

Significant Recreation Providers

Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority

The Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA) is the primary provider of recreation programming for City residents. RARA was established in 1971 under an intergovernmental agreement between Avon Township (now the City of Rochester Hills), the City of Rochester, Rochester Community Schools, and the Avondale School District for the purpose of organizing and providing for the operation of recreation programming for area residents. RARA offers programs for youth and adult sports, summer programs, and enrichment activities.

RARA is governed by a commission that is composed of seven members from the participating governmental units, including one member of the Rochester Hills City Council and two citizen appointees of the Rochester Hills City Council. The RARA commission is responsible for establishing policies, which are then carried out by an Executive Director, who is the chief administrative officer of the authority. RARA has nine full-time staff and part-time

seasonal employees that staff the programs, activities, and camps. They also coordinate numerous volunteers who serve as coaches and in other roles throughout the year.

Older Persons Commission

The Older Persons' Commission (OPC) provides services for Rochester area residents 50+ with a variety of personal enrichment, fitness, aquatic, social and travel offerings. They also offer supportive senior services such as Meals on Wheels, Adult Day Service, door to door transportation, information on resources for seniors and their



caregivers and more. Residents 50+ from the City of Rochester Hills, City of Rochester and Charter Township of Oakland are automatically members of the 90,000 sq. ft. state-of-the-art facility. The facility features an advanced fitness center complete with a variety of cardio and HUR Strength training equipment, lap pool, therapy pool, indoor walking track, gymnasium, art studios, classrooms, café, dining room, woodshop, computer room and auditorium.

The OPC is governed by the Older Persons' Commission Governing Board, which consists of eight commissioners representing the City of Rochester, City of Rochester Hills and Charter Township of Oakland. The Rochester Hills Council and citizen representatives are appointed by the Rochester Hills City Council. The OPC Governing Board adopts and monitors policies under the provisions of the Interlocal Agreement, which establishes the basic purpose, organization, structure, and operation of OPC. The Executive Director is the chief administrative officer.

Green Space Advisory Board

The Green Space Advisory Board (GSAB) is a 9-member citizens board created by City Council in 2005 to serve solely in an advisory capacity and make recommendations to City Council on planning and developing strategies for acquiring green space and preserving natural features in the City of Rochester Hills using the 10-year Green Space Preservation Millage beginning in 2005.

Community Education – Rochester Community Schools and Avondale School District

A variety of recreation programs, activities, and enrichment classes for children and adults are provided through both the Rochester Community Schools and the Avondale School District Community Education Programs. The Rochester Community Schools serve most of the City of Rochester Hills, with only the southwest portion of the City falling within the boundaries of the Avondale School District.



Paint Creek Trailways Commission

The Paint Creek Trailways Commission is an intergovernmental agency formed under the Urban Cooperation Act of 1967 with representatives from Rochester Hills, Rochester, Orion Township, and Oakland Township. As part of the intergovernmental agreement, commissioners are appointed by the local City Councils or Board of Trustees, depending on the municipality. The Commission is responsible for the ownership and operation of the Paint Creek Trail. Each voting member municipality contributes equal amounts to the Operations Budget, regardless of the amount of trail located in their community and maintains the portion of the trail within its jurisdiction. The patrol budget is prorated based on the amount of trail in each community and covers the cost of a part-time bike patroller as well as the contracted services of the Oakland County Sheriff mounted patrol.

Clinton River Trail Alliance and the Friends of the Clinton River Trail

The Clinton River Trail Alliance (CRTA) was formed between the cities of Rochester, Rochester Hills, Auburn Hills, Pontiac, and Sylvan Lake after the Canadian National Railroad decided to abandon the railroad right-of-way through their communities. The CRTA pursued funding sources to purchase the property and developed the Clinton River Trail Master Plan to coordinate a seamless connection of the trail through the five member communities. The CRTA works together with key local groups, including the Friends of the Clinton River Trail, Clinton River Watershed Council, and Oakland County Trails Advisory Council to encourage residents, local government, businesses, and other organizations to promote the Clinton River Trail corridor as a unique and valuable open space, protect its water resources, enhance recreation, and preserve and interpret its historic resources.

Pine Trace Park and Golf Course

In 1986 the City entered into a long term partnership with a private group, Golf Concepts, to design, build and operate Pine Trace Golf Course until 2025.



Budget and Funding

Rochester Hills City Council approves an annual budget that establishes available City funding for parks and recreation operation and maintenance, programming and capital improvements. The funding for operating the parks system comes from the City's annual general fund appropriation. Acquisition and development projects are funded through the Capital Improvement Fund, which also comes from the City's general fund. In addition, recreation provided by RARA and OPC are funded through voted millages dedicated to their programs, and pathways and green space are funded through separate voted millages.



