

## Chapter 6:

### ACTION PROGRAM

The Action Program addresses facility and program needs for the Township over the next five years. It is a culmination of identifying needs and opportunities through organizational and staff workshops, public information meetings and hearings and review by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The program includes goals, a prioritized capital improvement schedule and rationale for improvements.

#### RECREATION VISION AND GOALS

Goals and objectives have been developed based on the needs and concerns defined in the following chapters. Observations, public input sessions, written survey results, comparison to national recreational standards, as well as other identified needs were considered when establishing the following goals and objectives.

##### Goal 1: Improvement of the Pittsfield Preserve.

- Implement approved MNRTF grant award for Phase I Development of former Hillsdale College South property on Textile Rd. Construction is scheduled to start spring of 2005.
- Develop a site master plan for the remaining phases of the Pittsfield Preserve including necessary phasing priorities.
- Consider use of a portion of the Preserve for active recreation facilities where appropriate.
- Consider use of a portion of the Preserve for passive recreation where appropriate.
- Consider use of a portion of the Pittsfield Preserve for other needed community facilities to serve resident needs.
- Consider use of buffering elements between active and passive recreation facilities as well as surrounding neighbors.
- Consider location of available utilities when determining locations for recreation facilities.
- Identify areas for natural resource preservation, conservation and/or interpretation (e.g. wetlands, woodlands and wildlife).
- Identify areas for historic and cultural interpretation (e.g. Sutherland-Wilson Farm, Historic Town Hall, Town Hall School).

**Goal 2: Community Center Development**

- Conduct feasibility study to determine the space, location and need requirements of a community center that will meet the Township's current and future growth.
- Develop a program for a new community center ensuring the facility's design is flexible to accommodate changes in technology, social groups and anticipated changes in recreational interests.
- Build a new community center.

**Goal 3: Park and Recreation Facility Development**

- Construct Phase 1 Development Plan for the Pittsfield Preserve.
- Special emphasis should be placed on improving and expanding soccer, baseball/softball facilities in the township due to the demand and lack of needed fields for these sports.
- Continue to acquire, develop and maintain parklands and facilities for both passive and active recreation, particularly in areas with high concentrations of housing, in keeping with the desires of the residents and respecting the natural resources of the Township.
- Continue to maintain and update park equipment and facilities as needed, including playground equipment, hard pavement surfaces and buildings/pavilions.
- Continue to monitor all facilities for repair and pursue necessary improvements as needed.
- Recreation facilities and equipment should be improved and upgraded, wherever possible to reduce maintenance costs and any safety concerns.
- Consider the development of a farm/historic park. This may be an element within the Pittsfield Preserve.

**Goal 4: Development and Implementation of the Greenway Master Plan**

- Construct the Platt Road Greenway.
- Continue to implement the Greenway Master Plan as identified in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan and the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Ensure the greenway connects parks, open spaces, schools, environmentally sensitive areas and community facilities

through roadway corridors, abandoned railroad right-of-ways, natural areas, or any other available means.

- Actively pursue the implementation of the greenway plan through public support and funding sources such as grants and donations.
- Continue to participate in regional greenway planning efforts being conducted by organizations such as the Greenways Initiative, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, the Washtenaw County Road Commission, the Greenways Collaborative and the Downriver Linked Greenway Initiative.

#### **Goal 5: Parkland and Open Space Acquisition**

- Continue to acquire neighborhood parkland where population densities are greatest as opportunities and budgets allow.
- Locate parks and recreation facilities so as to be accessible to all residents and provide everyday recreational opportunities to all residents.
- Develop standards for parkland dedication that address size, location, accessibility, etc.
- Acquire and maintain community parks as opportunities and budgets allow.
- Encourage developers to dedicate open space and useable parkland and protect important natural resources within their developments.

#### **Goal 6: Build Partnerships**

- Continue partnerships with Ann Arbor and Saline Schools, City of Saline, Washtenaw County, City of Ann Arbor; and other adjacent communities in sharing and supplementing programs and facilities.
- Continue to implement the Forest Stewardship Program
- Continue to promote park stewardship and partnerships with the public and private sector including:
  - ◆ Corporations
  - ◆ Foundations
  - ◆ Civic Associations
  - ◆ Religious entities
  - ◆ Land Conservancies
  - ◆ Neighborhood Associations
  - ◆ Historical Societies

- ◆ Sporting Clubs
- ◆ Cultural Organizations
- ◆ Colleges and Universities
- ◆ Volunteer Programs
- ◆ Youth Groups

