



2022 Annual Report Parks & Recreation Commission Ypsilanti, Michigan

INTRODUCTION

The Parks & Recreation Commission of the City of Ypsilanti is empowered by Chapter 78 of the Code of Ordinances to make recommendations concerning the recreation and parks needs of the city, including how park improvement funds are used; update the parks and recreation master plan; review and approve "Adopt-A-Park" applications; expand park and recreational opportunities through commission sponsored events when appropriate.

In 2021, the Parks & Recreation Commission's membership was as follows:

Evan Sweet (chair through August)	Julia Collins (resigned June)
Dillon Navarre (chair)	Brian Merlos (vice chair)
Ben Connor-Barrie (vice-chair)	Blake Harrity (appointed July)
Cathy Thoburn (secretary)	Lola Malmer
	Tarik Fermin

Per Chapter 78- 49(6), the Commission must provide an annual report to City Council.

OPERATIONS

The Commission held regular monthly meetings from March onward during 2022 in a hybrid format, with Commissioners present and public participation welcomed via Zoom. The Commission was regularly updated by the Friends of the Rutherford Pool, Parkridge Community Center, and the Friends of the Ypsilanti Senior Center, and also heard periodic updates on the status of the Peninsular Dam removal project. In the summer, the PRC heard from staff regarding a plan for better promoting the events in the parks and making information about the parks easier to access. Huron River Day, an event that the Commission traditionally supports, was held in the fall in partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council and funding from mParks and MDHHS.

The Commission reviewed proposals for work in the parks from several groups. This year, that included the potential naming of an open area at the north-east corner of Spring Street and the Huron River, placement of a memorial bench in Prospect Park honoring Grace Sweeney and Pete Murdock, and the naming of the baseball field in Waterworks Park in honor of William Anhut and his role in opening Little League to players of all genders. Volunteers performed multiple clean-up days throughout the parks system.

Included in this year's annual report is the implementation matrix from the 2020 Parks Master Plan.

LOOKING FORWARD

The Parks and Recreation Commission looks forward to future progress on the following projects and goals:

- Progress on the removal of the Peninsular Dam and the plans for the expanded Peninsular Park
- Capital budget review on parks improvements
- Progress with Prospect Park and Frog Island improvements

ACTION

The Parks and Recreation Commission adopted this report at its regular December meeting and approved transmittal to City Council.

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
GOAL 1: ENSURE PARKS ARE ATTRACTIVE AND ACCESSIBLE				
Objective 1: Ensure safe routes to parks and recreation facilities from neighborhoods, schools, and business districts, for people of all ability levels.				
Frog Island, Freighthouse & Market Plaza				
Construct pedestrian crossing from Frog Island parking to Freighthouse at Market Street.	\$	★	✓	
Riverside Park				
Install bollards along drive (both sides) to prevent unauthorized access.	\$	★	✓	Improved signage 2022.
Construct ADA-compliant barrier-free access from street sidewalk at north and south ends of park.	\$	★	✓	South access complete 2017
Recreation Park				
Connect walking track to sidewalk along Woods Road at both east and west ends.	\$	★	✓	Feasibility study complete 2021
Waterworks				
Construct sidewalk along Catherine Street frontage; continue to Factory Street.	\$	★	✓	
Haab Brothers Memorial Park				
Construct sidewalk on both sides, to Factory Street.	\$	★	✓ ✓	
North Bay Park				
Construct accessible crossing of driveway north of bridge over I-94, and sidewalk from driveway to bridge.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	Completed 2021
Objective 2: Ensure each park has a visible presence, entrance, and sign on adjacent rights-of-way.				
All Parks				
Design and place consistent signage about rules, hours, and other information for each park.	\$	★	✓	Complete 2022

