

**BALDWIN VILLAGE
COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN**

2023-2028

Prepared by:

The Village of Baldwin Planning Commission

With assistance from
Robert Toland Consulting

MARCH 2023

VILLAGE OF BALDWIN PLANNING COMMISSION

Jane Allison, Chairperson

Jeremy Anderson, Vice-Chairperson

Tamara Pore', Secretary

Mary Moffitt

Clarence Vicent

Guy Wolgamott

Vacancy

VILLAGE COUNCIL

Jim Truxton, President

Clarence Vicent

Tim Jannereth

Pam Anderson

Curtis Miller

Theresa Lamb, Clerk

Valerie McKay, Treasurer

Theresa Lamb, Clerk

Valerie McKay, Treasurer

Theresa Lamb, Street Administrator

Robert Toland, Village Planner

Baldwin Village Hall

620 Washington Street

Baldwin, MI 49304

Tel. 231/745-3587

<https://villageofbaldwin.org/>

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION	3
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE	8
RECREATION INVENTORY	11
DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS	17
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	24
ACTION PROGRAM	27
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE	35
PLAN AMENDMENTS	37

FIGURES

1	Organizational Chart	9
2	Existing Recreation Facilities	12
3	Hollister Park Proposed Improvements	29
4	Proposed Recreation Facilities	34

TABLES

1	Population Growth	6
2	Population Projections	7
3	Public Recreation Inventory	13
4	Recreation Facility Standards	20
5	Recreation Area Standards	22
6	Capital Improvement Schedule	36

APPENDIX A

Resolution of Planning Commission Recommendation

APPENDIX B

Resolution of Plan Adoption

APPENDIX C

Public Hearing Notice

APPENDIX D

Plan Certification Checklist

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the 2023-2028 Parks and Recreation Plan is to provide a logical framework for guiding decisions concerning park and recreation facilities as well as public open space and natural areas. The goals, objectives and policy guidelines in this Plan are designed to set the tone for the administration of Village Parks.

The Plan is also designed to serve as an effective planning tool to maintain and improve the present level of service as well as to enhance an already successful park and recreation system. This "level of service" approach to park and recreation facility planning enables the Village Council to identify and meet the changing patterns of need and uses with considerable flexibility.

Modifications in the level of service provided to Village residents can be made at any time. The Plan should be continually monitored and officially updated in terms of need and use so that its recommendations and implementation strategy can be adjusted, as necessary. It analyzes the recreational opportunities of each park in the Village so that decision makers have the information necessary to establish priorities.

The Recreation Plan is intended to meet the needs of current and future generations. It advocates land acquisition and park development based on a survey of Village residents, population and housing trends and a strategic analysis of recreation needs and opportunities.

It recommends a strengthened commitment to optimum recreational opportunities. Park areas are seen as vital to the quality of life in the Village of Baldwin. They provide opportunities for a wide variety of benefits that promote physical fitness, enjoyment, a greater knowledge, and appreciation of the interrelationships between residents and the natural world and safeguard the natural resources of the Village.

Preparing the Plan and Plan Content - The plan forms a road map for decisions over the next five years regarding the provision of park and recreation lands and other open space for the community. As with all planning efforts, planners must try to determine not only current, but also future community needs. As discussed above, the coordination of recreation planning with broader community goals establishes a better understanding of how recreation and open space

planning relates to other planning decisions and how better coordination improves the ability to factor population growth, population demographics, planned transportation systems and land uses, among other variables, into recreation plans. The following sections of the plan are described in subsequent chapters:

Community Description

Administrative Structure

Recreation Inventory

Resource Inventory (optional)

Description of the Planning and Public Input Process

Goals and Objectives

Action Program

SECTION 2 COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

A review of the historical, physical, and social make-up of the Village is presented in this section to provide a clear understanding of the dynamics that helped shape the present park system. An overview of the characteristics of the Village is important because this information helps to ascertain what "raw material" there is to work with, in developing a recreation system. This information can be used to develop a park system that will best serve the people of the Village of Baldwin.

