

CITY OF  
**Wixom**  
*Michigan*

PARKS AND  
RECREATION  
MASTER PLAN

2018 - 2023





# RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# INVENTORY

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The City of Wixom has just over 700 acres of public parkland within its boundaries provided by the City, Walled Lake School District, and Oakland County that provide recreational facilities and amenities. In addition, numerous private facilities provide a wealth of additional recreation opportunities. These four entities play distinct roles in providing balanced, high quality recreation opportunities for the community. Of the total parkland within the City, the nine City parks provide over half, or 424.2 acres, of public parkland. *Map 1 Parks and Recreation Facilities* on page 14 identifies the location of the existing recreation facilities that were evaluated as part of this Plan.

*Table 1 Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory* identifies a complete inventory of the City recreation facilities that have been evaluated as part of this Plan. This inventory includes a detailed description of the City's facilities and activities and of the school and County facilities within the City's limits. In addition, a brief description of the school, County, Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, and State facilities that serve Wixom residents is included.

## Barrier Free Accessibility

The passage of the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) required all areas of public service to have barrier-free accessibility, including parks and recreation facilities. An evaluation of Wixom parks and facilities was conducted as part of the inventory. In accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) standards, facilities were evaluated to determine if those with limited sight, hearing, mobility and comprehension can safely and independently access and use the park or facility. The following evaluation system was used to rank each park's accessibility:

**Figure A**  
**Levels of Park Accessibility**

Rank	Characteristics
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Completely undeveloped and left in a natural state.</li><li>▪ No paved surfaces.</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities.</li><li>▪ Few paved areas.</li><li>▪ Facilities like play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities.</li><li>▪ Either the parking or pathways are paved, but not both.</li><li>▪ Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.</li></ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities.</li><li>▪ Most of the parking and pathways are paved.</li><li>▪ Some facilities like play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.</li></ul>



4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities.</li> <li>▪ Parking areas and pathways are paved.</li> <li>▪ Most facilities like play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Completely accessible and designed using the principles of universal design.</li> <li>▪ Enables all environments to be usable by everyone, regardless of age, ability, or situation.</li> </ul>

## CITY OF WIXOM FACILITIES

**Gibson Historical Park.** This historic site offers a unique opportunity for the community to provide recreation opportunities while preserving an historic homestead. Purchased by the City in 1995, this park includes the farmhouse built in 1872 and is situated on approximately six acres of land on Pontiac Trail, near the Village Center Area. The park is a multi-purpose facility, with meeting spaces and full kitchen that serves a broad range of community functions. Site amenities include a dedicated parking lot, community garden, horseshoe pits, benches and picnic tables, a multi-use field, and a pathway connection to Lyon Oaks Park. The Gibson Historical Park is also home to the City's annual Founder's Day Festival.



In the future, the City plans to relocate a historic barn structure to the site, expand the Community Gardens, construct a storage shed/restroom structure, and pave a parking area adjacent to the house.

**Gilbert C. Willis Park.** Acquired by Wixom in 1976, this beautiful 46-acre park is located on the northern edge of the City. Open from sunrise until sunset, the park offers a variety of athletic fields, basketball, tennis, and inline hockey courts, a picnic shelter with fireplace, 0 restrooms, gazebo, picnic tables, nature trails, drinking fountain, barbeque grills fitness trail, a playscape and swing set. In addition, the park features acres of woods, rolling hills and open space suitable for a variety of activities. The park is also the site of the City's annual Panther Hunt/Fall Fest and many other events.



**Gunnar Mettala Park.** This 65-acre park located on the City's east side at the intersection of West Maple and Beck Roads was developed in 1991, but the acquisition process began in 1976. Accessed via West Maple Road, Mettala Park is open daily from sunrise until sunset. Some of the many facilities featured include restrooms, a sand volleyball court, a picnic shelter, grills, picnic tables,



drinking fountain, paved walkways, playground equipment with swing set, a garden-like sitting area, athletic fields, tennis, basketball, inline skating courts, nature study, and nature and fitness trails. In addition to the “built” facilities the park offers open space and wooded areas to support a variety of activities.

**This park also hosts a trailhead for the Michigan Airline Trail.**



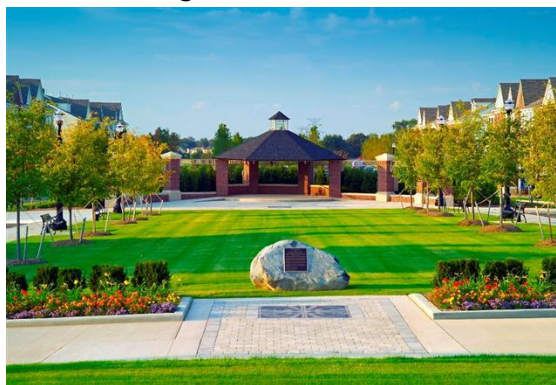
**Table 1**  
**Parkland and Facility Inventory**

	Acres	Accessibility Rank	Ball fields	Football Fields	Soccer Fields	Basketball Courts	Basketball Backstops	Multi-Purpose Fields	Tennis Courts	Volleyball Courts	Playground	Inline Skating Rink	Fitness	Shelter	Picnic Tables	Paths & Trails	Parking	Restrooms	Open Space	Shuffleboard	Horseshoes	Sledding Hill	Indoor Swimming Pool	Indoor Gym	Outdoor Ice Skating	Track	Community Garden
<b>City Owned Facilities</b>																											
<b>Gibson Historical Park</b>	6	4	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	Y
<b>Gilbert C. Willis Park</b>	46	4	2	-	-	1	4	-	2	-	Y	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Gunnar Mettala Park</b>	65	4	1	-	3	-	2	-	1	1	Y	1	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sibley Square</b>	0.5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	Y	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Mack Park</b>	0.2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Village Center Area Gateway Park</b>	0.1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Wixom Civic Center</b>	14	5	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	Y	-	Y	-	Y	-	-	Y	-	-	Y	-	-
<b>Wixom Habitat</b>	292	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Wixom Road Pocket Park</b>	0.4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Walled Lake School District Facilities</b>																											
<b>Sarah Banks Middle</b>	40	-	2	1	2	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-
<b>Loon Lake Elementary</b>	13	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	Y	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-
<b>Walled Lake Western High</b>	25	-	4	1	1	-	-	1	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-
<b>Wixom Elementary</b>	10	-	2	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	Y	Y	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-
<b>Oakland County Facilities</b>																											
<b>Lyon Oaks</b>	198	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	Y	-	-	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Mack Park.** This 0.2-acre park is located in the heart of the Village Center Area at the intersection of N. Wixom Road and Pontiac Trail. A landscaped urban plaza, Mack Park contains a gazebo, drinking fountain, benches and a decorative street clock. Mack Park offers valuable formal and informal social opportunities for visitors of the downtown and those traveling along the City's bike path system and Michigan Airline Trailway.



**Sibley Square.** Across the street from the Civic Center Park, it is a spacious urban lawn in the wide median of Center Boulevard. It features benches and the Performing Arts Pavilion – a covered, outdoor bandstand designed specifically for musical and theatrical performances. Numerous community special events are hosted here including summer concerts and special events.



**Village Center Area Gateway Park.** This 0.12 acre park introduces people to the Village Center Area. The park contains a sidewalk, decorative sign, lighting, landscaping, and irrigation.

**Wixom Habitat.** Wixom Habitat is a 292-acre nature preserve located in the northwest quadrant of the City. It contains unique natural features and plant and animal habitats that the City and its residents wish to see preserved. The site's water bodies and wetlands provide natural stormwater management, including pollutant filtration and stormwater retention.



Habitat Park provides Wixom residents with a quiet haven for passive recreation. A parking lot and bicycle racks are provided and the site's 800 feet of boardwalks and 2,685 feet of unpaved trails connect to the Wixom City-wide bike path. Educational placards at the East Gallagher Lake viewing platform allows visitors to learn about their surroundings. Planned improvements include additional pathways and interpretive placards, additional viewing platforms, and an interactive nature education center.

The City created a master plan for the Wixom Habitat in 1996 that describes the natural features of the site and identifies opportunities to the City related to the Habitat. A more detailed description of this site and its plans can be found in the [Wixom Habitat Master Plan: Site Assessment and Identification of Opportunities](#).

**Wixom Civic Center Park.** This 14-acre complex houses the City Offices, the Police Department, the Public Library and the Community Center. The Community Center is home to the offices of the Community Services Department and provides a senior center, a commercial kitchen, a ballroom and a large auditorium that can be divided to create up to four meeting rooms for programs and rentals. The Library, a 12,000-square foot facility, provides a variety of programming for both children and adults. It provides meeting rooms, children's areas, quiet study areas, and internet and computer services.

The community focal point is the civic complex adorned by a dynamic reflecting pool, which doubles as an ice rink in the winter months, with a water fall and illuminated jets. The park also features outdoor recreation facilities including a play structure, two basketball nets, picnic tables and bike racks. Future plans being contemplated include a water splash park and a play structure amenity.



**Wixom Road Pocket Park.** With nearly a half-acre of undeveloped open space, the Wixom Road Pocket Park provides seating, sidewalk, and landscaping on Wixom Road.

## **WALLED LAKE SCHOOL DISTRICT FACILITIES**

The Walled Lake School District serves a large portion of southwest Oakland County including the City of Wixom. Three Walled Lake schools are within Wixom's city limits and are inventoried in detail. A summary of facilities is provided for Walled Lake schools that serve Wixom residents but are outside the City.

