



2022-2026 Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Village of Lake Orion

Oakland County, Michigan

ADOPTED - January 24, 2022



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Adopted by the Recreation Advisory Committee on January 18, 2022

Adopted by the Village Council on January 24, 2022..



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Acknowledgments

Thank you.

The participation and cooperation of community leaders, residents and stakeholders in the preparation of the 2022-2026 Lake Orion Parks and Recreation Master Plan is greatly appreciated and we thank everyone who participated in its development. The content in this Plan reflects the continued collaboration between Village residents, stakeholders, the Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC), and Village appointed and elected officials.

In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of:

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01 Introduction





Welcome

Welcome to the Village of Lake Orion's 2022 - 2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This Plan reflects a vision for the future of Lake Orion's parks and recreation facilities: their operations, maintenance, and enhancements for the next several years. It serves as a roadmap for future recreation facilities and programs by considering existing parks and programs in and around the Village and the demand for additional or improved recreation facilities.

This Plan also forms the continued basis for potential recreation grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and other agencies or foundations. Lake Orion's Plan was prepared in accordance with MDNR's *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans*.

Most importantly, this Plan acts as Lake Orion's roadmap for community building as it relates to parks and recreation over the next five+ years.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

KEY STEPS

This 2022 - 2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared with technical assistance from McKenna, a planning and design consulting firm, and with the active involvement of the Village's Administration and the Lake Orion Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC).

Citizen input through an online survey and public hearing also contributed to this Plan. Following several discussions and adoption by the RAC, the 2022 - 2026 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was ultimately submitted to Lake Orion's Village Council for adoption. Throughout the process, all meetings were open to the public. Notices were posted beforehand, and when required, advertised in the newspaper, as provided by the Open Meetings Act, PA 267 of 1976, as amended.



Project Initiation

Kick-off meeting with the Village; schedule and work plan finalization.

Review of the 2017 - 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and other community recreation documents.



Identify & Quantify

Parks and recreation facility inventory by McKenna to catalogue amenities and update accessibility assessments.

Documentation of updated demographics and community profile.

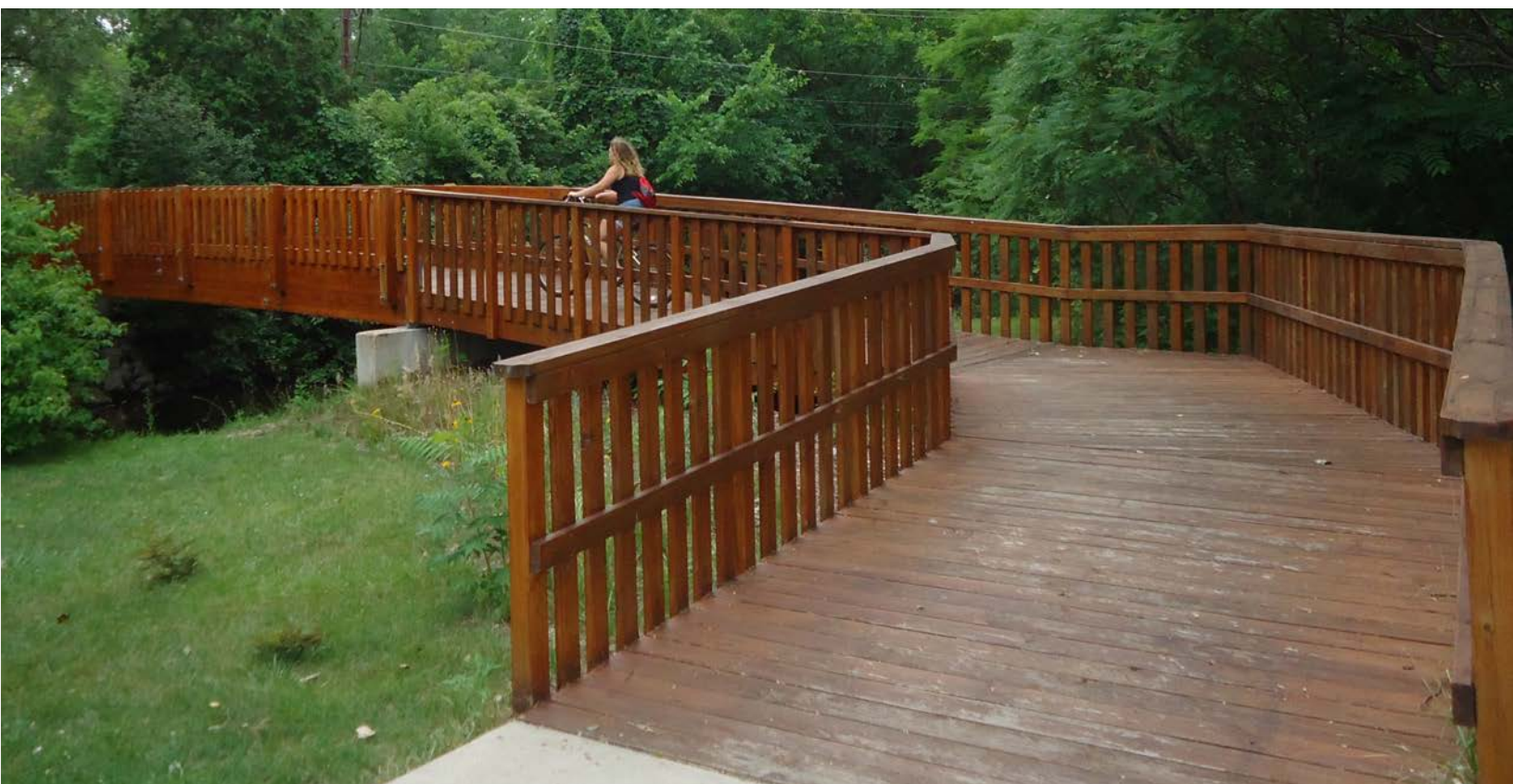
IMPORTANCE OF PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEMS

The Village of Lake Orion prides itself on its park and recreation system, as a healthy system affords residents and visitors with a higher quality of life standard. The benefits of creating and maintaining a quality parks and recreation system include:

- Greater opportunities for a healthy lifestyle;
- Rises in adjacent property values;
- Encouragement of economic development, which in turn, can further attract investment;
- Natural beauty;
- Environmental gains and benefits;
- Visitor attraction; and
- Sense of place and identity.

The intent of this Plan is to afford all members of Lake Orion the opportunity to participate and enjoy in the Village's parks and recreation facilities and for these facilities to act as gathering spaces for community building and development.





02 Community Snapshot





Welcome to Lake Orion

The Village of Lake Orion is located in the northern portion of Oakland County, within Southeast Michigan. While part of the larger Detroit Metropolitan Area and facing growth pressures, the Village has continued to grow in a sustainable manner.

Established in 1859 on the shore of Lake Orion, the Village stands apart from other communities, boasting a historic downtown, well-established residential neighborhoods, and natural resources with abundant lakefront and rivers.

Surrounded by Orion Township, the Village of Oxford is due north and the City of Auburn Hills is located to the south. The primary transport route is State Highway 24 (M-24). This Community Snapshot chapter presents the social composition of Lake Orion, together with the administrative structure and funding mechanisms, as these fields strongly inform the realm of possibilities for park and recreation facilities.



COMMUNITY PROFILE

BACKGROUND

Lake Orion's current and changing demographics and trends provide an understanding to the types of recreation facilities and amenities that are needed. The figures used in this Plan comes from the 2010 and 2020 US Census Bureau, as well as the 2019, 5-year American Community Survey (ACS).

POPULATION

The Village of Lake Orion has experienced a slight decrease in population, approximately 3.3 percent between 2010 and 2020, which accounted for a total population loss of 97 persons. As a whole, Oakland County saw a 5.7 percent population growth, for a total addition of 72,033 persons. The population loss could be attributed in part to a higher demand by younger generations to live in a more urban and suburban area, such as Rochester Hills, Pontiac, Farmington Hills, and other municipalities that are closer to Detroit. That said, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) projects that the Village's population is set to increase to 3,295 persons (increase of 419 persons within the next 25 years).

Table 1. Population, 2010-2020

Community	2000	2010	2020	Population Change (2010-2020)	Percentage Change (2010-2020)
Village of Lake Orion	2,729	2,973	2,876	↓ 97	↓ 3.4%
Orion Township	33,463	35,065	38,206	↑ 3,141	↑ 8.2%
Ortonville	1,529	1,442	1,376	↓ 66	↓ 4.8%
Oxford	3,646	3,436	3,492	↑ 56	↑ 1.6%
Oakland County	1,194,156	1,202,362	1,274,395	↑ 72,033	↑ 5.7%
State of Michigan	9,938,444	9,889,024	10,077,331	↑ 188,307	↑ 1.9%

Source: US Census Bureau : 2010 and 2020

Table 2. Age Groups in Lake Orion, 2019

Age Group	Percentage of the Population
Under 5 years	6.9%
5 to 9 years	4.2%
10 to 14 years	5.2%
15 to 19 years	5.0%
20 to 24 years	3.1%
25 to 29 years	9.5%
30 to 34 years	7.6%
35 to 39 years	5.8%
40 to 44 years	4.9%
45 to 49 years	7.3%
50 to 54 years	8.6%
55 to 59 years	4.6%
60 to 64 years	8.4%
65 to 69 years	6.0%
70 to 74 years	2.5%
75 to 79 years	3.8%
80 to 84 years	1.9%
85 years and over	4.6%

Source: 2019 ACS



AGE & RACE

Data from the American Community Survey (ACS), 2019, provides an estimate of age groups within the Village. The median age within the Village is 41.7 years, while the median age within the State of Michigan is 39.8. Table 2 provides further details regarding the age makeup within Lake Orion. Based on the ACS data, the largest age group within the Village was those aged between 25 to 29 years, which accounted for 9.5 percent of the population. The second largest age group was those aged between 50 to 54 years, which accounted for 8.6 percent of the estimated population.

