

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PARK AND OUTDOOR RECREATION INVESTMENT PLAN

Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission

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Proposal Summary

Background

Oakland County is blessed with an abundance of high-quality natural resources, green spaces, public parks and recreational facilities - including more than 70,000 acres of federal, state, county and local parkland, 358 inland lakes, the headwaters of 6 major rivers, and more than 100 miles of regional trailways.

Parks and recreational spaces are core infrastructure that support the quality of life, economic prosperity, environment, and physical and mental health of our residents. Unfortunately, gaps exist in access to these benefits and the gaps disproportionately impact marginalized or underserved groups, including communities of color, people with physical or cognitive disabilities, low-income people, immigrants, and people in LGBTQ+ communities. These disparities are often greatest in urban and densely populated areas where local governments struggle to meet the recreational needs of the community due to chronic underfunding and aging infrastructure. In Oakland County, the location and distribution of parks in proximity to where people live, access to affordable and accessible transportation, perceptions of safety, the condition of park facilities and standards of maintenance are often major factors that create barriers for our residents seeking to access and enjoy recreation opportunities.

COVID-19 and resulting mitigation measures have highlighted the essential role that parks, trails, and natural spaces play in supporting the mental and physical well-being of our residents. As attendance levels skyrocketed, our parks and green spaces became a place of recovery, restoration, comfort, social connectivity, and physical activity.

The Oakland County Board of Commissioners invited the Parks and Recreation Commission to present projects and proposals for utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds to invest in park and outdoor recreational spaces. Oakland County Parks and Recreation (OCPR) has developed a comprehensive proposal that would:

- Rejuvenate municipal parks that are underutilized due to existing conditions that compromise accessibility, participation, and use by residents, including outdated or inoperable recreation equipment and facilities, deteriorating infrastructure, and disinvestment and underutilization of natural resources/park amenities
- Sustain the one-time investment of ARPA funding through partnerships that will incorporate four existing municipal parks into the Oakland County Parks system, securing long-term, ongoing investments from OCPR in park facilities and maintenance
- Transform and eliminate historic inequities in the distribution of the benefits of the Oakland County Parks system and significantly enhance our capacity to serve residents of densely populated, diverse core urban cities
- Expand accessibility and use of existing community park facilities to serve regional recreational needs
- Make investments in park infrastructure that will have the greatest impact in improving the health and well-being of our residents
- Provide much needed financial aid to chronically underfunded, disproportionately impacted communities to address priority local park and outdoor recreation needs

- Rejuvenate and enhance four existing OCPR parks that serve disproportionately impacted populations through investments in park infrastructure, amenities and facilities targeted at improving health outcomes and social connectivity
- Leverage the investment of county ARPA funding with a commitment by OCPR to make a minimum \$5.2 million investment in park improvement projects to support the plans outlined in this proposal

Impacting Health Outcomes

Social determinants of health (SDOH) are defined by the CDC as the “conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes”.¹ Two of the five areas of SDOH outlined by the CDC are especially relevant to parks and recreation agencies: social and community context², and neighborhood and built environment.³ SDOH disparity contributes to wide health inequities and lowers life expectancy relative to people who have access to conditions that support positive health outcomes.

According to the CDC, race and ethnicity are risk markers for underlying conditions that affect health. Underlying conditions include socioeconomic status, access to health care, and exposure to the COVID-19 virus related to occupation. Native American, Black, and Hispanic populations are at the greatest risk compared to White, Non-Hispanic persons, with Asian populations at a somewhat lower risk.⁴

The CDC’s Healthy People 2030 sets data-driven national objectives to improve health and well-being over the next decade. The objective for physical activity is relevant: Improve health, fitness, and quality of life through regular physical activity. Only one in four adults and one in five adolescents in the United States meet physical activity guidelines for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. Most people don’t get the recommended amount of physical activity and it can be especially hard for older adults and people with chronic diseases or disabilities.

Strategies that make it safer and easier to get active — like providing access to parks and programs — can help people get more physical activity.⁵ Parks also provide access to nature, which has been shown to lower stress levels and improve mental health.⁶

Disproportionately Impacted Communities/Residents

The U.S. Department of Treasury’s *Final Rule* acknowledges that pre-existing disparities magnified the impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency on certain households and communities and provides methodology for identifying those households and communities. The *Final Rule* further indicates that parks and other services that reach a general geographic area can measure the median income of the area being served (Area Median Income or AMI), instead of identifying individual households.⁷ Using this method, communities with Low AMI⁸ and Moderate AMI⁹ were identified.

The Final Rule also identifies Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs) as an indicator of areas disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.¹⁰ These census tracts are identified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as having lower income and a higher rate of poverty. The table below identifies geographic areas that were selected by identifying communities and/or census tracts with Low AMI, Moderate AMI, or identification of QCTs.