**Loon Lake Elementary School.** Loon Lake Elementary is located on Loon Lake Road in the northeastern portion of the City and has approximately 525 students.. It serves approximately 500 students in grades K-5 and shares a 13-acre parcel with the Middle School Annex. Facilities include a basketball court, play equipment, multi-purpose field, picnic tables, and an indoor gymnasium.



**Wixom Elementary School.** Serving grades K-5, Wixom Elementary has approximately 560 students. The school is located within the city limits on a 10-acre parcel on Wixom Road near the Village Center Area. The site features a baseball diamond, play equipment, paved pathways, and an indoor gymnasium.

**Dr. Sarah G. Banks Middle School.** Serving grades 6-8, this facility, built in 1998, has approximately 900 students. Located on Charms Road near the Wixom Road intersection, the 40-acre school site features two baseball diamonds, two soccer fields, a football field, four basketball nets and an indoor gymnasium.

Six Walled Lake School District schools serve Wixom's student population but do not lie within the city limits. These schools are:

- Walled Lake Western High School
- Walled Lake Central High School
- James Geisler Middle School
- Walnut Creek Middle School
- Walled Lake Elementary School
- Glengary Elementary School
- St. Catherine of Siena Academy

Walled Lake Western High School, although outside the City limits, abuts the City and offers significant recreation facilities that are typical of a large public high school, such as tennis courts, running track, indoor pool, indoor gymnasium, and football, baseball, and soccer fields. James Geisler Middle School is less than one-half mile east of the City limits on Pontiac Trail and provides facilities such as baseball and soccer fields and basketball nets. The other schools are farther away and generally only provide recreation opportunities to students while at school. The facilities at these schools are typical of those inventoried above.

## REGIONAL FACILITIES

Regional parks offer unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, fishing, boating, hiking, and trail use. Many also include active play areas such as ball fields or courts. While these parks are not used for formal programming by the City of Wixom, they provide active and passive recreation opportunities to City residents. In addition to Lyon Oaks, partially located within the City, there are several regional recreation opportunities located within close proximity. Regional facilities are provided by Oakland County, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The regional parks are depicted on *Map 2 Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities*.

**Oakland County Parks.** Since 1966, over 6,500 acres of land have been acquired by the Oakland County Park System with assistance from the state and federal government. To date, there are twelve County parks which range in size from 125 acres to 1,141 acres. These facilities are within a short drive of the City.

Lyon Oaks Park, acquired by the County in 1992, has nearly 200 acres within the City limits. The 1,041-acre park, located west of Wixom on Pontiac Trail, will contains a new Arthur Hills, designed 18-hole golf course, driving range, banquet and meeting facilities, 13-acre dog park, nature center, sheltered



picnic areas, playground, athletic fields, and a trail system. In addition to the Lyon Oaks, eleven other Oakland County parks are conveniently located within a short distance from Wixom, providing nature preserves, athletic fields, golf courses, banquet facilities, swimming pools, trails, playgrounds, and picnic shelters. The parks include:

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

**Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Facilities.** The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA) is a regional park authority that encompasses the counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Livingston. Since its inception in 1940, the HCMA has obtained over 20,000 acres of park land, all located in the metro Detroit region. The parks provide a variety of outdoor recreation and educational activities including picnicking, hiking, golf, biking, winter sports, golf, water-related activities, horseback riding, and special programs. The HCMA regional parks located within a 30-minute drive of the City of Wixom include:

- **Huron Meadows Metropark.** Located along the Huron River three miles south of Brighton, this 1,539 acre park features a 18-hole public golf course and golf-activity center. Activities include picnicking, hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, and boating.
- **Indian Springs Metropark.** Dedicated in June 1982, this 2,215-acre park is located nine miles northwest of Pontiac in Springfield and White Lake Townships. The park is situated at the headwaters of the Huron River and encompasses the Huron Swamp, which is the largest undisturbed natural area remaining in southeastern Michigan. Most of the park activities focus on the preservation and interpretation of the natural environment. Features include a 18-hole golf course and driving range, nature and paved trails, picnic area,



tot lot, baseball diamond and volleyball court.

- **Kensington Metropark.** This 4,357 acre park, located in Milford Township, is four miles west of Wixom. Kent Lake is the primary natural feature at this Metropark, which offers a variety of recreation facilities including ball diamonds, an 18-hole golf course and activities including include swimming, boating, hiking, fishing, picnicking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, and other summer activities. A variety of winter activities including ice skating, cross-country skiing, and sledding are also available.



The HCMA also maintains the following parks in the region that are beyond a 30-minute drive from Wixom, but, nevertheless, provide significant recreation opportunities.

- Delhi Metropark (Ann Arbor)
- Dexter-Huron Metropark (Dexter)
- Hudson Mills Metropark (Dexter)
- Lake Erie Metropark (Brownstown)
- Lower Huron Metropark (Belleville)
- Metro Beach Metropark (Mt. Clemens)
- Oakwoods Metropark (Belleville)
- Stony Creek Metropark (Shelby Twp.)
- Willow Metropark (Belleville)
- Wolcott Mill Metropark (Ray Twp.)

**Michigan State Facilities.** There are several Michigan State Parks in the area that provide recreation opportunities to the citizens of Wixom. Seven state-owned facilities are located within 30 miles of the City of Wixom and provide a variety of recreational facilities and activities.

- **Brighton Recreation Area.** Located in Howell, this 4,947 acre park offers 232 campsites including modern, rustic, horseman's facilities, and group camp and cabins. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, beach house, boat launch and complete equestrian facilities. Available activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding.



- **Dodge No. 4 State Park.** This 139 acre park located in on Cass Lake in Waterford Township offers picnicking, swimming, fishing, hiking, and snowmobiling.
- **Highland Recreation Area.** Located in White Lake Township, this 5,524 acre park has 30 rustic campsites, a horseman's camp, a group camp and cabins. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, beach house, boat launch, and nature trails. Activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and horseback riding.
- **Island Lake Recreation Area.** This 3,466 acre area located in Brighton offers 45 rustic campsites, a group camp and cabins. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, and a boat launch. Activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling and hiking.
- **Maybury State Park.** This 944 acre park located in Northville Township offers no regular camping but has a group camp. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, living farm, visitor center, 11-miles of bridle trails, and 4-miles of paved biking and walking trails. Activities include fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding.
- **Pinckney Recreation Area.** Located in Pinckney Township, this 11,000 acre recreation area has 245 campsites including modern, rustic facilities and a group camp. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, a beach house and a boat launch. Activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking, cross-country skiing and horseback riding.
- **Pontiac Lake Recreation Area.** This 3,800 acre area located in Waterford Township has 176 modern campsites and offers a horseman's camp, group camp and tent rentals. Facilities include picnic area, beach house and boat launch. Activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, snowmobiling, hiking and horseback riding.
- **Proud Lake Recreation Area.** Adjacent to Wixom in Commerce Township, this 4,700 acre recreation area has 130 modern campsites, a group camp, mini cabins, tent rentals, and over 20 miles of trails. Facilities include picnic area, playgrounds, a beach house and boat launch. Activities include swimming, hunting, fishing, boating, snowmobiling, hiking, cross-country



skiing, and horseback riding.

## PROGRAMMING

The City of Wixom offers a variety of recreation classes and activities for people of all ages. Programs are offered throughout the year and enrollment continues to rise. Funding for the programs is obtained through user fees, with classes and activities generally held at the Community Center, except that outdoor programs operate at a variety of facilities. Activities currently offered include:



### Children's Classes

- All Sport Fun Fitness
- ATV Safety Classes/Boaters Safety Classes
- Karate
- 
- Soccer
- Tap, Jazz, Hip Hop & Creative Dancing
- T Ball

### Senior Citizen Activities

- Bus Trips
- Bingo, Euchre & Pinochle Days
- Computer Tutor Classes
- Driver Safety
- Movie & Pizza Day
- Potluck Luncheons
- Various Health Programs
- Holiday Programs

### Bus Trips

- Ice Shows
- Lions Games
- Red Wings Games
- Theater Productions
- Tigers Games

### Leisure Classes

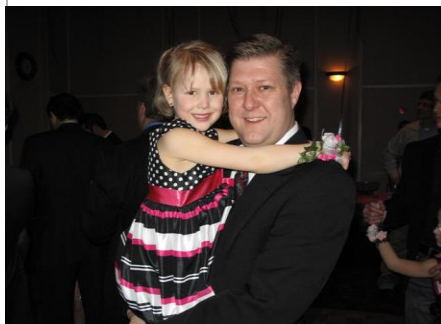
- Arts & Crafts
- Computer Classes
- Sports Lessons & Classes
- Health & Nutrition Classes

### Youth Camps

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Dance
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer
- Tennis
- Theater

### Special Activities

- Bike-parade
- Canoe Trips
- City Wide Garage Sale
- Family Fun Nights
- High School Senior Picnic
- Trail Trekkers



### Exercise Classes

- Aerobics & Yoga
- Kickboxing
- Martial Arts
- Pilates
- 



### Community Service

- Blood Drive
- Clean-Up Day
- Food & Mitten & Glove Drive
- 

### Special Events

- Circus
- Concert/Movies in the Park
- Daddy Daughter
- Bunny Hop
- Monster Mash
- Holiday Markt
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Founders Day Festival
- Light the Night (Fireworks)
- Movie in the Park
- Panther Hunt/Fall Fest
- Veterans Day Activities
- Tree Lighting
- Wine Tasting
- Hot Blues BBQ
- Skate Nite