As noted in Table 3, the Village is predominately composed of the Caucasian race, with an estimated 94.5% identifying as being Caucasian / White (US Census). Since 2010, the Lake Orion's racial diversity has expanded marginally.

Table 3. Race and Hispanic Origin, 2010–2020

Race and Hispanic Origin	Census 2010	Percent of Population 2010	Census 2020	Percent of Population 2020	Percentage Change 2010-2020
Non-Hispanic	2,869	96.50%	2,718	94.50%	↓ 2%
White	2,735	92%	2,537	88.20%	↓ 3.80%
Black	45	1.50%	28	1%	↓ 0.50%
Asian	30	1%	39	1.40%	↑ 0.30%
Multi-Racial	55	1.80%	106	3.70%	↑ 1.80%
Other	4	0.10%	8	0.30%	↑ 0.10%
Hispanic	104	3.50%	158	5.50%	↑ 2%
Totals	2,973	100%	2,876	100%	0%

Source: US Census Bureau : 2010 and 2020



Table 4. Average Household Size, 2010-2020

Community	2010	2020	Percent Change
Village of Lake Orion	2.19	2.22	↑ 1%
Ortonville	2.76	3.04	↑ 10%
Oxford	2.49	2.41	↓ 3%
Oakland County	2.46	2.46	↑ 0%
State of Michigan	2.49	2.47	↓ 1%

Source: US Census Bureau : 2010 and 2020

HOUSEHOLDS

Household growth has a different impact on demand for recreational services than population growth. If the population is growing faster than the number of households, this would suggest that more children are being born to existing households. If households are growing faster than population, this typically suggests that more singles or couples are moving into the community.

The number of households in the Village has increased from 1,290 units in 2010 to 1,454 units in 2020, an increase of 12.7 percent (164 units). While some of this increase includes more traditional, single-family homes, a number of these new units are the result of multiple-family developments, including the 24 dwelling units in the 120 S. Broadway mixed-use building. With multiple-family developments in particular, private open and recreational space is often limited or non-existent, placing a higher priority on shared, community facilities and amenities. This will continue to be a priority as other multiple-family developments are already proposed for 2022 and residents are attracted from other communities, including Sterling Heights, Warren, Clarkston, etc.

Average household size is another indicator of community composition. Larger average household sizes generally mean more children and fewer single-parent families. Nationally, household sizes have been shrinking as young singles wait longer to get married and life expectancy increases for the senior population.

Table 4 compares the change in average household size since 2010 for Lake Orion and comparison communities. The Village household size increased only slightly from 2.19 to 2.22.

COMMUTE

The average commute time for residents within the Village was 31.6 minutes (US Census). The top four locations residents commute to are: Auburn Hills, Orion Township, Madison Heights, and Troy (SEMCOG). SEMCOG also indicates that only an estimated 9.3 percent of Village residents are both living and working in Lake Orion. However, this data was last available from 2016. The cultural changes in the workforce (due to COVID-19) have reduced the need to commute and have further highlighted the need for local, accessible green spaces and recreation opportunities.



DISABILITY

The type of disability and number of residents with a disability shape the design and accommodations recommended in this Plan. The US Census Bureau reports that approximately 11.6 percent of Lake Orion residents have a disability of some sort.

The most prevalent disabilities within the population are ambulatory and hearing difficulties, followed by independent living and cognitive difficulties. Ambulatory difficulties encompass serious difficulties with walking or stairs, issues that limit physical activity, leading to steeper decline in health. Giving consideration to these difficulties in planning for parks and recreation activities could result in positive health outcomes for a population that already experiences great difficulty on a day-to-day basis. Accommodations could include ramps or pavement improvements in order to ease accessibility concerns, or by installing audible and visually assisted cross walks. Offering a range of active and passive recreation opportunities also leads to a more inclusive community.

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Operations, maintenance, and improvements to Lake Orion’s recreation facilities are the responsibilities of Village staff, the Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC), the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and the Department of Public Works (DPW). Ultimate authority for the provision of parks and recreation is held by Village Council.

The Village also appreciates the contributions from local service organizations and citizens in the maintenance and upgrades of parks and recreation facilities. Contributing organizations include, but are not limited to, the Lions Club, Horseshoe Club, Stadium Elementary, and the Paint Creek Center for the Arts.

Organizational Structure



ADMINISTRATIVE PLAYERS DETAIL

1

Recreation Advisory Committee

The Recreation Advisory Committee was formed by the Village Council to provide input on the acquisition of new play equipment for all of the Village parks. Additionally, the Committee oversees the recreation programs offered by the Village and leads the Recreation Master Planning process.

The Advisory Committee has five members, comprised of four citizens and one Village Council member.

2

Downtown Development Authority

The Village’s DDA also plays a key role in the provision of recreation in the Village. The nine member DDA board is appointed by the Village President with the approval of Council, and the primary funding for DDA projects is provided by tax increment financing (TIF).

Since park facilities are located within the District, the DDA has a vested interest and responsibility in the promotion and enhancement of recreation.



Opportunities for Collaboration

Parks and recreation development is an integral component to the Village's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) District as such amenities function as a public amenity that can serve as a location for events, civic activity, and district promotions. Additionally, these spaces enhance the value, appearance, and quality of the DDA District for the public and the business community.

The further development and enhancement of the four Village parks within the DDA District (Green's Park, Children's Park, Meek's Park, and Atwater Park) will improve the vibrancy of the downtown. It's recommended that the DDA remain a strong partner for future park investments as this is an important opportunity to generate even more activity, improve the downtown vibrancy, and provide greater recreational and cultural amenities. Green's Park (pictured above) is one example of a successful joint collaboration between the Village and the DDA.

3

Department of Public Works

Reporting to the Village Manager, the DPW Director and crew handle routine maintenance of the grounds and equipment, as well as the installation of new equipment. Work Alternative for Misdemeanants (WAM) workers are also used at times for Village park and facility maintenance.

5

Swim Program Director

The Swim Program Director is a part-time position charged with managing the summer swim program and hiring swim instructors and life guards. The DPW Director oversees the Swim Program and associated employees.

4

Village Council

A seven-member board maintains final authority over all Village parks and recreation facilities.

6

Village Manager

In charge of day-to-day parks and recreation administration, the Village Manager works closely with the RAC and DPW. The Village Manager is appointed by Village Council.



FUNDING

Primary funding for the maintenance and programming of Lake Orion's recreation facilities comes almost entirely from a sub-account of the Village's general fund. Alternative funding sources and revenues include passes and swim lesson registration fees for Green's Park, donations from individuals / private organizations, and grants awarded for specific projects, all of which the Village continues to pursue. Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations, and individuals will, at times, contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the Village.

Table 5 details the Village of Lake Orion's Parks and Recreation budget expenditures and revenue with consolidated categories (total budget of \$113,768 for 2021-2022). The Parks and Recreation Budget has significantly increased over the past decade. For comparison, during the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the Parks and Recreation budget was only \$24,190.

The Village has invested considerably in land improvements and has put forth a strong effort to maintain and upgrade parks and recreational facilities when possible.

BUDGET

Table 5. Parks and Recreation Budget, 2021-2022

Category	2021-2022
Revenue - General Fund	
Park Fees Revenue - General Fund	\$4,000
Expenditures	
Supplies	\$4,000
Contractual Services	\$17,000
Salaries	\$18,377
Utilities	\$2,500
Repair/Maintenance – Equipment	\$5,000
Repair/Maintenance - Grounds	\$13,000
Planner Services	\$4,000
Capital Outlay	\$49,891
TOTAL	\$113,768

Source: Village of Lake Orion, 2021

GRANT HISTORY

Over the past 30 years, the Village has been the recipient of four MDNR State grants and two community grants (see Table 6) for recreation facility development; all projects are closed.

Atwater Park, pictured right, is one of the Village's parks that has benefited from such grant funding in the past.



Table 6. MDNR Grant History as of 2021

Project Name	Project Year (Project No.)	Grant Amount	Site Elements	2021 Condition of Elements
Atwater Park MDNR	1980 (LWCF 26-01117)	\$8,000.00	Two ball field upgrades; Paved parking; Bleachers; Drinking fountains; and Landscaping.	Fountains have been removed; additional upgrades to ballfields and landscaping needed.
Atwater Park MDNR	1985 (LWCF 26-01344)	\$11,000.00	Basketball court; Wood sign; Landscaping; and Tot lot.	Basketball court in need of resurfacing and net equipment, additional landscaping and play structure upgrades needed.
Meek's Park MDNR	1991 (26-01497)	\$29,750.00	Walkway and footbridge; Fitness activity center; Benches; Checkerboard and table; Entry sign; Shoreline improvements; and Landscaping.	Footbridge due for structural repair, replacement of benches and signage needed.
Children's Park Improvements MDNR	2009 (26-01692)	\$75,000.00	At-grade slide; Entry gateway and ornamental fencing; Landscaping; Rock seatwall; and Stairs and sidewalk.	Improvements in fair to good condition.
Green's Park Improvements Sunrise Rotary Club	2020	\$7,500	Accessible sidewalk to the beach; and Accessible play feature.	Improvements in new (good) condition.
Green's Park Improvements T-Mobile	2021	\$50,000	Play structure.	Playground to be installed spring, 2022.

Source: Grants Management, Department of Natural Resources

03

Blue & Green Framework





Natural Resources

Understanding Lake Orion's environmental setting is critical when planning for recreation facilities and the connections between them. The location, topography, and existing environmental features all influence the types of facilities, amenities, and programs that are best suited for implementation. In addition, environmental quality significantly affects the quality of life in a community. Visual aesthetics, clean air, and clean water and soil all enhance the public health and economy. Therefore, this Plan requires that the condition of the environment be considered in future decisions and promotes best practices for the stewardship of the land.

