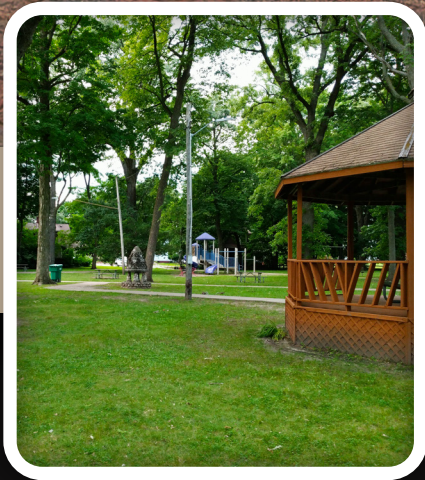


CHARLOTTE AREA FIVE-YEAR PARKS & RECREATION PLAN



2024 - 2028



Prepared by: ROWE Professional Services Company

Prepared by:



ROWE PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES COMPANY

2300485

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Charlotte Area

Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan

2024-2028

Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative Members:

Dave Bankhead – Chairman (Eaton Township)

Emily Williamson – Member (Eaton Township)

Deb Montgomery – Member (Carmel Township)

Vicki Montgomery – Member (Carmel Township)

Valerie Riesen – Member (City of Charlotte)

Josh Howe – Member (City of Charlotte)

Tammy Wisenborn – Member-At-Large

City of Charlotte:

_____ – Mayor

Erin LaPere – City Manager

Troy Bell – Interim Manager

Mary LaRocque – City Clerk

Amy Gilson – Director of Public Works

Bryan Myrkle – Community Development Director

Carmel Township:

Steven Willard – Supervisor

Laura Goostrey – Clerk

Michele Wise – Treasurer

Eaton Township:

David Roberts – Supervisor

Corie Morris – Clerk

Rebecca Dolman – Treasurer

Background

This Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan was prepared by the Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative (CARC) with assistance from ROWE Professional Services Company. The purpose is to direct the evaluation and decisions for future park improvements, development, land acquisition, or other issues regarding recreation opportunities for the City of Charlotte, Carmel Township, and Eaton Township.

The Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative was developed in November 2009 for the purpose of providing an inter-local agreement to facilitate and support recreational opportunities for the citizens of the City of Charlotte, Eaton Township, and Carmel Township. The cooperative acts under the authority of the Urban Cooperation Act, Act 7 of the Public Act of 1967, and Act 156 of Public Acts of 1917. Members of CARC, board members for Carmel Township and Eaton Township, along with the city council for Charlotte participated in the development of the plan.

The recreation plan is in accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requirements as stated in the “Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans”. This document will allow for the pursuit of MDNR grants, as well as a basis for other funding opportunities. The plan is valid for five years from the date of resolution of adoption by each community.

The recreation plan for the Charlotte community provides a common direction for future development and enhancements to parks and other recreation opportunities for each municipality. The intent of this plan is to develop parks and recreational opportunities to provide safe, accessible facilities and more choices for healthier lifestyles and economic development.

This plan is divided into several separate sections that represent the planning process used in its development. In addition to this introduction, the plan contains:

- **Community Description** – An overview of the Charlotte community and current and projected social, physical, and economic characteristics.
- **Administrative Structure** – Identifies the entities responsible for administration of the park and recreation programs and facilities provided throughout the Charlotte Community.
- **Parks, Facility, and Program Inventory** – Describes the existing park facilities within the Charlotte community and programs provided in and around the community.
- **Planning Process** – Describes the participatory process by the community and other partners to prepare and adopt the plan.
- **Action Plan** – Summary of information collected that provides support for the suggestions and recommendations in accordance with the community’s specific community goals.

Community Description

The Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative is located in central Eaton County; roughly 23 miles southwest of Lansing and 63 miles southeast of Grand Rapids. The communities represented in the cooperative include Eaton Township, Carmel Township, and the City of Charlotte. The Charter Townships of Benton, Chester, Eaton Rapids, Brookfield, and Walton also surround the communities. Table 1 shows the population for the communities within the cooperatives as well as the population trend from 1990 until the recent population estimate in 2022 based on the U.S. Census data.



Table 1: Population			
Cities/Township	2000	2010	2022
Charlotte	8,389	9,074	9,260
Carmel Township	2,626	2,855	2,835
Eaton Township	4,278	4,073	4,012

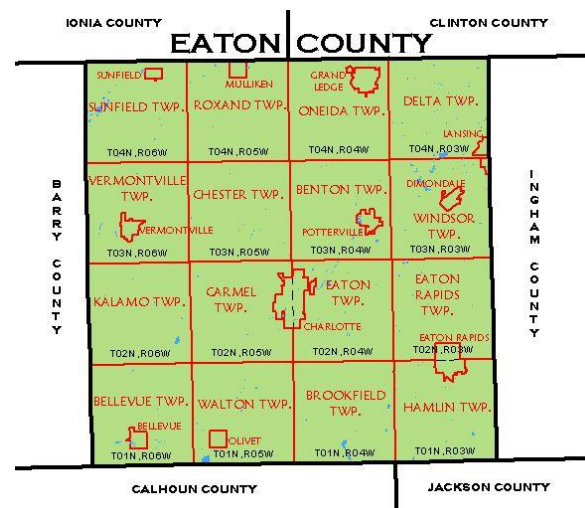
Source: Census.gov and censusreporter.org

Based on the U.S. Census data, the 2022 estimate for the communities shows a -2.05 percent change in population for the City of Charlotte, a -0.7 percent change in population for Carmel Township, and Eaton Township with a population change of -1.50 percent from 2010.

Table 2: Age Distribution (2022)					
Cities/Township	Under 19	20-24	25-44	45-64	65 and Over
Charlotte	2,356	618	2,456	2,144	1,488
Carmel Township	581	101	513	965	721
Eaton Township	1,172	181	835	1,160	735

The City of Charlotte is the county seat of Eaton County with numerous programs, activities, and entertainment that occurs in the city. The townships around Charlotte (including Carmel Township and Eaton Township) are rural agriculture with mixtures of retail trade and services. Commercial development and recreational activities are mostly contained within the City of Charlotte.

Primary transportation connections to the communities include I-69, BL-69, M-50, and M-79. I-69 runs east to west connecting Fort Wayne to Lansing. Business Loop 69 (BL-69) is a 5-mile loop around the City of Charlotte. M-50 and M-79 are trunkline routes that connect to cities and communities on the west side of the state. There is an airfield located northeast of the



Map 1: Regional Location Map

central business district of Charlotte, Fitch H. Beach Airport for smaller aircraft; also, Capital Region International Airport is located nearby for passenger transportation. Public transportation in Eaton County is provided by EATRAN which provides curb-to-curb public transportation throughout the county.

The area is relatively flat with gently rolling prairies. The highest elevation in Charlotte is 909 feet. Current land uses include mostly agricultural/farmland, light industrial, and residential. The Charlotte community is geographically located near the Battle Creek River Watershed and the Thornapple River flood plain. Local natural resources include regulated wetland areas, forests, and wildlife.

Administrative Structure

CARC is a “Michigan municipal corporation” that operates within the communities of Eaton Township, Carmel Township, and the City of Charlotte. This partnership has been in existence since November 2009 and provides park facilities in the community. Membership in CARC or representation by the communities is done by a seven-member board composed of residents from the three communities. Two members each are appointed, by the township or city council boards, from Eaton Township, Carmel Township, and the City of Charlotte; with one member appointed by CARC board as an “at-large” position. CARC has a yearly budget that is passed by the board; however, budget amendments must be approved by the governing bodies represented through CARC.

The City of Charlotte is an incorporated city with a Council-Manager form of government, with an elected city council of seven individuals (including the mayor). The City Council appoints the City Manager. The City of Charlotte also coordinates park maintenance, operating expenses, and utilities through the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Eaton Township is governed by a five-member elected Township Board consisting of a supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees. The supervisor is the head of government in the township.

Carmel Township also has a five-member elected Township Board with a supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees. Daily operations of the township are delegated to the Township Supervisor.

The City of Charlotte, Eaton Township, Carmel Township and CARC are four separate entities, and each can apply for MDNR grants for the respective communities. CARC grants are overseen by the City of Charlotte as the organization’s fiduciary agency. CARC works to provide the community with recreational opportunities for the residents to enjoy.

Parks and Recreation Budget

Currently, funding for property maintenance is made available through the City of Charlotte and CARC. Attached to this section is the current budget for 2023 - 2024 for the City of Charlotte Parks and Recreation Fund as well as CARC Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024 revenue and expenses. Figure 2 and Figure 3 show the budgets for CARC and the City of Charlotte. Eaton Township has previously allocated \$10,000 in the yearly budget for parks and recreation and Carmel Township also allocates \$5,000 to support CARC yearly.

Relationships with School District(s), Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations

The City of Charlotte and the surrounding townships are serviced by the Charlotte Public Schools. The city, townships, and school district work independently to provide engaging programs for the residents of the community along with recreational opportunities for students and community members. Collaborative partnerships exist to bring together the entities in the community for activities at various intervals. Charlotte Public Schools opens its swimming pool to the community for a fee. The school district has also recently hired a youth recreation coordinator to provide additional recreational programming for area youth. Another partnership within the community exists between the cooperative and the Sparrow Eaton Hospital. The hospital, which owns Charlotte AL!VE, has implemented programs in the community to support healthy living and lifestyle choices. Some of these programs provided from AL!VE include fitness classes, health and wellness services, cooking demonstrations, rehabilitation, and therapy classes. These services are available to the residents for a user fee. Additionally, Eaton Area Senior Center services the senior population in Eaton County and is in the city. Some of the programs that are offered by the Eaton Area Senior Center include dances, car shows, and health clinics. The City of Charlotte previously has worked with the county and other organizations within the county to develop the non-motorized transportation plan in 2013. The non-motorized plan is in the appendix.

Programming

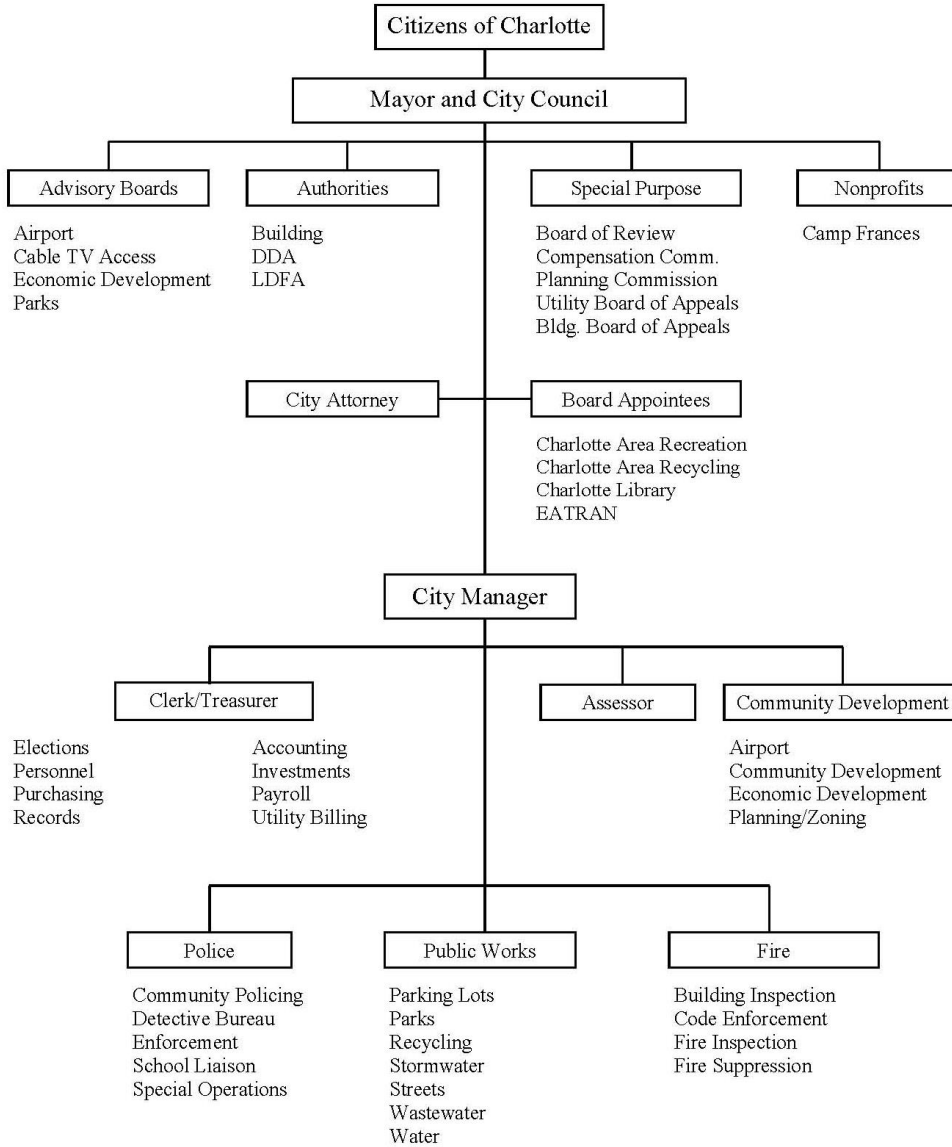
CARC does not coordinate programming in the community. The main responsibilities of the cooperative are for facilities and operations. Programs in the community are coordinated through the Charlotte Public Schools, various church and volunteer groups, and the Sparrow Eaton Hospital (also known SEH). The city also has Charlotte Rising, a Michigan Main Street organization, that promotes the community and its businesses through programs and events. Other festivals and functions occurring during the year include the Charlotte Bluegrass Festival in June, Charlotte Celebrates in mid-June, the Michigan Nordic Fire Festival in February/March, Eaton County Fair in July, and Charlotte Frontier Days in September.

Role of Volunteers

Volunteers are an extremely important part of the recreational and programming that provide activities for the residents in the community. Various church groups, the Rotary Club, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scout troops often partner with the community to provide services. The Charlotte Junior Orioles (CJO) is the largest volunteer organization in the community. They provide football, softball, basketball, and cheerleading programs for youth in the area. These programs are run by volunteers and are attended by community members. These programs and volunteer organizations work in cooperation with CARC, Eaton Township, Carmel Township, and the City of Charlotte. Baseball is provided by the Charlotte Baseball Club (CBC); who are the primary users/maintainers of the CARC ball fields.

Figure 1: City of Charlotte Organization Chart

CITY OF CHARLOTTE ORGANIZATION CHART



Current Funding History

The City of Charlotte has received funding by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the purpose of renovations and site improvements for the parks in Charlotte. The city also has acted as a grantee for CARC for the purpose of developing a 22.71-acre parcel into a recreational complex. Those projects include those listed in Figure 1 through Figure 3.