## PATHWAYS

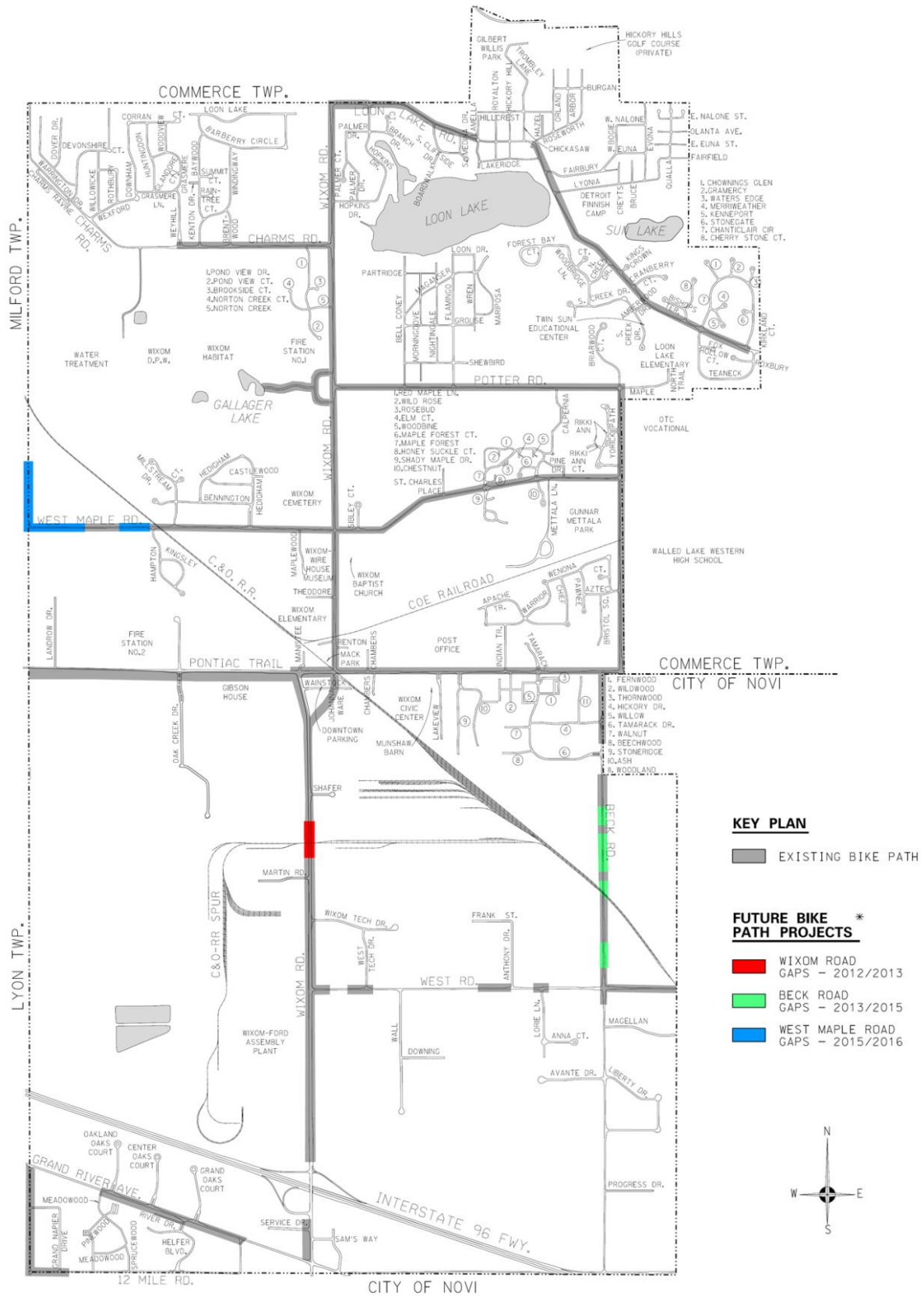
A comprehensive pathway system adds to the overall quality of life for residents and visitors to Wixom by providing access to various community facilities and parks and by offering a source of recreation for those who bike, jog, walk, and exercise. The maps on the following pages depict the type and location of pathways that currently exist or are proposed to be provided in the future.

Wixom has been very proactive in promoting pathways and making them a priority. The pathways system is widely used by residents and has consistently been included amongst residents' top desires. To encourage the expansion of the system, pathways are required along main roadways for new development and redevelopment projects. Residential development projects are also required to provide sidewalks in the development to enable residents to better access to main roadways and key destinations, including schools and parks. In 2008, the City passed a millage to continue the bike path/safety path program throughout Wixom, and in 2011, the City of Wixom, Walled Lake, and Commerce received a \$3.7 million dollar grant to acquire the Michigan Airline trail property. The Trailway Council is currently seeking grants for development of the trail for a paved surface from Walled Lake to Wixom.

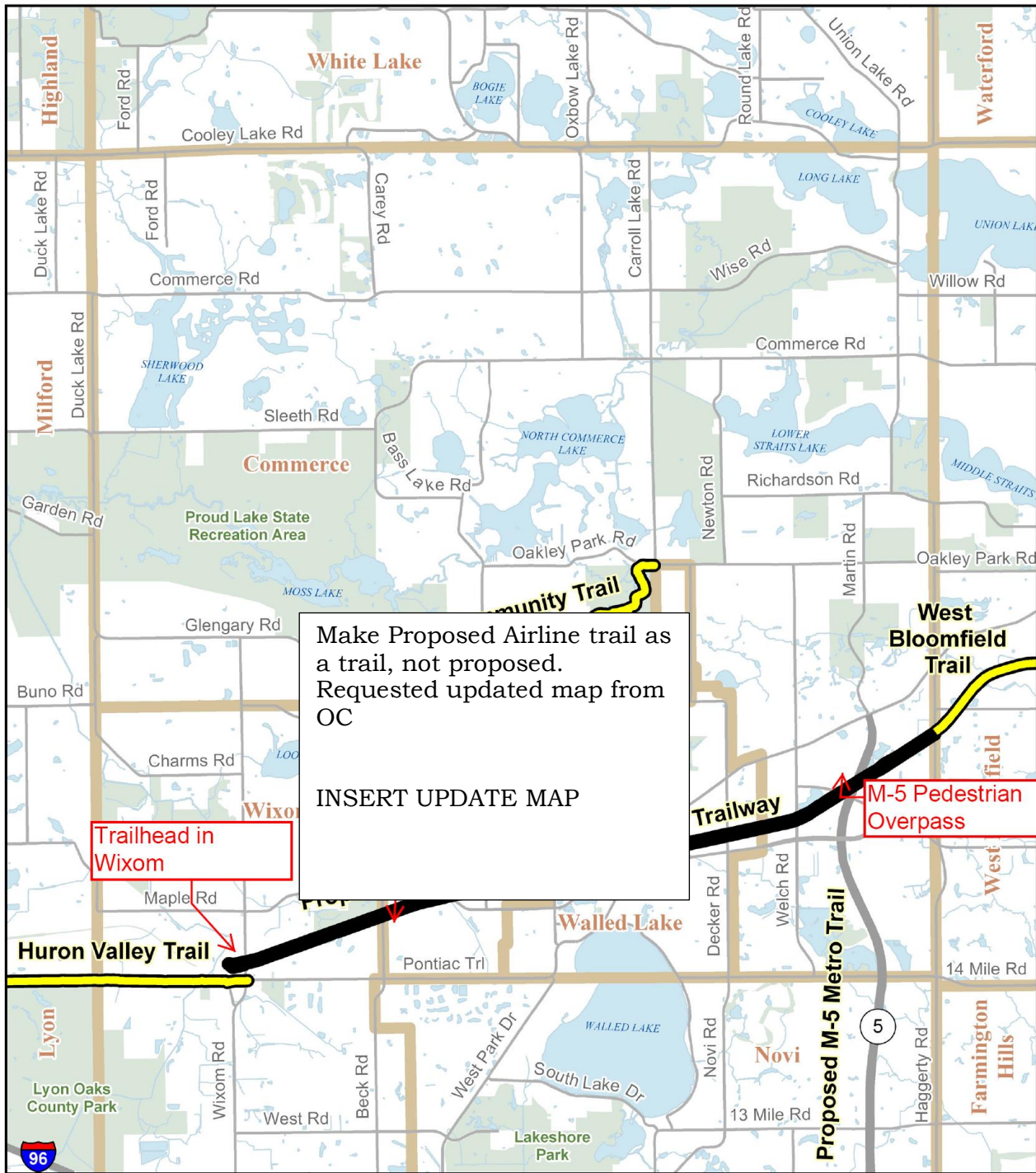


In addition to the City, Oakland County planners envision an interconnected trail system throughout the region for enjoyment of the outdoors and fitness activities. The County Parks and Recreation Department and the Oakland Trails Advisory Council, are teaming up to expand and coordinate a network of trails. There are 41 miles of completed trails; 29 miles in the planning, design and development stage; and 82 miles under consideration throughout Oakland County. A new trail will be developed from West Bloomfield to Wixom extending the Michigan Airline Trail to Wixom, which has a pathway/trail system to Kensington Metro Park, Island Lake State Park, Proud Lake State Park and Lyon Oaks County Park.

*Source:*







## Michigan Air-Line Railway Trailway Site Development Plan

**Environmental Stewardship Program**  
Oakland County Planning & Economic Development Services

\*\*\*The information provided herewith has been compiled from recorded deeds, plats, tax maps, surveys and other public records. It is not a legally recorded map or survey and is not intended to be used as one. Users should consult the information sources mentioned above when questions arise.\*\*\*

- Major Trail
- MART Right-of-Way
- Recreation Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Lakes & Ponds

Map Created on July 29, 2009



## GRANT INVENTORY

Wixom has received various state grants for projects in the past which supplement local capital project expenditures. *Table 2 Recreation Grant History* summarizes the state recreation grants awarded to the community.