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Riverside Park				
Install signage at Riverside Arts Center entrance; improve visibility.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	The RAC ownership has been transferred to the Riverside Arts Center nonprofit as of 2022. Any signage updates must be taken in partnership.
Frog Island				
Place signage at center parking lot entrance.	\$	★	✓	
Relocate north entrance signage as part of 2020 project.	\$	★	✓	Completed 2020
Parkridge				
Landscape and improve access at south Hawkins entrance.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	Removable bollard installed to maintain pedestrian access while excluding vehicles in 2022.
Peninsular				
Repair and consider reorienting the LeForge Street signage to be legible to vehicular traffic.	\$	★	✓	
Prospect				
Install signage at the Prospect/Cross corner as well as the Oak/Prospect corner, consistent with signage at other locations, to distinguish this location as a public park.	\$	★	✓	Sign installed on Prospect frontage midblock
Install secondary park identification signage at the parking lot on the southeast corner of the park, near the parking lot.	\$	★	✓	
The Spanish-American War Memorial, Edith Hefley Tot Lot, Ainsworth Park, Carrie R Mattingly Tot Lot, and the Haab Brothers Memorial Park				
Install signage indicating that these are public parks, consistent with signage at other locations.	\$\$	★	✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Pavilions, gazebos, and other rentable or reservable facilities.				
Install small signs or notices advertising the reservation system.	\$	★★	✓	
Nonmotorized connections				
Evaluate City-owned parcels for their ability to serve as nonmotorized connections between neighborhoods.	\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Provide signage for those parcels determined to be needful to serve a nonmotorized transportation purpose.	\$	★	✓	
Objective 3: Ensure that each park presents a well-maintained and clean image.				
Improve maintenance, either through engaging additional volunteers, adding staff time, or a combination of both.				Staff added 2021-22
Regular annual or seasonal inspections should be performed with an eye for cosmetic and other issues that can be addressed by volunteers.	\$	★★★	()	
Regular scraping and repainting of structures and facilities, either by volunteers or as part of an annual cleanup event, should be encouraged.	\$	★★★	()	
Integrate volunteer efforts into long-term landscaping plans.	\$	★★★	()	
Improve waste collection in all parks.				
Regularly evaluate location and number of trash receptacles; eliminate those in low-volume or inaccessible areas and add more where need seems to be greater.	\$	★	()	Added additional waste cans in 2021 Added recycling cans in 2022.
Engage volunteers or service groups for periodic litter cleanup days.	\$	★★★	()	
Encourage special events to make use of non-profit or service organizations in post-event clean-up efforts.	\$	★★★	()	
Encourage special events to coordinate with ZeroWaste efforts.	\$	★★★	()	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Objective 4: Ensure all parks, park shelters, trails, and other facilities are physically accessible to people of all ages and ability levels.				
Riverside Park				
Provide barrier-free access at north and west entrances.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Link pavilion to trails.	\$	★	✓	
Mark additional barrier-free spaces in parking areas.	\$	★	✓	
When reconstructing trails, bring to current barrier-free standards.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Frog Island Park				
Provide barrier-free access at north, east (center) and south entrances.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	North 50% and south complete.
Improve parking area; provide additional barrier-free spaces.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	Grant awarded 2021
When reconstructing trails, bring to current barrier-free standards.	\$\$\$	★	✓	Trail improved 2020
Recreation Park				
Provide additional barrier-free spaces near facilities, such as playgrounds, Senior Center, and the Rutherford Pool.	\$	★	✓	
When reconstructing trails, bring to current barrier-free standards.	\$\$	★	✓	
Upgrade play area and surfacing to barrier-free standards.	\$\$	★★	✓	
Pave walking path and connect to sidewalk system to the south	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	Feasibility study complete 2021
Parkridge Park				
Provide barrier-free access at south Hawkins entrance.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Link pavilion to trails.	\$\$	★	✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
When reconstructing trails, bring to current barrier-free standards.	\$\$\$	★	✓	Frog Island 2020.
Upgrade play area and surfacing to barrier-free standards.	\$\$\$	★★	✓	Complete 2020
Candy Cane Park				
Provide barrier-free access at south and north entrances.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Provide handicap placard parking.	\$\$	★	✓	On-street space signed 2021.
Create a paved path linking north & south ends of park, pavilion, and play area.	\$\$	★	✓	Sidewalk constructed from street to play area 2020.
Upgrade play area and surfacing to barrier-free standards; provide barrier-free access.	\$\$\$	★★	✓	Complete 2020
Peninsular Park				
Provide barrier-free access from LeForge.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
When constructing or reconstructing trails, bring to current barrier-free standards.	\$	★	✓	
Link pavilion to trails.	\$	★	✓	
Improve parking area; provide barrier-free spaces.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Provide barrier-free access to dock	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Prospect Park				
Provide barrier-free access from entrances to south pavilion and link to trail.	\$\$	★	✓	
Improve parking area at south-east corner; provide barrier-free spaces.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Work with YCS to upgrade the play area and its surfacing to barrier-free standards.	\$\$	★★	✓	Grant application submitted 2022.