Figure 1: City of Charlotte Grant Information:

CITY OF CHARLOTTE PARKS AND RECREATION GRANT HISTORY				
YEAR	PROJECT NAME	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	STATUS
1994	Bennett Park Improvements 26-01556	Develop multi-use building, paved entrance road and parking with security lighting and restroom renovations.	\$39,685.58	Closed
2000	Bennett Park Trail 26-01562	Develop 3,500 LFT of paved 10' wide multi-use trail, interpretive signage, site furniture for accessibility to playgrounds, picnic area, and access to the Battle Creek River.	\$89,500.00	Withdrawn
2000	Bennett Park Trail CM00-049	Develop 3,500 LFT of paved 10' wide multi-use trail, interpretive signage, site furniture for accessibility to playgrounds, picnic area, and access to the Battle Creek River.	\$134,250.00	Closed
2002	Lincoln Park Stake Park 26-01595	Development of a skate park, walking trails, portable restrooms, utilities, and parking.	\$166,000.00	Closed
2015	Charlotte Area Rec. Complex Development Project 26-01760	First phase includes an access road, entry sign, accessible aggregate parking lot, ball diamond, accessible walkway from ball diamond to the parking lot.	\$75,000.00	Closed

Figure 2: Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative FY 23-24

FUND BALANCE		
YTD		65,022.85
23/24 Revenues		30,695
PROJECTED FUND BALANCE 23/24		95,717.85
OPERATING NEEDS		
INSURANCE AND BONDS		
insurance		\$3,000
CONTRACTABLE SERVICES		
grass cutting		\$3,000
weed control		\$500
portable toilets		\$500
trash removal		\$500
FACILITY DEVELOPMENT		\$2,000
NEW PROJECTS		\$11,000
PROJECTED FUND BALANCE 24/25		\$75,217.85
FUND BALANCE		

Figure 3: City of Charlotte Budget

PARKS AND RECREATION

The City has responsibility for eight parks within the City limits. Costs associated with maintaining the parks, repairing facilities, and purchasing playground equipment are charged to this activity.

Maintenance of the parks system is the responsibility of the Department of Public Works. Mowing of parks is accomplished primarily through a service contract. During summer months, the City employs up to two park rangers who provide a variety of additional maintenance services.

To be eligible for certain state and federal grants, the City must adopt a five-year community recreation plan. The current plan expires in 2023 and the FY23/24 Budget includes funds to renew the plan for another five years.

Dept 825.000 - PARKS & RECREATION	2021-22 ACTIVITY	2022-23 ACTIVITY THRU 03/31/23	2022-23 AMENDED BUDGET	2022-23 PROJECTED ACTIVITY	2023-24 PROPOSED BUDGET
SALARIES & WAGES	16,197.79	8,905.79	26,585.00	15,980.00	24,915.00
FRINGE BENEFITS	5,605.94	3,202.30	6,705.00	5,875.00	9,325.00
SUPPLIES	5,456.30	6,676.65	2,000.00	8,500.00	6,600.00
PROFESSIONAL/CONTRACTUAL SERVICES & TRAINING	35,914.42	22,175.96	49,270.00	49,330.00	62,530.00
SERVICES TRANSFER	19,623.00	12,209.73	18,500.00	19,000.00	19,000.00
Totals for dept 825.000 - PARKS & RECREATION	82,797.45	53,170.43	103,060.00	98,685.00	122,370.00

FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 BUDGET- CITY OF CHARLOTTE

Recreation and Resource Inventory

The Recreation and Resource Inventory was conducted during a site visit in late March. The following chart is a summary of the local recreation facilities available. They have been categorized by jurisdiction, as well as classification based on size and type of facility.

	Acreage (approx.)	Ball Diamonds	Tennis Courts	Picnic Area	Playground Equipment	Horseshoes	Shelter	Boat Launch	Nature Trails	Playfield (Open Space)	Restrooms	Basketball Court	Volleyball Courts	Natural Areas	Comments
Charlotte Area Recreational Cooperative (CARC) Facilities															
Charlotte Area Recreation Complex	22.71														City-owned, CARC has 25-year lease
City of Charlotte Park Facilities															
Bennett Park	117														Camp Frances included in the park property; 5.4 miles of hiking trails. 8 miles mtn bike trails.
Samuel A. Combs Park	4.3														Business/Industrial Park
Dean Park	2.52														
Gateway Memorial Park	0.2														Entrance sign to community
Lincoln Park	19														24-hole disc golf, skate park, skating rink, sledding hill, and radio control car course
Timepiece Park	0.07														4 tables (w/ umbrella), fireplace, sculpture
Oak Park	1.54														
Snell Park	0.31														Welcome sign and planting beds
Southridge Park	0.34														
Eaton County Fairgrounds Area	42														Leased by Eaton County Fair; owned by the city
Local Public Facilities															
Charlotte Community Library															Meeting location
Eaton Area Senior Center															User fee for access to location; county senior center, meeting location
Eaton County Courthouse and Museum															Public and private events

	Acreeage (approx.)	Ball Diamonds	Tennis Courts	Picnic Area	Playground Equipment	Horseshoes	Shelter	Boat Launch	Nature Trails	Playfield (Open Space)	Restrooms	Basketball Court	Volleyball Courts	Natural Areas	Comments
Schools															
Charlotte Senior High School	111														Indoor swimming pool (Charlotte Aquatic Center), Charlotte Performing Arts Center, football/track field, and soccer field
Charlotte Middle School	111														
Charlotte Upper Elementary School	111														
Galewood Elementary School	10														Playground equipment
Parkview Elementary School	33														Soccer Fields
Washington Elementary School	10														
Carmel Township Park Facilities															
Township Property (Park)	24														Undeveloped
Eaton Township Park Facilities															
Township Property (Park)	6														Undeveloped
Facilities Located in Eaton Township (County Parks)															
Crandell Park	432														160-acre lake

Private Recreation:

There are private recreational facilities that are located within the Charlotte community that provide recreational activities for residents. These facilities are privately operated and, in some cases, require a user fee for admittance. They are included in the recreation analysis because they meet a specific need in the community. These private facilities include:

- **Bowling Alley:** Char Lanes
- **Dance:** Campbell Dance Studio, Dance Conservatory
- **Golf Courses:** Maple Brook Golf Course, Broadway Acres/Sparks Broadway Golf Course
- **Fitness Clubs:** AL!VE, Snap Fitness Charlotte, Cheryl’s Gymnastics
- **Martial Arts:** Watermans Tang Soo Do, Rodriguez Martial Arts
- **Miscellaneous/Ballfields:** American Legion

Parks, Facility, and Program Inventory

The Recreation Master Plan includes an inventory of recreation facilities programming and events that occur within Charlotte; as they provide information about the development of the action plan. Understanding the specific facilities and events available to the Charlotte community will aid decision making in the future. The following summaries address existing conditions and the accessibility of the park properties regarding compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). In general, all construction since 1991 was required to comply with these guidelines. A general ranking for each park was determined through site visits as follows:

- 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.

The following is a summary of the current recreational properties in the **City of Charlotte**.

❖ Bennett Park

- *This also includes Veterans Memorial Park, Memorial Tree Garden, and Camp Frances.*

Size: 117 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 1305 Cochran Avenue, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Picnic facilities, hiking and nature trails, 6 horseshoe pits, 3 playground sites, restroom building, 8 miles of mountain bike trail, 5.4 miles of hiking trails, and paved parking.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 3) There are some barrier-free facilities at this park and the site does have barrier-free parking. Additional improvements to site conditions were made recently to improve universal accessibility.

DNR Recreation Grants: 26-01556 (Bennett Park

Improvements – 1994), 26-01562 (Bennett Park Trail – 2000), CM00-049 (Bennett Park Trail – 2000)



❖ **Samuel A. Combs Park**

Size: 4.3 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: Parkland Drive, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Business/Industrial Park

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 1) The site is currently a part of an industrial park in the community that does not have any current playground equipment. No improvements have been done on the park.



❖ **Dean Park**

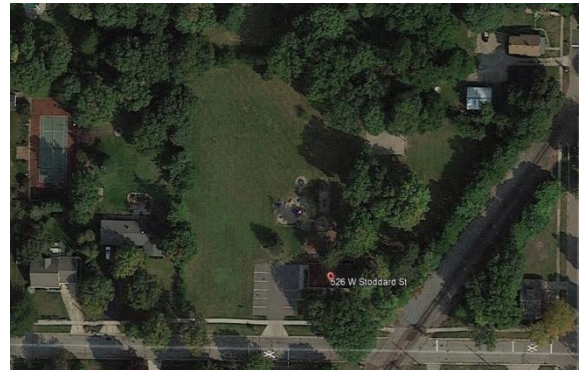
Size: 2.52 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 526 W. Stoddard Street, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Pavilion, restroom facilities, play structures and equipment, basketball court, and green space for open area activities.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 2) There are some barrier-free facilities at this park and the site does have barrier-free parking but some of the amenities within the park need to be upgraded to provide for universal accessibility. Playground equipment needs barrier-free safety surfacing and an accessible path to the basketball court could be constructed.



❖ **Gateway Memorial Park**

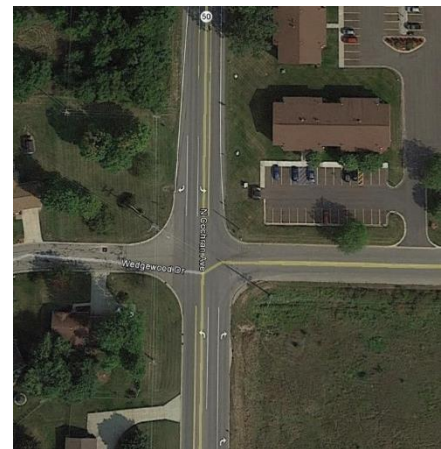
Size: 0.2 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: N. of Cochran Avenue (at Packard Highway) – Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Entrance signage

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 1) Site is currently where the entrance sign for the community is. There is no playground equipment and/or improvements at the site.



❖ **Lincoln Park**

Size: 19 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 714 S. Lincoln Street, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: 13,000 SFT skate park, 24-hole disc golf course, pavilion, skating rink (roller blade and ice) sledding hill, radio control car course, and restroom facility.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 3) Lincoln Park recently had some revisions done to the site that included the addition of a restroom facility; however, the site has gravel parking with no paved accessible spaces.

DNR Recreation Grants: 26-01595 (Lincoln Park Skate Park - 2002)



❖ **Oak Park**

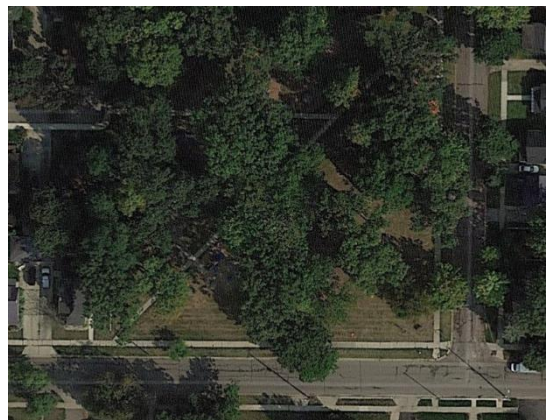
Size: 1.54 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: Seminary/Clinton Streets – Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Playground structure, gazebo, “old stone fountain”, and open grass area.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 2) The site has had some universal design components installed but the site still lacks universal access throughout the entire park.



❖ **Snell Park**

Size: 0.31 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 200-270 Upland Avenue, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Welcome sign and planting beds

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 1) Site is currently a pocket park used as one of the thoroughfares into the community.



❖ **Southridge Park**

Size: 0.34 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: Clinton/Third Streets – Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Play structures, basketball court, benches, and grills.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 2) Site has had some renovations and improvements to the park to increase ADA/ universal design. Other amenities at the park such as the basketball court need to be renovated or repurposed to current park standards.



❖ **Timepiece Park**

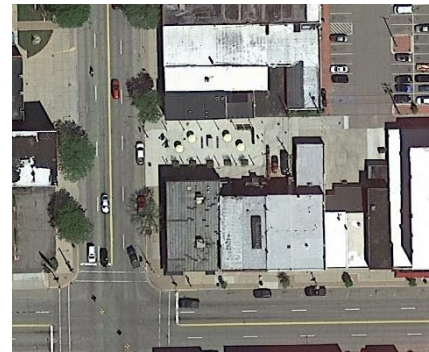
Size: 0.07 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 110 E. Lawrence Avenue, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Tables with umbrellas, fireplace, sculptures, and lighting.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 4) Site was recently developed in 2019 and meets the components of accessibility with seating and locating amenities at the appropriate height for easy access.



Eaton Township does not currently have any properties that are owned or operated by the township; the lone park facility within the township is Crandell Park which is under the authority of Eaton County Parks.

The following is a summary of the current properties in **Carmel Township**.

❖ **Township Park**

Size: 24 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: Beech Street

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 1) Site is currently undeveloped; but has a natural trail that is on the site. The current location is also where the township hall is now.



School Facilities

❖ Charlotte Senior High/Middle School

Size: 111 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 378 State Street, Charlotte, MI
48813

Facilities: 6 basketball courts, 3 soccer fields, 3 baseball fields, 3 softball fields, 2 soccer fields, competition lap pool, exercise pool (Charlotte Aquatic Center), auxiliary gym, climbing wall, tennis courts, wrestling area, 2 indoor gymnasiums, Charlotte Performing Arts Center, Football stadium (seating for 4,500), and track. Last year, the district completed an addition to the gym.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 4) The High School and Middle School sites have recently been constructed. Minor improvements could be made to provide for added universal design with sidewalk connections and additional ADA parking.



❖ Charlotte Upper Elementary School

Size: 111 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 1068 Carlisle Highway – Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: 6 basketball courts, 3 soccer fields, 3 baseball fields, 3 softball fields, 2 soccer fields, competition lap pool exercise pool (Charlotte Aquatic Center), auxiliary gym, climbing wall, wrestling area, 2 indoor gymnasiums, Charlotte Performing Arts Center, football stadium (seating for 4,500), and track.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 4) The Upper Elementary School site is included in the Middle/High School complex. Minor improvements could be made to provide for added universal design with sidewalk connections and additional ADA parking.

❖ **Galewood Elementary School**

Size: 10 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 512 E. Lovett, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: 2 basketball courts, ballfield, soccer field, playground, and small indoor gymnasium

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 3) Currently the site is the Early Elementary building for the district. Improvements have been made to provide universal design and accessibility but additional improvements to the parking area could enhance universal access.



❖ **Parkview Elementary School**

Size: 33 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 301 E. Kalamo Street, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Basketball hoops, 2 ballfields, playground equipment and indoor gymnasium. Property also includes the Rotary Park which has 5 soccer fields and a storage facility.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 3) Site has had some improvements with accessibility with the parking lot connections to the building. Additional universal design components could be provided.