**Table 2**  
**Recreation Grant History**

Park	Grant Amount	Grant Number	Year Received	Funding Source	Project Results	Current Inventory
Gilbert C. Willis Park	\$50,000	26-01104 12	1980	Land & Water Conservation Fund	Four Tennis Courts, Ball Diamond Relocation, Physical Fitness Trail, Nature/Cross Country Ski Trail	All facilities in good condition, see Table 1-1
	\$15,000	BF90-200	1990	Bond Fund	Little League Ball Field, 2 Shuffleboard Courts, Site Preparation, Play Structure	
Gunnar Mettala Park	\$150,000	TF88-007	1988	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	Acquisition of 29.3 Acres	All facilities in good condition, see Table 1-1
	\$78,000	26-01485	1988	Land & Water Conservation Fund	Picnic Area, Playlot, Fitness Trail, Utilities, Drinking Fountain, Restroom, Parking Lot Paving	
	\$59,813	BF89-342	1989	Bond Fund	Baseball/Soccer Field, Picnic Shelter, Lighting, 2 Tennis Courts	
Wixom Habitat Development	\$198,500	TF98-079	1998	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	Boardwalk 1318 LF, 8 ft. Wide, Walking Path 13,000 LF, 3 ft. Wide, Viewing Platform, Parking Lot, Landscaping, Signage	All facilities in good condition, see Table 1-1 for a detailed list of inventory
Michigan Airline Trailway	\$3,750,000		2011	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	Acquisition of 5.33 miles of Michigan Airline Corridor and conversion to a non-motorized recreational trail with links to the Huron Valley and West Bloomfield segments	In development

Source: City of Wixom

**MAP ONE: PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**



**MAP TWO: REGIONAL PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

# PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

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The ability to plan and accommodate parks and recreation in the City of Wixom involves different elements. First, the Plan combines data, ideas and public comments into a set of goals and objectives. The City established an administrative structure that includes staff, appointed and elected officials that ensures an organized hierarchy is utilized during planning and implementation. Finally, Wixom has a separate budget for parks and recreation to implement the Plan.

## PLANNING PROCESS

The process to develop this Plan involved the six steps described to the right. It involved a public workshop to review and update the 2007 Plan, and a public hearing held in compliance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements, details of which are provided below:

**Public Meetings.** Wixom hosted a series of meetings during development of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the City's overall Master Plan and the Vision 2025 initiative. Public involvement for these three projects was combined to provide residents more opportunities to comment. Meetings were held on November 27 & December 14.. A specific parks and recreation survey was distributed during these meetings to collect input from

### Task One: Community Profile

- The City's physical and social features, are described, including location, land use, natural features, historic sites and transportation networks, as well as age/sex distribution, disability statistics, household characteristics, employment and income.

### Task Two: Recreation Inventory

- Each park is visited to review existing facilities, accessibility needs and future improvements. The inventory includes City owned parks, as well as general descriptions of school, county and state parks within 30 miles of the City.

### Task Three: Public Participation

- Public input from the 2007 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Vision 2025 initiative provides a basis for recommendations. A public workshop was held to ensure the new plan is valid. A public hearing was held by the City Council before adoption.

### Task Four: Analysis

- Based on the data collected from tasks 1 through 3, information is analyzed in accordance with National Recreation and Parks Association guidelines, the experience of staff and consultants, the desires of the residents and potential funding sources.

### Task Five: Action Program

- Goals and objectives are developed based on the analysis and public input received. The goals provide the basis for a five-year action plan including a checklist of future actions, when and where it will occur, who will accomplish it, and how much it will cost.

### Task Six: Plan Completion and Adoption

- Consensus is reached by the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council. A public hearing is held to present the plan and solicit public input prior to adoption.

residents. The survey was also posted online. The public meetings were advertised throughout the City and on the City’s website.

**Public Hearing.** A copy of the draft Plan was made available to the public for their review 30 days prior to action by the City. Prior to their adoption of the Plan, the City Council conducted a public hearing on February 29, 2012. Both the availability of the Plan and notice of the public hearing were advertised in the local paper and posted on the City’s webpage.

**ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

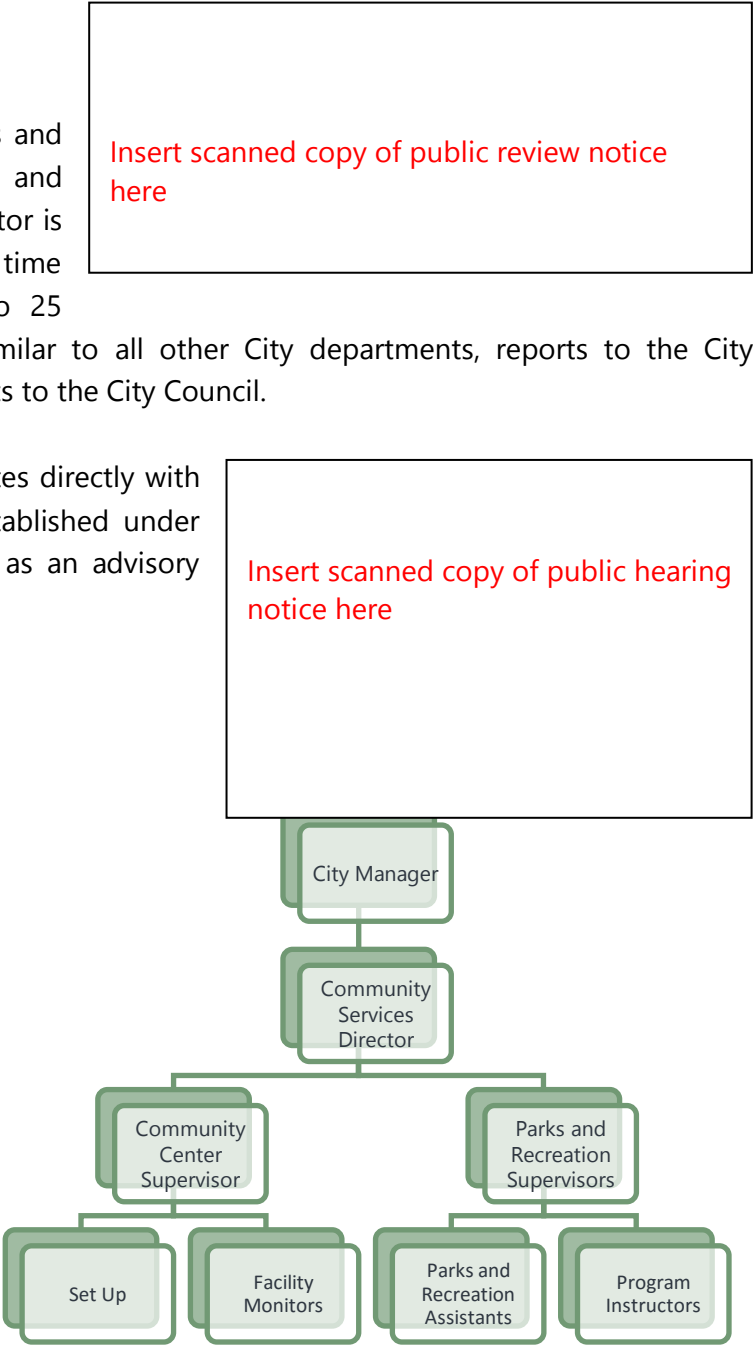
The Community Services Department plans and programs parks and recreation initiatives and City events. The Community Services Director is in charge of the five full and seven part time employees, in addition to roughly 15 to 25 program instructors. This department, similar to all other City departments, reports to the City Manager, who relays information and reports to the City Council.

The Community Services Director coordinates directly with the Parks and Recreation Commission, established under PA 156 of 1917. The Commission serves as an advisory board to the City Council on the recreation needs of the City and assists in the planning and implementation of the recreation events and park development for Wixom residents.

In addition to the Community Services Department and Parks and Recreation Commission, a number of other City departments and groups cooperate to aid in the delivery of services and events along with the management of the parks and programming. These include:

**Wixom Historical Society.** The Wixom Historical Society strives to safeguard the heritage of the City by documenting and preserving historic sites and structures,

*Source: City of Wixom*



educating the community about the history of Wixom, and promoting preservation. The Historical Society has generated revenues from fundraisers, and the City provides them with meeting rooms and Community Development Block Grant Funds were used to finance improvements to the Wire House/Gibson House and Munshaw Barn.

**Department of Public Works (DPW).** The DPW maintains all City streets, building and grounds, public parks, sidewalks and bikepaths, including street sweeping, roadside/ park/ cemetery mowing, snow removal, and ice control. In addition, the DPW assists with parks and recreation events.

**Walled Lake Consolidated School District.** Besides providing the physical land and facilities for many of the City's recreation programs, the school district provides Wixom youth and teens with a variety of athletic teams, clubs, and educational groups. In addition, the district's community education department offers adult education, recreation and enrichment and pre-school services including:

- High school completion
- Basic skills improvement
- Technical/vocational training
- English as a Second Language classes
- GED testing/preparation
- Academic/education advising
- Youth sports
- Adult volleyball and basketball
- Aquatics
- Fitness programs
- Children & Toddlers programs
- Computer classes
- Enrichment classes
- Preschool for 3-4 yr olds
- Head Start
- PREP (Michigan School Readiness Program)

## BUDGET AND FUNDING

The operating budget for park and recreation related operations and improvements, depicted in *Table 3 Community Services Budget*, is part of the City's general fund. There are individual operational budgets for the Community

<b>Fund</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-2019</b>
Community Center	\$272,003	\$303,758	\$313,553	13,553
Parks and Recreation	\$301,559	\$344,400	\$404,815	404,815
<b>Total Operational</b>				
Capital (P&R) Improvements	\$144,634	\$151,000	\$181,000	74,000
Community Center Improvements	128,200	45,600	413,500	32,200
<b>Total Capital</b>				
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$846,396</b>	<b>844,758</b>	<b>1,333,005</b>	<b>844,705</b>

Source: City of Wixom

Center, parks and recreation programs and senior citizen programs. Expenditures are limited to operational items such as salaries, office equipment and supplies, and rental of facilities and equipment. As previously stated, funding for the Parks and Recreation programs is included in the City's General Fund, and derived from real and personal property taxes as well as recreation program related fees.