#### **Goal 7: Efficient Operations**

- Ensure all facilities are readily accessible and useable, as possible, by individuals with disabilities.
- Continue to ensure public input is incorporated appropriately in future planning and design initiatives.
- Continue to utilize newsletter, website, press releases, advertising, mailings or other tools to increase public awareness of the functions of the Parks and Recreation Department.
- Continue to evaluate the opinions of users and non-users of recreation facilities to determine community needs and attitudes toward recreation services.
- Hire additional staff as necessary to support the level of service.
- Continue to aggressively seek public support and alternative sources of funding.
- Secure individuals and volunteer groups to expand gardening operations in the Community Garden.
- Continue to monitor the fertilization and weed program and its effects on the surrounding ecosystem.
- Create interpretive program at Lillie Park and identify appropriate personnel to operate the program.

#### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

In order to accomplish the priority recommendations, a capital improvement program schedules each investment by year. The program helps to prioritize spending and to spread it out over the life of this plan. A capital improvement plan organizes the identified action items by year and location.

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
<b>2005</b>					
	Additional Initiatives	Continue tree planting and replacement program.	Tree Mitigation Program administered by Township	Local	3,4
	Additional Initiatives	Purchase additional picnic tables.	\$ 6,000	Local	1,3,4
	Community Center	Appoint study committee to analyze the issues surrounding the possibility of constructing a new community/senior center.	No Cost	NA	1,2,4
	Community Center	Initiate feasibility study for construction of a new community/senior center. The study should explore the following: ? Programming/space needs ? Location ? Financing ? Design ? Operational costs ? Complementary on-site recreational facilities and ancillary buildings ? Parking ? Internal traffic flow	\$ 30,000	Local	1,2,4
	Firehall Park	Grade and seed open areas to invite general active play.	\$ 10,000	Local, grant	3
	Greenway System	Begin construction on Platt Road Greenway.	Cost to be determined	Local, grant	2,3
	Land Acquisition	Explore and consider opportunities to acquire property for neighborhood and community parks and active recreation areas	Dependent on land availability	Local	2,3
	Lillie Park East	Continue program to remove invasive species	\$ 1,500	Local	1,4
	Lillie Park North	Continue to work with administration to secure access and railroad right-of-way through purchase or lease	Fair Market Value to be determined	Local	2,3
	Lillie Park North	Establish a shore stabilization program for Haven Lake	\$ 10,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Lillie Park North	Initiate a prescribed burn program for bowl areas to help restore native grasses.	\$ 2,000	Local	1,3
	Lillie Park South	Continue program to remove invasive species in 7 acre test area and initiate a prescribed burn for the area	\$ 5,000	Local	1,3
	Lillie Park South	Explore converting bathroom functions to well and septic instead of BMS System currently in use.	Cost to be determined	Local	4
	Lillie Park South	Secure individuals and volunteer groups to expand gardening opportunities in the Community Garden.	\$ 1,000	Local	3,4
	Montibeller Park	Ballfield improvements ? Rehabilitate backstops	\$ 4,000	Local	1,2,3
	Montibeller Park	Build two pole barns for day camp programming and storage	\$ 50,000	Local	3,4
	Montibeller Park	Demolish maintenance and recreational building	\$ 25,000	Local	4
	Montibeller Park	Redesign entry signage to be consistent with those used in Lillie Park.	\$ 5,000	Local	1
	Montibeller Park	Replace old playground equipment (i.e.. slide, whirl, swings, wooden structure) and impact surfacing	\$ 50,000	Local	1,2,4
	Montibeller Park	Tennis court improvements ? Recolor and tar surfacing ? Paint fencing	\$ 30,000	Local	1,3
	P.G. Palmer Park	Redesign the site master plan for Palmer Park. The park should include passive trail features and considerable buffering for active recreation to meet the needs and concerns of the immediate neighbors. This should be undertaken in conjunction with the master plan for the Pittsfield Preserve.	\$ 20,000	Local	2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Construct interim parking areas on Thomas Road	\$ 20,000	Local	2,3

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
	Pittsfield Preserve	Develop greenways trail on Textile Road to connect parks.	\$ 50,000	Local, grant	2
	Pittsfield Preserve	Develop master plan and phasing strategy for the entire Pittsfield Preserve that considers the following elements: ? Parking ? Trails ? Pavilions ? Active recreation fields ? Spray park ? Tennis courts ? Ballfields ? Play structures ? Restrooms ? Natural and passive areas ? Historical resources ? Cultural resources ? Other ancillary features	\$ 50,000		2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Develop trail network throughout Preserve.	\$ 20,000	Local, grant	2
	Pittsfield Preserve	Enhance trails in wooded area of site with interpretive signage	\$ 20,000	Local, grant	2
	Pittsfield Preserve Phase 1	Start construction in 2005 with parking lot, restroom, trail, enhancements, playground structure, play areas, picnic pavilion and interpretive signage.	\$ 775,000	Local, grant	1,2
	Pittsfield Township Park and Community/Senior Center	Replace unsafe playground equipment and impact materials around playground structures and associated site improvements.	\$ 10,000	Local	1,2,4
<b>2005</b>			<b>TOTAL \$ 1,194,500</b>		