Potential priority areas identified by economic status: Low- to moderate Area Median Income (AMI) and communities with Qualified Census Tracts (QCTs)

	Communities with Low AMI <\$32,792	Number of Census Tracts with Low AMI <\$32,792	Communities with Moderate AMI <\$53,288	Number of Census Tracts with Moderate AMI <\$53,288	Number of QCTs	Total Number of Census Tracts in Community
Oakland County	\$81,981		\$81,981		16	
Hazel Park			\$38,751	4	2	4
Keego Harbor			\$45,480	1		1
Madison Heights			\$52,586	3		7
Oak Park		1	\$52,544	2	1	8
Pontiac		7	\$34,502	10	12	18
Royal Oak Twp	\$29,620	1			1	1
Southfield				9		21
Waterford				3		21
Wixom				1		4

Park Improvement Project Sites/Local Partnerships

Using the guidance provided by the *Final Rule* and in consultation with local government leadership, we identified the following three categories for selection of project sites:

1. Location in a community with Low AMI or Moderate AMI for the entire community or communities with QCTs
 - Ambassador Park in Madison Heights (Moderate AMI community)
 - Green Acres, in Hazel Park (Moderate AMI community)
 - Hawthorne Park in Pontiac (Moderate AMI community)
 - Mack-Rowe Park in Royal Oak Township (Low AMI community and QCT)
 - Shepherd Park in Oak Park (Moderate AMI community)
2. Location in a census tract with Low AMI or Moderate AMI or identified as a QCT
 - Beech Woods Park in Southfield (Moderate AMI census tract)
3. Location in a park that has a service area containing census tracts that are Low AMI, Moderate AMI or QCT
 - Catalpa Oaks County Park (serves Southfield, Oak Park, and Royal Oak Township)
 - Lyon Oaks County Park (serves Wixom)
 - Red Oaks County Park (serves Madison Heights and Hazel Park)
 - Waterford Oaks County Park (serves Waterford Township, Pontiac, and Keego Harbor)

Park improvement sites and projects were developed following extensive consultation with local government leadership to identify opportunities to maximize the impact of the investment of ARPA funding to address community needs and improve health outcomes.

American Rescue Plan Act Funds/OCPR Matching Expenditures

The Parks and Recreation Commission requests an appropriation of \$15 million in funds to support the projects and park improvement plans outlined in this document in accordance with the provisions of MR# 22-84, which was unanimously approved by the Board of Commissioners on March 24, 2022. We request that the Board authorize the release of funds to complete projects listed below, following review by Oakland County's ARPA eligibility/compliance process. Estimated costs/budgets have been developed with the assistance of internal planning staff, external planning consultants, and our staff of facility management engineers. Budget amounts are subject to change due to final design and construction costs, the terms of intergovernmental agreements, leveraging additional funding sources, and approval of revisions to OCPR's 5-year Recreation Master/Strategic Plans (if necessary) by the Parks Commission and Board of Commissioners in December. Projects will be scaled up or scaled back depending on final costs and funding availability.

OCPR will commit and expend a minimum of \$5.2 million to support capital improvement projects identified in park improvement plans prior to December 31, 2026, and will phase in additional unfunded projects into our Asset Management Plan for development in future years.

Forecasted Plan Budget and Park Improvement Projects

OVERALL BUDGET - ARPA FUNDS: \$15,000,000 / OCPR CIP FUNDS: \$5,200,000 = \$20,200,000 PLANNED EXPENDITURES

LONG-TERM PARK PARTNERSHIPS SUSTAINED BY EXPANDING OCPR PARK SYSTEM

ARPA: \$4,600,000 / OCPR: \$2,750,000 = \$7,350,000 PLANNED EXPENDITURES

Beech Woods/Southfield Oaks Park Improvement Plan – Total Planned Expenditures: \$3,000,000

Estimated **ARPA** Funded Expenditures - \$1,500,000

CIP ARPA Project List: *Upland, lowland and riverbank restoration, floodplain boardwalk and viewing platform, walking trail construction, pavilion(s)*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$1,500,000 (*includes shared entryway/parking lot with City*)

Hawthorne Park/Pontiac Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$1,800,000

Estimated **ARPA** Funded Project Budget - \$1,300,000

CIP ARPA Project List: *restoration of forested area, native gardens, disc golf course improvements, trail & shared-use pathways construction and improvements, invasive species control, playground improvements, fishing dock repair/replacement, pavilion(s)*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$500,000 (*includes demolition and replacement of restroom facilities*)

Shepherd Park/Oak Park Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$2,550,000

Estimated **ARPA** Funded Project Budget - \$1,800,000

CIP ARPA Project List: *Trail construction/improvements, universally accessible playground repair/replace/construct, pavilion(s) and other gathering space amenities, restoration of forested area, native tree/plants*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$750,000

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARK IMPROVEMENT GRANTS

ARPA/TOTAL BUDGET = \$2.2 MILLION

City of Hazel Park - \$400,000

Construct universally accessible playground at Green Acres Park and develop standards and wayfinding for pocket parks throughout the city

Royal Oak Township - \$300,000

Construct universally accessible playground at Mack-Rowe Park

City of Oak Park - \$500,000

Remove existing putt-putt course and construct splash pad aquatic play feature

City of Pontiac - \$500,000

Municipal park improvement projects

City of Southfield - \$500,000

Construct splash pad aquatic play feature and universally accessible playground

OAKLAND COUNTY PARK IMPROVEMENTS

ARPA: \$8.2 MILLION / OCPR: \$2.45 MILLION = TOTAL PLANNED EXPENDITURES: \$10.65 MILLION

Catalpa Oaks Park Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$1,000,000

Estimated ARPA Funded Project Budget - \$750,000

CIP ARPA Project List: *Construct pickle ball court, basketball court, exercise/activity equipment, pavilion and gathering space amenities, rain garden/bioswales, tree planting, seating*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$250,000 *(includes parking/trail improvements and signage)*

Lyon Oaks Park Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$400,000

Estimated ARPA Funded Project Budget - \$200,000

CIP ARPA Project List: *regional trail connection construction, construct universally accessible playground, construct pickleball court, pavilion/gatherings space*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$200,000 *(shared expense for projects)*