There is also a separate capital improvement budget included in the General Fund for facilities maintenance and acquisition of equipment. This budget is coordinated between the City's Department of Public Works and Community Services Departments. Capital projects budgeted include park maintenance, equipment replacement, new and/or improvement projects, completion of the pathway system, and improvements to the Community Center.

# ANALYSIS

The preceding chapters explain the current facilities and programs available to Wixom residents. However, assessing actual needs is more involved than a simple inventory. The action plan table provided later reflects the future needs for the City, which were based on public input received, meetings with City staff, evaluation of existing park conditions, and evaluations according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' suggested guidelines developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

NRPA standards help to determine the necessary amount of parkland, location and amount of facilities (fields, courts, amenities, etc.) that should be provided based on community population. They were, however, developed in 1983 and may not reflect current attitudes, social trends or other characteristics specific to the community including income, household type, climate and natural features. Therefore, adjustments to the standards can be made based on local knowledge and experience.

## PARKLAND AND SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

There are 710.2 total acres of parkland in the City of Wixom. This total includes parks provided by the City, at public school sites, and by Oakland County. The NRPA guidelines suggest that a variety of park types should be provided, and suggests four general park categories (mini, neighborhood, community and regional) to help communities plan for each type. Ordinarily parks are classified according to size since most larger parks serve a broader area. However, in Wixom, even the smaller parks are intended for enjoyment by the entire community and for this reason all local parks were designated as community parks.

**Table 4**  
**Parkland Acreage Analysis**

	City-Owned Parks Only Community Parks	All Parks Within City	
		Community Parks	Regional Parks
Recommended Minimum Acreage <sup>1,2</sup>	Average 6.5 acres per 1000 residents	Average 6.5 acres per 1000 residents	Average 7.5 acres per 1000 residents
Recommended Acreage in Wixom <sup>3</sup>	87.74	87.74	101.24
Existing Acreage in Wixom <sup>4</sup>	424.2	512.2	198
Surplus	336.46	424.46	96.77

<sup>1</sup> Per 1,000 Residents

<sup>2</sup> Source of Standard: Lancaster, Roger A., Ed. 1983. *Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines*. Alexandria, VA:NRPA

<sup>3</sup> Based on U.S. Census 2010 population of 13,498 people

<sup>4</sup> Acreage includes facilities listed in Table 1-1

The following analysis uses the NRPA standards for parkland and facilities to help assess the needs in Wixom. For the City's planning purposes, it includes analysis of City-owned parks only as well as analysis of all parks located within the City.

**Amount of Parkland.** An analysis of the existing parkland is shown in *Table 4 Parkland Acreage Analysis* and is based on the NRPA standards. Again, all City and school parkland is categorized as a community park, while the County Parks is considered a regional park. The NRPA standards suggest there is more parkland than recommended.

**Service Area.** While guidelines suggest there is more parkland in the City than recommended, the NRPA also suggests the City's parks should be of varying types and location to provide convenient facilities that meet the needs of all citizens. Recreational facilities, for example, provide service to the community in general, but may not be within convenient distances to neighborhoods and residential centers. The different park classifications provided by the NRPA, that are applicable to Wixom, are summarized in *Figure C, Park Classifications*.

**Figure C**  
**Park Classifications**

Park Type	Description	Service Area	Setting	Typical Size
Mini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small, specialized parks that serve the needs of residents in the surrounding neighborhood.</li> <li>Provides daily places for those who cannot travel.</li> </ul>	¼ mile	Residential	2,500 s.f. to 1 acre
Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-purpose facilities that serve as a local recreational and social focus.</li> <li>Provides both active and passive recreation.</li> </ul>	¼ to ½ mile	Away from main roads	5 to 10 acres
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meets larger, community-wide needs.</li> <li>Preserves unique landscapes and open spaces.</li> </ul>	½ mile to 3 miles	Varies	30 to 50 acres
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilities located on public school property.</li> <li>Generally used for school athletic programs but are also open to the public.</li> </ul>	Determined by school location and site size		

In Wixom, most parks serve multiple functions so they serve both local neighborhoods on a daily basis, but also provide fields and amenities that are used by the whole community. Technically, they fall into one of two park categories: Mini Parks, which include Sibley Square, Mack Park, Village Center Area Gateway Park, and Wixom Road Pocket Park and Community Parks, which include Gibson Historical Park, Gilbert C. Willis Park, Gunnar Mettala Park, Wixom Civic Center and Wixom Habitat. The City's three largest parks, Gilbert C. Willis Park, Gunnar Mettala Park and Wixom Habitat are all located in the northern half of the City, where the largest concentrations of residents live. Classified as Community Parks, these three also provide a range of amenities that allow for daily use as well as



community-wide events, and are well distributed within the City's residential areas.

**Findings.** With the City quickly approaching build-out, available land to meet acreage and service area requirements for public recreation, as well as balancing the amount of passive and active recreation areas offered, becomes a costly challenge. Fortunately, the City had the foresight to acquire adequate land area for recreation that is generally dispersed throughout the residential areas of the City. The priority for the City should be to maximize the use of these sites and ensure the greatest enjoyment and variety for all residents.

## RECREATION FACILITY ANALYSIS

NRPA standards were examined to compare recreation facilities utilized by residents to determine where potential improvements can be made. *Table 5 Park Facility Analysis* includes an analysis of all recreation facilities located within City boundaries that are available to the public. In addition, Western High School was included in the analysis due to their close proximity and frequency of use.

As mentioned previously, the national standards upon which the analysis is based were created twenty years ago and do not necessarily represent the specific needs of the City of Wixom. The overall evaluation must also consider county, school and private facilities, the distribution of facilities, trends in the community, cost, and the level of convenience and access.

**Table 5**  
**Park Facility Analysis**

	NRPA Guideline <sup>1</sup>	Recommended for Wixom	Existing Facilities in Wixom			Surplus/ Deficit
			City Parks	Schools	Total	
<b>Tennis</b>	1/2,000	7	3	8	11	4
<b>Playground</b>	1/3,000	4	3	6	9	5
<b>Baseball/ Softball</b>	1/5,000	3	4	8	12	9
<b>Basketball</b>	1/5,000	3	1	1	2	-1
<b>Volleyball</b>	1/5,000	3	1	1	2	-1
<b>Soccer</b>	1/10,000	1	5	3	8	7
<b>Football</b>	1/20,000	1	0	2	2	1
<b>Running Track</b>	1/20,000	1	0	1	0	0
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1/20,000	1	0	0	0	-1

<sup>1</sup> Source: National Recreation and Parks Association Open Space and Standards

<sup>2</sup> Based on U.S. Census 2010 population of 13,498 people

<sup>3</sup> Other facilities includes facilities listed in Table 1

## SYSTEM WIDE NEEDS

Considering the above analysis, but also the particular needs of the City, especially as expressed by residents at public meetings, the following overall list of needs was developed. Some are based on the NRPA guidelines for number and distribution of parks, and others based on the City's understanding of its own residents, their desires and needs.

Upgrades and improvements to current parks and recreation facilities and services are high priorities to ensure their long-term viability and to meet the goals and guidelines of this Plan. This section contains specific initiatives for the City to complete, based on the goals and objectives of the Plan.

**Barrier Free Accessibility.** Improve Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility to the Gibson House & Park. The ADA established guidelines to provide barrier free accessibility at parks. It is important to have access to these facilities so that disabled residents can enjoy the parks. As each park is improved these efforts should continue to improve barrier free accessibility. Improvements include proper surfaces for wheelchairs, accessible picnic tables, and play equipment that is accessible for use.

**Design Improvements.** Present a consistent image throughout the Wixom Park System by installing uniform park signs, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, waste receptacles, and bike racks at each park as they are improved. The following are suggested for all parks:

- Modernize restroom facilities
- Select uniform park signs, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, waste receptacles, and bike racks
- Install permanent picnic tables that attach to the ground, which eliminates potential for theft
- Develop a landscaping plan for all City parks
- Promote installation of decorative accent lighting where it will improve safety at the parks
- Implement surveillance system at parks for safety

**Programming.** The City should continue to offer high-quality recreation programs and events for its residents and should strive to improve programming. Specifically, the City should focus on the following programming improvements:

- Facilitate discussion between the City, school districts, and volunteer organizations in order to reduce duplication of services
- Develop a consolidated calendar of activities for the City, school districts, and volunteer organizations
- Maximize use of the internet, City website, cable channel, and marquee to increase awareness of and registration for parks and recreation programs
- Monitor recreation programs to ensure they meet the desires of residents and accommodate enrollment figures
- Evaluate programming fees to create a balance between covering City costs while maintaining affordability for area residents
- Keep abreast of the latest trends and preferences in recreation as well as local desires

- Expand the variety of leisure programs, not just athletic programs, in order to meet different interests and skills
- Expand senior trips and programs to meet the changing interests of seniors in the community
- Introduce more multi-generational events into future programming
- Expand programming specifically for single adults in order to respond the national trend of increased single headed households
- Expand Veteran and Patriotic recognition and special events

**Land Acquisition.** Although it is an established priority to maximize use of existing facilities, the City should continue to explore opportunities for land acquisition in order to meet future demands for parkland. This can be accomplished in many different ways. The City can develop a private/public partnership with landowners to share use of a facility or promote the re-use of buildings no longer operating. Cooperation with schools, churches, and other civic organizations may present opportunities for land donation, provided favorable arrangements are made such as the City completing the improvements or maintaining the facilities.