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
<b>2006</b>					
	Additional Initiatives	Continue tree planting and replacement program.	Tree Mitigation Program administered by Township	Local	3,4
	Additional Initiatives	Initiate community surveys for ongoing department monitoring	\$ 15,000	Local	3,4
	Community Center	Design and engineer Community Center and ancillary facilities.	\$ 200,000	Local	2,3
	Greenway System	Design, engineer and construct greenway corridors as identified in the Township Greenway Plan.	Dependent on land and easement availability	Local, grant	2
	Land Acquisition	Explore and consider opportunities to acquire property for neighborhood and community parks and active recreation areas	Dependent on land availability	Local, grant	2,3
	Lillie Park East	Conduct feasibility analysis for partial excavation of Turtle Rock Pond.	\$ 5,000	Local	1,3
	Lillie Park East	Create fish habitat areas in Turtle Rock Pond.	\$ 15,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Lillie Park North	Create fish habitat areas in Haven Lake.	\$ 15,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Lillie Park North	Stock Haven Lake with fish.	\$ 2,500	Local, grant	3
	Lillie Park South	Restripe parking lot.	\$ 5,000	Local	3
	Montibeller Park	Conduct a Space/Needs Assessment ? Basketball court ? Interpretive pavilion	\$ 5,000	Local	1,3
	Montibeller Park	Enhance northern entry to park.	\$ 1,000	Local	1,3
	Montibeller Park	Incorporate interpretive signage into trail system.	\$ 10,000	Local, grant	1,3
	P.G. Palmer Park	Create trail system around Button Bush swamp	\$ 10,000	Local, grant	3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Pursue funding opportunities for implementation of the Pittsfield Preserve Master Plan.	No Cost	Local	2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Design and engineer master plan for the Preserve.	\$ 100,000	Local	2,3
<b>2006</b>			<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>383,500</b>	

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
<b>2007</b>					
	Additional Initiatives	Continue tree planting and replacement program.	Tree Mitigation Program administered by Township	Local	3,4
	Community Center	Construct Community Center and ancillary facilities	Cost to be determined	Local	2,3
	Firehall Park	Enhance walking trail and build vita course (exercise) around circumference of park.	\$ 20,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Firehall Park	Install park furniture and barbeque grills.	\$ 5,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Firehall Park	Install playground structure.	\$ 40,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Firehall Park	Install small picnic pavilion.	\$ 15,000	Local, grant	1,3
	Greenway System	Continue construction per greenway plan	Dependent on land and easement availability	Local, grant	2
	Land Acquisition	Explore and consider opportunities to acquire property for neighborhood and community parks and active recreation areas	Dependent on land availability	Local, grant	1,2,3
	Lillie Park East	Install additional interpretive signage	\$ 20,000	Local	1,3
	Lillie Park North	Enhance east shore trail along Haven Lake.	\$ 10,000	Local	1,3
	Lillie Park South	Add additional playground structure near garden pavilion.	\$ 40,000	Local	1,3
	Montibeller Park	Construct pathway from pavilion to provide ADA access to the restrooms.	\$ 40,000	Local	1
	Montibeller Park	Continue pathway from pavilion to provide ADA access to the lower tennis courts at Paint Creek.	\$ 12,000	Local	1
	Montibeller Park	Pave parking lots	\$ 100,000	Local	1
	Pittsfield Preserve	Begin development of site improvements as set forth in site Master Plan considering and using conducted natural resources, surveys, wildlife inventories and assessments. Consider improvements for wetland development and construction, passive use areas, interpretive center, disc golf course, boardwalks and signage.	\$ 500,000	Local, grant	2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve Phase 1	Continue phase 2 park improvements ? Trail connections ? Trail extensions ? Additional park entrances	\$ 100,000	Local, grant	2,3
<b>2007</b>			<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>902,000</b>	

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
<b>2008</b>					
	Additional Initiatives	Continue tree planting and replacement program.	Tree Mitigation Program administered by Township	Local	3,4
	Community Center	Construct Community Center and ancillary facilities	Cost to be determined	Local	2,3
	Greenway System	Continue construction per greenway plan	Dependent on land and easement availability	Local, grant	2
	Land Acquisition	Explore and consider opportunities to acquire property for neighborhood and community parks and active recreation areas	Dependent on land availability	Local, grant	2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Continue development of site improvements as set forth in site Master Plan.	\$ 500,000	Local, grant	2,3
<b>2008</b>			<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>500,000</b>	