General Fund

The general fund is the basic operating fund for the City of Rochester Hills. It is also the traditional source of operating funds for parks and recreation. General fund revenues are derived from property taxes, state-shared revenues, federal grants, license and permit fees, charges for services, interest on investments, and court fines or forfeitures. Recreation facility user fees are channeled through the general fund.

Figure 6 Annual Budget Summaries			
Expenditures	2014 Audited Actual Budget	2015 Amended Budget	2016 Adopted Budget
Parks Division			
Personnel Services	\$1,945,327	\$2,067,440	\$2,223,070
Supplies	69,493	91,120	105,100
Other Services	632,056	679,520	848,100
Other Expenses	10,765	12,340	11,810
TOTAL	\$2,657,642	\$2,850,420	\$3,188,080
Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority (RARA)			
Administration	\$945,837	\$1,289,809	\$1,187,325
Adult Activities	16,412	5,625	17,725
Youth Sports	197,424	151,726	192,700
Other Programs	448,981	585,604	593,250
Dance	422,689	442,801	437,600
TOTAL	\$2,031,343	\$2,475,565	\$2,428,600
Older Persons Commission (OPC)			
Administration	\$2,246,941	\$1,223,374	\$774,975
Facilities Management (new)			559,862
Trips	273,382	367,294	332,637
Aquatics	164,057	179,525	0
Adult Day Services	93,504	96,378	99,184
Arts & Crafts	92,171	106,540	0
Performing Arts	36,155	40,989	40,653
Health & Wellness / Land	250,192	260,133	410,974
Programs & Events	115,700	123,090	203,723
Meals / Nutrition	735,769	760,711	765,494
Transportation	679,522	733,672	719,451
Newsletter	34,123	45,121	26,299
Senior Resources	48,618	53,320	35,140
Our Town Café	38,863	48,398	41,709
Volunteer Services	36,738	46,622	47,753
Recreation Programs	69,132	59,501	63,861
Signature Event	102,891	130,962	86,381
A-OK (new)	0	0	14,863
TOTAL	\$5,017,757	\$4,275,630	\$4,222,959

Note: This table depicts established budgets for operating, maintenance & programming, capital improvements are covered in a separate capital improvements fund

Source: Rochester Hills



User Fees

The City parks, RARA, and OPC charge reasonable fees to the users of specific recreation facilities or for enrollment in recreation programs. User fees provide substantial support for these facilities.

Green Space Millage

In 2005, voters approved a 10-year, 0.3-mill ballot question to permanently preserve green spaces, wildlife habitat, and scenic views; protect woodlands, wetlands, rivers, and streams; and expand the Clinton River greenway and other trail corridors by funding the purchase of land and interests in land for 2005-2014. This millage collection period concluded in 2015.

In 2013 the voters in Rochester Hills approved a ballot proposal that allowed for the use of funds from the 2005 Open Space Millage to not only be used to purchase land but for stewardship of the existing City owned Green Space properties and natural features owned or controlled by the City of Rochester Hills. In September 2014, City Council also established the Green Space Perpetual Care Trust Fund to provide for the preservation, protection, restoration and enhancements to our Green Space properties as well as educational opportunities for our residents.

The Parks Department and Green Space Advisory Board worked with Niswander Environmental to develop a long term management plan. The City of Rochester Hills Stewardship Program Long Term Management Plan serves as a guide for the protection and preservation of green space properties for future generations. The management plan provides guidelines for both short term and long term goals for all green space properties and natural features within Rochester Hills, including the Clinton River and its named tributaries. These stewardship projects will address areas of concern such as:

- Invasive species removal
- River and stream bank erosion
- Habitat restoration of wetlands and woodlands
- Monitoring and evaluation of all previous projects

In addition, the management plan addresses educational opportunities with the goal of engaging residents' involvement in the efforts to help complete the City's stewardship goals.