The Village of Baldwin is in the west central part of Michigan's Lower Peninsula in central Lake County. The actual total land area of the Village encompasses 720 acres. The Village of Baldwin is a community that is the center of Lake County governmental activity, considered the center of local K-12 education, and is a center of commerce within a county that is known as a recreational center for West Michigan. As such, it is not only a place of residence for 1,208 people but is also a community with a broader, year-round, and part-year population base from the surrounding area.

Social Factors - Existing and future recreation facilities should continue to have good potential for use in the Baldwin area. A good perspective of the Baldwin area requires knowledge of the balance between population characteristics and economic concerns.

Population Characteristics – The Baldwin area, including Webber and Pleasant Plains Townships, as well as adjacent Yates, Cherry Valley, Sweetwater, and Lake Townships in Lake County, have significantly diverse populations. As listed in the Recreation Inventory, area residents and visitors of all socio-economic backgrounds, and various age groupings within the local community, utilize most of the recreational opportunities year-round.

Economic Concerns - Usual indicators of the economic status of the Village of Baldwin and surrounding community such as occupational employment figures, per capita and household incomes, and unemployment numbers place Lake County at or near the lowest ranking of all Michigan counties in economic comparisons. Factors such as a high Department of Social Services budget and a high percentage of senior citizens on fixed income levels are to be considered as well. Lack of growth in tax revenues in the Baldwin area reduces expenditures for

recreational development and maintenance. The main industry is tourism, known for its yearly fluctuations based on economic and weather conditions, still provides a measure of economic security for the community.

Physical Factors - Several thousand acres of federal and state forestlands, an abundant natural resource, surround the Village and make Baldwin an important center for tourism and recreation. Several recreational opportunities are available within these forestlands, including boating, canoeing, swimming, fishing, camping, hiking, and winter activities as cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Numerous natural areas with public and private campgrounds accommodate many diverse activities. Natural resources found within the Village of Baldwin include a small portion of Bush Lake in the northeast corner, and the Baldwin River and Sanborn Creek in the southeast section of the Village.

The main commercial district comprises several blocks on either side of M-37 through the center of the Village. Most of the County, State, and Federal governmental offices and services are located within this commercial area. Currently, there is only one industrial use of land within the Village.

Areas of single-family residential developments are located throughout both platted and unplatted portions of the Village. Multi-family residential developments are located just to the west and to the north of the Village-owned Hollister Park. The northwest corner of the Village is primarily vacant land.

Geography - Consideration of the physical elements of the Village is important in determining appropriate settings for recreation areas. Compatibility of the potential recreational facilities and the land must be evaluated so that development does not have a negative impact. Other factors, which should not be ignored in determining the location of recreational areas, would be the scenic or aesthetic qualities of potential sites. Characteristics such as topographic variation, vegetation and water access are all used to determine the quality of these specific sites.

There is 60 feet of elevation change from north to south within the Village limits. The Baldwin River system creates the highest degree of elevation change. The apparent high point is on M-37 at the northern Village limits and is 875 feet above sea level. There is another high point at Astor

Road at the northwest corner of the Village also at 875 feet above sea level. The apparent low point in town is at the southernmost part of the Village east of Michigan Avenue near the Baldwin River at 815 feet above sea level.

Numerous small wetlands are found adjacent to the Baldwin River. The river also has beautiful natural settings making it ideal for park sites.

Hydrology and Surface Water Drainage – The entire Village is located within the Baldwin River Watershed. While most of the Stormwater system consists of ground-level ditches, there is some underground storm sewer along Michigan Avenue. All the storm water drainage is directed toward the Baldwin River.

Land Cover – While some of the undeveloped areas of the Village are forested, the predominant land use is residential. The greatest concentration of residential development is in the south ½ of the Village. Parcel sizes in the Village range in size from around 800 square feet to over 30 acres. Interestingly, 315 parcels (43%) are smaller than 10,000 square feet. Similarly, 262 parcels (36%) are smaller than 8,000 square feet. There are 201 parcels (28%) smaller than 7,000 square feet. Some of the 228 parcels in the northeast quadrant of the Village are as small as 800 square feet, with the parcels averaging about 10,000 square feet.