This Blue and Green Framework chapter describes the benefits and challenges associated with Lake Orion's location and natural resources features. Also included within this chapter is a detail of the Village's existing formal park system, with an inventory of the current recreation amenities provided at each facility and a description of recreational facilities available outside of Lake Orion. The existing recreational facilities and land devoted to such uses then provides the backdrop for analysis and comparison to national standards; highlighting where the Village is excelling or may have room for improvement.

Additionally, this chapter follows a holistic, regional approach to environmental quality, transportation linkages, parks and recreation facilities, and other assets. The Village seeks collaboration with not only Orion Township and Oakland County, but also within the larger southeast Michigan region.

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Lake Orion's Green and Blue Framework highlights the Village's array of environmentally significant features, including open spaces, waterbodies, and wetlands.

LAKE ORION

The foremost natural feature and single greatest resource in the Village of Lake Orion is its Lake. Over 350 acres, the surface waters of Lake Orion account for over 40 percent of the Village's total area. The Lake offers a number of amenities, including scenic views, waterfront residential settings, fish and wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities. Nearly half the population of the Village lives on Lake Orion and all residents have access to the Lake through Green's Park. Lake Orion is an "all-sports" lake, meaning it is used primarily as a recreation resource.

Public boat docks are now available on Lake Orion (south of Green's Park) and a user-activated flashing light and crosswalk on M-24 has recently been installed by MDOT, which aids users across from the Lake into downtown.

PAINT CREEK

Paint Creek, a tributary of the Clinton River, begins at the dam at the east end of Lake Orion and flows through the middle of the Village. Paint Creek is a high-quality, cold water stream with a significant trout population. In the mid-1990s, the Village and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources joined forces to improve the trout habitat within Paint Creek by helping to regulate the temperature of the water. A bottom-draw tube was installed near the dam of Lake Orion to draw cold water off the bottom of the Lake, directing the cold water to Paint Creek, lowering the Creek's temperature and providing a better trout habitat. The Clinton River Watershed Council coordinates the Paint Creek Habitat Improvement Project. This is an on-going volunteer project with Trout Unlimited to improve habitat on Paint Creek by adding gravel, cobble, and natural wood structures to create a safer habitat for trout.



CLINTON RIVER WATERSHED

Both Lake Orion and Paint Creek are parts of the Clinton River watershed. The Clinton River watershed is made up of 760 square miles of land in four counties, which drains rain and snowmelt into the Clinton River and eventually into Lake St. Clair. The total watershed includes more than 1.5 million people in 71 municipalities.

The Clinton River Watershed Council was established in 1972 as a communication forum to coordinate local governments' efforts to protect and improve the river basin. Today, the Council is a broad-based organization with representatives from the business community, academia, and local governments that work together to support the Watershed. The Council organizes volunteer efforts, such as River Day, Adopt-A-Stream, and the Student Monitoring Program, and provides education and outreach services for local governments, organizations, and individuals.

FLOODPLAIN

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) publishes Flood Insurance Rate maps that identify flood-prone lands, defined as "any place with a 1 percent chance or higher chance of experiencing a flood each year is considered to have a high risk. Those areas have at least a one-in-four chance of flooding during a 30-year mortgage" (FEMA).

As a community with substantial lake front development, the potential of Lake Orion to flood is an important concern to property owners and the resiliency of the community. The 100-year floodplain follows the perimeter of the Lake at lower elevations. The Lake level is generally controlled by a dam at the M-24 bridge which is capable of releasing excess waters in time of flood to Paint Creek. However, Paint Creek has a greater potential to flood because of its function as the collector of excess water from the Lake and as a collector of runoff from nearby State and County drains and adjacent lands.

WETLANDS

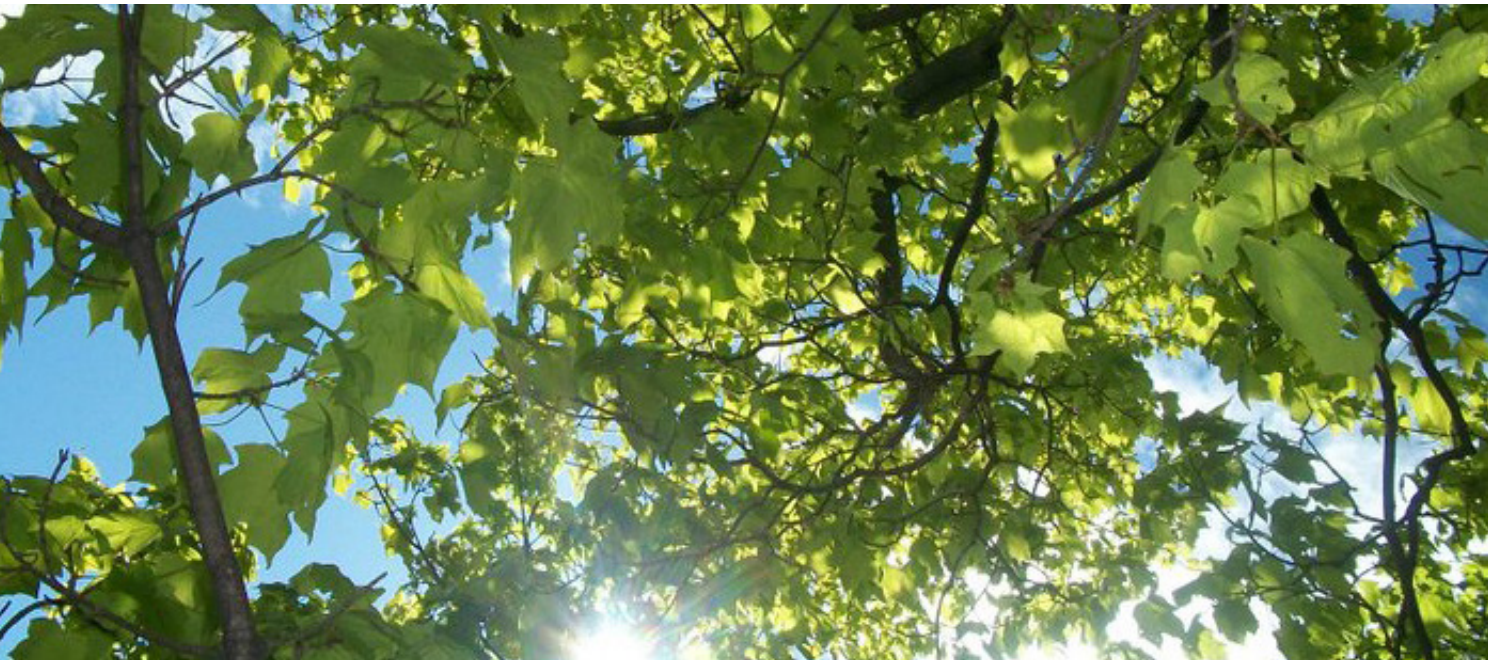
In the simplest terms, a wetland is a land where water is found, either on the surface or near the surface. However, this simple definition minimizes the challenge of wetland delineation. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in order to determine if a wetland is present, land must have one or more of the following three attributes:

1. At least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes (plants specifically adapted to live in wetlands);
2. The substrate is predominantly undrained hydric (wetland) soil; and/or
3. The substrate is nonsoil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.

Wetlands have an important role in local hydrological and ecological systems. In addition to providing habitat for fish and wildlife, wetlands also maintain and stabilize groundwater supplies, reduce dangers of flooding, control erosion, and improve water quality.

The Village is rich with surface water, but has only a few remaining wetlands. Some wetlands are located along the floodplain of Paint Creek, others are on undeveloped parcels of land with areas of steep slopes and woodlands, and some are connected to the Lake. There are four regulated wetlands in the Village and six "emerging" wetlands according to the Michigan Resource Information System (MIRIS) and shown accordingly on the Natural Features Map. Emerging wetlands are wetlands that are somewhat unstable, with irregular water, and are typically dependent on climatic conditions.





TREE CANOPY

Lake Orion boasts a mature tree canopy within its residential neighborhoods. Shaded, tree-lined streets are a major feature of the community's appearance, charm, and character. Residential neighborhoods on either side of M-24 are uniquely characterized by the large number of trees, reminiscent of Lake Orion's past as a summer lake resort.

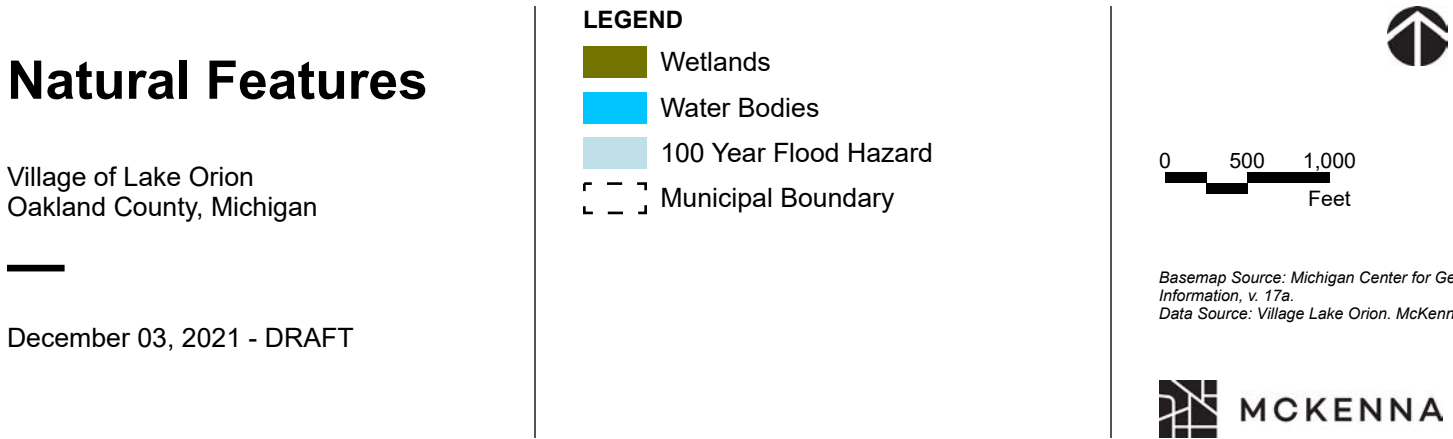
Tree-lined streets distinguish the Village from new, suburban-type developments that often lack trees or have trees of smaller diameter, many years away from full development. The trees provide a vaulted canopy over sidewalks, filtering sunlight for pedestrians, providing needed shade for houses, and reinforcing residential setbacks and human-oriented patterns of development. Additionally, the mature trees make life outside the house more enjoyable in the summer, provide energy and savings to residents by reducing air-conditioning costs, and create windbreaks that reduce heating costs in the winter.