Red Oaks Park Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$4.75 million

Estimated ARPA Funded Project Budget - \$3,750,000*

CIP ARPA Project List: *native gardens, tree planting, trailway/walking path construction, construction of pickleball courts, construct green restroom, play structures, seating, pavilion(s)*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$1,000,000 (*shared costs, parking improvements, dog park improvements*)

Waterford Oaks Park Improvement Plan – Total Projected Budget: \$4.5 million

Estimated ARPA Funded Project Budget - \$3,500,000*

CIP ARPA Project List: *native garden, invasive species removal, pavilions, trail construction/improvements, splash pad, ice rink, sledding hill improvements/resurfacing, construct pickleball courts*

Projected OCPR CIP Expenditures - \$1,000,000 (*shared costs, parking improvements*)

Project Guiding Principles

Engage the Community and Residents

Use a variety of methods to engage diverse community members, community groups, and local government to identify projects and actions that meet the needs of the community

Identify and Remove Barriers

- Make it easy to participate – no physical, skill, or cost barriers to entry
- Connect with diverse communities and do what is needed to help them feel welcome and that they belong

Connect Parks to the Community Through Pathways, Programs, and Events

Celebrate the uniqueness of the community and its residents

Create Opportunities to Be Healthier

- Being more active
- Gathering with other people
- Relaxing and recharging
- Connecting with nature
- Accessing healthy food and food from the local cultures

Design Welcoming and Safe Spaces

- Effective lighting and clear lines of vision for users
- Clearly identified and visible access points and boundaries
- People and activities in the park make it feel safer and part of the community
- Maintain a clean and well-run park – we care for this space and we care about you
- Remove or repair deteriorated or closed assets and infrastructure

Advance Environmental Sustainability

Integrate green infrastructure, conservation practices, and alternative energy

Measure Outcomes

- Establish baselines and key performance indicators
- Review results and plan adjustments to improve outcomes

Measuring Outcomes

Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used to measure the outcomes of our investments. KPIs should answer three basic questions: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? And, finally, to address the issue of equity: is everyone better off? We will look at KPIs on the park level, the service area level, and the county level.

Park KPIs

- Park visits – determine the baseline and optimal capacity for the park and track visits monthly and annually
- Visitor satisfaction – do visitors express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with park services and facilities?
- Cost recovery – do recreation services that charge a fee meet their cost recovery targets?

Service Area KPIs

- Community use – do the people visiting the park reflect the demographic profile of the service area?

Oakland County KPIs

- Health outcomes – link with Oakland County strategic plan KPIs
- Sustainability outcomes – link with Oakland County strategic plan KPIs
- Park access outcomes – link with Oakland County strategic plan KPIs

Park Improvement Plans – Local Park Partnerships

Beech Woods / Southfield Oaks Park

Community Statistics (2021)

City of Southfield

- Area: 26.28 square miles
- Population: 74,120
- Area Median Income: NA
- Qualified Census Tracts: no
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 22 %
 - Black/African American: 71%
 - Hispanic: 2%
 - Asian: 3%
 - American Indian: 0.19%
 - Two or more races: 3%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

City of Southfield Census Tract 26125162500

- Population: 3,441
- Area Median Income: \$44,472 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: no
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 33%
 - Black/African American: 61%
 - Hispanic: 3%
 - Asian: 2%
 - American Indian: 0.41%
 - Two or more races: 4%

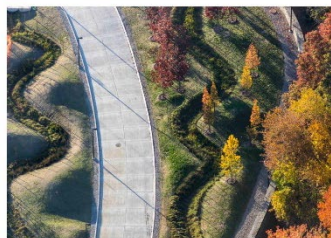
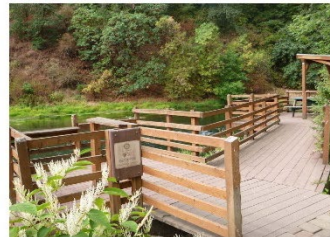
Park Description

- Location: 22200 Beech Rd, Southfield, MI 48033
- Acres: 81.86 acres
- Features: Driving range, community center, golf course ceased operation in 2019
- O CPR area of interest: 40 - 55 acres

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on providing quality experiences in nature with accessible trails, boardwalks, and access to the Rouge River in a restored grassland and forest habitat. Gathering and seating areas will provide opportunities to socialize and relax in a natural setting.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



BEECH WOODS PARK ELEMENTS

Top row (from left): Wooded trail, example of boardwalk river outlook with seating and shade.
Middle row: Hammock station and other seating along enhanced trails.
Bottom row: Tree plantings and native/pollinator gardens.



Hawthorne Park / Pontiac

Pontiac Community Statistics (2021)

- Area: 20.29 square miles
- Population: 60,867
- Area Median Income: \$34,502 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 12 out of 17 census tracts are identified as QCTs
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 32.51%
 - Black/African American: 50.67%
 - Hispanic: 20.13%
 - Asian: 3.46%
 - American Indian: 0.58%
 - Two or more races: 5.22%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

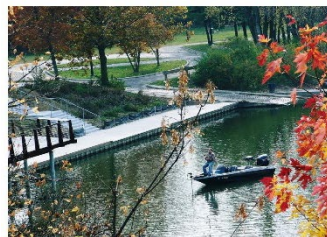
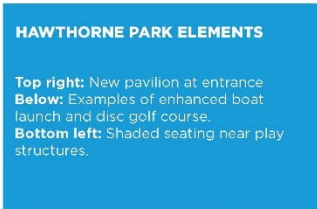
Park Description

- Location: 1400 Telegraph Rd, Pontiac, MI 48340
- Acres: 77.33
- Features: disc golf course, three horseshoe pits, a playground, picnic area, pavilions, a boat launch, and fishing area.