Wildlife Habitat - There is a wide variety of wildlife species inhabiting the Village. Numerous songbirds and other non-game wildlife are present along with whitetail deer, small game animals and game birds. A diversity of habitats, combined with a clean environment is critical to the wildlife in the Village. The abundance of many species of game fish makes the Baldwin River extremely well suited for recreational fishing. Anadromous trout migrate up through the Pere Marquette River to the Baldwin River and its tributaries. Steelhead is found primarily in the spring, although some fish ascend in the fall and over winter. Salmon run in the fall and provide both fishing and viewing opportunities on the creek. The fish and wildlife in the Village provide many recreational opportunities including fishing, bird watching, photography and nature study.

Transportation – The intersection of highways US-10 and M-37 create a major focal point in the Village. Aside from US-10 and M-37, the major access roads within the Village are 8th Street and Maple Street.

Culture - The Village has only a few cultural sites and amenities to offer its residents and visitors. Baldwin Public Schools is the sole educational institution in Baldwin. The Wenger Pavilion, located in the parking lot east of the downtown businesses, is a frequently used performance stage in the summer months.

Population Growth - The population of the Village has remained stable over the past thirty years, with an average population of about 1,000. According to the United States Census Bureau, the population of Baldwin grew by 49 persons between 2000 and 2010 and declined by 254 persons between 2010 and 2020. In the year 2010, the population was 1,156 and 902 in 2020. This is a 18.5% decrease since 2000 and a 9.9% increase since 1990. Special attention should be given to the age group under 18 years old, which makes up 18.3% of the population. They tend to be the largest group of recreation facility users. However, this age group in Baldwin has decreased slightly since 2000. Another important group of residents are those over the age of 65. They are more active and demanding than seniors a generation ago. The proportion of senior citizens in the population comprised about 20.8% in 2020 compared to 21.8% of the population in 2000.

TABLE 1				
POPULATION GROWTH				
	1990	2000	2010	2020
	Census	Census	Census	Census
Village of Baldwin	821	1,107	1,156	902
Pleasant Plains	1,428	1,535	1,585	1,603
Webber	945	1,857	1,693	2,384
Lake County	8,583	11,333	11,539	12,096

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

The number of people being served or in need of recreational facilities, is the major factor influencing the number, size and type of parks, recreation areas, open space, and natural areas. As population increases and diversifies, so does the demand for an increasing amount and variety of recreation. Similarly, as people's education, occupations, incomes, and desires change, so do their demands on park and recreation facilities. The future population of the Village, as well as

the future demographics, will help prepare the Village respond with appropriate recreational opportunities.

Population Projections - Three population projection techniques were selected as a growth figure based on historic growth rates for the Village and countywide population projections.

The first two techniques are based on the past growth for the Village. The arithmetic method assumes that the Village will grow with the same number of people per decade as it did between 1990 and 2020. The geometric method assumes that the Village will grow at the same rate of growth as it did since 1990.

The third technique is a ratio-change projection, which assumes that a certain area (the Village) will experience growth like a larger area (Lake County). This technique assumes that the Village will continue to capture 7.46 percent of the county's total population (based on 2020 population figures).

Population projections, based on the above-described methods, suggest that in the year 2030 the Village of Baldwin population will rise to 962. The table suggests a slightly slower rate of growth of 6.65% every ten years. The challenge for this planning period is to determine, based upon this rate of growth, if the current allocation of parkland will prove adequate to meet the recreation and conservation needs of the next generation.

TABLE 2 POPULATION PROJECTIONS				
	2010 Census	2020 Census	2030 Projected	Percent Gain
Village	1,156	902	962	6.65
Pleasant Plains	1,585	1,603	1,621	1.12
Webber	1,693	2,384	3,357	40.81
Lake County	11,539	12,096	13,746	13.64

Source: Robert Toland Consulting

SECTION 3
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

An organizational chart of the administrative structure of park and recreation in the Village is shown in **Figure 1 Organization Chart**. The Village Council has the authority and responsibility to conduct the general business of the Village and to provide Village Park and recreation facilities. A standing recreation sub-committee of the Village Council advises the Council concerning parks. This committee develops information, alternatives and recommendations on Village Park activities and oversees the operation of Hollister Park. Village residents, of course, have a direct influence on both the planning commission and the Village Council at the ballot box and all meetings are open to the public for comment. The planning commission has been given authority for long-range recreation planning. The Village president has been designated by the Village council to supervise the Department of Public Works (DPW) supervisor. The DPW operates and maintains the existing Village Park. The DPW includes a full-time supervisor, three (3) full-time employees. Young people sometimes volunteer community service hours to assist with park clean up and maintenance.