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Pave sidewalk along south side of Oak, Vought to Charles	\$\$	★	✓	Grant application submitted 2022.
Waterworks Park				
Provide sidewalk along east side of Catherine.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Improve parking area; provide barrier-free spaces.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
GOAL 2: PROVIDE PARKS THAT MEET YPSILANTI'S RECREATION NEEDS				
Objective 1: Ensure existing facilities can continue to meet the needs of park users.				
Develop a parks-specific maintenance and capital improvement plan, to be integrated with the larger City-wide Capital Improvements Plan.	\$\$	★	✓	Development underway 2022.
Continue to perform regular, scheduled safety inspections of playground and sports equipment, repairing, removing, or replacing equipment as necessary and as resources permit.	\$	★	()	
Perform annual safety inspections of picnic pavilions.	\$	★	()	
Perform annual or seasonal inspections of electrical systems used in festivals and events.	\$	★	()	
Institute a "move in and move out" checklist for large events, such as Class III and IV events.	\$	★	✓	
Work with Friends groups, Adopters, and regular event-holders to help ensure the ongoing maintenance of facilities.	\$	★★★	()	
Address ongoing stormwater issues in Riverside, Frog Island, and Recreation Parks.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Clarify boundary between Parkridge Park and Perry School.	\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Consider installing an intergenerational playground in Recreation Park, adjacent to and with the aid of the Senior Center.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Consider installing a dog park in Waterworks Park.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Work with the Ypsi-Arbor Little League to develop plans for continuing use of Recreation Park and Candy Cane Park, including scoreboard installation or replacement, fencing improvements, lighting improvements, and ballfield improvements.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Continue to work with the adjoining public schools to ensure that children have safe, accessible, and appropriately challenging places to play during the school year and year round.	\$\$	★★	()	
Continue to expand the network of shared use paths and connectors.	\$\$	★	()	
Objective 2: Ensure that parks are safe and appear to be safe.				
Lighting should be consistently provided in parks.				
Community Parks				
Provide lighting under pavilions, at entrances, and along paths at Riverside, Frog Island, Recreation, and Parkridge Parks.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	Lighting added at Frog Island 2021.
Neighborhood Parks				
Provide lighting under pavilions, at entrances, and along paths; these lights can be motion-sensitive, photocell, on a timer, or a combination.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Mini-parks				
Evaluate the need for lighting on a per-park basis.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Improve sightlines				
Clear brush at entrances, bends in trails, and at park borders.	\$\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
When renovating or replacing pavilions, maintain at least three open sides.	\$\$\$	★	()	
Redesign area at top of Riverside Arts Center/Riverside Park stairway to improve visibility and feelings of safety.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	The RAC ownership has been transferred to the Riverside Arts Center nonprofit as of 2022. Any updates must be taken in partnership.

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Address vandalism issues promptly and thoroughly.	\$	★★	()	Ongoing
Create standards for amplified sound in Frog Island and other parks to ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods.	\$	★★	✓	
Objective 3: Provide upgrades to the parks that increase their long-term durability and reduce operation costs.				
When renovating pavilions or other structures in the parks, consider long-term maintenance and operating costs as well as the initial cost.	\$	★	()	
Consider replacing decommissioned restrooms with accessible and durable facilities, either permanent or seasonal.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Use landscaping to beautify the parks, help to provide shade, improve the ecology of the parks, and offset stormwater impacts.				
Remove invasive species, and replace with gardened spaces.	\$	★★★	✓ ✓	
Pursue streambank restoration.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Investigate slope stabilization plantings for Frog Island, Riverside, Peninsular, and Parkridge Parks.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Work to install shade tree plantings adjacent to play and picnic areas.	\$\$	★★★	✓	
Use raingardens to control stormwater and drainage issues; work with skilled volunteers to install and maintain.	\$\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Plant trees to replace those lost in the past decade.	\$\$	★★	()	Ongoing
Objective 4: Provide upgrades to the parks that increase recreation opportunities.				
Ensure each park has sufficient benches, picnic tables, waste cans, dog waste stations, lighting, barrier-free parking, and bike parking.	\$\$	★★★	()	
Ensure each park has sufficient trees.	\$\$	★★	()	
Ensure each park's attractions are accessible.	\$\$	★	()	
Riverside				