Pathway Millage

A 0.1858 mill pathway millage was enacted by a vote of the people in 2006 and continues through 2026. The Citizens Pathway Review Committee was established by City Council in 2007 for the purpose of suggesting, reviewing, ranking and recommending future pathway projects. The committee is responsible for the following:

- Reviewing pathway construction and major rehabilitation projects and recommend priorities to City Council
- Reviewing and recommending major pathway policies to City Council such as Pathway Construction Standards
- Implementing the goal of having a contiguous pathway on at least one side of all major arteries
- Providing recommendations to City Council, as appropriate, that arise throughout the life of the current millage
- Ensuring compliance with other requirements

Relationship with Other Agencies

Through the Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority inter-municipal agreement, the City has a relationship with the Rochester Community Schools and, to a lesser extent, the Avondale School District. Citizens of the City frequently use school facilities for recreation programs operated by RARA, and in addition, most school sites are open for informal, outdoor use. Other major agencies and commissions which provide recreation services and which coordinate and/or cooperate with the City are:

- Older Persons Commission
- Rochester Schools – Enrichment Department
- Rochester Hills Public Library
- Avondale Schools – Community Education
- Paint Creek Trailways Commission
- Volunteers at the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm and for special events
- Other sports providers, such as Rochester Youth Soccer League, North Oakland Baseball Federation, and Rochester Hills Little League



Parks and Recreation Policies and Procedures

The City's Department of Parks and Forestry, the Rochester-Avon Recreation Authority, and the Older Persons Commission independently develop policies and procedures for recreational programming. The agencies provide a variety of programs for residents, including instructional and educational programs, special events, athletic programs and tournaments, children's summer day camps, recreation programs, teen activities, and senior citizen programs.



4 RECREATION AND RESOURCE INVENTORY

The City of Rochester Hills has over 1,000 acres of public parkland within its boundaries provided by the City, with hundreds of additional acres provided by schools, neighborhoods, neighboring communities and regional facilities. In addition, numerous private facilities provide a wealth of additional recreation opportunities. These entities play distinct roles in providing balanced, high quality recreation opportunities for the community. *Map 2 Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities* identifies the location of the existing recreation facilities that are provided by Rochester Hills and the schools located within its boundary.

City Owned Facilities

City staff inventoried the existing City recreation facilities in 2015, the results of which are indicated on *Figure 7 City Owned Existing Recreation Facilities Inventory*. The physical inventory of local facilities consisted of site inspections of all City parks and recreation sites which documented the quantity and condition of facilities and an accessibility assessment.

Condition

The existing conditions of parks were rated according to the following general guidelines:

- **Good:** Equipment is in working condition with no immediate concern for repair or maintenance. Meets ADA criteria and is generally safe to use.
- **Fair:** Equipment is usable, but maintenance or repair is needed. May not meet ADA requirements or current safety standards.
- **Poor:** Equipment is not usable; reconstruction or considerable repair is necessary.



Accessibility

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all citizens have access to all facilities provided by the City, regardless of physical ability. Many of the parks facilities meet the ADA accessibility requirements. It is imperative that all new park development and programming address not only accessibility, but universal accessibility. That is to insure that parks provide access to all facilities for all people of all abilities. The issue of accessibility will become even more important with the continued aging of the general population.

Park staff with assistance from consultants completed a thorough review of park facilities in 2010 to identify problem areas and develop strategies for improvements, the executive summary of which is included in *Appendix A Parks & Recreation Accessibility Report Executive Summary*.

Classification

Parks were classified in accordance with national standards as follows:

1. **Major/Community Parks:** Approximately 30 – 75 acres in size and generally serves neighborhoods up to 3 miles in distance. Major parks typically contain a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents from several neighborhoods. Major 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 seven major/community parks including Avondale, Bloomer, Borden, Nowicki, Riverbend, Spencer and Yates Parks.
2. **Neighborhood Parks:** Approximately 30 – 75 acres in size and generally serves neighborhoods $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile in distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers. The City has three neighborhood parks including Allen, Tienken Road and Wabash Parks.
3. **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 Area, Pine Trace Golf Course, Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm, Veterans Memorial Pointe and the multiple green space properties.
4. **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.