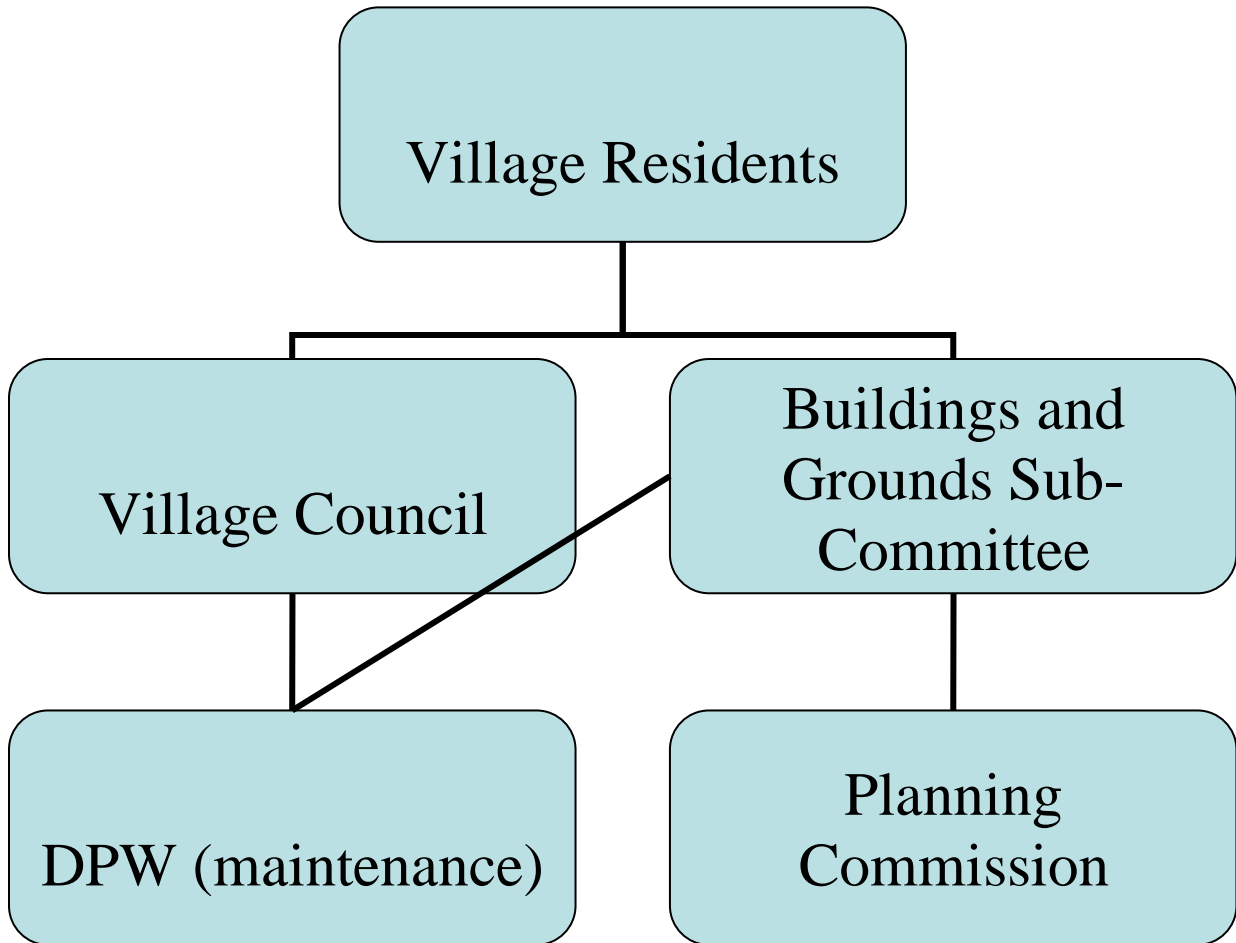
Having an adequate and functional internal organization is important, but it can only be successful if the community provides adequate funding for operating and maintaining parks. The Village has been highly effective in budgeting for this purpose. Operation and maintenance is paid for through General Fund appropriations. No funding is derived from park user fees.