❖ **Washington Elementary School**

Size: 10 Acres

Age Groups Serve: All Ages

Location: 525 High Street, Charlotte, MI 48813

Facilities: Includes open field for soccer, playground, and indoor gymnasium.

Accessibility: (Accessibility Ranking – 3) Significant renovation have been made over the years to provide universal design and access to the building. Improvements could be made to the parking lot.



Regional Recreation Facilities and Park

Regional recreational facilities within the service area offer unique natural features that provide outdoor activities such as wildlife habitats, boating, hiking, and trails. Many of these amenities are readily available to the residents of the Charlotte community through Eaton County Parks, private regional recreational facilities, and through MDNR.



The City of Charlotte and CARC lies within Eaton County.

a. Crandell Park – Eaton County Parks

Size: 432 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Undeveloped natural area, bird/wildlife watching, natural trail access (nearly 3 miles in length), fishing, canoeing/kayaking, and non-motorized boating. Parking is available in designated areas on M-50.



b. Fitzgerald Park – City of Grand Ledge (Leased by Eaton County Parks)

Size: 78 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Parking area, restroom facilities, 4 picnic shelters, 2 picnic areas, playground, 2 ball fields, basketball court, sand volleyball court, horseshoe pit, 18-hole disk golf course, canoe landing and rental, fishing along the Grand River, trails for hiking and cross-country skiing, sledding hill, and nature center.

c. Lincoln Brick Park – Eaton County Parks

Size: 90 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Parking area, 2 picnic shelters, playground, interpretive center/museum, and trails.

d. Fox Memorial Park – Eaton County Parks

Size: 160 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Parking area, restroom facilities, 3 picnic shelters, playground areas, volleyball court, small lake with swimming beach, fishing dock, public observatory, and nature trails for hiking/cross-country skiing.

e. Optimist Youth Camp – Eaton County Parks (Operated/Maintained by Charlotte Optimist Club)

Size: 20 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Parking area, tent camping, bunkhouse with wood stove and hand pump, restrooms, picnic shelter, nature trails, and a large, wooded area (Groups Only).

f. Duane Tirrell Roadside Park – Eaton County Parks

Size: 0.5 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: An artesian well, picnic area, road shoulder parking lot.

g. Butler Park Public Access – Eaton County Parks (Leased by City of Bellevue)

Size: 0.5 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Concrete boat ramp, picnic area, and parking lot.

h. Dyer Kiln Historical Site – Eaton County Parks

Size: 0.5 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Historic kiln, gravel parking area, and picnic area.

i. Keehne Environmental Area – Eaton County Parks

Size: 17 Acres

Age Groups Served: All Ages

Facilities: Parking area, picnic areas, 2 ponds, boardwalk system, nature trails, and cross-country ski trails.

Additional Parks in Eaton County

- Fulton Park (City of Lansing)
- Woodcreek Park (City of Lansing)
- Anderson Park (Delta Township)
- Delta Mills Park (Delta Township)
- Erickson Park (Delta Township)
- Grand Woods Park (Delta Township)
- Hawk Meadow Park (Delta Township)
- Hunter’s Orchard Park (Delta Township)
- Lake Delta (Delta Township)
- Leland Park (Delta Township)
- Lootens Park (Delta Township)
- Mount Hope Park (Delta Township)
- Player’s Club Park (Delta Township)
- Sharp Park (Delta Township)
- Colonial Park (City of Grand Ledge)
- Elaine Dible Memorial Park (City of Grand Ledge)
- Alliance Park (City of Potterville)
- Potterville City Park (City of Potterville)
- Veterans Memorial Park (City of Potterville)
- Sunset Hills Park (City of Potterville)
- Biggs Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- Hall Street Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- Howe Memorial Field (City of Eaton Rapids)
- G.A.R. Island Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- J.B. Bradley Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- McArthur River Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- Memorial Park (City of Eaton Rapids)
- Scott Munn Riverwalk (City of Eaton Rapids)
- County Fairgrounds (City of Charlotte)
- Jefferson Park (City of Bellevue)
- Washington Park (City of Bellevue)
- Rotary Park (City of Olivet)
- Township Park No. 1 (Hamlin Township)

- Township Park No. 2 (Hamlin Township)
- Lions Community Park (Village of Dimondale)
- Danford Island Park (Village of Dimondale)
- Fitzgerald Field (City of Grand Ledge)
- Island Park (City of Grand Ledge)
- Jaycees Park (City of Grand Ledge)
- Oak Park (City of Grand Ledge)
- Sunfield Village/Van Buren Park (Village of Sunfield)

Private Schools in the Area

- Charlotte Seven Day Adventist School
- Maple Country Amish School
- St. Mary’s Elementary School

Recreational Programming in the Charlotte Area

Programming in the Charlotte Area is primarily conducted through Charlotte Junior Orioles (CJO) and Charlotte Public Schools. Other volunteer groups in the community also provide recreational support that provides services for residents in the community such as AL!VE – Charlotte (that provides community health resources and wellness) and the Eaton Area Senior Center.

Recreation Inventory Analysis

Based on the site visit by ROWE, the following needs were identified at various locations:

City of Charlotte Park Facilities

Bennett Park improvements have been made to its pathway connections in the park. The current playground equipment should be updated. The existing tennis courts are owned by the city and are located to the northwest of the park. The courts need drainage improvements and resurfacing. Camp Frances is a rustic campground that would benefit from improved trail links to the park that are accessible from the parking lot. Veterans Memorial Park is a part of Bennett Park and shares a border with the Battle Creek River. Bennett Park also includes a 5.4-mile hiking trail and 8 miles of mountain bike trails. The site is currently undeveloped and is used as a memorial by the community. Memorial Tree Garden is also contained within Bennett Park and is currently tended to by the city.

Samuel Combs Industrial Park is not a recreational park; but is used as an industrial park. There have been attempts previously to incorporate certain parts of the park as a recreational area; however, due to the Combs Park Ordinance, no trees in the park can be removed. The city seeks to ensure that the ordinance is maintained and that the park remains in its natural form.

Dean Park is a smaller community park that has some accessible parking, but most of the park amenities are not accessible. The basketball court and playground equipment were recently updated.

The City of Charlotte has two smaller parks that are not used for recreation; those parks are **Gateway Memorial Park** and **Snell Park**. The parks currently have no playground equipment or amenities on the sites. At Snell Park, there are currently tables and grill areas for community members to utilize.

Lincoln Park has recently been renovated and has a new pavilion and restroom facilities but still has a gravel drive and parking lot. Accessible parking should be added. Connecting routes to the new restroom and pavilion areas will provide universal access. Across Shepherd Street is an extension to the park that includes a skating rink, sledding hill, and RC-controlled cars track. This site can be updated to provide additional resources and amenities for the park facility.

Oak Park has had some amenities added to the site; however, the playground equipment and connecting routes to the site need to be improved to allow for universal access. Most of the playground equipment does not have safety surface but rather has woodchips around them. This does not provide universal access to the amenities.

Southridge Park has had some improvements to some of the playground equipment to provide an ADA-accessible swing. The basketball court needs to be redeveloped due to the loss of a backboard. Additional elements of universal design can be incorporated into the site (i.e., safety surfacing around playground).

Eaton Township Park Facilities

Eaton Township currently does not have dedicated park land that has park amenities on site. The township has purchased 6 acres located behind the Dunham's Sports store on Lansing Road. Some of the benefits of the proposed site are the proximity to residential houses and the fact that a trail already exists across the site that connects the neighborhood to the sporting goods store. Some of the constraints include the location of the park behind an existing building. Access to the site can be provided from Kimberly Drive.

Carmel Township Park Facilities

Carmel Township has 24 acres of property behind the township offices on Beech Street. The site provides natural areas for viewing and a trail around the site.

Charlotte Area Recreation Complex

The 22.71-acre site is in the Combs Industrial Park and is owned by the city but is leased to CARC on a 25-year lease. The site currently has a softball field, gravel drive, and parking lot. The site has universal design accommodations as well from the parking lot to the field. However, this was only Phase One of a multi-phase project with CARC. Other plans for the site include additional parking, softball fields, and lighting.

Partnerships with other organizations in the community (Charlotte Junior Orioles, Rotary Club), Boy Scout groups, and working with the Charlotte Public Schools are valuable to the continued success of providing recreational services to the area. Many of the additional recreational or programming opportunities exist through these partnerships. The Charlotte Aquatic Center and Charlotte Performing Arts Center are connected to the existing school facilities in Charlotte and are open to the community to use for various functions and programming.

As addressed in the survey results from the community, the respondents felt that the community needs to concentrate on making improvements and renovations to existing park facilities rather than acquiring new

properties. The undeveloped properties that the communities have should be further discussed with residents about the specific needs of the area for specific recreational purposes. Based on those results, grant funds and fundraisers could be done to raise additional revenue to provide these improvements to existing facilities and expanding park opportunities in others.

Standards for Need

The MDNR has adopted a set of standards to determine the need for certain recreational facilities based on the population of the communities. Table 3 compares the facilities located in the Charlotte community as identified in the Recreation Inventory to the state’s recreational standards.

Table 3: Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative Inventory and State Recreation Standards					
Item	Public Facilities	School Facilities/Others	State Standards	Community Standards	Need 2023
Park Land (acres)	145.2	164.0	10/1,000	160.3	Need
Soccer Field	-	6	1/20,000	1	Need
Hiking Trail (mi.)	5.4	-	1/5,000	3	Exceeds
Playground	4	4	1/3,000	5	Need
Ball Fields	1	4/2	1/3,000	5	Meets
Outdoor Basketball Court	2	3	1/5,000	3	Need
Ice Rink	1	-	1/20,000	1	Meets
Fishing Access (ft.)	13,200	-	1,000/1,000	16,100	Need
Picnic Area (tables)	48		1/200	80	Need
Outdoor Swimming Pools	-	-	1/40,000	-	N/A
Swimming Beaches	-	-	1/25,000	-	N/A
Sledding Hills	1	-	1/40,000	1	Need
Bicycle Trails/Walkways (mi.)	8	-	1/40,000	1	Exceeds
Tennis Courts	4	8	1/40,000	1	Exceeds

According to the information recorded during the initial site visit, there are certain amenities to park properties in the Greater Charlotte Community that need to be replaced or purchased to meet the state recreation standards. Some of these amenities include additional park land, public-owned soccer fields, and fishing access. Most of the deficiencies exist in areas where the school district currently provides these facilities for community recreation. Charlotte Public Schools has many of the park amenities such as ball fields, swimming facilities, tennis courts, and football/soccer fields on the sites of their schools.

Future development in Carmel and Eaton Townships can also meet these needs. In addition to these categories, other than the Science Camp, there is a lack of environmental education/nature-based facilities in the community. Additional recreational programming and amenities exist with the plan for Maple City Park in Charlotte. The site includes walking trails, dog park, and restroom facilities. The Maple City Park Plan is included in the appendix.

As noted, most of the amenities and facilities for recreational programming are in the city limits of Charlotte. To make up the deficiencies that exist in the area, the community must be proactive in providing these services and recreational activities that are accessible to all the residents.

Public Input and Planning Process

The Planning process for the recreation plan started with a kick-off meeting that was held on _____, 2023. During that meeting, the goals and objectives, action plan, and information regarding the plan were discussed with the community and stakeholders. The previous recreation plan was also made available to review and updated based on the current facilities that have been redeveloped or improved. For public input, a survey was provided for the residents that utilize the facilities in the Greater Charlotte area. Over 400 respondents provided their information. The results are included in the appendix. The survey results are included in the appendix. The cooperative (along with the City of Charlotte) worked with ROWE Professional Services Company to develop the action plan and goals and objectives.

After the action plan, goals and objectives were developed, the plan was submitted back to the Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative (CARC) and to the individual communities for their review. The plan was advertised with a public notice and made available for a 30-day period from _____, until _____, 2023 at the Charlotte Area Public Library, Charlotte City Hall, Eaton Township Hall, and Carmel Township Hall. Electronic versions of the recreation plan were also made available on the websites of the City of Charlotte, Carmel, and Eaton Township. After the public had time to review the recreation plan, CARC and the various municipalities advertised and held a joint public hearing for the plan on _____. The Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative (CARC) approved the recreation plan on _____, 2023. The City of Charlotte approved the recreation plan on _____, 2023. Carmel Township approved the recreation plan on _____, 2023; and Eaton Township approved the recreation plan on _____, 2023.

The final copy of the plan was uploaded to the MDNR website with a transmittal letter noting that copies had been sent to the local and regional planning agency for acceptance.

Goals and Objectives

An overall guide for the recreation goals for the Charlotte area will be to leverage development, programming, and maintenance of park facilities by pursuing partnerships, grant funding, and volunteer efforts when appropriate.

Goal 1: Increase Non-Motorized Interconnections with Surrounding Communities.

Continue the development of trails and non-motorized transportation alternatives that promote healthy living options. Work with the Eaton County Parks, Tri-County Regional Planning, and other communities to develop these routes that connect communities together by trails and pathways.

- » Increased pedestrian traffic that would promote businesses in the communities.
- » Propose potential internal walking routes around parks and local destinations to encourage additional use by residents.
- » Collaborate with volunteer groups that would support programs that encourage non-motorized transportation.

Goal 2: Promote, Maintain, and Upgrade Existing Park Facilities.

Based on the survey results collected from the residents in the Charlotte, Carmel Township, and Eaton Township area, at least 50 percent of the respondents expressed a desire to upgrade the existing parks with another 22 percent that wanted to maintain existing parks and facilities. The responses speak to the fact that the community would rather see the parks improved and maintained than developing new facilities.

- » Coordinate with block clubs/volunteer groups to increase park use and support.
- » Conduct an inventory of existing equipment and create a priority list for repair or replacement.
- » Provide park amenities that provide recreational access for all ages and abilities.
- » Develop internal wayfinding in parks and upgrade existing signage.
- » Ensure ADA accessibility/universal design at all park properties.

Goal 3: Pursue Grants, Partnerships, and Additional Funding Sources for Park Projects.

With the increased cost of services in communities, additional resources are often sought to offset the cost of providing recreational services, maintenance, and operations. The Greater Charlotte community has many potential partnerships that would be useful in providing these additional resources to the community.

- » Continue applying for grants to develop and renovate park properties.
- » Developing recreational facilities based on sound fiscal policy, planning and sustainability.
- » Encourage improved design of recreational facilities and equipment to reduce ongoing maintenance costs.
- » Continue partnerships with various organizations to assist with park clean-ups and potentially for handling minor improvements and renovations.

Goal 4: Evaluate Potential New Park Development Throughout the Community.