Figure 7 City Owned Existing Recreation Facilities Inventory

FACILITY NAME	ACRES	LIKELY SERVICE AREA (neighborhood, city quadrant, city-wide, regional, county)	PARKING LOTS	AMENITIES					HARD SURFACED AREAS			PASSIVE AREAS				ACTIVE AREAS					PLAY STRUCTURES		CURRENT CONDITIONS (good, fair, poor)	ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT	OTHER		
				Concessions	Restrooms	Meeting Rooms	Swimming Beaches	Unimproved Water Access	Basketball Courts	Roller Hockey Rinks	Tennis Courts	Tables/Benches	Fishing	Pathways	Pavilion/Shelters	Picnic Areas	Baseball Fields	Softball Fields	Lighting	Multiple Purpose Fields	Volleyball Courts	Soccer Fields				Play Areas	Resilient Surface
Major/Community Parks																											
1. Avondale Park	18.5	quadrant	PV		PT				2		2	X		X	1	X		1		X	2		2	WF	good	3	Sand volleyball
2. Bloomer Park	206.9	city-wide	PV		X							X		X	4	X				X	3		4	WF	good	3	Sledding hill, velodrome, cricket, grass volleyball courts, mountain bike trails
3. Earl E. Borden Park	143.0	city-wide	PV	V	X				3	2	4	X		X	1		2	2	X	X	1	11	1	WF	good	4	15 irrigated fields, batting cage, Festival of the Hills, 30 acres wooded wetlands
4. Eugene S. Nowicki Park	35.0	quadrant																						N/A	N/A	Undeveloped	
5. Riverbend Park	118.4	regional	PV					X					X	X										N/A	N/A	Includes 48.4 acres of the former White Parcel (Riverbend North) purchased for green space	
6. Thelma G. Spencer Park	113.0	regional	PV/ GR	X	X		X				2	X	X	X	1	X					1	2	1	WF	good	3	40-acre lake, ice skating, heated shelter
7. Yates Roadside Park	4.3	regional	PV		VT			X				X	X	X		X								good	3	Clinton River frontage, Yates Cider Mill	
Subtotal 639.1																											
Neighborhood Parks																											
8. Helen V. Allen Park	9.9	neighborhood	GR		PT													2						good	1		
9. Tienken Road Park Property	10.0	neighborhood											X											N/A	1	Undeveloped	
10. Wabash Park	3.7	neighborhood	GR									X				X						1	WF	good	2	Community garden	
Subtotal 23.6																											
Special Use or Conservancy Parks																											
11. Avon Nature Area	97.4	city-wide	PV					X				X	X	X										good	1	Clinton River frontage, gazebo, pond	
12. Pine Trace Golf Course	190.0	regional	PV	X	X									X										good	3	Championship golf course, clubhouse, restaurant, driving range	
13. Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm	16.6	regional	PV		X	3						X	X		1	X				X				good	3	Historic farm complex, children's garden, school house, interpretive displays, programs, events	
14. Veterans Memorial Pointe	5.1	city-wide	PV		VT							X		X	1									good	4	Memorial, Clinton River frontage, connected to Clinton River Trail	
15. Green Space Properties	64.9	quadrant																						N/A	N/A	Multiple parcels (including the White, Childress, Clear Creek, Cloverport, Harding, & Rivercrest properties) all with Clinton River frontage & woodlands, many with steep slopes, wetlands, ponds &/or scenic views <i>Note: White parcel was also purchased as green space but is included in Riverbend Park for planning purposes</i>	
Subtotal 374.0																											
Linear Parks																											
16. Clinton River Trail	54.0	regional	GR		VT							X	X											good	3	4.5 miles, connected to regional trails	
17. Paint Creek Trail	17.8	regional	PV		PT							X	X	X										good	3	1.2 miles connected to regional trails, trout stream	
Subtotal 71.8																											
TOTAL 1,108.5																											

Legend:
 PV = Paved
 GR = Gravel
 X = One or More Units
 PT = Portable Toilet
 V = Vending
 VT = Vault Toilet
 N/A = Not Applicable
 WF = Engineered Wood Fiber

