

▶ Charter Township of Highland Recreation Plan

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Community Description.....	3
Administrative Structure.....	21
Recreation Inventory	23
Public Participation & Needs Assessment.....	45
Goals and Action Program	51
Appendix and Supporting Documents	61

Introduction

Highland Township wishes to improve the quality of life for the Township’s existing and future residents by ensuring that adequate recreation facilities and programs are available. The Charter Township of Highland Recreation Plan articulates a vision for parks and recreation, providing a guide for recreation planning and development over the next five years. Once adopted, the Plan is the official document to be used by the communities to guide decisions regarding parks and recreation.

What the Plan Contains

The Charter Township of Highland Recreation Plan follows the format suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) in the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans (IC 1924, revised 01/27/2006). It begins with a brief overview of the Plan, as well as a **Description of the Planning Process** which was used to develop the Plan. The next chapter provides a **Community Description** with information on both the social and physical characteristics of the community. The Township’s **Administrative Structure** is described next, including information on funding and budget. A detailed **Recreation Inventory**, which follows, describes the existing parks and recreational facilities of the Township as well as regional and state facilities. The **Public Participation** portion of the Plan presents the input received from local officials, staff, and Township residents, which helped in formulating the Plan’s **Goals and Objectives**. The **Action Program** then provides an action plan and strategies for implementation. Finally, the **Supporting Documents** include the resolution and notices documenting the Plan’s adoption by the Highland Township Board.

Planning Process

The process used to create the Plan consists of three phases: 1. background studies; 2. evaluation; and 3. plan development:

- 1. Background Studies.** This phase involved gathering and updating data from census data, existing documents, plans, and field observations. The data is organized into two main categories: community description and recreation inventory.
- 2. Evaluation.** The second phase in the planning process evaluated and analyzed the data compiled to determine recreation facility deficiencies and needs. Public input to assess recreational needs was also sought at this level. A written survey and a public meeting were conducted to receive residents’ opinions and ideas for the park and recreation system. Input was also requested from Township officials and the members of the Parks and Recreation Committee.
- 3. Plan Development.** The last phase in the process involves plan development and adoption. Based on the deficiencies and needs, goals and objectives were formulated and a specific action plan developed. Strategies to implement the Plan are also discussed.

The following table illustrates the planning process and how it corresponds to the MDNR’s suggested format described earlier.

MDNR Suggested Format	
Background Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Description of Planning Process• Community Description• Administrative Structure• Recreation Inventory
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Needs Assessment and Public Participation
Plan Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals and Objectives• Action Program• Supporting Documents

This Recreation Plan was developed with input from local officials, staff, and residents. A questionnaire was distributed to park users at regularly-scheduled sporting events, and posted on the Township’s website (www.highlandtwp.com). A public meeting was

also conducted to encourage participation and generate ideas for improving the community's parks and recreation system. Input from local officials and members of the Parks and Recreation Committee were also used. The Plan was recommended for adoption at the Committee's meeting of April 2, 2009. The Plan was then adopted by the Township Board on April 8, 2009, following a public hearing. The Plan was also available for public review and comment at the Township Offices for one month prior to the public hearing.

This Plan will be used as a guide for improving recreation opportunities for the five-year period of 2009 to 2014. If additional actions are necessary prior to the expiration of this Plan, the Township will amend the Plan and justify the additional actions.