Within the Charlotte community, there are properties that have been identified for potentially being used for park amenities. These locations are in the City of Charlotte, Eaton Township, and Carmel Township.

The responses from the community were in favor of renovating and improving the current parks, so the intent of CARC should be not to acquire properties unless there is significant need expressed by the community.

- » Conduct surveys and resident public hearings on potential park development.
- » Work with various groups throughout the community to develop plans for recreational programming.
- » Identify community recreational needs as vacant properties/undeveloped sites become available (i.e., Maple City Park Master Plan).
- » Base new properties and opportunities on the ability to maintain the site and whether the achieved goal of recreational activities can be done.

Action Plan

The Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative, Eaton Township, Carmel Township, and City of Charlotte continue to offer quality recreational opportunities to support neighborhoods throughout the greater Charlotte community. Through the various park facilities, partnerships and volunteer organizations, residents have access to healthy lifestyle activities. The updated Parks and Recreation Plan will ensure preservation of recreational assets into the future and present new opportunities to improve the park systems.

The Action Plan is a framework for future decision making; the following recommendations are not listed in priority order. They are based on the goals and objectives listed within the plan:

- » **Park-Specific Recommendations:** These include a listing of all potential projects for all the parks in the community.
- » **System-Wide Initiatives:** Another important aspect of the planning process involves system-wide initiatives in order to accomplish objectives. These include projects such as ADA upgrades, and consistent enhancements.

Bennett Park/Camp Frances/Memorial Tree Garden/Veteran's Memorial Park

While Bennett Park has many amenities that support a large recreational facility, there are some features that could be improved:

- » Redevelop tennis courts near Bennett Park
- » Redevelop playground equipment for universal design and access
- » Renovate Bennett Park Trail

Many of the amenities around the park are still in good condition; but proper maintenance should be done to ensure the continued usage of the equipment. Residents also expressed that Bennett Park is the most familiar park.

Samuel A. Combs Park

Combs Park has been listed as a business/industrial park. While there are open fields, an agreement between the former owner and the city stipulated that the tree stand in the center of the park remain natural with an

ordinance protecting trees. Further options for the site include allowing the site to remain natural and use additional landscaping to highlight the natural features.

Dean Park

Dean Park is a community park that has seen some improvements to the parking lot area but other improvements for universal access and design need to be implemented.

- » Renovate basketball court
- » Provide connecting routes between playground equipment in the park
- » Improve non-motorized routes (sidewalk connections) from the community

Gateway Memorial Park

The site could be important to the development of a trailhead location or for non-motorized connections to other locations throughout the area. Additional signage may also be included (along with plant material).

Lincoln Park and Sledding Hill Area

Lincoln Park has recently undergone some improvements that have provided modern restroom facilities along with pavilion and seating areas. However, the park could be used for additional recreational programming as well as improvements at of the skate park.

- » Ensure universal design/accessibility by park amenities
- » Install playground equipment on the site (ages 1-5 and 6-12) – on the sledding hill side of the park
- » Adjust lighting at skate park
- » Ice rink renovation and cover

The park sits in the middle of a community; improving routes to the site would increase pedestrian traffic from the surrounding neighborhood. Potential planning and funding for this project could be secured through a "Transportation Alternatives Program" (TAP) grant.

Oak Park

Oak Park is located close to downtown and has been classified as a community park facility.

- » Renovate playground equipment
- » Install safety surfacing around playground equipment
- » Gazebo needs renovation/replacement

Snell Park

Snell Park is a small pocket park located west of I-69 near M-50 and E. Shepherd Street. Snell Park is exactly ½ mile south of downtown; the development of a connecting route to the downtown area could be created at the park. Also, developing a gateway entrance for a potential trailhead would be a nice highlight for this site.

Southridge Park

Southridge Park has previously had some site work done that has provided additional amenities to provide ADA accessibility to equipment. Additional improvements to the park include:

- » Ensure universal design for all playground equipment
- » Repair basketball court and hoops or repurpose basketball court into pickleball court
- » Improve sidewalk routes around the site

Minor improvements to Southridge Park could be coordinated through volunteer organizations to make the site more universally accessible and updating the playground equipment.

Charlotte Area Recreation Complex

Phase One of the complex was recently completed; however, there are plans to add additional amenities to the site as well.

- » Additional sports fields (i.e. Softball/Baseball)
- » Installation of playground equipment
- » Construction of restroom facilities
- » Construction of new pavilion on site

Undeveloped Properties in the Community

CARC and the municipalities of Carmel Township, Eaton Township, and the City of Charlotte have properties that are undeveloped that could be used for park property. The property behind the township hall in Carmel Township, and the property in Eaton Township need to be discussed within the community. Community stakeholder meetings can be conducted to review the specific needs for recreational programming.

Eaton Township does not currently have any properties but are constantly reviewing new opportunities to expand parks and recreational opportunities for the residents. Crandell Park does provide some recreational opportunities for residents. Crandell Park currently is operated by Eaton County but it is in the township.

Charlotte also has vacant property that has been identified for future development. The proposed Maple City Park has been identified as a recreational site for the community to include walking trails, a dog park, and restroom facilities.

System-Wide Initiatives

For the future success of the recreational activities, there are some system-wide actions that must be accomplished for the parks system to be productive. Some of those items include programming, land acquisition, and safety.

Programming:

As discussed, CARC does not coordinate programs in the community and was developed to provide facilities. There are entities within the community that work with various programming and services that assist with healthy living and lifestyle choices. Most recreational programming is offered by the Charlotte Public Schools, SEH/AL!VE, and volunteer groups (Charlotte Junior Orioles and 4H). Some of these programs through Charlotte Public Schools include swimming, sports, and the performing arts. Programming can be accomplished by reviewing the trends of the community members and working with various organizations and volunteer organizations to discover which groups and organizations would be best qualified to provide specific programming.

Land Acquisition:

In the future, CARC and municipalities should seek to acquire properties based on need and a plan to provide recreational services that are currently not being provided. The survey responders expressed a desire to see more properties improved rather than other properties acquired without a set plan.

Safety

To promote usage of park properties, the community can address maintenance items promptly, provide oversight, and maintain clear visibility in all park properties and deterring vandalism in park properties. Working with neighborhood groups/watches and with the public safety (police department) in the community are essential to ensuring that all residents and community members are safe and secured while they are in the park properties.

Programs

To develop educational programs, the community should work with other groups (educational organizations) and others to acquire sources of funding, either through the MDNR or other philanthropic organizations, that could aid and maintain funding for improvements and various programs. These services of outdoor educational programming would best be served through the schools.

Partnerships with School Districts

While the Charlotte Public Schools and CARC have worked together previously, the relationship with the school district should continue and CARC should work to provide additional resources and opportunities for the district to work with the cooperative. The school district also has a lot of recreational field acreage (baseball and softball diamonds, swimming facilities, performing arts, football/soccer fields, pickleball and tennis courts, and open fields). Charlotte Public Schools has created a position to handle community relations. Recently, CARC awarded a grant to the Charlotte Public Schools for the purchase of athletic equipment for the athletic program. CARC and the school district can cooperate on programs and use of public facilities.

Recreational Trail Connections

The Eaton County Parks and Recreation Five-Year Master Plan identifies the interest for developing county-wide pathway/trail systems. The intent is to work with the county planning commission, road commission, Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and various local organizations to lay out

various trails that would promote county-wide access and transportation alternatives. Some of the amenities that would be located at these regional trailhead sites include trail maps, benches, mile markers, and interpretive signage with directional information. Along with regional trail connections, CARC also should investigate developing trail systems within the Charlotte area that promote healthy living and activity. The current sidewalk and pedestrian access in the community can be repaired and improved to ensure universal design and accessibility.

Conclusion

CARC, the City of Charlotte, Eaton Township, and Carmel Township continue to provide recreational opportunities by creating community through people and parks. The potential for expanded services, park properties, and increased partnerships offer great opportunities for the community to continue to engage the residents. By implementing the changes outlined in the recreation plan, CARC and the various municipalities represented with the cooperative seek to promote active living and additional recreational programming within the community.

Funding

General Fund

Continue to allow for re-investment in facilities to avoid future increased maintenance costs and ensure revenue streams when possible.

User Fee

Continue to charge reasonable fees to participants of recreation programs and key facilities. Evaluate the fees annually to ensure they are providing the appropriate amount of funding to allow the programs to continue.

Special Millage

A property tax millage can be used to finance specific park and recreation projects such as parkland improvements and facility upgrades. A millage is an effective method to divide costs over time among all the taxpayers in the community to provide matching grant funds or finance projects out right. A millage allows more flexibility in how the money is used than a bond.

Bonds

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

Michigan Department of Transportation

The **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** provides funding for numerous types of projects that support the enhancement of transportation facilities and promote safe and efficient multi-modal transportation methods. This is a reimbursement program that originally comes from the federal level and

is administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). A minimum of 20 percent local match is required for proposed projects.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants

The **Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)** Grant provides funding assistance for state and local outdoor recreation needs, including land acquisition and development of recreation facilities. This assistance is directed at creating and improving outdoor recreational opportunities and providing protection to valuable natural resources. These are grants between \$15,000 and \$300,000 with a required minimum local match of 25 percent. Final engineering and construction services are covered at a maximum of 15 percent.

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

The **Michigan Recreation Passport Grant** program is funded by sales of ‘passport’ opt in participation for those wishing to access or support Michigan parks as part of their license renewal. Eligible projects are targeted for renovation and improvement to existing parks. Grants range from \$7,500 to \$75,000 with a minimum 25 percent local match, with the anticipation that the maximum grant amount will increase as revenue from sales of the Recreation Passport also increases.

The **Michigan Invasive Species Grant** Program is funding that deals with the issues of prevention, detection, eradication, and control for both terrestrial and aquatic invasive species in Michigan. The scope of the grant must prevent new invasive species from being introduced, strengthen state-wide invasive species early detection and response network, limit the dispersal of recently confirmed invasive species and manage and control widespread, long-established invasive species. These grants are between \$25,000, with a maximum grant amount between \$60,000 and \$400,000.

State Water Trail Designation Program is a new program that is under the direction of the MDNR that will classify certain water trails in communities as state water trails. Partnering groups and organizations would be vital in supporting the community in pursuing the grant. Funding sources are still being reviewed and analyzed; but \$50,000 appropriations are in place through 2026.

Other DNR grants include specialized opportunities such as the **Urban and Community Forestry (UCF)** program, funded through the USDA Forest Service’s State and Private Forestry program and the Water Trail Designation Program. Local units of government, nonprofit organizations and schools are eligible to apply. Projects include street and park tree management and planning activities; urban forestry training and education events; tree plantings; and Arbor Day celebrations.

Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) Grants:

Funding sources in EGLE are available through the **Clean Michigan Initiative (CMI)** program. Funding is used to secure and provide protection for water and coastline areas to prevent contamination and erosion control. Some of the grants available include the **Waterfront Redevelopment Grant**, which deals with increasing public access to the waterfront and supporting economic development in areas. Another grant through EGLE is the **Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)** Grant which deals with coastal areas, protecting rare and threatened species and natural communities. Maximum grants are capped at \$1,500,000 with no minimum grant requirement. The **Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Grant** is available to those communities with direct Great Lakes access. The total grant funds available are not to exceed \$100,000; with an equal match from the community.

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

Projects eligible for **CDBG** funding must be in a low-moderate income service area and/or provide access to the disabled to qualify. Investments using CDBG funds must provide a documented benefit to low- to moderate-income households. Projects eligible for funding include public infrastructure improvements and those that provide ADA accessibility.

MEDC Patronicity Crowd Funding

The **Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC)** has developed an additional way of securing funding for community development projects by using crowdfunding to support developments. Communities, non-profits, and municipalities can submit projects by applying to the Patronicity campaign. The projects that meet the programs parameters and successfully crowd-fund their goal will receive a matching grant from the MEDC of up to \$50,000.

Donations

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations and individuals will often contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services or the contribution of equipment or facilities.

Michigan Natural Resources Tree Planting Grants

Through the **Michigan Department of Natural Resources**, there are three tree planting, grant programs that will assist in funding landscape enhancements at the park and reforestation projects. Applicants must provide at least 50 percent of the total project cost.

Conservation Easements

A **conservation easement** is a method of preserving open space that is guaranteed through formal documentation. Rather than obtaining fee simple or complete ownership, an organization or community can purchase or acquire by gift an 'easement' to the property.

Public-Private or Public-Public Partnerships

Reduced funding at the public and private sector has created a need for various **partnerships** between public and private entities, as well as between two or more public entities to accommodate specialized large-scale recreation demands.

Foundations

A **foundation** is a special non-profit legal entity established as a mechanism through which land, cash and securities can be donated for the benefit of parks and recreation services. The assets are disbursed by the foundation Board of Directors according to a predetermined plan.

These grant funding opportunities can be accessed through the *Michigan Foundation Directory*.

The city has been successful demonstrating leveraging of these funds as match against other grant sources and demonstrating the ability to build capacity for long term economic stability.

Charlotte Community Recreation Plan

Meeting Agenda

July 31, 2023

1. Introductions
2. Describe function of the 5 Year Recreation Plan
3. Review scope of work and schedule
4. Role of the community
 - a. Update to any existing recreational facilities.
 - b. List of community partners, partnerships, and parks.
 - c. Survey questions
5. Review changes / progress since last plan
 - a. Discussion, progress over past 5 years.
6. Documentation needed
 - budget (Recreation & Park Department)
 - changes in admin structure
 - changes in facilities
 - relevant master plan documents
 - post completion forms
 - mi-rec grant website
 - legal notices for public meetings, etc
 - sign checklist
7. Intent to apply for MDNR grants?
8. Next steps



Interlocal Agreement for Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative

This Interlocal Agreement is effective on and after 20th day of November, 2009, provided it is approved by the City of Charlotte, a Michigan municipal corporation, whose address is 111 E. Lawrence Ave., Charlotte, Michigan 48813 (“Charlotte”); the Township of Eaton, a Michigan municipal corporation, whose address is 3981 E. Clinton Trail, Charlotte, Michigan 48813 (“Eaton”), and the Township of Carmel, a Michigan municipal corporation, whose address is 1959 W. Kalamo Hwy., Charlotte, Michigan 48813 (“Carmel”) (collectively, “the Parties”).

ARTICLE I – AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE

1. Authority

- a. This Interlocal Agreement establishes a Recreation Cooperative under the authority of the Urban Cooperation Act, Act 7 of the Public Acts of 1967, as amended; Act 156 of the Public Acts of 1917, as amended; and Act 35 of the Public Acts of 1951, as amended.

2. Purpose

- a. The purpose of this Interlocal Agreement is to facilitate and support varied recreational opportunities principally for the residents of the City of Charlotte, the Township of Eaton, and the Township of Carmel. Resources allocated and/or generated through the establishment of this Agreement will be directed toward, but not limited to, the development and maintenance of facilities, fields, and spaces that enhance recreational and sport offerings.