The past, current, and projected annual budgets for parks operation and maintenance, recreation programming, and capital improvements have ranged from around \$12,000 to \$30,000. Funding for park operations and maintenance was budgeted at \$20,900.00 in 2020/2021. The most recently adopted Parks & Recreation budget for FY 2021/2022 is as follows:

<i>Operating Supplies</i>	\$ 1,000.00
<i>Wenger Pavilion</i>	\$ 1,000.00
<i>Contracted Services</i>	\$5,000.00
<i>Electric</i>	\$1000.00
<i>Repairs & Maintenance</i>	\$2,500.00
<i>Equipment Rental</i>	\$6,000.00
<i>Property Insurance</i>	\$300.00
<i>TOTAL</i>	\$16,500.00

The organizational structure of the Village is shown in ***Figure 1 Organizational Chart***. The Village Council has the authority of approving the Park and Recreation budget. The Village Council is responsible for parks and recreational facilities, programs and activities.

FIGURE 1
VILLAGE OF BALDWIN RECREATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Role of Volunteers

The local Little League, Lake County Men’s Softball League and other local tournaments help in maintaining the Ballfield. An important partnership has been formed with the Baldwin Rotary Club to maintain and improve Hollister Park. In addition to the Baldwin Rotary Club, the Michigan State University Extension office, Lake County Modelers and Flyers Club, Baldwin Area Action Council, and the Troutarama Committee are all local volunteers working on recreation programs. The

Michigan State University Extension office also has partnered with the Baldwin Public Schools to construct a Disc Golf course on the school property. The Lake County Modelers and Flyers Club has also partnered with the public schools to introduce model flying programs primarily using the airport property. The Baldwin Area Action Council sponsors the “Salmon Run” 5K run event each October using the Pere Marquette Trail. The Troutarama community festival includes Horse Pull, 5K run, alumni basketball tournament, fishing derbies, and partners with the Village to coordinate the event.

The Village Council conducts public hearings for projects that are developed with state and/or federal grants. The purpose of these hearings is to allow the people in the community the opportunity to voice their support, concerns, comments, or questions on these projects. Public input and citizen involvement is always encouraged for all Village Park and recreation projects.

SECTION 4 RECREATION INVENTORY

The Village of Baldwin is concerned with providing recreational opportunities to Village residents, tourists, and surrounding populations. The private sector also provides some recreational services and facilities. The Village strives to encourage local active recreation and tourism-oriented activities through the improvement and maintenance of existing facilities and the addition of facilities that are consistent with the needs of the Village and surrounding community. Existing recreational opportunities available to the community limits the need for recreational development to those facilities and programs that are not met, avoiding unnecessary duplication of recreational opportunities.

Inventory of Existing facilities - There are four outdoor recreational areas in the Village, each one uniquely different. Two are owned and operated by the Village, one by the State of Michigan and the other owned and operated by the Baldwin Public School System. The Village's Hollister Park is considered both a neighborhood and a community park, as it serves the entire community and is readily accessible by pedestrians and nearby neighborhoods. It is within convenient walking distance of most of the residential areas of the Village. Hollister Park, however, does not function as a town square or Village green. The primary gathering place for festivals and celebrations are the downtown parking and other adjacent open areas on the east side of M-37. The Village's Wenger Pavilion is considered a central gathering point and serves as the venue for numerous performing artists throughout the year. Wenger Pavilion serves the entire community and is readily accessible by pedestrians and nearby neighborhoods. It is within convenient walking distance of most of the residential areas of the Village.

Figure 2 illustrates the existing recreational facilities in the Village.