TOPOGRAPHY

The topography surrounding the lake shore in the Village consists of low rolling hills. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, elevations surrounding the lake reach up to 1,000 feet, 15 feet higher than the level of the Lake itself. The portion of the Village east of M-24 is relatively flat with variations in elevation of ten feet or less.

SIGNIFICANT VIEWS

The beautiful and naturalistic views within the Village are predominately scenes of the Lake and perspectives of the downtown district from across or on the Lake. Views are difficult to describe and quantify, but they are a feature that contribute to quality of life. Often, views are an afterthought in the planning of places and new developments, but they should be seriously considered as a resource deserving protection. For passers-by and travelers through the Village, a glimpse of the Lake from M-24 is a unique pleasure that reinforces the Village's history and patterns of development as a lakeside community.



RECREATION INVENTORY & AMENITIES

In total, Lake Orion features six public recreation facilities, with almost ten acres of land and a regional trail system. The Village's parks and recreation facilities each have different types of amenities and opportunities for a wide variety of recreation experiences. The following inventory and the adjoining Park and Recreation Inventory and Services Areas Map details the amenities currently available at each facility and the park's service coverage.



SWISS VILLAGE PARK

Classification:	Mini-Park
Area:	0.61 acres
Accessibility Ranking:	Level 2

Located in the northwest portion of the Village and on a peninsula of Lake Orion, Swiss Village mini-park serves the immediate neighborhood and is a prime example of scattering greenspace in a community highly divided by natural features and waterways.

A popular spot for family gatherings, Swiss Village Park features a half basketball court, swing set, picnic tables and large open area for various active recreation activities. Parking areas are located on the peripheries of the park.



UNGER PARK

Classification:	Mini-Park
Area:	0.91 acres
Accessibility Ranking:	Level 1

Located in the southwest portion of the Village, Unger Park, like Swiss Village Park, is located on a peninsula of Lake Orion and serves the needs of those living in the immediate vicinity. Unger Park is oval in shape, located below grade, and surrounded by residential units (bordered by Bellevue and West Bellevue Streets).

Unger Park features a play structure, a set of swings, chess table, seating, and bike racks. The play equipment was recently updated in 2018/2019 to provide a fresh and engaging look for all visitors and ensure safe play. Invasive species management techniques are being pursued in order to keep this mini-park fully operational for all types of visitors.

CHILDREN'S PARK

Classification: Community Park

Area: 1.54 acres

Accessibility Ranking: Level 4

Located in the heart of downtown Lake Orion, Children's Park is a major community gathering place and is surrounded with natural beauty as Paint Creek runs directly through the park. Throughout the year, various community and civic events occur at the park including the Optimists Club annual rubber ducky race, River Days, and the Summer Concert Series. The gazebo within Children's Park also hosts a number of events, and performances, including private events such as weddings.

Within the park are two playscapes, one designed for young toddlers and a second designed for children 5-12 years old. Children's Park also features several picnic tables located on the periphery of the site and scattered park benches and bike racks. Two (2) shade sails were recently installed over several benches. Public, paved parking is located along Anderson Street (and within the DDA parking lot) which is connected to the park by a pedestrian bridge spanning Paint Creek. Public restrooms are now available at the Fire Station directly across the street as well.

New play structures are slated for installation in the spring of 2022.



ACCESSIBILITY RANKINGS

Providing accessible facilities that may be utilized by persons with varied disabilities is one of Lake Orion's community goals. Each Village-owned recreation facility was evaluated for compliance to the ADA Standards of Accessible Design and are rated on the following scale, as defined by MDNR:

1. None of the site elements meet ADA accessibility guidelines.
2. Some of the site elements meet ADA accessibility guidelines.
3. Most of the site elements meet ADA accessibility guidelines.
4. The entire recreation facility meets ADA accessibility.
5. The entire recreation facility was developed / renovated using the principles of universal design.

All of the Village's facilities have accessibility ratings of 2, 3, or 4, with the exception of Unger Park which carries an accessibility ranking of 1 due to the grade change and lack of paved surfaces to access any features within the park. While most of the recreation facilities include elements that are handicapped accessible, many of the routes to reach such facilities are lacking in compliance.



GREEN’S PARK

Classification:	Community Park
Area:	2.21 acres
Accessibility Ranking:	Level 4

Green’s Park, located adjacent to M-24, is the only programmed park abutting Lake Orion, with over 560 feet of shoreline frontage. Once only open to Village residents (permit required), Green’s Park is now open to the general public, provided a user fee is made for summer usage.

Located within the park are various recreation facilities, including a basketball court, playground area, swings, picnic tables, grills, benches, and bike racks. In addition to the parking lot located directly off M-24, Green’s Park features a restroom facility, water fountains, and concession / storage facility for visitor convenience. One of the major assets of Green’s Park is the public beach, which is enclosed by a small, “U”-shaped dock that extends out to Lake Orion, providing a boardwalk and a beautiful vista for the community. Kayaking is now allowed at Green’s Park via the boat launch at the south end. Swimming lessons are also provided during summer months.

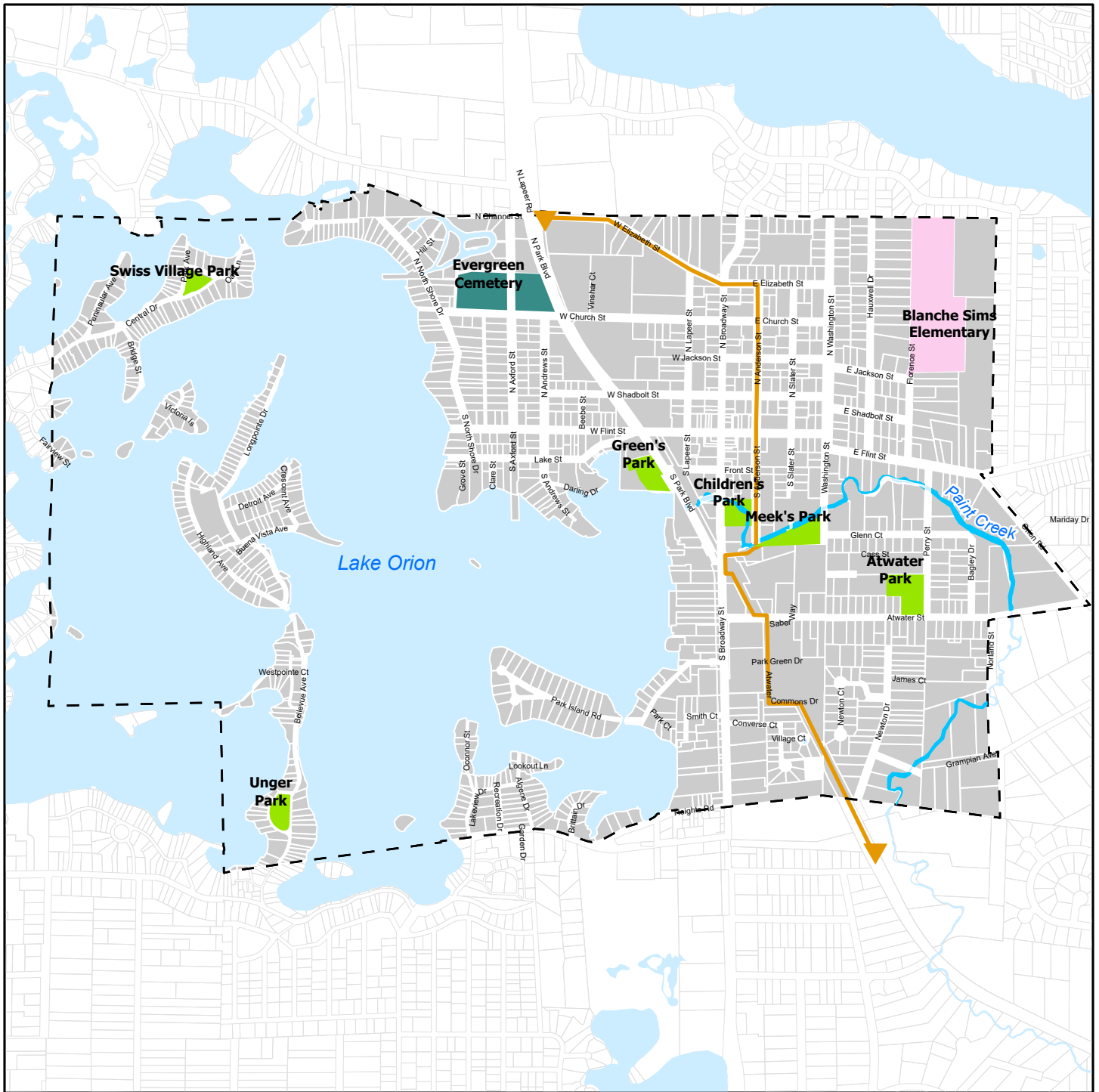
Recently completed in 2020, a new accessible sidewalk system (with two accessible play structures) now provides access down to the beach. A new play structure is also slated for installation in 2022.