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on improving and replacing deteriorated buildings and amenities and increasing accessibility to provide a safe and welcoming environment. Management of shoreline vegetation and invasive species will provide clear views of Silver Lake and visitors will be able to fish and launch canoes and kayaks off a new accessible dock. The already popular disc golf course will be updated with signage and maps. Trail improvements and forest management will provide quality experiences in nature.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS





David H. Shepherd Park / Oak Park

Oak Park Community Statistics (2021)

- Area: 5.18 square miles
- Population: 29,880
- Area Median Income: \$52,544 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 1 out of 8 census tracts is identified as QCTs
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 35.12%
 - Black/African American: 58.09%
 - Hispanic: 1.86%
 - Asian: 2.30%
 - American Indian: 0.22%
 - Two or more races: 3.71%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

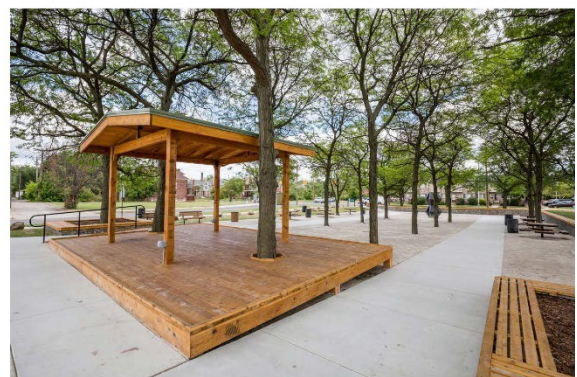
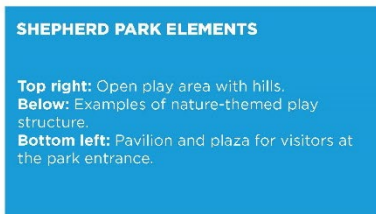
Park Description

- Location: 24198 Church St, Oak Park, MI 48237
- Acres: 43.39
- Features: pavilions, basketball courts, play structures, baseball diamonds, tennis courts, nature trails.
- OCPA Area of Interest: approximately 20 acres

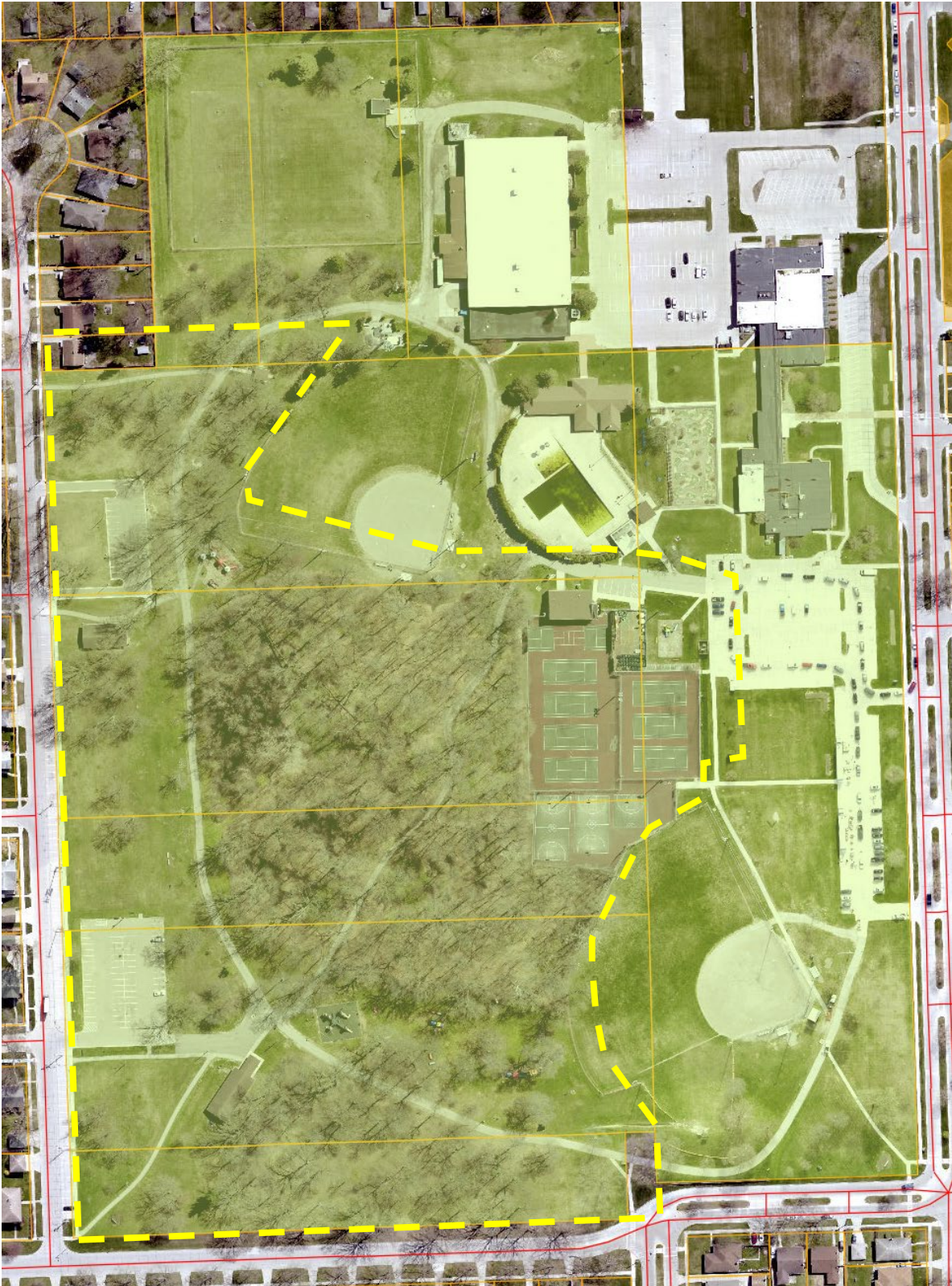
Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on developing a welcoming gateway to a valuable urban woodland and developing an open space gateway with accessible trails, seating and gathering areas.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