**Facilities.** NRPA guidelines suggest additional facilities are needed for basketball, volleyball and swimming. St. Catherine of Siena Academy will be constructing athletic and recreation facilities on the Academy property that are likely to fulfill some of the needs identified. These facilities will be made available for City use under Academy establishes guidelines and approvals. This recreational partnership expands the availability of needed facilities and does so to the mutual benefit of both the City and the St. Catherine of Siena Academy. Based on the NRPA guidelines and comments made by the public, the following are needed:

- **Basketball Courts.** One additional basketball court is needed according to the NRPA guidelines. The inventory in Table 1-1 shows only one basketball court located at Loon Lake Elementary and one at Gilbert Willis Park. However, what the analysis does not consider were indoor facilities and outdoor backstops that also are provided at Wixom Civic Center, Gunnar Mettala Park and two of the local schools. When considering all facilities available, the city is well served.
- **Volleyball Courts.** If high activity is seen at the existing courts, or if additional demand is expressed by residents, there is potential to accommodate additional volleyball courts at Gunnar Mettala Park; however there are indoor courts available at many of the school sites.
- **Swimming Pools.** The school, county and regional pool facilities are available for use by Wixom residents.
- **Ball Fields.** The City may want to evaluate improvements to existing ball fields, such as



seating and lighting.

- **Soccer Fields.** According to the national standards, there is a surplus of soccer fields in the community; however popularity of the sport has caused the actual need for fields to exceed the number provided. The City should consider potential locations for an additional field within the City park system and coordinate with neighboring communities, school districts, and local soccer organizations to assist in meeting the program's needs.
- **Rollerblading and Skateboarding.** The development of a skate park has been identified by the Parks and Recreation Commission as a desirable facility for the City's youth.
- **Dog Parks.** Currently all parks allow dogs, but they have to be on-leash. There has been increasing demand throughout the country for areas for dogs to exercise and play off-leash. A dog park exists at Lyon Oaks that is conveniently located to serve Wixom residents.

## PARK-SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS

In addition to the above, each City park was reviewed to determine needed improvements and new opportunities for development. Included below are the improvements suggested for City-owned parks.

**Gibson Historical Park.** Gibson Historical Park provides a unique opportunity for the City to develop public recreation land that is tied to the region's heritage. Through recent upgrades, the Park now has a multipurpose facility for community activities. It also includes a Gazebo, community garden, horseshoe pits, benches & picnic tables, a multi-purpose field and a pathway connection to Lyon Oaks Park. The City should continue to maximize use of this facility by expanding programming options to include gardening clubs, historic groups, and various civic events. Planned improvements include accessible restroom facilities, and moving the Spencer Barn to the Historical Park.

**Gilbert C. Willis Park.** Gilbert C. Willis Park is nestled in the northeastern corner of the City. Its only access is from a residential street north of Loon Lake Road. The park is setback and not easily found. Similar to Gunnar Mettala, Gilbert C. Willis Park serves as an important source of active recreation for residents. Convenient access and visibility are therefore important. A pathway along Glengary Road connects the Park to the Lakes Community Trail, which extends east into Commerce and West Bloomfield Townships, achieving a goal of past plans, but additional improvements like fencing, paving, entrance features and other amenities are still needed. The possibility of converting the southeastern baseball diamond into a soccer field is also still recommended.

**Gunnar Mettala.** Gunnar Mettala is the largest of the developed, active parks in the City. To maximize the potential for this site, the City should capitalize on the potential to incorporate this park into the core of the community, the Village Center Area. This will likely involve a linear connection by way of abandoned railroad



lines, utility corridors and the street right-of-way. Some of the open space areas could be better utilized and could be improved with irrigation for soccer and ball fields, re-building of the tennis and skate courts, additional benches, landscaping and replacement of equipment.

**Sibley Square.** This newly developed park must be consistently maintained as it is a focal point for the Village Center Area. Future enhancements could include a pavilion, waste receptacles, signage, and additional seating. Restroom facilities should be considered when further commercial development occurs adjacent to the park.



**Mack Park.** Mack Park serves as a resting place within Wixom's downtown and along the City's pathway system. The City has developed links between the park to other key destinations such as the Civic Center Park, Gunnar Metalla, schools, churches and local businesses. The park should have landscaping and lighting improvements to keep this a visually attractive park.

**Village Center Area Gateway Park.** Since the VCA Gateway Park is intended to provide an attractive point of entry into the City's Village Center Area, its purpose is not for direct recreational use. The Park has been improved with attractive signage and landscaping, but it could be further improved with the installation of bench seating.



**Wixom Civic Center Park.** This complex serves as the main community center and features City's offices, Community Center and the Library. It provides a variety of recreation opportunities and community-wide pathway linkages. This park has been identified as the ideal location for the development of a skate park, and it is also planned for relocation of the basketball backstops to a specifically designated area of the park. A newer goal for the park includes development of a splash park or water facility.

The Community Center was built in 1992, and is well-used, but additional space is already needed to accommodate the expanding youth, teen, adult and senior programs and offices for staff more comfortably. The first step is preparing a space needs assessment in order to better evaluate the actual and realistic need and to maximize existing space between the library, Community Services Department and senior groups.



**Wixom Habitat.** Wixom Habitat occupies 292 acres within the City and has the ability to serve both the active and passive recreation needs of the residents as well as preserve a significant amount of environmentally sensitive land. The park offers pathways with interpretive signage, which are planned to be extended along with additional programming to enhance enjoyment of the natural features and environment that the Habitat provides. The City should continue to work with Oakland County and/or the Walled Lake School District toward implementation of the trail system master plan. Such collaboration may help to secure funding.



To ensure proper protection of the natural features, these areas should be distinctively separate from the preservation areas that are dedicated exclusively to passive recreation use. If a connection is desired, it should, at most, be in the form of a pathway link. The City may even determine that it be classified with a different park name to better identify the two different types of facilities provided. Playground equipment, athletic fields, and potentially a community pool are all attractive recreation options. Finally, park enhancements should be encouraged including installation of additional benches along the pathways, landscaping and regular maintenance.

**Wixom Road Pocket Park.** This park is generally unimproved, and is somewhat encumbered by overhead power lines, but it provides an area for casual recreational needs. Few improvements are proposed here; however, additional passive amenities like benches and picnic tables would encourage more use.

**Loon Lake Fishing/Viewing Platform and Nature Walk.** The City, through a unique partnership between a private developer and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, is planning to perpetually preserve in its current state, approximately 10 acres of wetland. Reserved will be a strip of land connecting Wixom and Loon Lake which will accommodate a pedestrian pathway providing access to a lake viewing and youth fishing platform.

## PROGRAMMING

The Wixom recreation programs are very popular. The great number of programs offered and residents' participation in these programs are indicators that speak very highly on how important the Recreation Programming is to the community. The most popular programs and events offered are identified in *Table 6 Highest Attended Programs and Events*.

Wixom should continue to monitor all existing programs offered and associated fees to decide which should be expanded and which should be reduced or eliminated. A number of programs were cancelled due to low attendance. Further, the programs offered to City residents should be analyzed to make sure that programming keeps pace with trends, technology, community demographics, the economy, and the physical conditions and resources in the City.

**Table 6**

**Highest Attended Programs, Trips and Special Events**

Program	Trips	Special Events
Boater Safety	Detroit Tigers	Circus
Challenger Soccer	Red Wings	Founders Day
ORV Safety	Musical shows	Easter Egg Hunt
T-Ball	Children's Shows	City Wide Garage Sale
Jr. Karate		Movie in the Park
Wild Adventures Camp		Panther Hunt / Fall Fest
.		Monster Mash
Sports Camps		Pumpkin Painting
Yoga		Daddy Daughter Dance
Hunter Safety		Light the Night
		Wine Tastings
		Holiday MarktSummer
		ConcertsHot Blues and
		BBQ
		Annual Tree lighting

*Source: City of Wixom*

The City is just one of many sources of programming for community residents. Because of the number of recreation providers, the City should increase coordination with each of the groups to ensure that the needs of the residents are met. By consolidating programs, the City and other providers can decrease costs and the amount of scheduling conflicts between the different programs.

## **PATHWAYS**

A pathway system adds to the overall quality of life for residents by providing access to various community facilities and parks. This is a source of recreation for residents that bike, jog, and walk, as well as offering other opportunities for recreation and exercise.

The road network has continued to improve throughout the City, and in effect, has offered convenient vehicular access to parks and recreation. Non-motorized pathways are essential when planning for parks and recreation and people of all ages. Children especially need to be able to access the parks without having to rely on automobiles.

In 2008, the City passed a millage for completion of its non-motorized pathway plan and expansion of multi-modal access throughout the community, and continues to work toward providing connections to all destinations including neighborhoods, commercial areas, civic uses and parks and open space.



**WIXOM PARKS AND PATHWAYS MAP**

# ACTION PLAN

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This portion of the plan begins with the goals and objectives that serve as the foundation for specific recommendations, followed by a five year action plan that lists specific tasks to be completed during the term of the Plan. The Action Plan functions as an annual checklist that should be reviewed at the beginning of each year in order to track implementation progress.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives are intended to provide a framework for future decisions related to provision of parks and recreation for the City of Wixom. These strategies are more general in nature than the specific projects/initiatives identified in the Five-Year Action Plan schedule.