ARTICLE II – RECREATION COOPERATIVE

1. Name

The name of the body formed by way of this agreement is the Charlotte Area Recreation Cooperative (C.A.R.C.).

2. Board

- a. The CARC shall be governed by a Board composed of seven (7) members as follows:
 - i. Two (2) members appointed by the City of Charlotte Board and residing in Charlotte.
 - ii. Two (2) members appointed by the Eaton Township Board and residing in Eaton.
 - iii. Two (2) members appointed by the Carmel Township Board and residing in Carmel.
 - iv. One (1) citizen-at-large member appointed by the CARC Board and residing in one of the Parties’ territory.

3. Appointment and Removal

- a. The Parties shall appoint their respective CARC members, who shall serve at the pleasure of the respective appointing body. The Parties' governing bodies may remove their respective Board members by Resolution at any time, with or without cause.
- b. The Citizen-At-Large appointee must be a resident of one of the Parties. To ensure equal opportunity in representation, the appointment of the Citizen-At-Large will occur in a rotating fashion among the Parties in the following order: Eaton, Carmel, Charlotte. If the Board is unable to identify an interested candidate from the appropriate Party at the time of that Party's designated order in the rotation, the Board may appoint a citizen from the next Party in the order of rotation. An at-large member may be removed from the CARC Board for any reason at any time, with or without cause, by a 2/3 majority vote of the entire remaining membership of the CARC Board.

4. Terms of Office

- a. The Parties shall appoint their initial two (2) Board members such that one will serve a one year term and the second shall serve a two year term. All future Board members appointed by the Parties shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors has been appointed and take office.
- b. The initial Citizen-At-Large appointment will occur within 30 days of the completion of the Parties' initial appointments. The initial Citizen-At-Large and all future appointed Citizens-At-Large shall serve a two year term.
- c. With the exception of the initial CARC appointments, Board member terms of office shall begin on July 1st each year.

5. Vacancies

- a. Any vacancy on the CARC Board arising for any reason shall be filled by appointment within thirty (30) days of the vacancy to serve the remainder of the unexpired term.

6. Compensation

- a. Members of the CARC shall not be paid by the CARC for attending meetings of the CARC or of the CARC Board.

7. Officers

- a. The CARC Board shall elect at its first meeting to occur after July 1st of each year, from its membership, a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Secretary/Treasurer, who shall hold respective offices for terms of one year and/or until a successor is elected.

- b. Vacancies in any office shall be filled by the Board within thirty (30) days of the vacancy, for the remainder of the unexpired term.

8. Officer Responsibilities

- a. The Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board and shall have all privileges and duties of a Board Member.
- b. The Vice-Chairperson shall preside at all meetings of the Board at which the Chairperson is absent.
- c. The Secretary/Treasurer shall make and keep, all records, reports, and minutes required by this Agreement and applicable law and shall serve as the Board signatory for financial transactions.

9. Meetings

- a. CARC shall meet no less than once per quarter. CARC, at its first meeting after July 1st of each year, shall establish a regular meeting schedule which shall be posted at the offices of the parties in similar form and within similar times as required by law for governmental meeting schedules.
- b. Special meetings of the CARC may be called by the Chairperson or, in the absence of the Chairperson, by the Vice Chairperson, with at least eighteen (18) hours prior notice provided to the members of the CARC Board.
- c. The Board shall comply with the requirements of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

10. Quorum

- a. In order to conduct business a minimum of four (4) members of the CARC Board must be present.

11. Voting

- a. Five affirmative votes shall be necessary for the CARC Board to take any official action at a regular or special meeting.

12. Minutes

- a. Complete written minutes of all CARC meetings shall be kept in compliance with applicable provisions of the Michigan Open Meetings Act, with copies sent to all CARC members and the Clerks of the Parties as soon as reasonably possible after a CARC meeting.

13. Rules

- a. The Board shall adopt rules to govern its meetings.

14. Registered office

- a. The registered office of the CARC shall be the office of the City of Charlotte, 111 E. Lawrence Ave, Charlotte, MI 48813. The CARC Board may designate another location as the registered office.

15. Records

- a. CARC shall comply with all provisions of the Michigan Freedom of Information Act, Act 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended.

ARTICLE III – POWERS

1. General Powers

- a. The CARC shall have the following powers, authority and obligations:
 - i. Contract with any other governmental units, public agencies, or private persons or organizations as appropriate to carry out CARC functions or fulfill CARC obligations.
 - ii. Authorize user fees and accept funds, grants, voluntary work, or other assistance, to carry out CARC functions and obligations from any source, public or private, including, but not limited to, local governmental funding, user fees, state and federal grants, and private donations. Any application for grants or other public funding shall be communicated to the Parties.
 - iii. Conduct and carry out any program, activity or function which advances and directly relates to the purposes expressed in this Interlocal Agreement.
 - iv. Expend funds for the acquisition of real property and for construction, operation, and maintenance of recreational equipment and facilities when the property is available for and used for recreation. Approve and authorize purchases and expenditures.
 - v. Acquire and hold, by purchase, lease with or without option to purchase, grant, gift, devise, land contract, installment purchase contract, bequest, or other legal means, real and personal property inside or outside the territory of the Parties. The property may include franchises, easements, or rights of way on, under, or above any property.
 - vi. Provide for the maintenance of all of the real and personal property of the Cooperative.
 - vii. Exercise all powers and take such actions as are authorized by State law and this agreement.
 - viii. The authority to sue and be sued.

2. Limitations of Authority

- a. CARC shall be subject to the following limitations on its authority. Annually, by January 2 of each calendar year, the Board shall submit a budget to each of the Parties for approval, which shall identify the specific obligations, goals, and initiatives proposed to be carried on for the ensuing year, together with the projected costs for those obligations, goals, and initiatives. The CARC does not have the power or authority to levy any type of tax or to issue any type of bond in its name. CARC shall not or in any way indebted any of the parties except in accordance with a budget approved by the Parties.

3. Insurance

- a. The CARC shall obtain policies of insurance, as part of its budget, for comprehensive and other appropriate and necessary purposes. The CARC shall have the parties hereto named as "named insureds", on the comprehensive liability and property damage insurance policy.

ARTICLE IV – FINANCE

1. Fiscal Year

- a. The fiscal year of the CARC shall be from July 1 through June 30 annually.

2. Funding

- a. Initial funding for the CARC shall be established by a contribution from the Parties in the amount equivalent to \$1.50 per resident, based on the most recent official population statistics for each party available from the United States Census Bureau, or the funds accrued by the respective entity for use on joint projects in fulfillment of the Interlocal Agreements established between and among the parties prior to the establishment of this agreement, whichever is greater.
- b. Annual funding for the CARC shall be established by an allocation of funds from the Parties in the amount equivalent to \$1.65 per resident, based on the most recent official population statistics for each party available from the United States Census Bureau, or 0.5 mill of the respective portion of tax revenue generated through the Interlocal Agreements established between and among the parties prior to the ratification of this Agreement, whichever is greater.

3. Additional Funding

- a. The Parties, individually or collectively, may, at any time, elect to allocate additional funds to the CARC.
- b. Funds for CARC may also be generated through user fees, grants and donations from any source, public or private, including, but not limited to, local governmental funding, individual users, state and federal grants, and private donations. Any application by CARC for grant funding or other public funding shall be communicated to the Parties prior to submission of application.

4. Annual Budget

- a. The CARC Board shall prepare budgets and appropriations acts in the manner provided by sections 14 to 19 of the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, Act 2 of the Public Acts of 1968, as amended. The CARC Board shall annually prepare a proposed budget in such detail as required by Parties, which shall include all sums necessary to carry on obligations, goals and initiatives. The proposed budget shall be submitted to the Clerk of each Party by January 2 of each year. The governing bodies of each Party shall review and either approve as presented, or as modified, an annual budget, no later than May 30 of each year, and approval of the budget by the Parties must be unanimous.
- b. The Parties shall pay to the CARC their respective financial commitment on or before July 1 at the commencement of the fiscal year. The CARC treasurer shall invoice the parties annually.

- c. Approval of the Parties' governing bodies shall be required for any amendments or transfers of approved CARC budget line items that exceed \$500.

5. Fiscal Agent of CARC

- a. The Board shall appoint a Fiscal Agent for the CARC who shall have the responsibility of custody and control of all funds of the CARC.
- b. The Fiscal Agent shall make, or cause to be made, a full and complete financial report to the Board and to the governing bodies of each Party, of the CARC's financial transactions at the end of the fiscal year. Such report shall include an annual audit of CARC, and report on the audit and auditing procedures, in the manner provided by sections 6 to 13 of the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, Act 2 of the Public Acts of 1968, as amended. The audit shall also be in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards as promulgated by the United States general accounting office and shall satisfy federal regulations relating to federal grant compliance audit requirements.
- c. The funds received or set aside by the Fiscal Agent for the CARC shall be held in a separate fund and accounted for separately from the other funds of the Fiscal Agent

6. Administration

- a. The CARC Board shall administer the financial aspects of the CARC. All expenditures shall be approved by the Board prior to being paid by the Treasurer.
- b. The CARC is an independent corporate entity separate and distinct from the Parties. Administration of the financial aspects of CARC or any other acts done by any of the Parties in assistance or in cooperation with CARC shall not have any effect upon, nor change the status of CARC, nor create any legal responsibility by any of the Parties for acts or obligations of CARC.

ARTICLE V – TERMINATION AND DISSOLUTION

1. Termination of Participation

- a. A party may terminate its membership in CARC and its participation in this Interlocal Agreement as of June 30 in any year by written notice to the CARC Board and to the governing bodies of the other Parties no later than April 1st of the year in which such termination shall be effective. If notice of termination is given, that Party shall remain liable for all obligations incurred by CARC pursuant to this Interlocal Agreement prior to the actual termination and according to the budget approved for that fiscal year.
- b. A Party's participation in CARC by way of this agreement may be terminated or rescinded by a referendum of that Party's residents not more than 45 days after the approval of the agreement by the governing body of the local governmental unit.

2. Dissolution
 - a. When any of the parties terminates its participation under this Agreement, CARC shall be dissolved unless the remaining Parties deem it advantageous to continue CARC. If the CARC is terminated or dissolved, after meeting any and all obligations and debts of CARC, the real and personal property and assets owned by CARC shall be distributed to the Parties in kind or sold by agreement of the Parties, with each Party receiving an amount of property and assets in proportion to the respective contributions made by each Party to CARC. Any property, either real or personal, which was donated or provided by one of the Parties shall remain the property of said party.

ARTICLE VI – MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

1. Amendments
 - a. This Agreement may be amended, in whole or in part, by written agreement of all of the Parties.
2. Applicable Laws
 - a. The CARC Board shall fully comply with applicable local, Michigan, and federal laws, regulations, grant conditions and contract provisions.
3. Effective Date
 - a. This Interlocal Agreement shall be in full force and effect on the date first written above.
4. Duration
 - a. This Interlocal Agreement shall remain in effect and continue for a period of twenty (20) years, unless terminated at an earlier date in accordance with its terms.
5. Effect of Agreement
 - a. This Interlocal Agreement shall be binding upon and serve to the benefit of the Parties and their respective successors.
6. Severability
 - a. Should any section of this Interlocal Agreement be held by a court or arbitrator of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, illegal or unconstitutional, such holding shall not be construed as affecting or invalidating the remaining sections or parts of this agreement, which shall remain in full force and effect.
7. Notices
 - a. Any notice, demand or communication required, permitted, or desired to be given under this Interlocal Agreement shall be deemed effectively given when personally delivered or mailed by first class mail, addressed to the recipient Party at the addresses identified in the first paragraph above. Any changes to the above addresses shall be promptly communicated to the other Parties in the manner described above.
8. Governing Law
 - a. This Interlocal Agreement has been executed and delivered in and shall be interpreted, construed and enforced pursuant to and in accordance with the laws of the State of Michigan. All duties and obligations of the parties created hereunder are performable in Eaton County, Michigan and Eaton County, Michigan shall be the venue for any legal action between the Parties that may be

brought in connection with or arise out of or by reason of this Interlocal Agreement.

9. Assignment

- a. No assignment of this Interlocal Agreement or the rights and obligations there under shall be valid without the specific written consent of all the Parties, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.

10. Waiver of Breach

- a. The waiver by any Party of a breach or violation of any provision of this Interlocal Agreement shall not operate as, or be construed to be, a waiver of any subsequent breach of the same or other provision hereof.

11. Dispute Resolution

- a. All disputes between the parties under this Interlocal Agreement shall be initially submitted to facilitative mediation. The mediator shall be whomever the parties mutually agree upon within 15 days of written notice of a request for mediation. If the parties cannot agree, counsel for each of the parties will each select an attorney who practices in Eaton, Clinton or Ingham Counties, and those selected attorneys shall then select by mutual agreement an attorney who is on the Ingham County Circuit Court Contract Mediation Panel to act as the mediator. Unless the time limits are mutually waived, the facilitative mediation shall be heard within 30 days of the appointment of the mediator. Each party shall bear equally the costs of the facilitative mediator. If the dispute is not resolved by mediation, each party is free to exercise their rights as provided by law.

12. Gender and Number

- a. Whenever the context hereof requires, the gender of all words shall include the masculine, feminine and neuter, and the number of all words shall include the singular and plural.

13. Article and Other Headings

- a. The Article and other headings contained in this Interlocal Agreement are for reference purposes only and shall not affect in any way the meaning or interpretation of this Interlocal Agreement.

14. Entire Agreement

- a. This Interlocal Agreement supersedes all previous or contemporaneous contracts and constitutes the entire agreement between the parties. No Party shall be entitled to benefits other than those specified herein. No oral statements or prior contemporaneous written material not specifically incorporated herein shall be of any force and effect, and all the Parties specifically acknowledge, in entering into and executing this Interlocal Agreement, they rely solely on the representations and agreements contained in this Interlocal Agreement and no others.

15. Counterparts

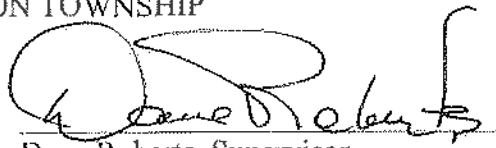
- a. This Agreement may be executed in any number of counterparts and each such counterpart shall be considered a valid original.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this Interlocal Agreement as of the date first written above by authority of their respective governing bodies.