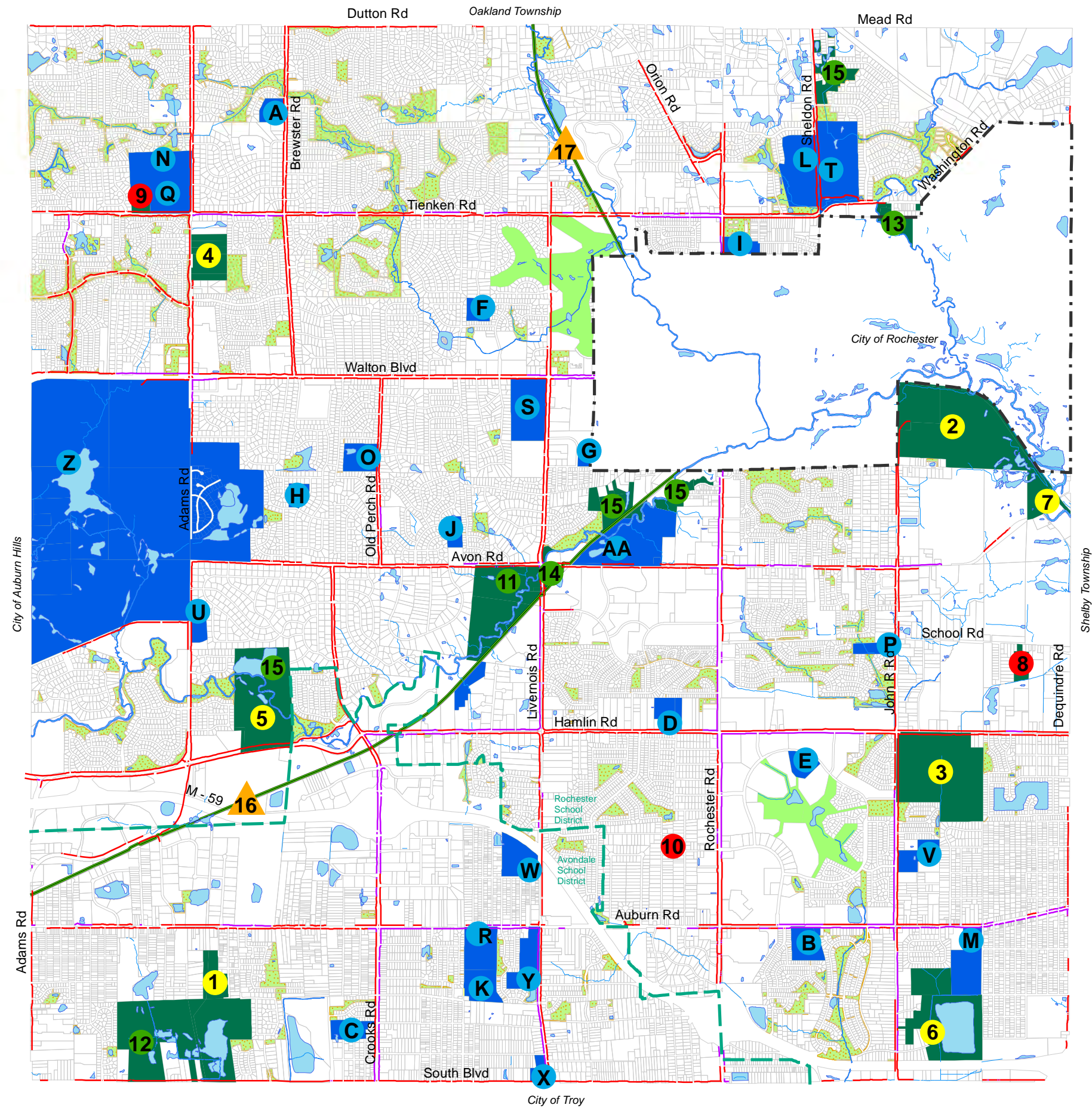
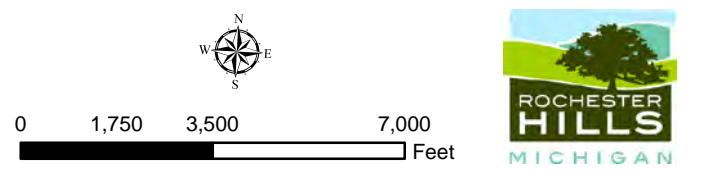
Accessibility Assessment Scale:
 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
 3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
 4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
 5 = the entire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

Map 2 Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

- **Major / Community Parks**
 - 1 Avondale Park
 - 2 Bloomer Park
 - 3 Earl E. Borden Park
 - 4 Eugene S. Nowicki Park
 - 5 Riverbend Park
 - 6 Thelma G. Spencer Park
 - 7 Yates Roadside Park
- **Neighborhood Parks**
 - 8 Helen V. Allen Park
 - 9 Tienken Road Park Property
 - 10 Wabash Park
- **Special Use or Conservancy Parks**
 - 11 Avon Nature Area
 - 12 Pine Trace Golf Course
 - 13 Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm
 - 14 Veterans Memorial Pointe
 - 15 Green Space Properties
- ▲ **Linear Parks**
 - 16 Clinton River Trail
 - 17 Paint Creek Trail
- **Schools**

Public Elementary		Private
A Brewster	U Brookfield Academy	V Holy Family Regional - Rochester Hills
B Brooklands	W Lutheran High NW	X Oakland Steiner
C Deerfield	Y Rochester Hills Christian	
D Hamlin		
E Hampton		
F Long Meadow		
G McGregor		
H Meadow Brook		
I North Hill		
J University Hills		
Public Middle		Colleges
K Avondale	Z Oakland University	AA Rochester College
L Hart		
M Reuther		
N Van Hoosen		
O West		
Public High School		■ Rivers & Ponds
P ACE	■ Subdivision Open Space	■ Park & Green Space
Q Adams	■ Golf Course	■ School
R Meadows	--- School District Boundary	--- Asphalt Pathway
S Rochester	--- Concrete Pathway	
T Stoney Creek		

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Avondale Park





Avondale Park

Park Classification

Major/Community Park

Size

18.5 acres

Location

Southwest section of the City, south of Auburn Road between Crooks and Adams Rds., accessed off of Bathurst Ave

Description

Located within the park are one ball diamond, one multi-purpose field, two sand volleyball courts, two basketball courts, and two tennis courts for active recreation. Natural areas, a picnic shelter, and play structures are further amenities for residents.