SHEPHERD PARK PROPOSED OCPR-MANAGED AREA



SHEPHERD PARK DETAIL: FOREST GATEWAY



Park Improvement Plans -Oakland County Parks

Catalpa Oaks County Park / Southfield

Community Statistics (2021)

10-minute drive time service area includes several census tracts with Low or Moderate Area Median Income in Southfield, Oak Park, and Royal Oak Township

Oak Park Community Statistics (2021)

- Area: 5.18 square miles
- Population: 29,880
- Area Median Income: \$52,544 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 1 out of 8 census tracts is identified as QCTs
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 35.12%
 - Black/African American: 58.09%
 - Hispanic: 1.86%
 - Asian: 2.30%
 - American Indian: 0.22%
 - Two or more races: 3.71%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes
-

Charter Township of Royal Oak

- Area: 0.56 square miles
- Population: 2,398
- Area Median Income: \$29,620 (Low AMI)
- Qualified Census Tracts: entire township
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 1.25%
 - Black/African American: 95.08%
 - Hispanic: 1.50%
 - Asian: 0.04%
 - American Indian: 0.13%
 - Two or more races: 3.17%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: no

City of Southfield Census Tracts	26125162200	26125162100	26125161400	26125161600
▪ Population:	1,377	3,569	3,714	2,902
▪ Area Median Income:	\$42,282 (Moderate)	\$39,526 (Moderate)	\$50,858 (Moderate)	\$52,381 (Moderate)
▪ Qualified Census Tracts:	No	No	No	No
▪ Race and Ethnicity				
○ White	6%	3%	41%	17%
○ Black/African American	89%	93%	55%	74%
○ Hispanic	2%	2%	1%	2%
○ Asian	4%	1%	2%	7%
○ American Indian	0.07%	0.03%	0.19%	0.07%
○ Two or more races	1%	3%	2%	3%

Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

Park Description

- Location: Adjacent to the South Oakland Health Department at 27705 Greenfield Rd, Southfield, MI 48076
- Acres: 24
- Features: four soccer fields, two baseball fields, playgrounds that are universally accessible, a large pavilion, and a .6-mile loop for walking or running

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on increasing opportunities for active outdoor recreation with pickle ball and basketball courts and flexible open space for exercise. An accessible plaza with shaded gathering and seating areas will welcome visitors to the park and provide opportunities to socialize and relax. Added trail connectors to city sidewalks will increase pedestrian access to the park.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



CATALPA OAKS PARK ELEMENTS

Top left: Pickleball court; vibrant basketball court with mural and courtside seating.
Below: Examples of plazas that serve as accessible gathering and event spaces.
Bottom left: Bioswale; structural seating elements.