### **The City of Wixom will offer parks and recreation facilities that meet the diverse needs and interests of the community**

- Implement applicable Gibson Historical Park master planned improvements
- Implement the additional phases of the Wixom Habitat Plan, including trail system and nature center, potentially in conjunction with Oakland County and the Walled Lake School District
- Explore other passive recreation and educational uses at the Habitat
- Increase the number of and improve the quality of soccer and baseball fields within the City
- Investigate acquisition of property for future facilities and athletic fields, as part of the redevelopment of the former Ford Wixom Assembly Plant site, or as other opportunities arise
- Consider the feasibility of construction and expansion of outdoor/indoor recreation facilities such as an aquatic complex, skateboard park, etc.
- Evaluate and consider the feasibility of lighting outdoor recreation areas
- Evaluate the feasibility of park development opportunities on the west side of the Wixom Habitat
- Expand bike path and trailways for Wixom and interconnect with other communities

### **The City of Wixom will offer high quality parks, recreation facilities and open space areas that are well-maintained and ensure a pleasant experience for users**

- Improve barrier free accessibility of the City's park and recreation facilities through accessible pathways and equipment to meet accessibility standards
- Pursue the paving of parking lots to improve accessibility
- Continue the installation of entrance/directional/interpretive signage at all the parks that is consistent with City signage
- Incorporate feasible enhancements at park entrances and throughout

- Continue on-going maintenance and equipment replacement at all parks on a life cycle basis

**The City of Wixom will offer a variety of recreation programs and events that promote a high quality of life for residents and encourage interaction of its residents**

- Incorporate additional historic interpretation programs to showcase the City's historic resources
- Expand programming and community events for City residents of all ages
- Continue to evaluate and modify programs based on City interest and trends
- Coordinate with other recreation providers to prevent duplication of services and avoid unnecessary competition

**The City of Wixom will increase the opportunity for enjoyment and appreciation of the City's natural resources**

- Implement the additional phases of the Wixom Habitat plan, including trail system and nature center, potentially in conjunction with Oakland County and the Walled Lake School District
- Consider other passive recreation facilities at the Wixom Habitat that would educate and increase appreciation for the resource such as a nature center
- Expand programming for environmental and natural features education utilizing local parks such as Lyon Oaks and the Wixom Habitat
- Expand the City's pathway system to increase access to park and natural areas and to link to other communities' pathway systems
- Increase coordination between Parks and Recreation Commission and the Planning Commission when new residential developments offer open space and pathways to ensure it connects with the overall system
- Capitalize on new opportunities and methods for open space preservation
- Develop a Loon Lake viewing and fishing platform

**The City of Wixom will enhance and preserve its historical resources in order to capture the City's past for appreciation and enjoyment into the future**

- Continue to implement construction and renovation plans for the Gibson Historical Park including improved accessibility and parking and the development of an artifact storage facility
- Incorporate additional historic interpretation programs to showcase the City's historic resources such as the cemetery
- Expand the City's pathway system to increase access to historical resources

**The City of Wixom will develop an interconnected and accessible park system that continues beyond its boundaries**

- Finish implementation of the City's pathway plan
- Link park facilities and key points of interest to create a linear park system throughout the City

- Utilize road, utility and railroad corridors
- Incorporate the City pathway system into regional networks of abutting communities

**The City of Wixom will establish a regular system of cooperation with other recreation providers and government entities in order to maximize recreation benefits for its residents**

- Maintain open communication with abutting communities for joint venture opportunities on larger improvement projects and regional recreation demands
- Coordinate with regional governmental agencies such as Oakland County for opportunities to partner on projects and share facilities
- Join efforts with other neighboring and or regional groups to pursue grant funding

**The City of Wixom will effectively and efficiently implement the recommendations of this plan**

- Consider the feasibility of a special recreation millage to assist in funding projects
- Explore grant funding opportunities for improvement projects
- Organize fund raising for park enhancement projects
- Coordinate the Five-Year Action Plan with the City's capital improvement program
- Work with City boards and commissions to consider parks and recreation in development proposals and City plans

## **FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN TABLE**

The Action Plan Table for the City of Wixom provides a five-year implementation checklist for the Community Services Department, the Parks and Recreation Commission and all others involved in park and recreation planning. It is intended to be used as a working document for daily use and referral by the City.

The Action Plan Table organizes the items identified in the Analysis and those needed to accomplish the above-stated Goals and Objectives. It not only helps to remind the City of planned projects but also to match those projects to the City's budget and priorities. Included for each item within the Action Plan are rough cost estimates and potential funding sources to consider.

The cost estimates are based on general assumptions and construction costs for similar facilities in the Midwest, but the actual costs may vary significantly due to site-specific design details. Rough, preliminary costs are provided to help the City budget for improvements, but will need to be verified through engineering plans and studies before any capital projects are actually conducted.

Also to help the City budget for improvements, strategies are organized by year, with ongoing tasks listed separately. However, the order may change due to scheduling conflicts or budgetary constraints, which is why it is suggested that the Action Plan be reviewed annually to ensure it is current and feasible.

**Table 7**  
**Five-Year Action Plan Table**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>2018</b>		
<b>Gilbert C. Willis Park:</b> Improvements including ballfields, fencing, paving, entrances, and other amenities	TBD based on extent of improvements	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<b>Gibson Historical Park:</b> Continue implementation of the park master plan including improved restroom accessibility and development of the grounds	\$65,000	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<b>Sibley Square Park:</b> Construct new restroom pavilion	\$150,000	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<b>Wixom Habitat:</b> Begin implementation of phase 2 and phase 3 of the trail system master plan	\$320,000	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund, Oakland County, Walled Lake School District
<b>Wixom Civic Center Park:</b> Improvements to landscaping, playground, equipment and other amenities.	\$10,000	General fund
<b>System-Wide:</b> Develop plan to upgrade existing soccer fields	\$5,000-8,000	Grant funding, fund raising, private donations, general fund
<b>System-Wide:</b> Develop Subarea Plans for all City Parks	\$10,000	General fund, private donations
<b>System-Wide:</b> Determine the feasibility of new recreation facilities in the City such as a new multi-purpose center and/or aquatic facility	Staff time	General fund
<b>System-Wide:</b> Continue development of the Michigan Airline Trail & other trail improvements.	TBD based on length, topography and environmental features	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund, Oakland County, Walled Lake School District
<b>2019</b>		
<b>Gilbert C. Willis Park:</b> Continue installing park improvements including ballfield improvements, fencing, paving, entrances, and other amenities	TBD based on extent of improvements	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund

**Table 7**  
**Five-Year Action Plan Table**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>Gibson Historical Park:</b> Expand community programming and events to utilize park facilities such as hosting community events on the grounds, offering guided historical tours and beginning a City Garden Club and associated classes at the community garden . Continue park improvements and landscaping of stream on west side of property	Staff time, hire or seek volunteer instructors with historic expertise	General fund
<b>Gunnar Mettala Park:</b> Install irrigation systems for the soccer and ball fields	\$35,000	Grant funding, general fund
<b>Wixom Habitat:</b> Expand programming opportunities at the Habitat to include guided tours and classes to increase awareness and education about the environment	Staff time, hire or seek volunteer instructors	General fund, Oakland County, Walled Lake School District
<b>Wixom Civic Center Park:</b> If appropriate and if concept plan is approved, finalize design and construction plans for upgrades and secure funding	TBD based on the extent of the improvements	General fund, grant funding, bonding, private donations, fund raising
<b>System-Wide:</b> Implement concept plan to upgrade existing soccer fields, explore implementation of additional soccer fields	\$50,000-\$100,000, TBD based on the plan	Grant funding, fund raising, private donations, general fund
<b>System- Wide:</b> Develop Subarea Plans for all City Parks	\$10,000	General Fund, private donations
<b>2020</b>		
<b>Gilbert C. Willis Park:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to facilitate park improvements including fencing, paving, entrances, and other amenities</li> </ul>	TBD based on extent of improvements	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the possibility of converting the southeastern baseball diamond into a soccer field</li> </ul>	TBD	
<b>Wixom Habitat:</b> Complete phase 2 and phase 3 of the trail system plan	\$350,000	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund, Oakland County, Walled Lake School District
<b>System- Wide:</b> Develop Subarea Plans for all City Parks	\$10,000	General Fund, private donations

**Table 7**  
**Five-Year Action Plan Table**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Funding</b>
<b>2021</b>		
<b>Wixom Habitat:</b> Provide nature facility at the Habitat that enhances the appreciation and enjoyment of the natural features such as some type of natural center facility	\$200,000-400,000 depending on the type of facility	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund, Oakland County, Walled Lake School District
<b>Wixom Civic Center Park:</b> Implement skate park concept plan	\$50,000-100,000, TBD based on the plan	Grant funding, fund raising, private donations, general fund
<b>Wixom Civic Center Park:</b> Implement community center expansion and/or upgrades based on approved concept plan	TBD based on the extent of the improvements	General fund, grant funding, bonding, private donations, fund raising
<b>System- Wide:</b> Develop Subarea Plans for all City Parks	\$10,000	General Fund, private donations
<b>2022</b>		
<b>Wixom Habitat:</b> Resurface existing parking lot	\$15,000	General fund
<b>Wixom Civic Center Park:</b> Develop Splash Park / Water Facility / Play Structure	\$300,000 - \$400,000 TBD, based on size and location	General fund, grant funding, bonding, private donations, fund raising
<b>Gibson Historical Park:</b> Move Spencer Barn to the Historical Park	TBD	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<b>Gunnar Mettala Park:</b> Re-build tennis and skate courts	\$100,000	Grant funding, private donations, fund raising, general fund
<b>System-Wide:</b> Update parks and recreation master plan	TBD	General fund
<b>System- Wide:</b> Develop Subarea Plans for all City Parks	\$10,000	General Fund, private donations



# COMMUNITY PROFILE

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This chapter provides a profile of the various socioeconomic characteristics that were reviewed as part of this Plan. It also includes an overview of the community's location, land use and natural features, as they relate to parks and recreation planning.

## REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Wixom is located 25 miles northwest of Detroit in Oakland County. The City contains 9.4 square miles, which were originally incorporated from portions of Commerce and Novi Townships.

## HISTORIC PLACES

There are two historic sites identified on Michigan's Register of Historic places:

- The Wixom-Wire House, or the Tiffin House, which is located at 687 N. Wixom Road. The house was placed on the Register February 10, 1983 and a marker was placed on the site May 7, 1985.
- The South Commerce Burying Ground, or Wixom Cemetery. The site is located at the northwest corner of Wixom and Maple Roads. The cemetery was placed on the State Register on October 23, 1987 and a marker was placed in the cemetery June 28, 1989.



In 1979, a study was conducted to review historically significant buildings in addition to those on the register. Along with several buildings with architectural significance, two additional significant properties were identified:

- The Detroit Finnish Summer Camp Association between Loon Lake and Sun Lakes.
- Gibson Historical Park contains the famous farmhouse built in 1872.
- The City should seek to preserve the sites listed in the 1979 study.

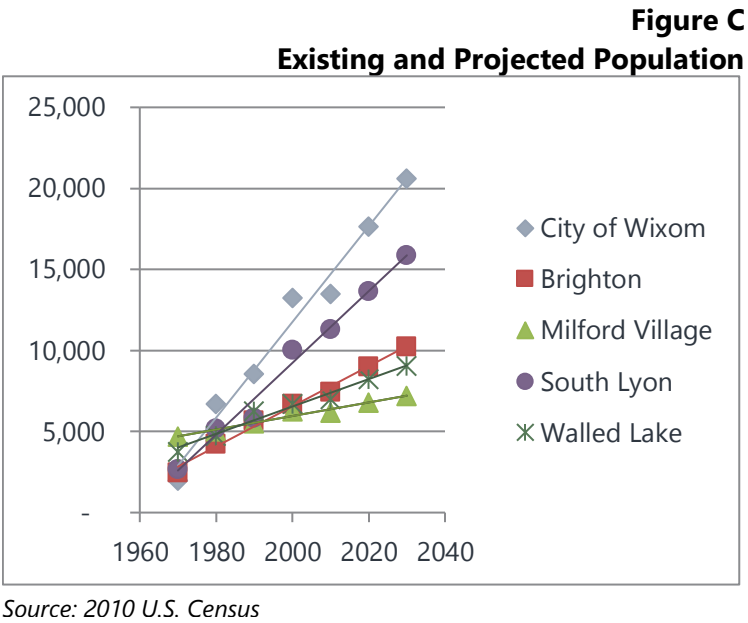
## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

The amount of park facilities and level of recreational programming required in Wixom is a result of demand. An understanding of existing and future demographics helps to identify trends, emerging needs, and deficiencies in the system. This Plan was prepared using the most recent census data available. In Michigan, however, the time between the previous (2000) and current (2010) census

represented a time of economic change that has caused uncertainty in the projections derived from 2000 data. When possible, communities in Southeast Michigan often use mid-decade census figures provided by SEMCOG. Where current predictions were not available or were unreliable, this Plan instead evaluates changing trends rather than specific numbers.

**Population Trends and Projections.** In 2010, the City of Wixom’s population was 13,498, representing only a 2% increase from 2000. While mid-decade census projections anticipated higher growth, the impacts of the Michigan economy, coupled with the loss of the Wixom Ford Assembly Plant impacted the city’s population in ways that were not predicted. Generally speaking, slow population growth means that demands for City services, including parks and recreational facilities will also be less extensive than expected.

Historic population counts from the past several decades were projected to determine population trends. As shown in Figure C, using a straight line projection method, Wixom is projected to gain approximately 53% more residents. This projection assumes that there will be no other limiting factors, such as dwindling land availability, lack of workforce, etc. Regardless, once the economy rebounds, the city stands to continue growing, which means demand for recreational facilities and programs will too.



**Table 8**

**Age Distribution**

	2000	2010	% of Total 2010	SEMCOG 2035	% change 2010-2035
Under 5:	1,130	921	7%	984	7%
Ages 5-17:	2,170	2,502	19%	2,067	-17%
Ages 18-34:	4,601	3,377	25%	3,084	-9%
Ages 35-64:	4,641	5,753	43%	4,701	-18%

**Age Distribution.** As one passes through the various stages of life, recreational

Ages 65+:	721	945	7%	3,545	275%
Total	13,263	13,498		14,381	7%

Source: SEMCOG

needs change, resulting in different facility and programming requirements. *Table 8 Age Distribution* shows the age distribution of Wixom's population for five sectors of the community, which have been grouped according to typical recreational needs. Similar to the mix in 2000, Middle-aged adults (ages 35-64) make up the largest portion of the population in 2010, followed by young adults (ages 18-34) and school age children (ages 5-17). Review of population by sector shows how priorities may shift over time. The consistency in the predominant age brackets between 2000 and 2010 suggests that resident's priorities today are similar to those that existed in 2000. However, this Plan should also consider the breakdown of future populations as well. As shown, the percent of seniors (age 65+) is expected to grow by 275%. They are expected to represent about one-quarter of the population by 2035, which indicates the city should expect strong shifts in recreation demands in the next 25 years.

**Household Size.** In an environment where residential densities remain constant, a changing household size will affect the population density and thus the necessary distribution of parks. The average household size in Wixom has been steadily increasing. In 2010, households contained an average of 2.36 persons.

**Persons with Disabilities.** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 mandates that all public services, including park facilities, be barrier-free. Today, even more emphasis is being placed on providing facilities that are usable by all residents. As the population ages, the proportion with one or more disability generally increases, and this trend is consistent for Wixom. Disabilities include sensory, physical, mental, self-care, go-outside-home, and employment disabilities. This *Table 9 Persons 5 Years and Older With a Disability* shows, for various age categories, the proportion of the non-institutionalized population older than 5 years with one or more disability. As shown, a significant portion of residents are in need of special consideration, whether it is providing barrier-free access, modified building designs, or special programming, these residents may require unique facilities to accommodate their needs.

**Table 9**  
**Persons 5 Years and Older With a Disability**

	Total Residents	Sensory	Physical	Mental	Self-Care	Going Outside the Home	% of Total
Under 18 years	2,046	40	0	38	19	0	1%
18 to 64 years	9,562	244	372	306	38	233	9%
65 years and over	1,045	290	147	84	39	99	5%
TOTAL	13,733	574	519	428	96	332	14%

Source: 2012-2016 ACS 5-Year Estimates

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**Land Use.** Parks and recreation facilities should be located within proximity to residential concentrations or near public gathering places. The City is bisected by the Grand Trunk Western railroad, and land to the north is generally residential in type, with industrial and commercial operations dominating land to the south. As such, a majority of parks are located in the northern portions of the city.

The City's Village Center Area is located near Wixom Road and Pontiac Trail. Significant new commercial and office development has occurred along Pontiac Trail in the historic downtown area and several large residential neighborhoods are under construction immediately to the north. The City's governmental complex is located within the VCA and adds

institutional uses to the land use mix.

The City has been able to maintain a strong tax base and the second lowest tax rate in Oakland County due to its significant concentration of industrial operations, located primarily south of Pontiac Trail. However, with the recent closure of the Wixom Ford Plant, the city is in transition as it plans for the future of this currently vacant site.

**Transportation.** Residents in Wixom are provided convenient access to I-96 via the recently reconstructed Beck Road and Wixom Road interchanges. The two most heavily traveled regional transportation corridors, Wixom Road and Pontiac Trail, essentially divide the City into quadrants. Many residents rely on public streets for biking and walking connections to area parks. In response to demand, the City developed a bike path plan, passed a millage, and has begun to develop pathway connections in an attempt to improve safety and connectivity into residential neighborhoods.

Regional trail systems are continually being expanded in Oakland County, many of which use abandoned rail lines. In Wixom, some of these lines remain active to serve industrial areas within and around the City, so alternative connections need to be provided elsewhere.

**Natural Features.** Natural features can provide passive recreational opportunities. The topography of the City is gently rolling, with the highest elevations in the northernmost and southeast portions of



the community and the lowest elevations in the vicinity of Loon and Gallagher lakes. These lakes and their associated wetlands are connected by the Norton Creek, the community's primary waterway which flows to the north and empties in to the Huron River east of Milford. The creek connects the two major parklands in the City, Lyon Oaks, an Oakland County park, and Wixom Habitat, a City natural preservation and recreation area. The City's most significant wetlands are generally related to this waterway and its associated lakes.

The City contains large expanses of poorly drained soils that are of particular concern with respect to parks and recreation planning. From one perspective, since these areas are often unsuitable for building they may be appropriate for resource protection and/or recreation. However, the same characteristics that make these areas unsuitable for building also create severe limitations with respect to development for recreation. Well-drained land is needed for sports fields, playgrounds, golf courses, and other active use areas.

# TRANSMITTAL LETTERS

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The letters on the following pages were sent along with a copy of the adopted Wixom Parks and Recreation Master Plan, in accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management Guidelines.