CITY OF CHARLOTTE

By: 
Deleski Smith, Mayor

EATON TOWNSHIP

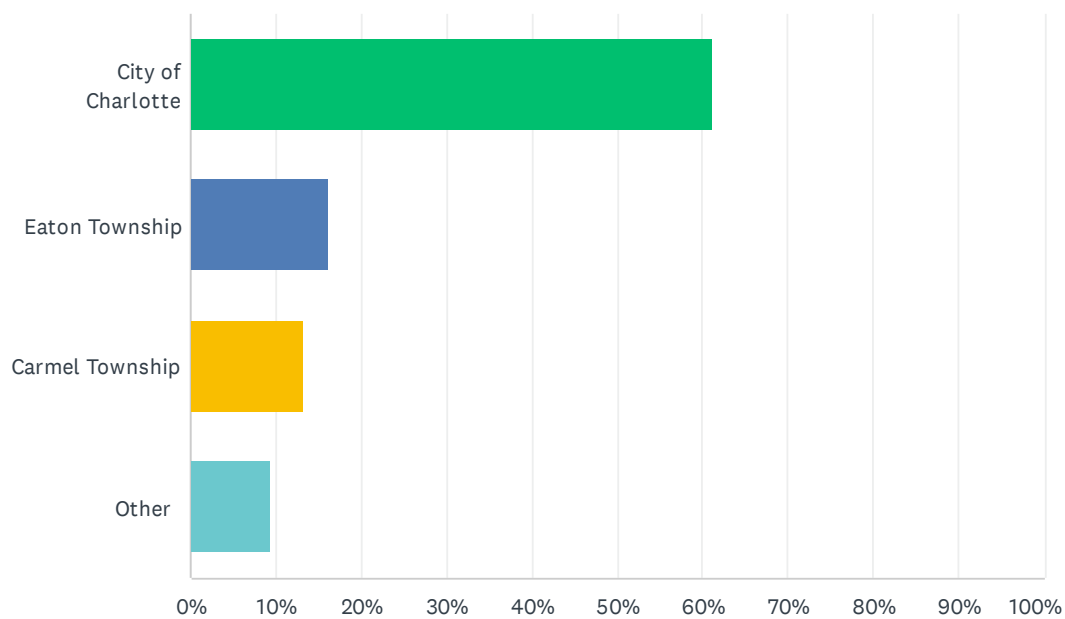
By: 
Dave Roberts, Supervisor

CARMEL TOWNSHIP

By: 
Steve Capps, Supervisor

Q1 I am a resident of:

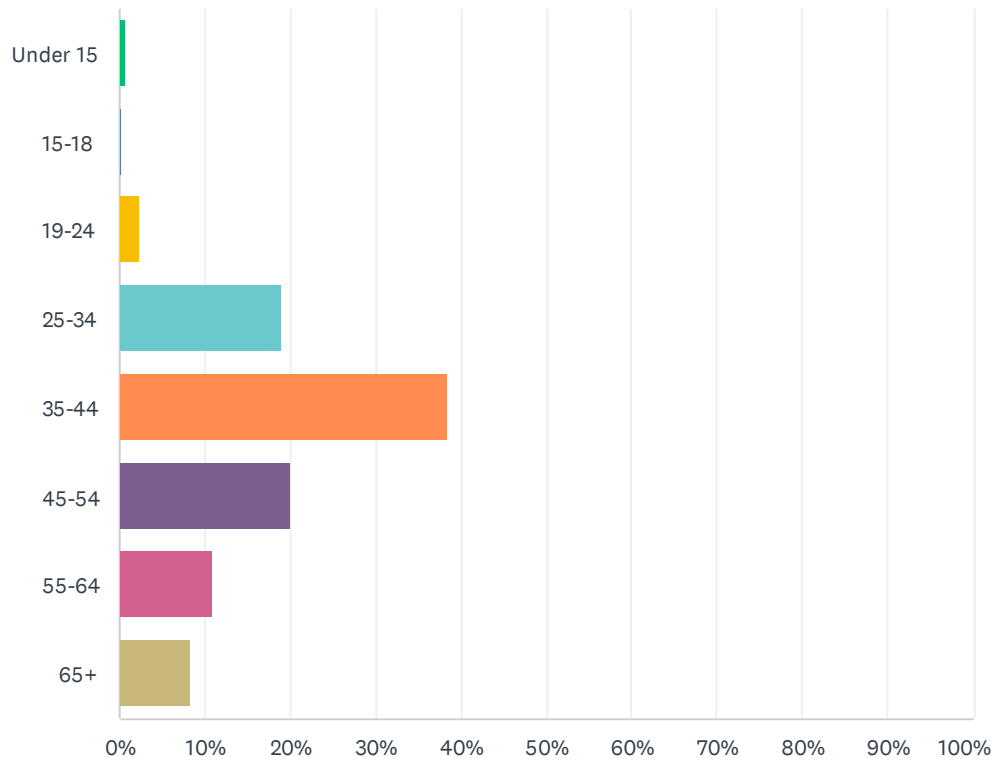
Answered: 417 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
City of Charlotte	61.15%	255
Eaton Township	16.31%	68
Carmel Township	13.19%	55
Other	9.35%	39
TOTAL		417

Q2 What is your age?

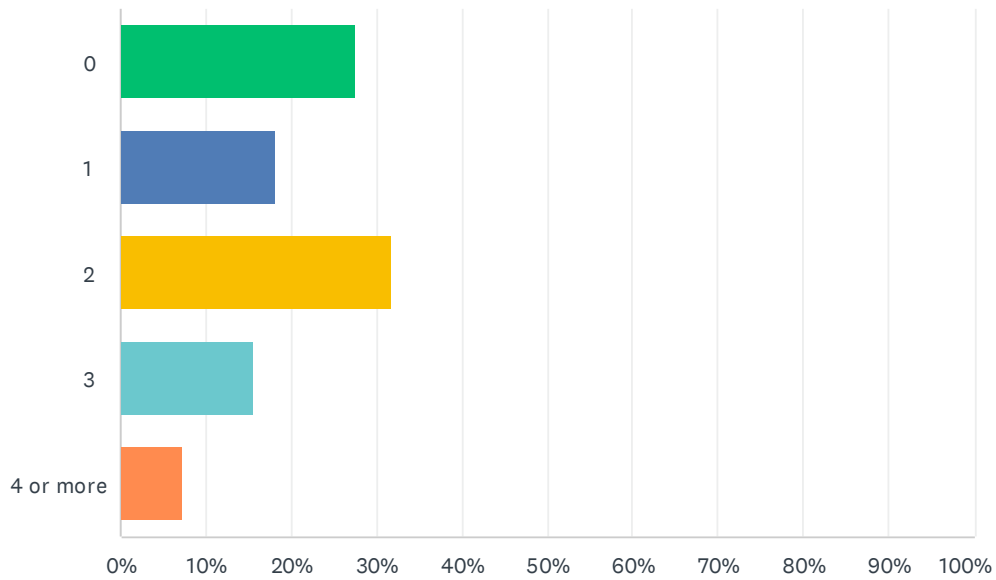
Answered: 417 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 15	0.72% 3
15-18	0.24% 1
19-24	2.40% 10
25-34	18.94% 79
35-44	38.37% 160
45-54	20.14% 84
55-64	10.79% 45
65+	8.39% 35
TOTAL	417

Q3 How many children live in your household?

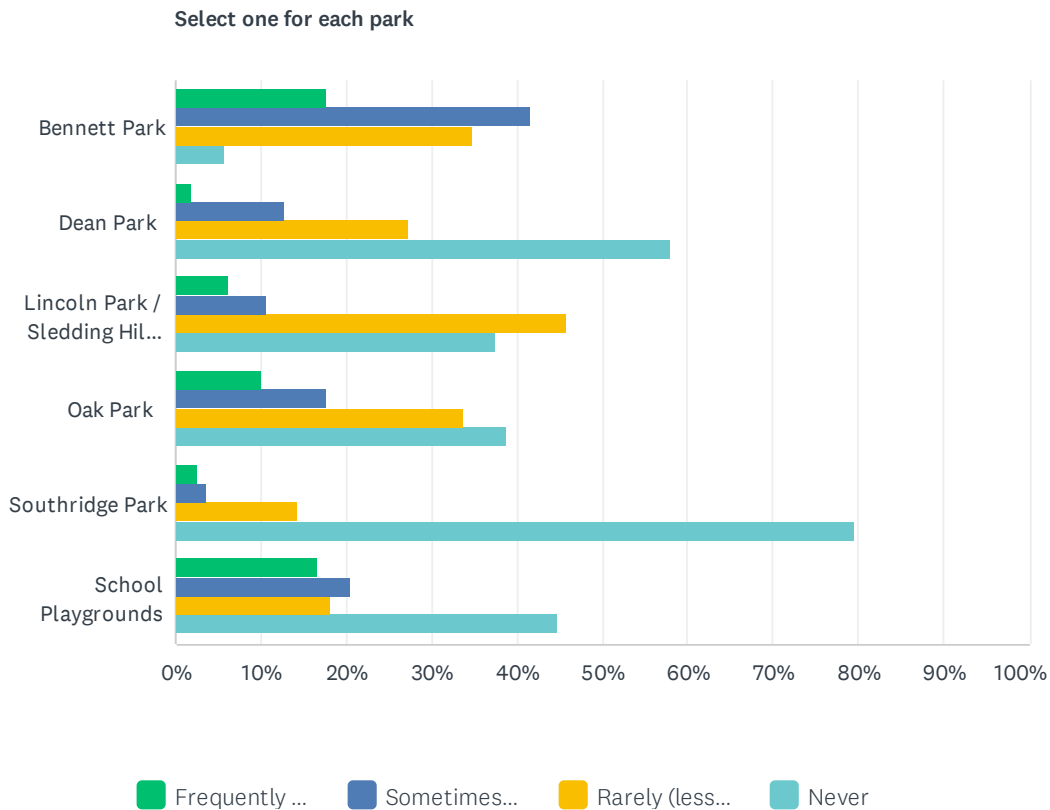
Answered: 416 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0	27.40%	114
1	18.03%	75
2	31.73%	132
3	15.63%	65
4 or more	7.21%	30
TOTAL		416

Q4 How frequently do you visit the following parks?

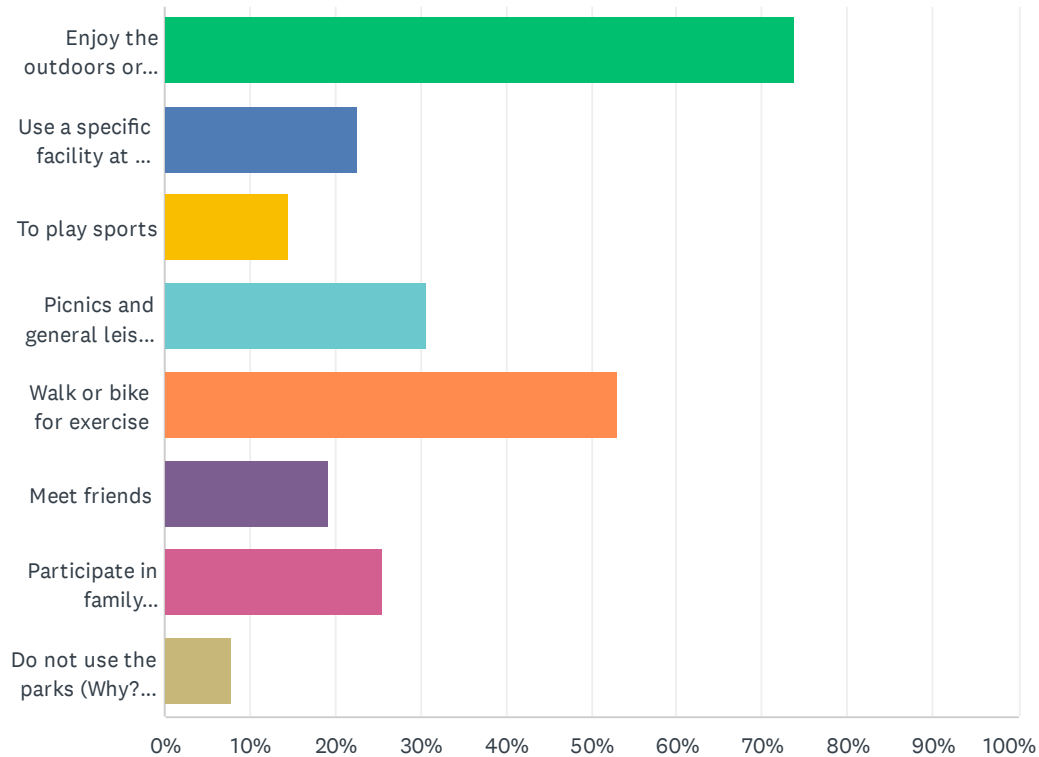
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Select one for each park					
	FREQUENTLY (ONCE A WEEK)	SOMETIMES (1-2 TIMES A MONTH)	RARELY (LESS THAN 5 TIMES A YEAR)	NEVER	TOTAL
Bennett Park	17.68% 70	41.67% 165	34.85% 138	5.81% 23	396
Dean Park	1.90% 7	12.74% 47	27.37% 101	57.99% 214	369
Lincoln Park / Sledding Hill Site	6.12% 23	10.64% 40	45.74% 172	37.50% 141	376
Oak Park	9.95% 37	17.74% 66	33.60% 125	38.71% 144	372
Southridge Park	2.49% 9	3.59% 13	14.36% 52	79.56% 288	362
School Playgrounds	16.53% 62	20.53% 77	18.13% 68	44.80% 168	375

Q5 What are the primary reasons you and your family use community parks? (Please select your top two (2) choices)

Answered: 416 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Enjoy the outdoors or nature	73.80%	307
Use a specific facility at a park	22.60%	94
To play sports	14.42%	60
Picnics and general leisure activities	30.77%	128
Walk or bike for exercise	53.13%	221
Meet friends	19.23%	80
Participate in family activities	25.48%	106
Do not use the parks (Why? Please specify below)	7.93%	33
Total Respondents: 416		

#	DO NOT USE THE PARKS (WHY? PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW)	DATE
1	Not close	9/26/2023 10:29 PM
2	No need	9/5/2023 11:09 AM
3	Used them when son was older. But haven't been in a while. Have heard issues at Bennett	9/2/2023 5:12 PM

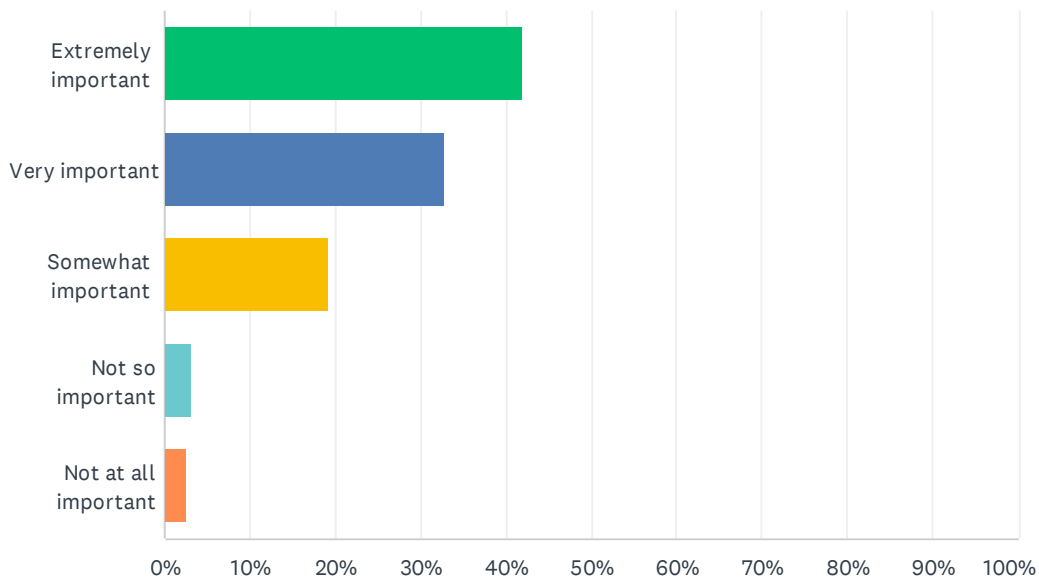
Charlotte Community 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

which was the one we used to go to. So not sure I want to go back.