MEEK’S PARK

Classification:	Community Park
Area:	1.68 acres
Accessibility Ranking:	Level 3

Also located near the downtown core of the Village and connecting to Children’s Park is Meek’s Park. This linear park provides both active and passive recreation opportunities and runs along Paint Creek for approximately 600 feet. Pedestrian access to the park is available at several locations: Glenn Street, Broadway Street, a pedestrian bridge at Washington Street, and a pedestrian bridge from the Lake Orion Art Center. The key amenity to Meek’s Park is the paved pedestrian path, which runs along Paint Creek and provides opportunity for walk, running, and cycling.

Passive recreation is also available among the scenic backdrop, with seating areas scattered along the path and a checkerboard table. Residents and visitors enjoy the opportunity to walk through this natural area, watch ducks and other wildlife, and visit with friends / family. As Meek’s Park also abuts the Heritage Place senior housing complex, the park is an accessible and usable amenity for many of the residents to independently access.

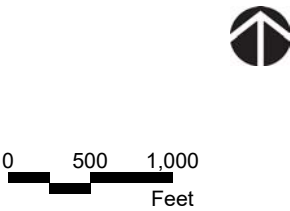


Parks, Trails & Community Facilities

Village of Lake Orion
Oakland County, Michigan

December 03, 2021 - DRAFT

- Legend
- Paint Creek Trail
 - School Facility
 - Evergreen Cemetery
 - Parks
 - Water Bodies
 - Municipal Boundary



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a.
Data Source: Village Lake Orion. McKenna 2021.





ATWATER PARK

Classification: Neighborhood Park

Area: 2.88 acres

Accessibility Ranking: Level 4

Located in the eastern portion of the Village within a traditional style neighborhood, Atwater Park provides the community with a gathering space and opportunities for active recreation. A majority of the park is comprised of two ball fields, with the infields opposite one another. The ball fields are augmented with bleachers and player benches and maintained in part by the ball leagues that schedule games and practice here.

The south end of the park, closer to Atwater Street, is less intensive and contains a mix of playgrounds and other recreation amenities, including two play structures, benches, picnic tables, bike racks, swings, and a basketball half-court. Its central location to the neighborhood and its mix of recreation amenities make Atwater Park an ideal space to bring children. On-street parking is limited, however other parking opportunities are available and could be further development with additional funding.

VILLAGE RECREATION PROGRAMS

The Village offers a swim program at Green's Park in the summer, but otherwise offers few recreation programs. With additional funding, further opportunities could be developed and offered by the Village. There a number of community events that are offered in the Village, including the annual "Dragon Boat Race" and "Brave the Wave", along with road and trail races.

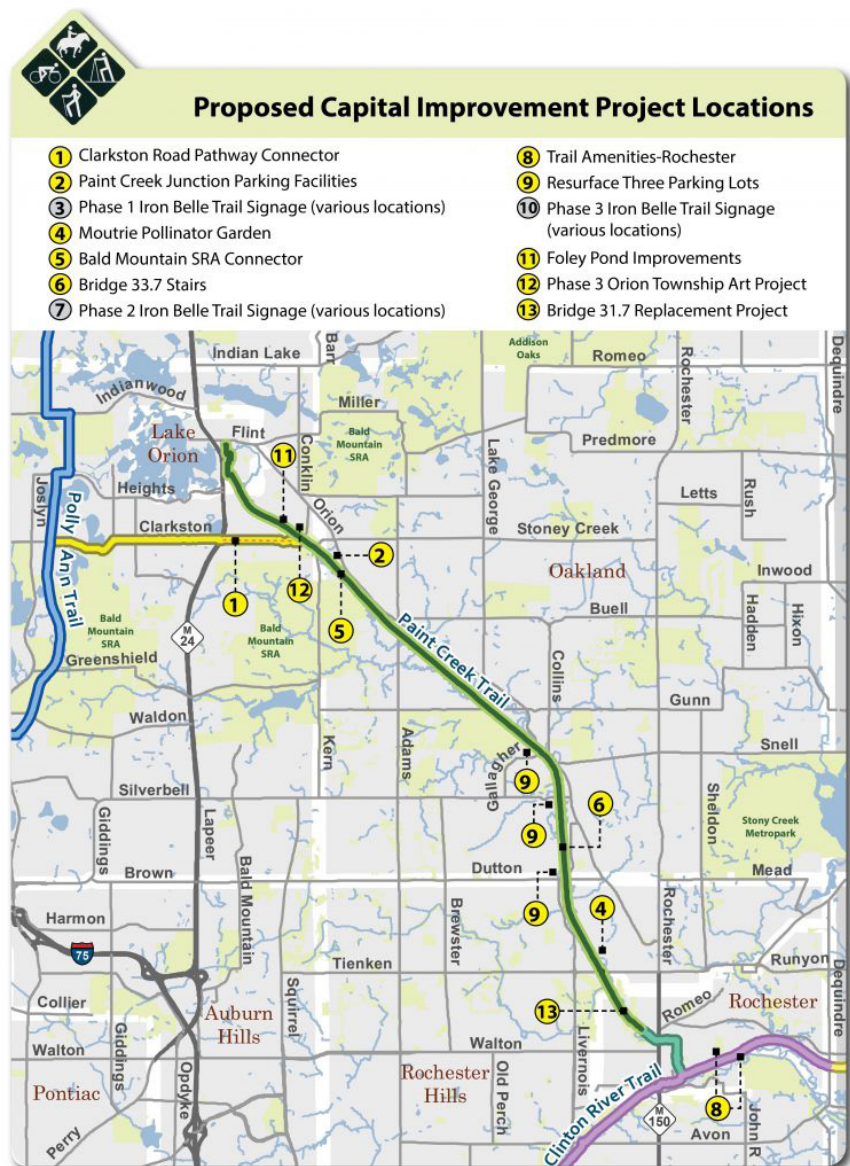
There are also a number of private youth and adult recreation leagues in the Village of Lake Orion. These include the Lake Orion Horseshoe Club, Main Street Bicycles (group rides and club), and local running clubs.

PAINT CREEK TRAIL

One (1) trail facility is located within the Village - Paint Creek Trail. The Paint Creek Trail is owned and operated by the Paint Creek Trailways Commission (PCTC) and was the first non-motorized, rail-to-trail in the State (converted from the former Penn Central Railroad).

Starting at the Clinton River Trail in Rochester, the Paint Creek Trail is approximately nine-miles in length. This crushed limestone trail enters the Lake Orion community at the southern Village limits (due west of Newton Road) and continues north to Atwater Street and into Meek's Park and Children's Park. At Children's Park, there is also a trailhead. The trail is used by hikers, cyclists, joggers, equestrians, nature observers, and photographers. During the winter months, many residents utilize the trail for cross-county skiing.

Connections to the trail have recently been extended to the north along Anderson Street to Elizabeth Street, allowing trail users to safely traverse from the south side of the Village to the north. A connection east along Orion Road has also been dedicated.



Source: 2020-2024 Paint Creek Trail Recreation Master Plan: Capital Improvement Schedule

OTHER RECREATIONAL & CULTURAL FACILITIES

FACILITIES WITHIN LAKE ORION

Public School Recreation

The Blanche Sims Elementary School, part of the Lake Orion Community School District, is located in the northeastern portion of the Village and offers recreational facilities that include an indoor gymnasium, baseball field, soccer field, play structure, swings, picnic tables, and benches.

Evergreen Cemetery

Also within the Village is the historical Evergreen Cemetery, located along Church Street and M-24, which provides almost 300 final resting places for area residents.

Orion Art Center

The Orion Art Center (OAC), located at 115 South Anderson in a former United Methodist parsonage and adjacent to Children's Park, offers day and evening classes, art exhibitions throughout the community.

The purpose of the OAC is to promote, encourage, and support the development of the arts in the community. The OAC also works with the DDA and Detroit Institute of Arts to bring art into the community..

Orion Township Public Library

The Village receives exemplary services from the Orion Township Public Library, located on Joslyn Road. The Library was first established by the Lake Orion Women's Club in 1926 and was renamed the Orion Township Free Public Library in 1929 after Township residents ratified a proposition to levy taxes to support the library (orionlibrary.org).

In addition to the main library, the Orion Township Public Library also supports the "Little Free Libraries" program, which promotes the sharing of books in localized areas, such as neighborhood gathering spaces and public parks. Several of these Little Libraries are located within the Village limits. The Library has also partnered with the DDA to bring monthly StoryWalks into Downtown Lake Orion.





REGIONAL RECREATION RESOURCES & FACILITIES

Within the greater Oakland County region, numerous recreational facilities and resources can be found, including Orion Township parks, State of Michigan parks, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks, and Oakland County parks. In addition to regional park facilities, many other cultural and recreational attractions, such as museums and professional sports venues, are available; these regional facilities offer a variety of activities that are not available within the Village limits but are desired by its residents. Regional facilities having the most significance in terms of proximity to Lake Orion include:

Orion Township Parks and Trailways

Village residents can access all Township recreation facilities. The Township has five parks: Friendship Park, Camp Agawam, Civic Center Park, Jesse Decker Park, and the Wildwood Amphitheater. For further information regarding each of these parks, visitors and interested persons may visit orionparks.com. In addition to the parks below, the Township also maintains and administers a Safety Path System. This 31-mile network of paths adjacent to roads throughout Orion Township offers pedestrian, runners, cyclists, and other non-motorized users access on a paved network.

DNR Access Site

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) owns and operates an access site to Lake Orion. This public access site is located north of the Village limits on Indianwood Road and provides boating and other water recreation opportunities for non-lakefront owners within the Village.

Iron Belle Trail

The Iron Belle Trail is “Michigan’s showcase trail, that touches hundreds of municipalities and crosses through 48 different Michigan counties. The trail extends more than 2,000 miles from the far western tip of the Upper Peninsula to Belle Isle in Detroit by using existing trails, networks and new connections” (Michigan Department of Natural Resources). The trail has a route for bicycling and a route for hiking. For Lake Orion’s portion, the trail runs east/west along W. Clarkston Road and to the north/southwest of Elkhorn and Square Lake. Presently, the Iron Belle Trail runs directly south of Lake Orion. Additional funding would allow efforts to continue connections with this Trail, including connections north to Oxford, are planned.