Recommended Action Items

1. Improve turf and irrigation on multi-purpose fields to aid in “recovery”
2. Improve ADA compliance

Bloomer Park





Bloomer Park

Park Classification

Major/Community Park

Size

206.9 acres

Location

Eastern central portion of the City, adjacent to Yates Roadside Park, accessed from John R Rd.

Description

Once a State Park, Bloomer Park is the largest park within the City of Rochester Hills. Recreational amenities include two volleyball courts and a multi-purpose field used for cricket, field sports and special events. Mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and hiking paths traverse the park. The sledding hill provides additional wintertime recreational opportunities to area residents. Bloomer Park also has a number of picnic areas and four shelters, along with children's play structures and river access. Bloomer also serves as an access point and stop along the Clinton River Trail and contains Michigan's only velodrome which was opened in 2002 and is used for bicycle riding and racing.

Recommended Action Items

1. Improve access to amenities
2. Establish a fitness facility or green gym to serve as a hub for hosting various athletic programs, classes and spontaneous exercise
3. Consider the development of a splash pad or other aquatic amenity
4. Improve access, protection and enjoyment of the Clinton River
5. Improve ADA compliance

Earl E. Borden Park





Earl E. Borden Park

Park Classification

Major/Community Park

Size

143 acres

Location

Eastern central portion of the City, at the southeast corner of John R and Hamlin Rds.