4	The parks in Charlotte need updated BAD! I travel to other cities when taking my kids to the park :(It's sad and I don't like it but we just don't have any good ones in our town.	8/31/2023 12:42 PM
5	Would love a dog park	8/29/2023 7:24 AM
6	Unkempt, dangerous, undesirable people hanging around	8/27/2023 7:43 AM
7	Walking my labradors	8/26/2023 9:35 AM
8	Not interested in parks	8/25/2023 9:31 PM
9	Too many drug users	8/25/2023 5:56 PM
10	Some times the parks can be dirty or scary.	8/25/2023 7:22 AM
11	To go on a walk with our dogs	8/24/2023 4:22 PM
12	Too many that are not maintained	8/24/2023 10:41 AM
13	not interested	8/24/2023 9:08 AM
14	Usually some sketchy people here and there	8/24/2023 6:33 AM
15	I don't have a need to	8/24/2023 5:20 AM
16	Walk/play with dogs	8/23/2023 9:59 PM
17	I have a side walk that I walk on or use home equipment	8/23/2023 9:03 PM
18	I work for a living, the only people who hang out in Charlotte parks are teenagers buying drugs.	8/23/2023 8:59 PM
19	Don't have kids	8/23/2023 8:52 PM
20	Kids are older now	8/23/2023 8:34 PM
21	The city parks suck and you don't care about this community's input you do what you want no matter what the community says	8/23/2023 8:12 PM
22	To busy	8/23/2023 6:57 PM
23	Most parks in the community are not nice. We tend to travel outside Charlotte to see other parks. Charlotte needs lots of improvement on recreation areas	8/23/2023 6:12 PM
24	There not clean and don't have much to offer	8/23/2023 6:08 PM
25	We don't use some because they are dirty and gross	8/23/2023 5:59 PM
26	No need	8/23/2023 5:32 PM
27	I prefer to travel to nicer parks	8/23/2023 5:13 PM
28	Have no need to	8/23/2023 5:13 PM
29	The parks are outdated, old, dirty, and not inclusive.	8/23/2023 5:05 PM
30	Weekdays on school playgrounds.	8/23/2023 5:05 PM
31	They need updating	8/23/2023 4:42 PM
32	I use my own yard to be outside.	8/23/2023 3:53 PM
33	Need updates	8/23/2023 3:42 PM

Q6 How important do you feel parks and recreation facilities are to the quality of life of yourself and your family?

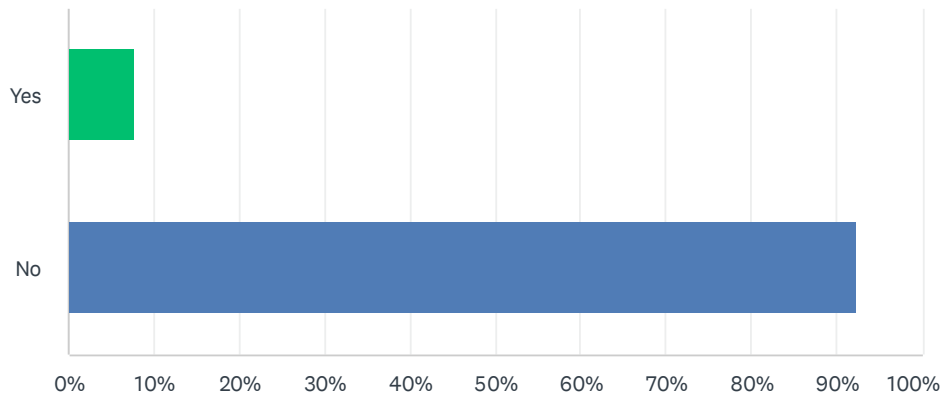
Answered: 416 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	42.07%	175
Very important	32.93%	137
Somewhat important	19.23%	80
Not so important	3.13%	13
Not at all important	2.64%	11
TOTAL		416

Q7 Do you or your family have need for ADA accessible facilities?

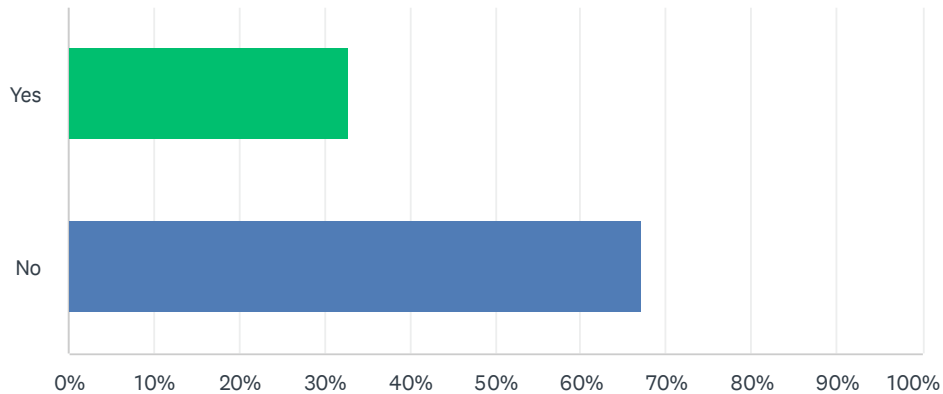
Answered: 415 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	7.71%	32
No	92.29%	383
TOTAL		415

Q8 If you answered Yes to question #7, do you feel there are adequate facilities/amenities in the community parks for those requiring ADA accessibility?

Answered: 67 Skipped: 350



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	32.84%	22
No	67.16%	45
TOTAL		67

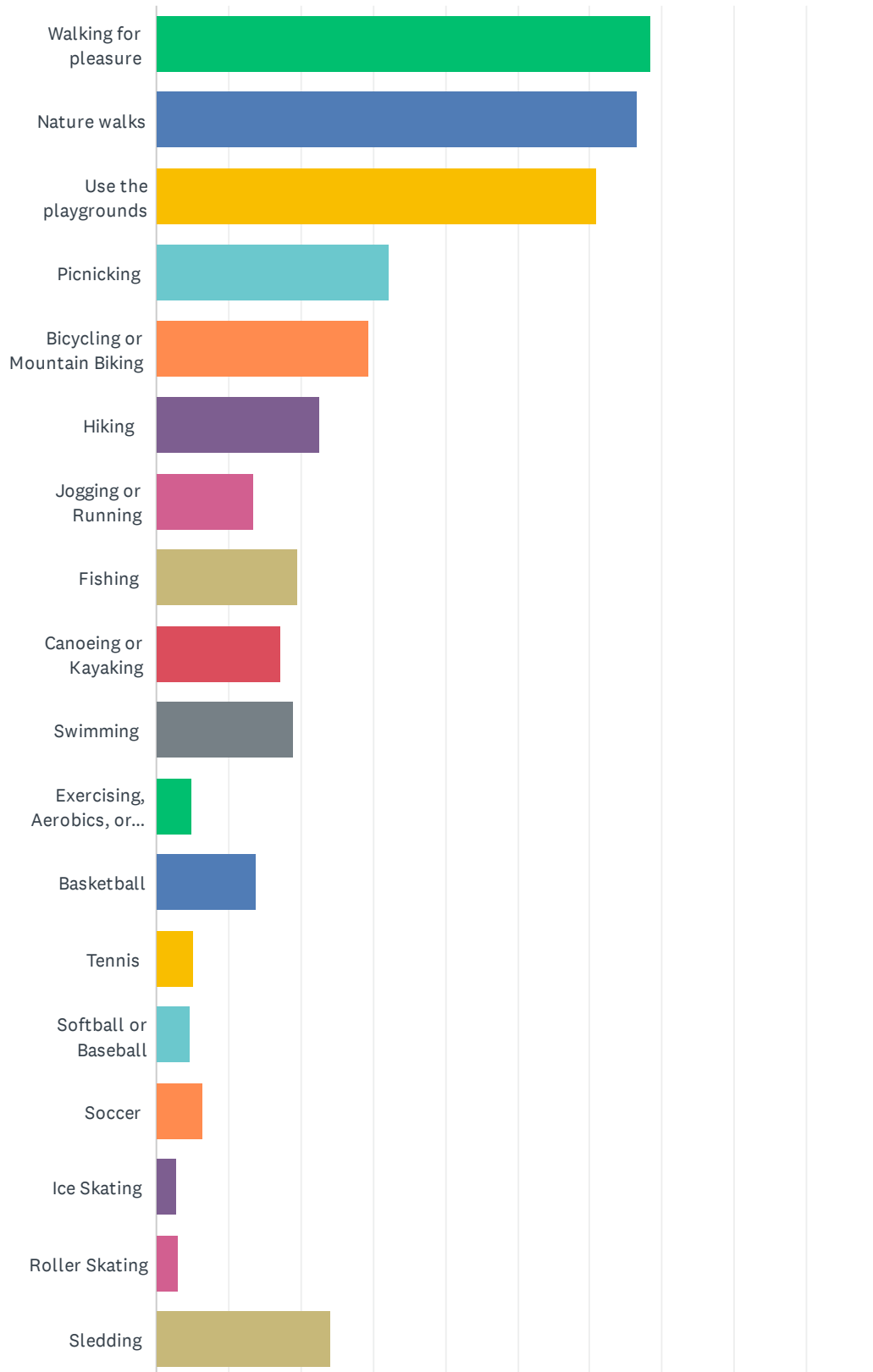
#	IF YOU ANSWERED NO, PLEASE SPECIFY POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS	DATE
1	More wheelchair accessible options that aren't destroyed by vandalism	9/26/2023 9:13 PM
2	Wheelchair access, accessible playstructures	9/5/2023 11:09 AM
3	Blind people can not walk on sidewalks or in parks on trails or sidewalks that have tree branches over hanging walking areas. The branches pose a risk to their already fragile eyes	9/1/2023 12:12 PM
4	More wheel chair accesibility	8/31/2023 4:19 PM
5	Accessable playground equipment for wheelchairs	8/28/2023 2:23 PM
6	Unsure	8/26/2023 12:09 PM
7	None	8/25/2023 7:57 AM
8	I have a daughter that has Down syndrome and a lot of the equipment is inaccessible to her.	8/25/2023 7:22 AM
9	Need safe, non motorized paths between all the parks, downtown, schools. Crossings down town are hostile to wheelchairs and pedestrians.	8/24/2023 8:57 PM
10	Not enough wheelchair toys	8/24/2023 4:48 PM
11	NA	8/24/2023 4:22 PM
12	Better sidewalks and transition areas.	8/24/2023 3:50 PM
13	Paved paths for wheelchair	8/24/2023 2:24 PM
14	More paved trails at bennet park on the other side of bridge.	8/24/2023 10:12 AM
15	More disabled parking	8/24/2023 10:11 AM

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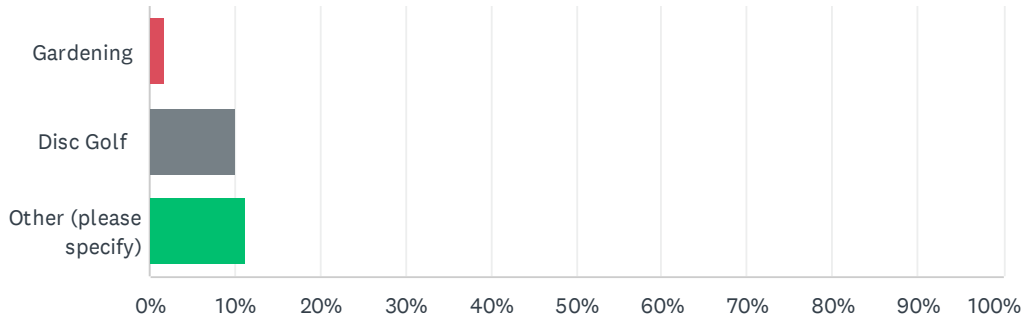
16	Smooth paths from parking to the waling paths and to play equipment is needed. A ramp or some type of structure at the sledding hill would be amazing. I know that is not likely and is costly, but it would be a dream.	8/23/2023 11:31 PM
17	Better bathrooms	8/23/2023 10:19 PM
18	Our parks are trashy. The wheel chair swing at Bennet park is cool but condoms syringes and profanity keep us from enjoying the park and I can see a park from my house. Improvement would be awesome but cameras are needed heavily.	8/23/2023 10:14 PM
19	Unsure of ADA needs	8/23/2023 8:49 PM
20	Pave all of the Bennett Park trails.	8/23/2023 8:00 PM
21	The parks need more paved paths. Any areas that are unpaved, or don't have a paved path leading to them, are inaccessible to people with mobility issues, who use walkers and wheelchairs, and canes.	8/23/2023 6:54 PM
22	The parks look like parks built in 1960. No new things, no new attractions, no new kids activity it really sucks to pay bunch of taxes and have cruddy parks	8/23/2023 6:45 PM
23	N/A	8/23/2023 6:33 PM
24	The park's unfortunately aren't well managed and don't have great equipment	8/23/2023 6:33 PM
25	Restrooms are often not accessible. For example the restrooms near MacGobel field	8/23/2023 6:14 PM
26	Needs more activities for kids in wheelchairs	8/23/2023 5:43 PM
27	Do what you need	8/23/2023 5:42 PM
28	Get rid of mulch, to hard to walk on around playground equipment. Need the cushions mats to be more ADA friendly	8/23/2023 5:10 PM
29	Playground equipment for all ages and abilities, rubber floor instead of wood chips for ease of wheelchair use/ younger children	8/23/2023 5:05 PM
30	Would love to see more adaptive playground equipment for the kids	8/23/2023 5:02 PM
31	Wheelchair accessible swings	8/23/2023 4:42 PM
32	A inclusive playground, bathrooms at Southridge.	8/23/2023 4:38 PM
33	Make them userfriendly for the blind and wheelchairs. Flat ground coming up to water. Braille	8/23/2023 4:27 PM
34	More walking paths so wheelchair can use them as well as familes	8/23/2023 4:15 PM
35	Tired of spending money this town wastes money. Cut the taxes	8/23/2023 3:53 PM
36	no automatic doors	8/23/2023 3:40 PM
37	Bathroom at oak	8/23/2023 3:31 PM
38	Swings, ramps	8/23/2023 3:30 PM

Q9 Select the five (5) activities you and your family like to do the most within the parks.