## 5 Year Capital Improvements Schedule

Year	Park/Project	Action	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Basis for Action
<b>2009</b>					
	Community Center	Construct Community Center and ancillary facilities	Cost to be determined	Local	2,3
	Greenway System	Continue construction per greenway plan	Dependent on land and easement availability	Local, grant	2
	Land Acquisition	Explore and consider opportunities to acquire property for neighborhood and community parks and active recreation areas	Dependent on land availability	Local, grant	2,3
	Pittsfield Preserve	Continue development of site improvements as set forth in site Master Plan.	\$ 500,000	Local, grant	2,3
<b>2009</b>			<b>TOTAL \$</b>	<b>500,000</b>	

**Funding Source:**

Local: Township General Fund, Recreation Millage, local contributions and/or donations

Grant: MDNR grant or any other grants available

**Basis for Action:**

1. Existing Park Evaluation
2. Public Input
3. Other Identified Needs
4. General Park Operational and/or Maintenance Needs

**LAND ACQUISITION**

Throughout this process, the Township and its citizens have stressed the urgency of acquiring parkland in their rapidly growing community. Several potential parks have been identified in this plan (where a Township official has had contact with the owner for some time). Additionally, the potential exists that some property owners may be willing to donate or sell their property to the Township for purposes of establishing public parks. Criteria developed in the 2002 Parks and Recreation Master Plan will assist staff in deciding whether a parcel would meet the Township's park needs.

Criteria 1: The property is adjacent to an existing park or undeveloped property already owned by the Township and earmarked for parkland.

Criteria 2: The property is located in or adjacent to densely populated areas or in the northwest corner of the Township or south of Michigan Avenue.

Criteria 3: The property possesses either (a) enough space for active recreation fields and associated uses (parking, restrooms etc.), or (b) significant natural and/or cultural features that would provide open space and/or educational opportunities.

Criteria 4: The property owner is willing to donate the parcel or sell the parcel to the Township.

**ADMINISTRATION AND EQUIPMENT**

During the next five years, the growing population and the developing parks system in Pittsfield Township will inevitably increase the costs for administration and equipment. The Township's commitment to providing all its residents with substantial and varied recreational opportunities will require additional expenditures.

**FUNDING INITIATIVES**

To accomplish the actions specified in the Action Plan during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current parks and recreation budget (from the General Fund and the Parks and Recreation Millage) provide funds for parkland acquisition, development, equipment and maintenance support.

However, these funds are less than the projected expenses of the proposed improvement schedule. Therefore, the following sources of funding should be explored in proceeding with acquisitions, development and improvements.

### **Federal and State Grants**

There are a variety of funding sources available to local governments for park development that have been and will continue to be applied for by the Township.

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 \$500,000 with a required minimum local match of 25 percent.

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

Funding is also available through other State of Michigan Divisions. For example, the Federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (TEA-21) grant program can be used for the construction of safety/bike paths.

### **Specific Project Bond Issues and Millage**

Bonds offer the advantage of providing lump sums of money with which to undertake large or expensive projects. They can earn interest until the sums are actually spent to partially offset the interest to be paid on the borrowed funds. There are several types of bonds: the General Obligation Bond, backed by the full faith and credit of the municipality, and a Revenue Bond, the income from which is pledged to a specific project. Bonds entail the disadvantage of substantial long-term interest costs while requiring taxation to retire them.

**Other Local Funds**

Some communities choose to enact a special assessment to add amenities to their community. Special assessments are often set up to finance sidewalks, sewers or street projects. Appropriations from the Township's General Fund are possible when a prompt commitment of funds is necessary and funds are available. Special assessments are levied against the owners of the property and this income is pledged to the repayment of the bonds. Such bonds usually carry a higher rate of interest than general obligation bonds, but have the advantage of not being charged against the Township debt limit.

**User Fees**

The Parks and Recreation Department must continue to charge reasonable fees to participants of recreation programs. The department should continue to evaluate and analyze fees charged to make sure fees are covering costs of programs.

**Lease Arrangements**

Communities successfully lease parkland or management of park and facility operations to private companies. A common method is to initiate lease agreements with local youth/parent sports organizations for use of fields.

**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.

**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. A brief list of grant making foundations is depicted in Appendix G. Additional private grant funding opportunities can be accessed through the *Michigan Foundation Directory*.