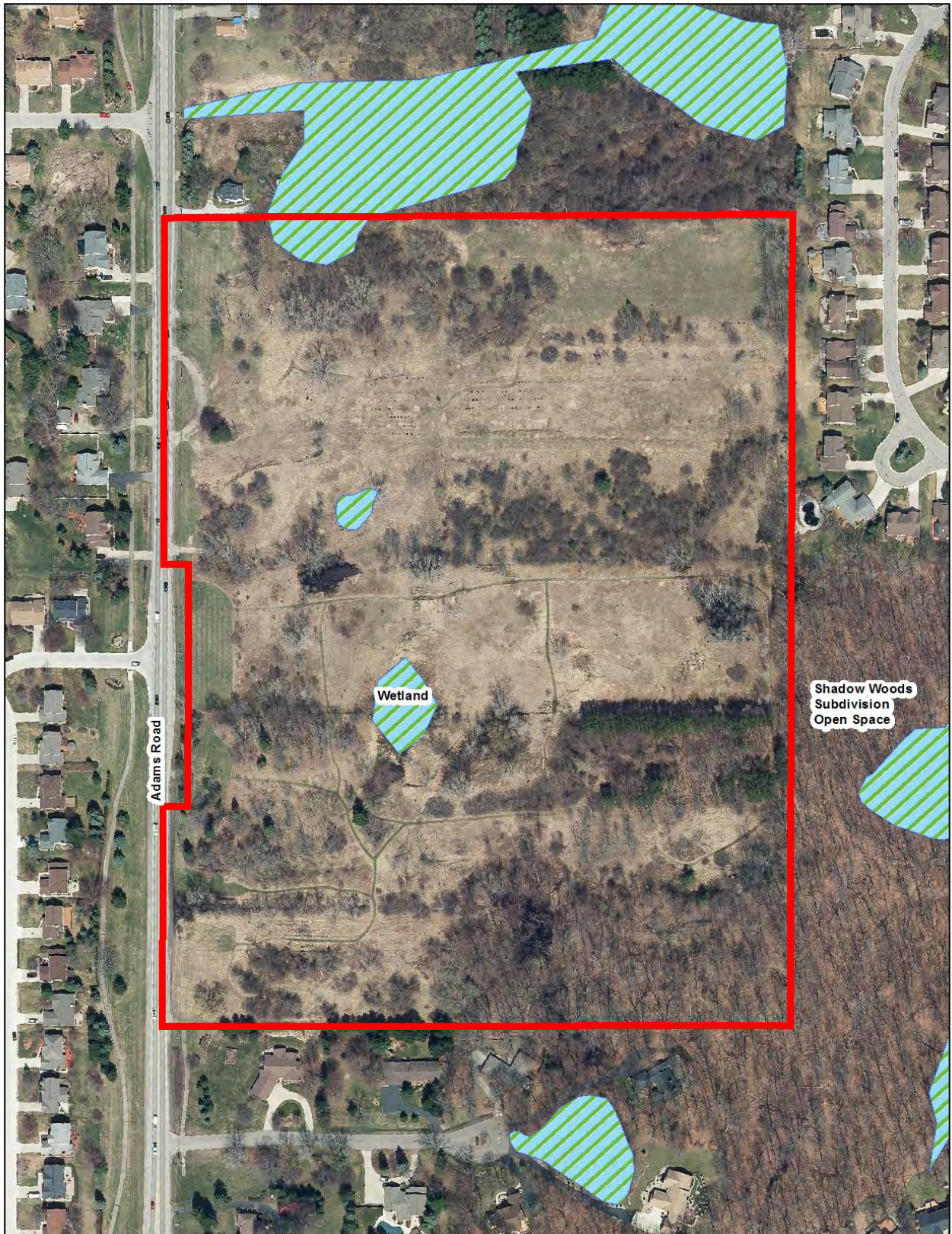
Description

Borden Park is a significant community amenity for active recreation with four irrigated and lighted ball fields, eleven irrigated soccer fields (one of which is lighted and recently renovated), two roller hockey rinks, four tennis courts, three basketball courts, a five-acre multi-purpose field, a seven-station batting cage, and a recently upgraded playground. There is a 30-acre wooded natural area for those that enjoy more passive recreational activities.

Recommended Action Items

1. Move the administrative office and its operations to a central location in the park to provide better safety, security and customer service
2. Continue to renovate existing soccer fields through improved drainage, grading and re-sodding to improve performance
3. Consider additional lighting for soccer fields, roller hockey rinks and tennis courts
4. Develop a secure fenced and landscaped storage area for park maintenance operations
5. Incorporate recommendations of the CRWC Watertowns Green Infrastructure Community Report to improve stormwater runoff at Borden Park
6. Evaluate cross utilization of existing fields to maximize usage
7. Improve ADA compliance

Eugene S. Nowicki Park





Fitness Path



Baseball Fields



Pavilion & Restrooms



Practice Fields



Play Structure

NOWICKI PARK

Concept Sketch

Scale 1" = 50'-0"
Date: 9/23/08





Eugene S. Nowicki Park

Park Classification

Major/Community Park

Size

35 acres

Location

Northwest portion of the City, on the east side of Adams Rd., just south of Tienken Rd.