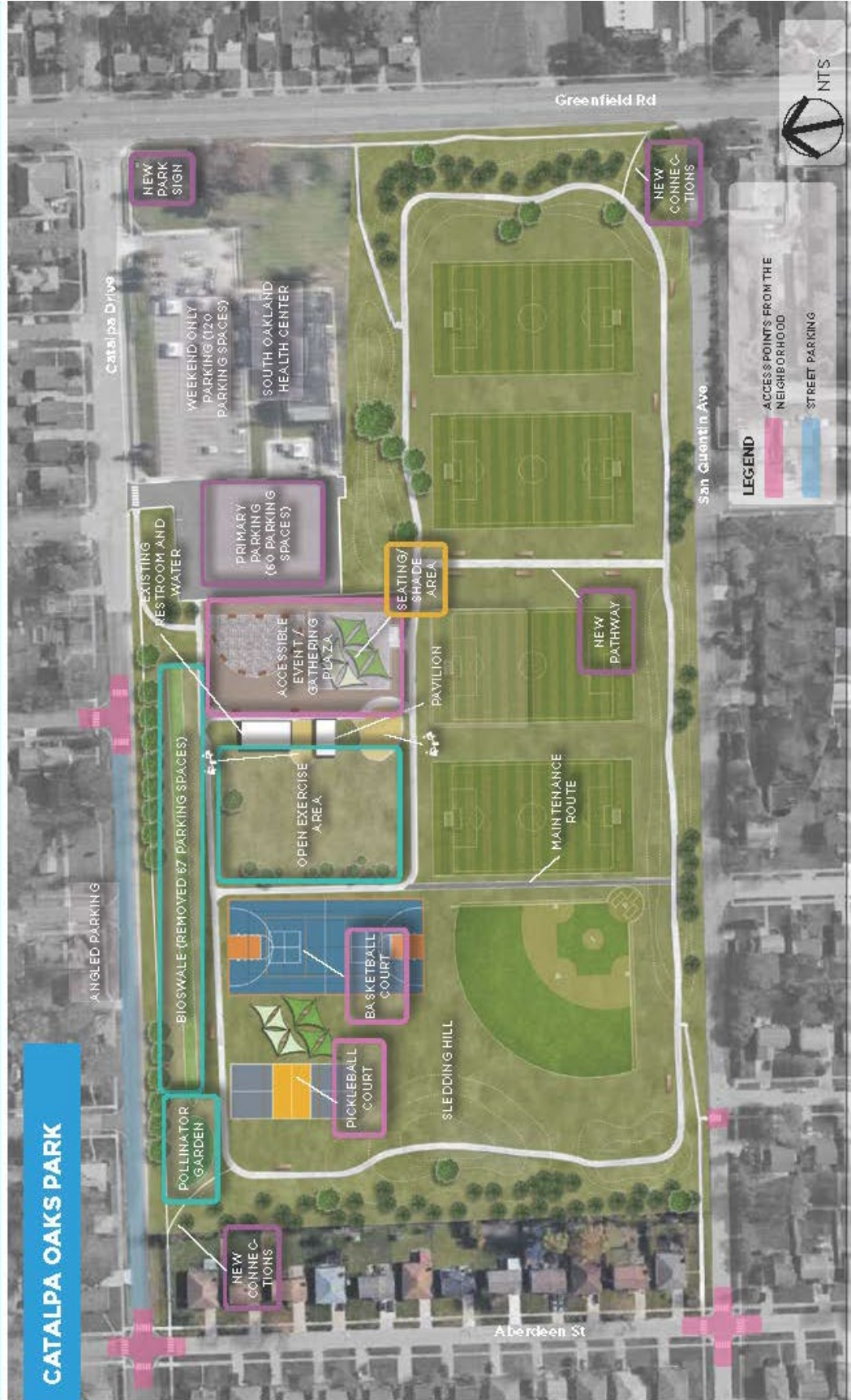
The proposed park improvements will update the feel and amenities offered at Catalpa Oaks to better serve the surrounding communities on a daily basis. The new basketball court and pickleball court will activate the park daily during the warmer months, and the enhanced sledding hill will attract park users for winter activities. Additional seating and shade structures will encourage more passive use and regular visitation of the park. There is a variety of opportunities to utilize the accessible plaza for programming and events, particularly in collaboration with the neighboring South Oakland Health Center. This design concept also considers opportunities to phase in amenities over time, through grant funding and collaboration with other County Departments, such as a new park sign at the intersection of Catalpa Drive and Greenfield Road, and crosswalks to improve connections from the surrounding neighborhoods and support pedestrian safety.

The reconfiguration of parking at Catalpa Oaks reclaims park space and adds trees and new green stormwater infrastructure (GSI). Further, the pollinator gardens and GSI provide potential for an environmental education component (interpretive signage or programming) at an otherwise modern sports park.



PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS

The planning team designed and revised park concepts to accomplish several things: to visualize which unique features are possible for each space; to present the proposed improvements to the focus group attendees; and to assist in cost estimates to apply for ARPA funding. The following pages provide the final park design concepts, precedent images, and planning context.



Lyon Oaks County Park / Lyon Township and Wixom

Community Statistics (2021)

10-minute drive time service area includes Lyon Township and the City of Wixom. The park is in both communities. The east half of the park is in a moderate Area Median Income census tract in Wixom.

Wixom Census Tract 261251331 – Moderate Area Median Income

- Population: 4,080
- Area Median Income: \$36,034 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 0
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 51%
 - Black/African American: 31%
 - Hispanic: 13%
 - Asian: 9%
 - American Indian: 0.39%
 - Two or more races: 4%

Park Description

- Location: 52221 Pontiac Trail, Wixom, MI 48393
- Acres: 1,040
- Features: Golf course, dog park, soccer complex, cricket pitch, picnic pavilion with restroom and playground, paved trails and rustic trails, natural areas

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on increasing opportunities for active outdoor recreation with pickle ball and a destination playground, as well as flexible open space for exercise. A new trail that connects with the Huron Valley Trail will provide new pedestrian access to the park.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



LYON OAKS PARK ELEMENTS

Opposite: Cricket pitch.
Below: Example of a universal playground to model improvements after.





Red Oaks County Park and Ambassador Park / Madison Heights

Community Statistics (2021)

10-minute drive time service area includes the City of Madison Heights and the northern half of the City of Hazel Park which both have moderate Area Median Income.

City of Madison Heights

- Population: 30,053
- Area Median Income: \$52,586 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: none
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 79.28%
 - Black/African American: 6.64%
 - Hispanic: 3.45%
 - Asian: 9.26%
 - American Indian: 0.45%
 - Two or more races: 3.38%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

City of Hazel Park

- Population: 16,945
- Area Median Income: \$38,751 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 2 out of 4 census tracts are identified as QCTs
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 79.65%
 - Black/African American: 10.56%
 - Hispanic: 3.77%
 - Asian: 2.47%
 - American Indian: 0.86%
 - Two or more races: 5.87%
- Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

Park Description – Red Oaks County Park

- Location: Golf course - 29600 John R Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071
Nature Center - 30300 Hales St, Madison Heights, MI 48071
- Acres: 163
- Features: Dog park, waterpark, golf course, nature center, and youth soccer complex.