Answered: 410 Skipped: 7



Charlotte Community 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking for pleasure	68.54%	281
Nature walks	66.59%	273
Use the playgrounds	60.98%	250
Picnicking	32.20%	132
Bicycling or Mountain Biking	29.51%	121
Hiking	22.68%	93
Jogging or Running	13.41%	55
Fishing	19.51%	80
Canoeing or Kayaking	17.32%	71
Swimming	19.02%	78
Exercising, Aerobics, or the like	4.88%	20
Basketball	13.90%	57
Tennis	5.12%	21
Softball or Baseball	4.63%	19
Soccer	6.34%	26
Ice Skating	2.68%	11
Roller Skating	2.93%	12
Sledding	24.15%	99
Gardening	1.71%	7
Disc Golf	10.00%	41
Other (please specify)	11.22%	46
Total Respondents: 410		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Walking my dog	9/27/2023 11:46 AM
2	admiring landscape...different than nature walks as in landscape is more flower-based	9/27/2023 9:36 AM

Charlotte Community 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

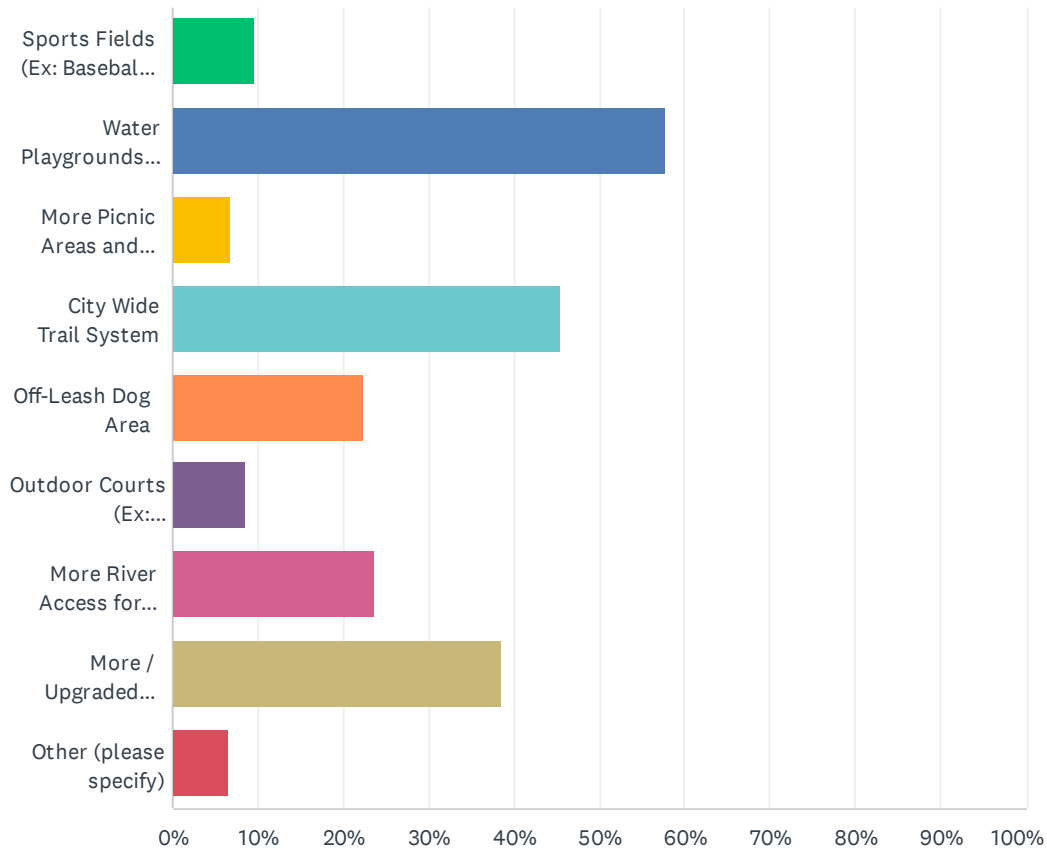
3	Art	9/23/2023 1:36 PM
4	Sledding	9/20/2023 10:24 AM
5	Skate park	9/19/2023 11:07 AM
6	Gather with friends	9/9/2023 11:17 PM
7	Getting in miles of exercise by using paths to do so.	9/1/2023 12:12 PM
8	Dog walking	8/29/2023 7:24 AM
9	Walking dogs	8/28/2023 8:56 AM
10	Skate Park	8/25/2023 9:07 PM
11	Walk our dog! More dog-friendly areas would be great! A dog park where they can run free, dog drinking fountains (I saw these in Grand Wood park in the Waverly (Lansing) area), more potty bags/trash cans	8/25/2023 9:54 AM
12	Using the jungle gyms	8/25/2023 7:57 AM
13	Dog walking	8/25/2023 7:43 AM
14	Anything dog friendly ☺	8/24/2023 4:22 PM
15	Dog area	8/24/2023 7:58 AM
16	Sand volleyball	8/24/2023 12:19 AM
17	Dog walking	8/23/2023 11:04 PM
18	Skate park	8/23/2023 10:55 PM
19	Skate boarding	8/23/2023 10:08 PM
20	Simply spending time outside in a quiet peaceful location.	8/23/2023 9:27 PM
21	None, the only people who hang out at Charlotte parks are teenagers looking to buy drugs.	8/23/2023 8:59 PM
22	Skatepark	8/23/2023 8:49 PM
23	Skate park	8/23/2023 8:38 PM
24	I don't use your parks because the suck	8/23/2023 8:12 PM
25	Homeschooling	8/23/2023 8:10 PM
26	Dog walking	8/23/2023 8:00 PM
27	Scooter	8/23/2023 7:48 PM
28	New Swings!! Some are so old the frame is gonna break	8/23/2023 6:34 PM
29	Walking our dog	8/23/2023 6:33 PM
30	Cornhole	8/23/2023 6:24 PM
31	Skateboarding needs cleanup bad graffiti	8/23/2023 6:12 PM
32	Taking pictures	8/23/2023 6:08 PM
33	Library at the park in the summer	8/23/2023 6:04 PM
34	Frisbee, meeting with friends to knit	8/23/2023 6:02 PM
35	RC park! The one at the sledding hill is great but the grass is always so high you can never enjoy it	8/23/2023 5:59 PM
36	Photography & birthday parties	8/23/2023 5:43 PM
37	Event photos	8/23/2023 5:26 PM
38	Walking the dog.	8/23/2023 5:26 PM
39	Pickleball	8/23/2023 5:22 PM

Charlotte Community 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

40	Take family pictures	8/23/2023 5:21 PM
41	Football	8/23/2023 5:11 PM
42	Picture taking	8/23/2023 5:03 PM
43	Walk Dog	8/23/2023 5:03 PM
44	Pokemon Go	8/23/2023 4:23 PM
45	Pickle ball	8/23/2023 3:51 PM
46	Dog walk	8/23/2023 3:34 PM

Q10 If funding were available which of the following facilities should have the highest priority in the Charlotte Community? (Please select your top 2 choices)

Answered: 410 Skipped: 7



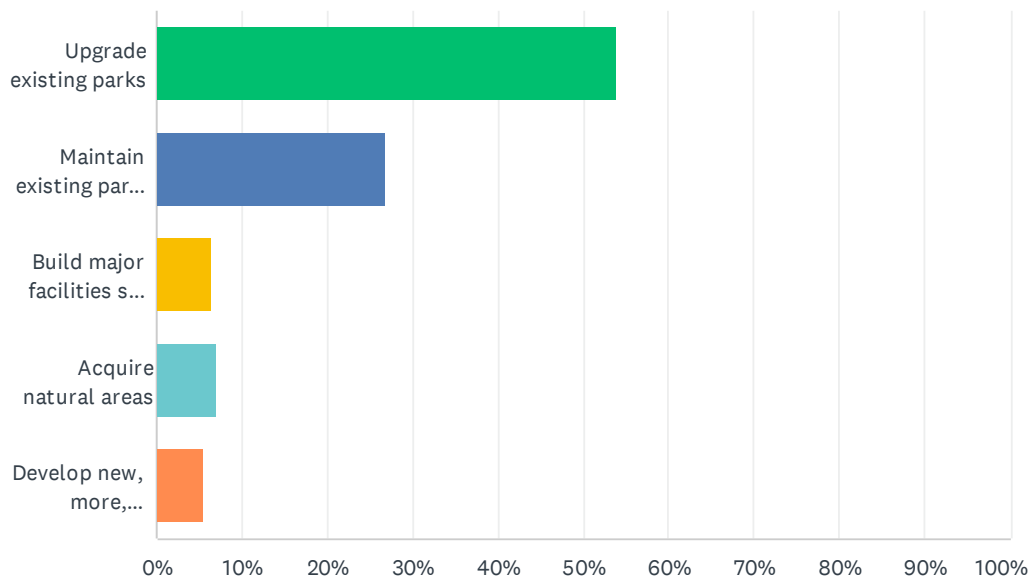
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Sports Fields (Ex: Baseball, Softball, Soccer)	9.51% 39
Water Playgrounds (Ex: Splash Pads, Swimming Pools)	57.80% 237
More Picnic Areas and Pavilions	6.83% 28
City Wide Trail System	45.37% 186
Off-Leash Dog Area	22.44% 92
Outdoor Courts (Ex: Basketball, tennis, pickleball, volleyball)	8.54% 35
More River Access for Boating and Fishing	23.66% 97
More / Upgraded Playground Equipment	38.54% 158
Other (please specify)	6.59% 27
Total Respondents: 410	

Charlotte Community 5 Year Parks and Recreation Plan Survey

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Nice trails to walk like Burchfield Park	9/27/2023 11:46 AM
2	Expansion and maintenance of existing trails, especially behind Alive and the American Legion, which is a MESS!	9/1/2023 12:12 PM
3	Walking and biking trails	8/26/2023 12:09 PM
4	It would be nice if there were community rentals like kayaks, paddle boats	8/25/2023 7:22 AM
5	Rustic (tent) camping in Bennett or other location.	8/25/2023 5:41 AM
6	Orv trails	8/24/2023 9:07 PM
7	disc golf	8/24/2023 4:07 PM
8	Do something with the old tennis courts	8/24/2023 2:28 PM
9	Open bathrooms	8/24/2023 2:24 PM
10	Rails to trails, unused railroads converted to trail system for bikers, walkers, handicap. If the railroad where the mystery train was converted to a trail it could go all the way to Meijer and beyond. I've seen so many people going over the interstate bridge to get to Meijer in electronic wheelchairs, bikes, walking. It's not safe! Charlotte can do better. A new trail system would make it safer for people to get groceries, and ride bikes safer as a family. Most cities are adopting these systems already. I think this would be a game changer for Charlotte and community growth!	8/24/2023 10:12 AM
11	Bennett park car trails	8/24/2023 10:00 AM
12	Camping	8/24/2023 2:52 AM
13	Let's try keeping the restrooms open first before we add more to maintain.	8/23/2023 9:45 PM
14	Roads. Same thing every taxpayer in this city has been begging for to 'tone dear' elected representatives who keep talking about dog parks.	8/23/2023 8:59 PM
15	Improve the Lincoln Park ice skating rink by adding a pavilion. This space could be used as a free public ROLLER skating rink.	8/23/2023 8:53 PM
16	I'm not voting for any more funding this school district asks for	8/23/2023 8:12 PM
17	Maybe we should be worried about paying teachers more.	8/23/2023 6:28 PM
18	The current parks and facilities we have need better maintenance including cleanliness, trash, access to restrooms	8/23/2023 6:14 PM
19	Disc golf clean up	8/23/2023 5:24 PM
20	Props/backdrops for pictures!	8/23/2023 5:21 PM
21	Nicer trails	8/23/2023 5:13 PM
22	Make Crandell park user friendly for the blind and wheelchairs. Also flatten earth so we can get to the water.	8/23/2023 4:27 PM
23	Splash pad!	8/23/2023 4:17 PM
24	Longer bike path around outside parameters of town	8/23/2023 3:55 PM
25	Pickle ball	8/23/2023 3:51 PM
26	Employee to keep clean- especially the bathrooms, trash	8/23/2023 3:41 PM
27	Bathroom at oak park	8/23/2023 3:31 PM

Q11 How can the Charlotte Community best improve the parks around the area?

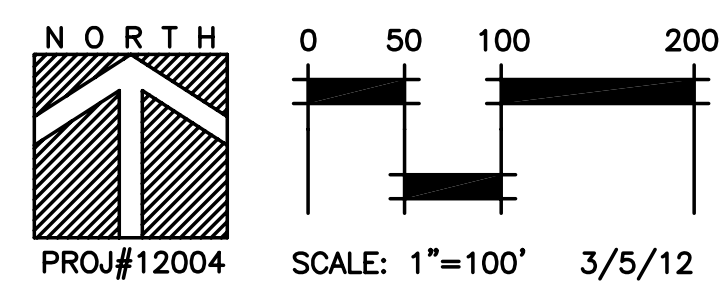
Answered: 409 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Upgrade existing parks	54.03%	221
Maintain existing parks and facilities	26.89%	110
Build major facilities such as sports fields and courts	6.36%	26
Acquire natural areas	7.09%	29
Develop new, more, neighborhood parks	5.62%	23
TOTAL		409



- LEGEND:**
- EXISTING CONTOURS (10' INTERVAL)
 - EXISTING WETLAND
 - RESTORED HISTORICAL WETLAND
 - EXISTING STORM SEWER
 - EXISTING STORM SEWER EASEMENT
 - PROPOSED TRAIL
 - EXISTING TREES



MAPLE CITY PARK MASTER PLAN

HALL STREET ■ ■ ■ CHARLOTTE, MI 48813

MASTER PLAN

FITZGERALD HENNE & ASSOCIATES, INC.
 engineering, surveying, landscape architecture & environmental services
 4089 GRAND OAK DR • STE A108 • LANSING, MI 48911 • 313.887.1100

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