Polly Ann Trail

The Polly Ann Trail is a 14.2-mile long, non-motorized trail located north of the Village of Lake Orion. The trail begins near Indianwood Road and Joslyn Road west of the Village, and extends north and northeast through the communities of Orion Township, Oxford Township, the Village of Oxford, Addison Township, and the Village of Leonard. This linear park utilizes the abandoned P.O. & N. railroad corridor and traverses through some of the most beautiful and untouched landscapes in northern Oakland County. The trail is open year-round during daylight hours and is restricted to non-motorized uses. Walking, hiking, jogging, cycling, horseback riding, and cross country skiing in winter are just some of the activities enjoyed by users of all ages. The Polly Ann Trail is owned and managed by the Polly Ann Trailway Management Council, Inc.

Oakland County Parks and Trailways

In total, Oakland County operates eleven parks. The closest park is Orion Oaks, but other county parks are located within a short driving distance of Lake Orion, including Independence Oaks Park (Independence Township) and Addison Oaks Park (Addison Township). Orion Oaks County Park is also located southwest of the Village on Clarkston Road in Orion Township and features 927 acres of open space, a dog park, fishing, hiking trails, and a boardwalk. In addition to the Paint Creek and Polly Ann Trails, other non-motorized paths are available within the Oakland County Trailways System.

Bald Mountain Recreation Area

The Bald Mountain Recreation Area comprises 4,637 acres of land in three major concentrations south and east of the Village. The primary entrance to the recreation area is located off of M-24, only a few miles south of Lake Orion. The recreation area is owned and operated by the State of Michigan. Bald Mountain offers a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities and boasts some of the steepest hills and most rugged terrain in southeastern Michigan. Such activities and facilities include hunting, swimming, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, boating, snowmobiling, cross country skiing, playground areas, picnic areas, and an archery/shooting range.

RECREATION SYSTEMS ANALYSIS

COMPARISON TO NATIONAL STANDARDS

The type of parks and their location, number of amenities, and distribution throughout the Village are all components that are assessed together within a recreation system analysis. The following comparisons are made between Lake Orion and national standards for service areas, acreage, and number of facilities.

Overall, Lake Orion has a strong parks and recreation system and the Village has made considerable efforts towards improving recreation facilities and making them more accessible to neighborhoods and other community destinations.

SERVICE AREA ANALYSIS

From each residence in the Village, it is important that the household be within a 10-minute walking distance to park space. The Connectivity Map on the following page illustrates a 10-minute (0.25 mile) walking radius from each of Lake Orion's parks.

Per 2018 Village tax accessing records, 68.5 percent of all residential parcels within the community are within this 10-minute walk zone. The primary areas of coverage include the entire downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods and smaller pockets of residential in the northwestern and southwestern areas of the Village. However, several neighborhoods are outside this walkability range, especially within the outer areas to the north, the south and the west of the community. New park facilities and open space should be considered in the north of the Village, as well as on Bellevue Island. The Village should also build upon the existing non-motorized / trail system to link neighborhoods to parks as a means to improve access and expand recreation opportunities for residents.

Further, as a baseline indicator, Table 7 highlights the surplus / deficiencies of all park land that is available to residents. While there is a surplus of mini park acreage available to Lake Orion residents, there is a deficiency of community park acreage. The Village should explore the potential addition of parkland for residents north of downtown.

Table 7. Lake Orion's Recreation Land Acreage Analysis

Facility Type	NRPA Guideline for Minimum Acreage per 1,000 Residents	Lake Orion's Minimum Recommended Acreage*	Lake Orion's Actual Acreage	Surplus / Deficiency
Mini Parks	0.25 acres	0.86 acres	1.62 acres	↑ 0.76 acres
Neighborhood Parks	1.00 acres	3.48 acres	2.88 acres	↓ 0.60 acres
Community Parks	5.00 acres	17.39 acres	5.43 acres	↓ 11.96 acres
Greenways / Trails	Variable	Varies	< 1.0 linear mile	n/a

* Based on the 2020 US Census population count of 2,876 individuals.



FACILITIES ANALYSIS

Prior to 2020, the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) published the NRPA Areas and Facilities Standards to help agencies assess whether they had sufficient parks and recreation facilities. The Standards had not been updated in more than two decades, and the NRPA realized that a single set of standards could not encompass the uniqueness found in every community across the country. Consequently, NRPA replaced the single set of standards with the creation of a nationwide benchmarking tool for parks and recreation, called NRPA Park Metrics.

The NRPA publishes the NRPA Agency Performance Review, which is a report that summarizes the benchmarking data contributed by 1,100 park and recreation agencies to the Park Metrics database. The Park Metrics database separates the data based on size of jurisdiction being served. Table 8 below provide a snapshot of Lake Orion's parks and recreation offerings in comparison to data from similarly sized peer communities. This information must be combined with information about the community's specific needs and experiences to identify the optimal mix of facilities and programming. The Village meets or exceeds the standards for over half of the facility types.

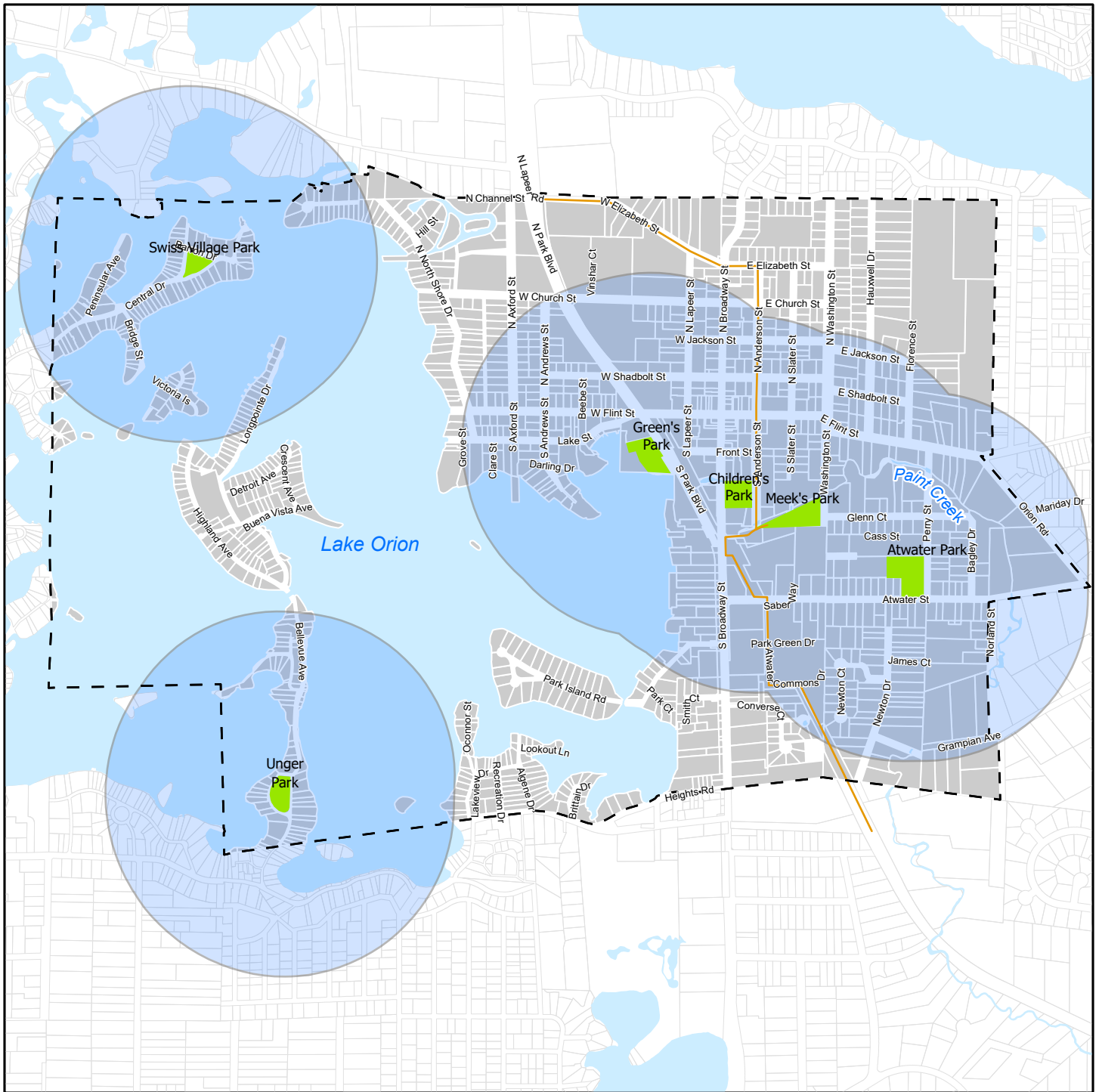
The surplus of recreation amenities may be greater if the count included the elementary school that belongs to the Lake Orion Community School District. It's recommended that collaboration be continued with the School District and other entities, including Orion Township, in order to provide residents with even greater access to a wide variety of recreation facilities. As funding allows and needs arise, based on deficiencies and other needs in the community, additional facilities should be considered.

Table 8. Recreation Amenities Standard Analysis

Facility Type	Median Number of Residents Per Facility*	Recommended Facilities**	Lake Orion's Amenity Count	Surplus / Deficiency
Playground	2,132	1	5	↑ 4
Basketball Courts	4,051	1	7	↑ 6
Tennis Courts (outdoors)	2,748	1	0	↓ 1
Baseball / Softball Fields	3,000	1	3	↑ 2
Dog Parks	11,148	0	0	-
Swimming Pools (outdoors)	8,591	0	0	-
Multi-Purpose Athletic Fields	3,895	1	0	↓ 1
Soccer Fields	3,433	1	1	Met
Community Gardens	9,001	0	0	-
Tot Lots	6,194	0	1	↑ 1

* The Median Number of Residents per Facility is based on data from communities having a population less than 20,000.