Park Description – Ambassador Park/ Madison Heights

- Location: 600 E 13 Mile Rd, Madison Heights, MI 48071
- Features: a track, play structure, picnic tables, small sled hill, soccer field, tennis courts
- Acres: 7
- O CPR Area of Interest: incorporate entire park into Red Oaks with a long-term lease

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Improve Ambassador Park and incorporate into Red Oaks – proposed improvements include playground equipment, restroom facilities, pickleball courts and a pavilion. Increase opportunities for nature education and gathering spaces at Red Oaks Nature Center with the addition of a new outdoor classroom/pavilion space with restrooms accessible by park/trail users. Improve parking areas for increased capacity and bus/van access.

Maps/graphics under development.

Waterford Oaks County Park / Waterford Township

Community Statistics (2021)

10-minute drive time service area includes several census tracts with Low or Moderate Area Median Income in Pontiac, Waterford Township, and Keego Harbor.

City of Pontiac

- Population: 60,867
- Area Median Income: \$34,502 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 12 out of 17 census tracts are identified as QCTs
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 32.51%
 - Black/African American: 50.67%
 - Hispanic: 20.13%
 - Asian: 3.46%
 - American Indian: 0.58%
 - Two or more races: 5.22%

Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

City of Keego Harbor

- Population: 2,949
- Area Median Income: \$45,480 (Moderate)
- Qualified Census Tracts: 0
- Race and Ethnicity
 - White: 80.30%
 - Black/African American: 6.48%
 - Hispanic: 14.55%
 - Asian: 3.63%
 - American Indian: 0.37%
 - Two or more races: 3.93%

Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: no

Waterford Township Census Tracts

	261251447	261251449	161251459
▪ Population:	3,559	3,789	2,845
▪ Area Median Income:	\$44,600 (Moderate)	\$42,362 (Moderate)	\$38,722 (Moderate)
▪ Qualified Census Tracts:			
▪ Race and Ethnicity			
○ White	65%	85%	71%
○ Black/African American	16%	6%	15%
○ Hispanic	21%	10%	13%
○ Asian	3%	3%	5%
○ American Indian	0.42%	0.34%	0.53%
○ Two or more races	5%	3%	4%

Adopted 5-Year Recreation Plan: yes

Park Description

- Location: 1702 Scott Lake Road, Waterford, MI 48328
- Acres: 199
- Features: Waterpark, Bicycle motocross (BMX) track, hiking trails, playscape, two platform tennis courts, a sledding hill, and outdoor fitness equipment.

Vision

Increase opportunities for outdoor recreation and quality of facilities to benefit the health and wellness of people living in an area that has been disproportionately impacted by COVID. Focus investment on increasing opportunities for wintertime active outdoor recreation with sledding hill improvements (synthetic surface) and an ice rink. A spray park will extend the season for water play. Pickle ball courts and flexible open space for exercise will further increase outdoor recreation activities. An accessible plaza with shaded gathering and seating areas will welcome visitors to the park and provide opportunities to socialize and relax. A new trail and additional connectors to township sidewalks will increase overall trail mileage and access in the park.

PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



The proposed park improvements will reestablish Waterford Oaks as a winter destination and diversify its year-round offerings. An enhanced sledding hill with synthetic surfacing and combination ice rink and splash pad creates two distinct locations for winter-themed activities, hot drinks, and more. The dedicated bus lane for food truck parking near the Lookout Lodge doubles as an accessible event/gathering space. Pickleball courts are highly sought after in this part of Oakland County, and will likely attract new and recurrent park users to experience all that Waterford Oaks has to offer. Other park improvements relate to connectivity. Expanding the current trails system will expand the natural spaces available for visitors to explore. Adding a new non-motorized access point from Scott Lake Road creates a pathway for residents in the adjacent neighborhood to walk into the park, instead of driving. The maintenance road will provide operations vehicles with another route that avoids traffic congestion at the roundabout near Lookout Lodge.