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Pursue implementation of the vision proposed in the 2008 Parks & Recreation Master Plan, particularly stormwater improvements and trail repair, and consider updating the site plan.	\$\$\$	★★	()	
Frog Island				
Pursue implementation of the vision proposed in the 2008 Parks & Recreation Master Plan, and consider updating the site plan.	\$\$\$	★★	()	
Recreation Park				
Pave walking path around park; ensure that the path width is a consistent ten feet wide and that the grade meets accessibility standards.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Resurface former tennis courts- currently basketball courts.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Work to improve stormwater drainage in the open playing fields to the south of the Rutherford Pool and baseball fields.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Repair or remove nonfunctional lighting poles.	\$	★	✓	
Repair or replace outfield fencing, work with Little League to ensure adequate fencing is provided.	\$	★★★	✓	
Stripe additional barrier-free spaces in both parking lots.	\$	★	✓	
Parkridge Park				
Install picnic tables &/or benches and shade trees near the play area in southwest area of the park.	\$\$	★★★	✓	
Update the play area; expand the playground facilities and ensure they are accessible and appeal to a broad range of ages and abilities.	\$\$	★★★	✓ ✓	Updated summer 2020
Finish and landscape the parking area off of Monroe Street, or close curb cut and use as pedestrian entrances.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Create ADA-accessible connections to Monroe Street via paved pathways.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Provide needed repairs to ballfield, basketball courts, tennis courts, and pavilion; remove disused sand volleyball court.	\$	★	✓ ✓	Volleyball court removed 2021; basketball court repaired 2021. Funding obtained for softball field repairs.
Candy Cane				
Install an accessible pathway through Candy Cane, linking the pavilion, the existing sidewalk to the north, the playground, and the sidewalk to the south.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓	
Replace play equipment.	\$\$	★★★	✓	Complete 2020
Work with Little League to provide needed updates to the ballfield.	\$	★★★	✓ ✓	
Work with partners to mark historic Little League/Carolyn King events.	\$	★★★	✓	
Peninsular Park				
Remove the dam.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Create a barrier-free walking path along the Huron River.	\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Install an accessible canoe/kayak launch.	\$\$\$	★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Work with local stakeholders such as volunteer groups to install functional plantings, such as butterfly/pollinator gardens and raingardens, as well as interpretive and educational signage.	\$	★★★	✓ ✓	
Following dam removal, work to restore the newly exposed impoundment area.	\$\$	★★★	✓ ✓	
Seek a private partner for re-use of the historic Powerhouse.	\$	★	()	
Repair the access to the concrete dock downstream of the dam, and add an accessible path to the dock.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Prospect Park				
Work with YCS to ensure the play equipment is maintained and replaced as needed.	\$	★	✓	
Continue to work with YCS on other projects to improve the park's functionality as both a school playground and a community playground.	\$\$	★★★	()	
Work with the skate park volunteer group on maintenance, improvement, and expansion projects.	\$	★★★	()	
Repair the existing basketball courts.	\$	★	✓	
Repair the pathways and ensure they are linked throughout the park.	\$	★	✓	
Waterworks Park				
Continue to work with the Ypsilanti American Little League and private partners to renovate the existing ball diamond.	\$	★★★	()	
Continue to work with the Ann Arbor Area Disc Induced Sports Club (A3 Disc) to ensure the disc golf course is maintained.	\$	★★★	()	
Work with area stakeholders and potential partners to explore the need for, design of, and potential fundraising mechanisms for a dog park.	\$\$	★★★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Tot Lots and Mini-Parks				
Maintain and replace play equipment as needed.	\$\$	★★★	()	
Border-to-Border Trail				
Repair and maintain the portions of the Border to Border trail that run through Frog Island and Riverside Parks.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓	Frog Island pathway replacement complete 2020.
Shift portions of the Border to Border trail that are split between bike lanes and sidewalks to shared-use paths wherever possible.	\$\$\$	★	✓ ✓ ✓	
Link the Border-to-Border Trail with the parks and to the nonmotorized transportation system.	\$\$\$	★	()	Ongoing

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Continue to expand the City's bike lane and trail system, linking parks and the B2B Trail to the City's commercial and cultural centers, as well as to regional resources.	\$\$\$	★★	()	Ongoing
Huron River Shoreline				
Continue assembling access and/or conservation easements on private shoreline.	\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
Pursue opportunities to construct a riverfront trail system as they arise.	\$\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
GOAL 3: WORK WITH VOLUNTEERS AND ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES TO CITY RESIDENTS				
Objective 1: Improve relationships with entities that provide recreation opportunities within the City.				
Continue to formalize relationships wherein another entity is operating a city-owned facility.	\$	★★★	()	MOU with the Senior Center adopted 2021
Continue to help provide resources to established partners, such as expertise, historical information, and joint purchasing where feasible.	\$\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
Work with adjacent schools, daycare centers, and other institutions in parks improvements and maintenance.	\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
Coordinate with neighboring communities and the County to implement regional planning goals.	\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
Objective 2: Encourage volunteerism.				
Strengthen and streamline the Adopt-A-Park program.	\$	★★★	()	Ongoing
Create a volunteer manager position, or merge volunteer management responsibilities with a new position that will also coordinate Special Events.	\$	★★	✓ ✓	
Objective 3: Continue to improve the Special Events and park reservations program.				
Increase the visibility of and publicize the Special Events program.	\$	★★	✓	

PROJECT	COST	VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT	TIME TO COMPLETE	STATUS
Ensure that the City website can be a resource to those seeking to volunteer, to reserve a park, or simply to find a park or an event.	\$	★★	()	Ongoing. City website significantly updated in 2022 for better parks & recreation communications.
Continue to work with well-established partners to support and promote recreation in the City.	\$	★★★	()	Ongoing