**The figures in this column represent the number of facilities needed to achieve a Median Number of Residents per Facility, based on the Village's population of 2,876 (2020 US Census).



Connectivity & 10 Minute Walk Analysis

Village of Lake Orion
Oakland County, Michigan

LEGEND

- Paint Creek Trail
- 10 Minute Service Area (1/4 Mile Radius)
- Parks
- Municipal Boundary



0 500 1,000
Feet

04 Lake Orion's Strategy





A Shared Vision

Goals and objectives formulated by the community are the cornerstone of the recreation planning process as they form the framework for public and private decision-making. The purpose of this Plan is to provide a basis for public policy decisions and technical coordination in recreational development and to inject long-range consideration into the determination of near-term actions.

The goals and objectives, as outlined in this chapter, were developed through the Recreation Advisory Committee and Village Administration, incorporate park and recreation best practices, and were confirmed by the results of the public engagement process.

Lake Orion's strategy hinges on its ability to provide a variety of parks that are flexible spaces to serve multiple users, creating an inclusive space for the community to enjoy. This chapter details the public engagement process and key results and establishes the Village's goals and various corresponding objectives.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

Community participation brings vitality to a Parks and Recreation Plan, and to solicit public input for the goals and objectives process, an on-line survey was hosted by the Village during December of 2021, which generated approximately seven respondents. The survey was publicized by the Village on its website and paper copies were also available at the Village Offices.

SURVEY RESULTS

Respondents were asked a series of questions pertaining to the existing condition and the future goals and priorities for Lake Orion’s park and recreational facilities. Five (5) respondents were Village residents (approximately 71 percent) with the remaining two respondents (29 percent) from Orion Township. Key results of the survey are detailed below with full results included in the appendix.

Major themes emerged from the public engagement results and are embodied in the goals and objectives section. They include a priority on maintenance and accessibility; the development of non-motorized pathways; preservation of natural features and the lakefront; and the addition of natural, cultural, and historical education programs.



VISITS TO FACILITIES IN THE PAST YEAR & CONDITION RANKING

The most visited parks and recreation facilities within the Village in the past year are listed below with their visitation rate by respondents and the most frequent rating of their current condition (Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, or Not Visited).

Children’s Park	100%	Excellent
Paint Creek Trail	100%	Excellent
Green’s Park	71%	Good
Meek’s Park	57%	Good
Atwater Park	57%	Fair
Unger Park	29%	Good / Fair / Not Visited
Swiss Village Park	0%	Not Visited

Overall, 71 percent of respondents were satisfied with the appearance, maintenance and cleanliness of the Village’s parks and recreation facilities. Participants were asked to rate the variety, quality, and availability of park amenities, and the categories that received over 50 percent ‘Excellent’ or ‘Good’ ratings included:

Availability of bike routes and paths	Excellent
Quality of parks and recreation facilities	Good
Availability of walking paths	Good



FUTURE PARKS & RECREATION INVESTMENTS & AMENITIES

Respondents were asked to identify the reasons that prevented members of the household from using any of the Village’s parks, recreation facilities, or programs. The following were the most common reasons, which show that by improving the quality and quantity of parks and facilities as well as making these spaces more accessible, Village parks may be better utilized:

Facilities are not well maintained	16%
Program or facility not offered	16%
Too far from residence	16%
Availability of parking	16%
Facilities are too hard to reach, poor access	16%

In the future, respondents would like the Village to add, expand, or enhance the following amenities:

- Bicycling routes and paths
- Nature education programs
- Playgrounds
- Walking paths (sidewalks or trails)
- Public Wi-Fi connection
- Cultural / historical programs

Specific facilities and amenities respondents indicated that they would like to see added, expanded, or enhanced included the following:

- Update all park equipment that predates 2000
- Install restrooms instead of port-o-johns
- Update amenities in Green’s Park
- Pavilion at Green’s Park
- Indianwood Road sidewalk access to the Village from the Township

Survey respondents most frequently visit Green’s Park, Children’s Park and Paint Creek Trail and offered feedback specific to these sites. As a result, they have been identified as the facilities that should receive priority investment in the next five (5) years. Respondents are most likely to travel to each facility by foot or by car.



COMMUNITY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goals, as related to community planning, are general statements of ideals toward which the Village strives towards. They also express a consensus of community direction for public and private agencies, groups, and individuals, and are long-range considerations that guide the development of specific objectives and actions.

Objectives are a means to achieve goals and identify the methods by which the goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan may be realized.

The stated goals and objectives are grouped according to major community themes and developed using feedback from the public engagement surveys and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.



1) Future Parks & Recreation Facilities

GOAL: Develop, improve, and expand (where possible and appropriate) park and recreation facilities to provide a variety of experiences (both passive and active) that are desired by the community.

+ MEET DEMAND

Strive to provide the recreation opportunities of this Plan over the next 5-year period to meet the Village's unmet need for parks and recreation pursuits.

+ LAND ACQUISITION

Look for opportunities to acquire land that: (1) is adjacent to/ near existing parks; (2) provide increased/enhanced recreation opportunities; and/or (3) will help to ensure protection and access to community natural features.

+ BEST PRACTICES

Utilize environmentally-friendly design and construction techniques; ensure parks are inviting, friendly, aesthetically-pleasing, and consistent with the Village's overall design standards; and prioritize park safety.

+ CONTEXT SENSITIVE

When improving parks, particularly in the downtown area, seek to incorporate elements that complement and enhance the historic nature of the community in terms of materials, design, etc.

+ SIGNAGE

Develop and implement consistent signage for the parks system and along access roads to raise awareness of park locations and facilities (including historical interpretative signage, where appropriate).



2) Greenway & Trail Systems

GOAL: Create a system of non-motorized trails, offering both recreation and transportation opportunities, to connect with regional / state trails and to link people with parks and other destinations, promoting mobility and public health.

+ PAINT CREEK TRAIL

Continue enhancement of the Paint Creek Trail and its connection to the regional Polly Ann Trail network.

+ DOWNTOWN CONNECTIONS

Establish a pedestrian / non-motorized connection between the downtown and Lake Orion, potentially with Green's Park.

+ SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS

Add missing links between existing Village sidewalks and connect existing paths to existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

+ WATER ACCESS

Expand recreation access to Lake Orion / Paint Creek through land acquisition and/or conservation easements for greenways/trails, especially along water corridors that are ideal for trails but less suitable for other land uses.

+ NEW DEVELOPMENT

Require developments to provide greenways / trails and non-traditional paths, in addition to sidewalks, in new / modified developments to connect them with other community neighborhoods, amenities and destinations.

3) Recreation Programming

GOAL: Coordinate with other parks and recreation providers and supporters to ensure safe, quality, affordable, accessible, and diverse program and event opportunities.

+ INTEGRATED SYSTEM

Develop and maintain online registration capabilities and integrate the Village's system for recreation passes / facility rental for a more streamlined and efficient process.

+ DIGITAL OUTREACH

Develop and maintain a stronger, more viable website and other social media platforms to increase awareness of planned activities and upcoming events and to link the recreation passes / facility rental system.

+ WATER-BASED PROGRAMMING

Continue to offer swimming lessons at Green's Park and promote the existing lake / water resources in the Village by expanding on programming, including water skiing, boating, fishing clubs, and other water-based uses.

+ VOLUNTEERS

Establish and maintain job descriptions and duties in the park system for volunteers to help deliver services and support staff work.

+ WEALTH OF PROGRAMS

Continue to work with local athletic organizations, clubs, and institutions to provide a wealth and variety of organized activities within the community.



4) Public & Private Partnerships

GOAL: Coordinate and partner with other entities to ensure the availability of and opportunity for comprehensive, quality services and facilities.

+ EVENTS

Continue to support and work with the DDA (and others) for events such as the Halloween Extravaganza, Summer Concert Series, Oktoberfest, Thursday Music in the Streets, Holiday Sign and Stroll, and more.

+ EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Work closely and support the Lake Orion Community School District to continue to provide recreational program activities and events.

+ RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

Actively seek and encourage the involvement of residents in the recreation planning and implementation process.

+ PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

Foster, promote, and encourage cooperative relationships with public entities, including:

- DDA
- Orion Township and nearby communities
- Senior Center
- Oakland County
- Paint Creek Trailways Commission and Polly Ann Trail Council
- Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMA) – Oakland County

+ PRIVATE RELATIONSHIPS

Foster, promote, and encourage cooperative relationships with private entities, including:

- Athletic organizations / associations
- Art Center
- Clinton River Watershed Council (CRWC)
- Trout Unlimited
- Lions Club
- Sunrise Rotary Club
- American Legion

5) Natural Resources

GOAL: Preserve and protect natural resources and environmentally sensitive lands while maintaining public use, access, and enjoyment.

+ VIEWSHEDS

Ensure the preservation of viewsheds of the natural resources.

+ WATERCOURSES

Protect and restore water quality, stream channels, natural areas, wetlands, and ecosystems; enhance in-stream habitats; and implement streambank restoration/erosion control measures utilizing soft shoreline techniques.

+ STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Where possible, utilize low-impact development (LID) techniques to manage storm water that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source.

+ EDUCATION

Increase awareness and education of the natural resources through interpretive signage.

+ PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Meet the recommendations of the Stony / Paint Creek Subwatershed Management Plan, and other valid natural resource plans, when implementing projects.



6) Existing Facilities

GOAL: Ensure the continual operation, maintenance and accessibility of existing Village parks, recreation facilities, and trail systems.

+ ACCESSIBILITY

Ensure barrier-free accessibility to all existing parks, recreation areas, and trail systems, including paths, transfer points, resilient surfacing, picnic tables, play equipment, curb cuts, parking, etc.