WATERFORD OAKS PARK ELEMENTS

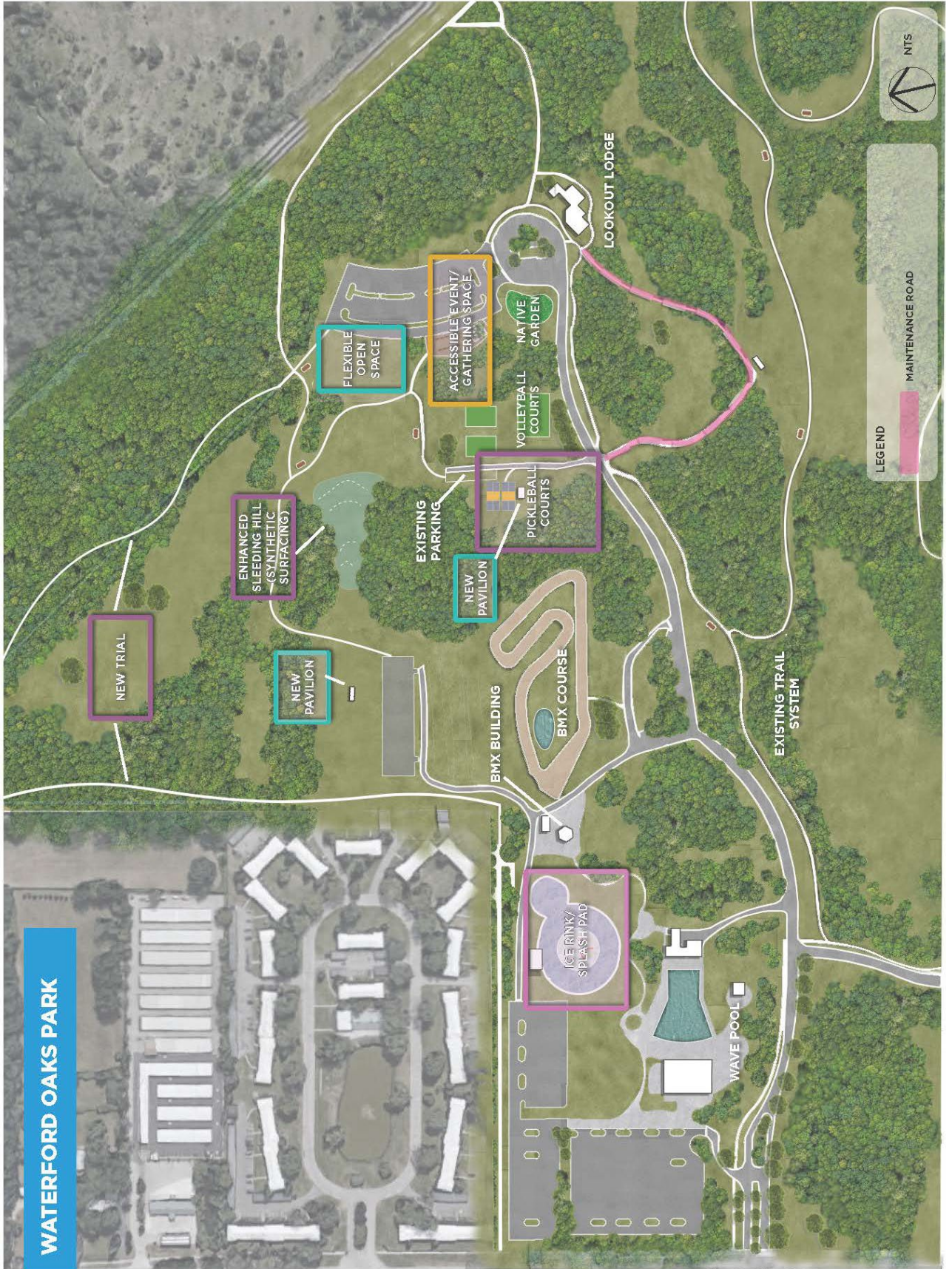
Top left: New trail extension, year-round synthetic sledding hill.

Right: Rain garden; flexible, accessible event and gathering space with food truck parking; combination ice ribbon and splash pad.

Bottom left: Pickleball courts.



PROPOSED PARK IMPROVEMENT CONCEPTS



Notes

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/about.html>

² Social and community context: The connection between characteristics of the contexts within which people live, learn, work, and play, and their health and well-being. This includes topics like cohesion with a community, civic participation, discrimination, conditions in the workplace, and incarceration.

³ Neighborhood and built environment: The connection between where a person lives – housing, neighborhood, and environment – and their health and well-being. This includes topics like quality of housing, access to transportation, availability of healthy foods, air and water quality, and neighborhood crime and violence.

⁴ CDC: Risk for COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalization, and Death by Race/Ethnicity – accessed 3/3/2022. Data is adjusted by age because risk of infection, hospitalization, and death is different by age and age distribution differs by racial and ethnic group.

Rate ratios compared to White, Non-Hispanic persons	American Indian or Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic persons	Asian, Non-Hispanic persons	Black or African American, Non-Hispanic persons	Hispanic or Latino persons
Cases	1.6x	0.7x	1.1x	1.5x
Hospitalizations	3.0x	0.8x	2.3x	2.2x
Death	2.1x	0.8x	1.7x	1.8x

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-race-ethnicity.html>

⁵ <https://health.gov/healthypeople>

⁶ The National Parks and Recreation Associations’ Three Pillars are:

- Health and Wellness – Advance community health and well-being through parks and recreation
- Equity at the Center – Strive for a future where everyone has fair and just access to quality parks and recreation
- Conservation – creating a nation of resilient and climate-ready communities through parks and recreation

<https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/Three-Pillars/role-of-parks-and-recreation-on-health-and-wellness/>

⁷ “Recipients may determine whether to measure income levels for specific households or for a geographic area based on the type of service to be provided. For example, recipients developing a program that services specific households (e.g., a subsidy for internet access, a childcare program) may measure income at the recipient level. Recipients providing a service that reaches a general geographic area (e.g., a park) may measure median income of that area.” (CSLFRP final rule, p 31)

⁸ “The final rule defines a household as low income if it has (i) income at or below 185 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines (FPG) for the size of its household based on the most recently published poverty guidelines by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or (ii) income at or below 40 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) for its county and size of household based on the most recently published data by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).” (CSLFRP final rule, p 30)

Our analysis used the most recent American Community Survey data (2021). Oakland County’s 2021 AMI (\$81,981) was used for this comparison with low-income areas being at or below 40% county AMI (\$32,792).

⁹ “The final rule defines a household as moderate income if it has (i) income at or below 300 percent of the FPG for the size of its household based on the most recently published poverty guidelines by HHS or (ii) income at or below 65 percent of the AMI for its county and size of household based on the most recently published data by HUD.” (CSLFRP final rule, pp 30-31)

Our analysis used the most recent American Community Survey data (2021). Oakland County’s 2021 AMI (\$81,981) was used for this comparison with moderate-income areas at or below 65% (\$53,288).

¹⁰An additional method of identifying disproportionately impacted households is the Qualified Census Tracts identified annually by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These are census tracts with 50% of households with incomes below 60% AMI or which have a poverty rate of 25% or more.
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/qct.html>