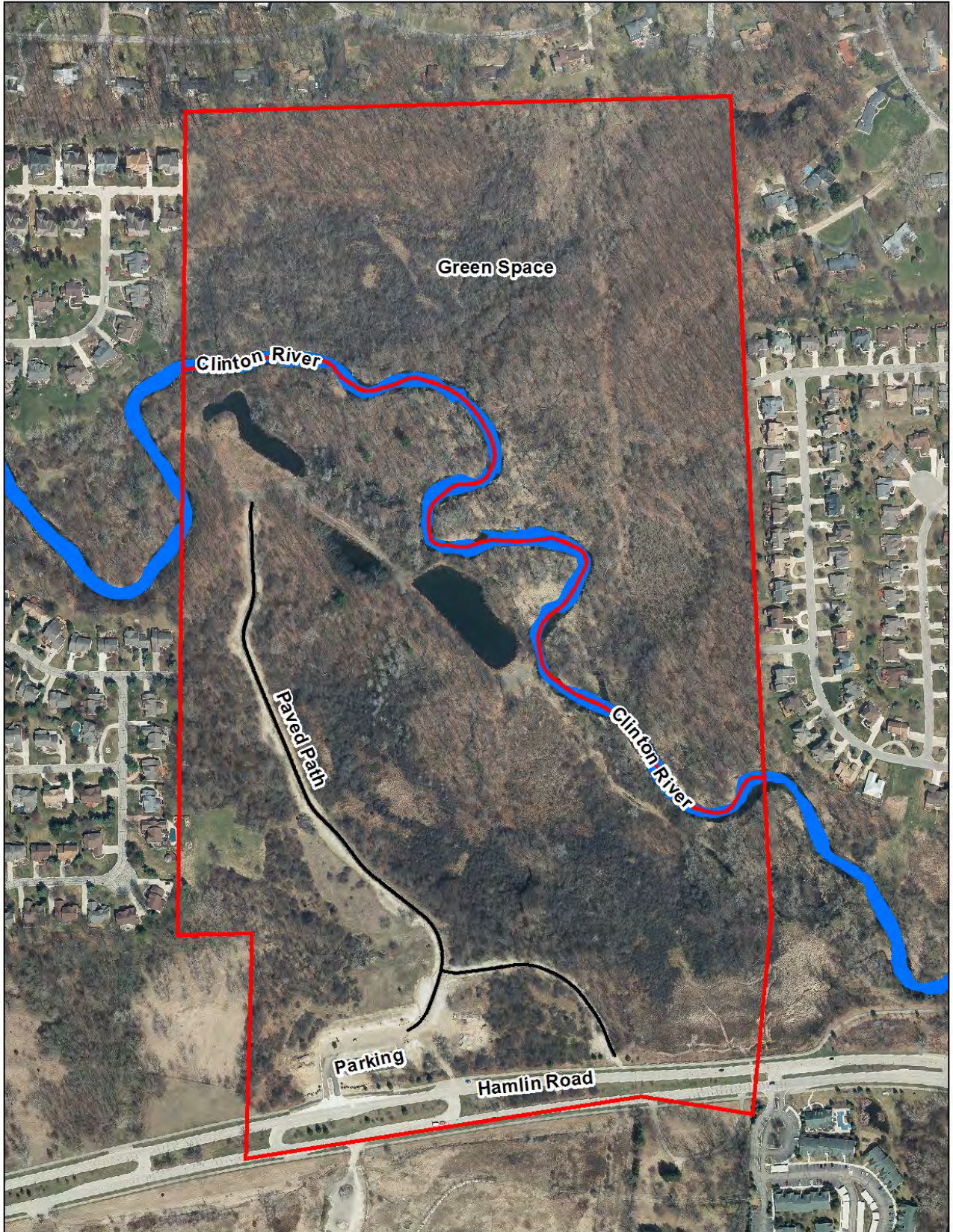
Description

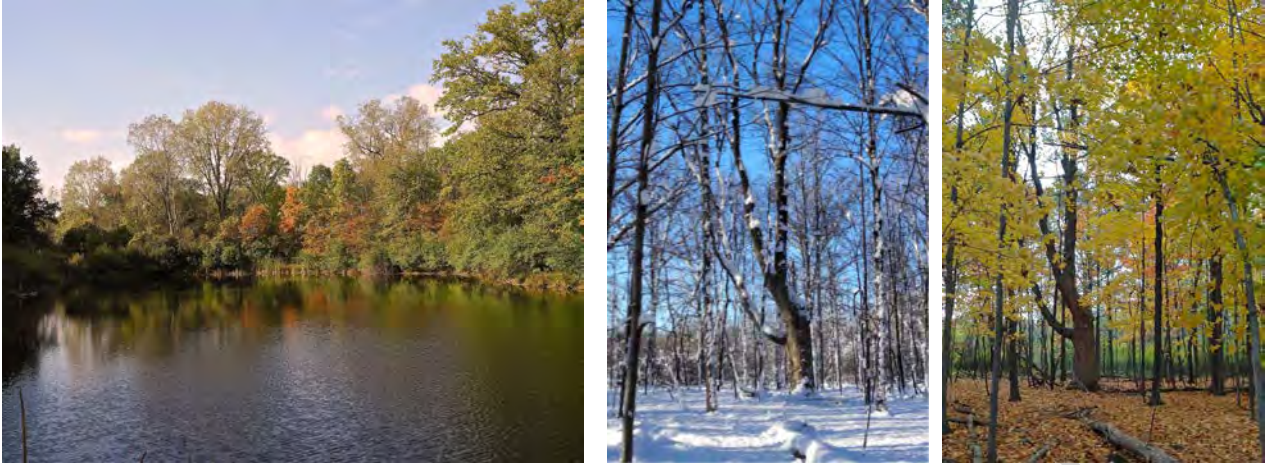
Undeveloped, proposed concept plan has been created.

Recommended Action Items

1. Implement existing concept plan
2. Investigate potential for development of a dog park on a portion of the property
3. Explore the possible development of a community garden at the site

Riverbend Park





Riverbend Park

Park Classification

Major/Community Park

Size

118.4 acres (includes 48.4 acres of green space known as Riverbend North)

Location

Western central portion of the City, on the north side of Hamlin Rd., east of Adams Rd.

Description

Purchased by the City in 1991 using recreational bonds, the park consists of prairie, dense hardwood forests, and pristine wetlands with the Clinton River unobtrusively winding through the site. The 48.4 acres north of the Clinton River were purchased by the City through the green space fund in 2015.

Private donations coupled with City funds have been used to develop a parking lot and the start of a pathway system in the park along with a detailed study of the park that sets the vision and future plans for the park. This plan is included in *Appendix D Riverbend Park Strategic Framework Plan*.

Recommended Action Items

1. Implement concept plan for Riverbend Park as identified in *Appendix D Riverbend Park Strategic Framework Plan*
2. Actively seek funding for development as identified in *Appendix D Riverbend Park Strategic Framework Plan*