+ MAINTENANCE

Develop maintenance standards for developed park areas and the cost to implement the established level of maintenance on a yearly basis.

+ RESPONSIBILITIES

Clearly define maintenance roles and responsibilities between the Village DPW, the DDA, and other entities.

7) Finance

GOAL: Prioritize funding streams and seek alternative funding sources to assist in implementing the goals, guidelines, and capital improvement projects of this Plan.

+ FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Track how the Village will spend its future financial resources on recreation projects and inform the public on resources available. Consider long-term maintenance costs with all new projects and improvements.

+ SELF-GENERATING

Seek to make improvements, offer programs and events, and maintain facilities that will generate revenue, when applicable.

+ GRANTS

Identify and pursue all applicable federal, state, and local grants, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF).

+ SPONSORSHIPS

Seek sponsorships for facilities and programs where appropriate.

+ LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Review and update the Parks and Recreation Master Plan every five years to maintain a current assessment and ensure grant funding eligibility.

05 Planning for Change





Call to Action

Lake Orion's Action Plan serves as a template for future projects and is intended to be a flexible, year-by-year list of improvements. The Action Plan supports the goals and objectives for the Village's development, growth, and enhancement through a comprehensive set of network improvements, policies, and programs that are staggered over the five years.

Within this chapter, projects are identified that will develop the Village's recreation system in a manner that provides a total recreation experience for all users within the community. With the goal to continually enhance facilities for active and passive recreation, competitive sports, for children, adolescents, and seniors, and civic gathering spaces, and natural landscapes, Lake Orion will continue to afford residents and visitors a high-quality park and recreation experience.

Detailed on the next several pages is the parks and recreation Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and project descriptions to help guide and inspire responsible parties towards a common understanding of prioritization, and lay the groundwork for implementation.



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is detailed in Table 9 which presents each of the proposed project titles, prioritization, the anticipated time frame, estimated cost range, and potential funding sources / partnerships. Some park facilities contain various projects that are planned to occur over multiple years and involve coordination with other agencies. Other park and recreation projects involve targeted improvements that the Village can implement quickly.

Project cost estimates were derived in 2021 dollars and are strictly preliminary. Actual costs for each project should be specifically determined with the aid of site surveys, programming elements, and engineering plans. If funding levels are lower than required to implement the project based on the schedule provided, the project's implementation could be stretched over additional years or the scope of the project condensed.

The CIP should be reviewed annually by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee and reported to the Village Council, . This is also an opportunity for the RAC to make recommendations to the Village Council for the upcoming budget year.

TOP 5 PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following five priority projects represent near-term investments that have the potential to create major and immediate improvements to the Village's parks and recreation system.

These top projects serve as an excellent starting point for future prioritization and action; full project descriptions are detailed on the following pages.

- 1 **Children's Park Improvements**
- 2 **Environmental Resource Management**
- 3 **Green's Park Improvements**
- 4 **Atwater Park Design Plan & Improvements**
- 5 **Increased Mobility & Access**

Table 9. Capital Improvement Plan, 2022-2026

Project	Time Frame			Estimated Cost Range	Collaboration & Funding Source(s)
	Near-term	Mid-term	Long-term		
Children's Park Improvements	X	X		\$\$\$	GF, D, LSO, G, DDA, PRC, EGLE, PCTC
Environmental Resource Management	X	X	X	\$	GF, G, PRC, OT, DEQ
Green's Park Improvements	X			\$\$\$	GF, D, LSO, G, DDA, PRC, EGLE
Park Signage	X	X		\$	GF, D, LSO, G, PC, VC, DDA, PCTC
Invasive Species Management	X	X	X	\$	GF, G, EGLE
Atwater Park Design Plan & Improvements		X	X	\$	GF, G, VC, LSO, PRC, DDA
Meek's Park Improvements	X	X		\$	G, LSO, EGLE, DDA, PCTC
Swiss Village Park Improvements		X		\$	GF, PRC
Unger Park Improvements	X		X	\$	GF, G, PRC
Increased Mobility & Access	X	X	X	SSS	GF, PCTC, G, DDA
Ordinance Amendments	X			\$	GF, PC, VC
2026 Parks & Recreation Master Plan Update			X	\$	GF, PRC, PC, VC
Expand & Partner for Recreation Facilities	X	X		\$	LSO, DDA, VC, OT, OC, PCTC

KEY

Time Frame

Near-Term	Within 1 year
Mid-Term	1 – 3 years
Long-Term	3+ years

Estimated Cost Range

\$	\$0 – \$10,000
\$	\$10,001 – \$500,000
\$	\$500,001 +

Funding Source and Collaboration

GF	General Fund (Village)
D	Donation or Corporate Sponsor
LSO	Local Service Organizations
PCTC	Paint Creek Trailways Commission
CRWC	Clinton River Watershed Council
G	Grants (e.g. MDNR, CDBG)
DDA	Downtown Development Authority
PC	Planning Commission
PRC	Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
VC	Village Council
OC	Oakland County
OT	Orion Township
EGLE	Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy



PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

CHILDREN'S PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Design and implement infrastructure improvements, including installation of a new bridge, creek shoreline stabilization and erosion control, and electrical upgrades. Continue management and control of invasive species.

Design and implement passive recreation improvements, including the addition of more shade trees / shade sails, and enhance the screening of Valentino's dumpsters and the adjacent parking lot with a decorative fence and/or landscaping.

The repair and/or replacement of the gazebo, the addition of public art, lighting for the waterfall / dam, and the repair of the cracking blocks in the tiered landscaping are also priorities.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Create, integrate, and maintain blue and green infrastructure for the Village's water systems to improve the water quality (including algae removal, water flows and levels, etc.) so such resources remain healthy and attractive. This includes:

- Stormwater management;
- Lake Orion water quality and invasive species treatment; and
- Land use management around Lake Orion.

Environmental resource management also involves the acquisition and preservation of greenbelts of land around water systems to protect the watershed from development impacts and pollution and collaboration on regional projects to address environmental quality. Project specifics include the design and implementation of shoreline and bank stabilization improvements with one or two designated public outlooks along Paint Creek in both Meek Park and Children's Park.

MEEK'S PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Design and implement infrastructure improvements, including the replacement of deck boards on the western bridge, mitigation of flooding with the potential option of replacing existing concrete with an elevated boardwalk to maintain open access of the park, creek shoreline stabilization and erosion control, storm drain improvements, the addition of fit "exercise" stations along the path, replacement of benches and tables with steal, thermo plastic coated amenities, and the replacement of the existing chain link fence with something more inviting, such as a living wall at the park entrances.

GREEN'S PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Design and implement infrastructure improvements, and replacement with grass / vegetation and provide on-site, public WiFi access to help facilitate the sale and online system for park passes.

Design and implement water infrastructure improvements, including the addition of four or five more boat docks (ADA accessible), seawall improvements, including the reworking of the break wall area to improve safety, creation of two fishing / scenic outlook areas with paved sidewalks to them, and a goose management plan. A review of the administration / logistics of swim lessons is also planned to offer improved services to users and increase efficiency for Village staff.

Design and implement passive recreation improvements, including shaded picnic tables and general site maintenance of vegetation and the beach. Design and implement active recreation improvements, including a pour in place playground surface or artificial turf for the play structure, purchase and install new pavilion for gatherings.



PARK SIGNAGE

Design and install new signage at all parks, following a consistent theme.

ATWATER PARK DESIGN PLAN & IMPROVEMENTS

Develop a master design plan for Atwater Park, reviewing amenities and adjacent land uses. From this master design plan, implement general park improvements. While these are yet to be determined, they may include improvements to the parking areas, screening of the DPW garage, the addition of restrooms, additional landscaping, repair of fencing, and new bike racks.

Potential active recreation improvements may include the resurface / replacement of the basketball court and backboard / net and improved accessibility within the park. Playground replacement will also be needed in the near-future.

SWISS VILLAGE PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Relocate the picnic table and checkerboard table (including the concrete slabs) to permit greater room for active recreation in the grassy area and for sledding.

UNGER PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Design and implement improved accessibility to and within the park, relocate the low utility wires to eliminate potential hazards, and redesign the vegetation to provide for low-maintenance, non-invasive species (removing the existing Japanese Knotweed). Continue collaboration with CISMA for grant opportunities and contractor availability.



INCREASED MOBILITY & ACCESS

Continue to improve sidewalks, trails and access to parks throughout the Village. This includes enhancements to the newer MDOT pedestrian crosswalk at M-24 and S. Broadway. For instance, additional crossing signs and pavement markings to increase pedestrian safety is warranted. Another area within the Village that would benefit for a continuous sidewalk is along the Evergreen Cemetery.

ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS

Adopt Ordinance text amendments that will accomplish the following:

1. Require pedestrian greenways / trails and non-traditional paths, in addition to sidewalks, in new and modified developments to connect them with other community neighborhoods, amenities, and destinations;
2. Provide for alternative public gathering spaces and non-traditional walkability and connections to community amenities (ex: programmed alleys downtown); and
3. Develop a tree fund and protection ordinance to ensure the health and replenishment of the Village's tree canopy.

PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Update this Parks and Recreation Master Plan a minimum of every five years (2026), or as significant changes take place to warrant an update before the five-year mark.



EXPAND & PARTNER FOR RECREATION FACILITIES

Seek both public and private partnerships with organizations such as the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), local service organizations, the Lake Orion Community School District, Orion Township, Oakland County, and private developers in order to provide improved and new recreation facilities for residents of the Lake Orion area. This will provide opportunities for a healthier lifestyle. Joint partnerships with citizen involvement is also envisioned, including seasonal neighborhood clean-up days. Specific partnerships with the DDA, collaboration on social media efforts and monthly involvement on relevant projects is recommended. It is also recommended that, for greater collaboration with the Paint Creek Trailways Commission, the Village have a voting member on the Commission.