Figure 2 - Existing Recreation Facilities



EXISTING
2-22-22.pdf

The recreational facilities, and the state trail, are shown in the following table:

TABLE 3			
PUBLIC RECREATION INVENTORY			
<u>Park Type</u>	<u>Facility Name</u>	<u>Number of</u> <u>Acres</u>	<u>Existing Facilities</u>
Community	Hollister Park	8.28	Softball Diamonds/Playground Equipment, Picnic Pavilion, Restrooms, Grills, Tables, Benches
Community	Wenger Pavilion	0.01	Performance Stage and Pavilion
School	Baldwin Community Schools	10.25	Ballfields, playground equipment
Regional	Pere Marquette Trail	1/2 Mile	Gravel-Surfaced Trail
Community	Bush Lake Boat Launch	0.5	Improved Launch and Parking
Regional	Baldwin Airport	220	Festivals and Events

1. **Hollister Park** - The Village Park, located on Washington Street and Tenth Street west of Courthouse Drive, is the Village’s primary park facility, established in 1940. It is 8.28 acres in size. People use Hollister Park for a wide variety of activities and the park functions as a neighborhood park, serving nearby residents with a quickly accessible recreation site after school or work, and as a community park serving softball leagues and residents from surrounding townships. Hollister Park does not contain a natural feature such as a river or wooded area and is not adjacent to other features such as the Pere Marquette Trail or Baldwin River. The park features a playground with swings and a play scape, two ball fields, two tennis courts, a refreshment stand, a basketball court, and a picnic area.

Accessibility Assessment 3 Most site elements meet 2010 ADA standards, some grassy areas make it difficult to traverse

2. **Wenger Pavilion** - The Village's "Wenger Pavilion", in the center of town between 7th and 8th Streets, functions as the "Town Square" or "Village Green", even though it has little actual green space. It has been very popular as one of the Village's main attractions in the summer months. The Pavilion is the venue for numerous performing artists throughout the year. The use of the performance stage has increased over the years and now has dozens of participants annually. The Pavilion is the primary gathering place for festivals and celebrations in the downtown parking areas and serves the entire community. It is readily accessible by pedestrians and is within convenient walking distance of most of the residential neighborhoods of the Village.

Accessibility Assessment 3 Most site elements meet 2010 ADA standards, the pavilion is elevated and does not have a ramp

3. **Baldwin Community Schools** - Additional recreational facilities in the Village are available at the Baldwin Community Schools located at the school complex site in the southwestern corner of the Village. The school facility offers outdoor track, open areas, play equipment and a disc golf course. The public-school system also offers indoor recreation, such as a gym, basketball court, volleyball court, gymnastics, and multipurpose room, however, access is limited for the public.

Accessibility Assessment 4 All site elements meet 2010 ADA standards

4. **The Pere Marquette State Trail** – The State trail through the center of town has been very popular as one of Michigan's many Rails-to-Trails projects. Trail use for hiking and biking has increased over the years and now has approximately 10,000 participants annually. Activity on this part of the trail is especially high in the winter due to the popularity of the trail for snowmobiling.

Accessibility Assessment 4 All site elements meet 2010 ADA standards

5. **Bush Lake Park** – This park was developed by Webber Township and includes parking and boat launch.

Accessibility Assessment 2 Some site elements meet 2010 ADA standards, limited parking and turnaround, pier is not sturdy

Lake County - In addition to local outdoor recreational areas within the Village, there are several opportunities for recreation in Lake County and surrounding Township parks. Among these opportunities is the public use of State Forest property, and U.S. Forest land (Manistee Forest). Forestlands provide open and forested lands for camping, hiking, and hunting. All of these are available within a few miles of Baldwin. The Baldwin River and Pere Marquette River (a designated national scenic waterway) are excellent for kayaking, canoeing and fishing. In addition, there are several developed private campgrounds, snowmobile trails, the North Country hiking trail, Bowman Lake foot travel area, and swimming areas.

Community Events and Festivals – Regular community events such as the “Sounds of the Forest”, “Echoes Through the Timbers”, “Santa Parade” and the “Salmon Run” are held each year. Several festivals take place in the Village throughout each year enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike. Well-known major festivals that take place in Baldwin include the “Blessing of the Bikes” in June and “Troutarama” in July.

Natural Areas – Natural recreational opportunities due to being surrounded by State and National Forests include canoeing, hunting for small game, turkey and deer, fishing in Baldwin River, Pere Marquette River (which is a premier trout stream), snowmobiling, and Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) use.

PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Baldwin Bowling Center – This eight-lane facility hosts tournaments, league, school, and recreational bowling, and features a pro shop, restaurant, outside patio, gaming arcade and live entertainment.

DNR RECREATION GRANT

A Recreation Bond Fund grant was received by the Village in 1992 that financed Development of park facilities in Hollister Park. The grant amount was \$96,000.00 and the grant number was BF92-243. The improvements included playground, ball fields, picnic area, tennis courts, parking improvements, and lighting. All the elements constructed at that time are still in excellent condition. All the improvements have been well maintained by the Village and are used regularly.

In 2010, the Village obtained a LWCF grant to build a skate park. The grant amount was \$65,000.00. The project consisted of a new skate park in an otherwise undeveloped part of the existing Village Park. Components of the skate park included equipment and apparatus on a paved bituminous surface. The improvements featured signage and amenities such as trash receptacles and benches.

SECTION 5
DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

The Village Planning Commission was responsible for the preparation of this Plan. The planning process occurred in three concurrent segments. The first was a strategic planning process facilitated by the planning commission and Village planner. It involved an inventory of the Village Park system. The Planning Commission created a strategic vision of the Village of Baldwin Parks over the next five years. A comprehensive list of all potential issues relating to parks and recreation opportunities and deficiencies was developed. After an analysis of Village Park strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, a revised mission statement and a series of action steps were developed.

Community Input – In March 2022, the Planning commission determined that inviting the public to participate in a questionnaire and then invite them to an open meeting to discuss the Recreation Plan would provide the best forums and yield the best results for gathering ideas for the "Park and Recreation Plan". The questionnaire would be available on the Village's website and Village residents would receive a postcard and notifications on the website, in the newspaper and flyers to visit the website and fill out the questionnaire.

Once the information from the questionnaire was obtained and tabulated, the Planning Commission revised the Plan accordingly. Many ideas were expressed but the discussion was focused primarily on Hollister Park projects. Several modifications to the projects that had been proposed were developed by the Planning Commission.

DESCRIPTION OF PLANNING PROCESS

Recreational facilities are divided into three classifications: (1) neighborhood parks and playgrounds, (2) community parks, and (3) regional parks. A summary of these park classifications is provided below:

Neighborhood parks and playgrounds are areas for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, and playgrounds. Neighborhood parks should be easily accessible to a neighborhood population, centrally located, with safe pedestrian access. The service area should be approximately 1/4 to 2 miles.

Community parks are passive and active recreational areas serving the entire community. Community parks are larger and may provide passive recreation, such as walking trails, seating areas, skating, and picnic areas. Service areas for community parks should be approximately 2 miles. For Baldwin, this would include populations well outside the Village limits.

Regional parks function as parks that can accommodate and serves residents from an hour or more and not necessarily as a close, convenient facility for area residents.

Planning Initiative - The Village does not currently have any type of formal committee to provide for the recreational needs of Village residents. The current 7-member Planning Commission was assigned the task of preparing and updating the 5-year Community Parks and Recreation Plan, which will include a vision of the future, a mission statement, and a series of action steps through the year 2021. Convenient and worthwhile recreational opportunities are a vital component of the Village's growth. Recreation is an increasingly important role in a family's decision when relocating to a new area. In addition, recreational facilities provide an opportunity for entertainment, giving younger people within the community constructive leisure time.

The plan's highest priority is the improvement of existing park facilities for the continued enjoyment of current and future generations. Improvements to existing facilities will provide recreation activities to a diverse and changing demographic mix of residents and meet potentially changing cultural norms and new activities. Second to facility improvements is the acquisition of new parkland. Some of the needs identified in the Plan cannot be met with existing facilities. Opportunities for acquiring new parkland will be explored and land obtained when possible. This aspect of the Plan highlights the value of open space, greenways, clean water, and recreation space for Village residents for an expanded area populace.

Resources that were used included the Parks and Recreation Plan developed in 2015 by the Planning Commission, with assistance from local officials and citizens. Information pertaining to the different recreational opportunities was gathered and many meetings held to balance the many priorities of the local community with the local tourism industry.

During 2021 and 2022, the Baldwin Planning Commission met monthly to discuss local and regional recreation needs, spending priorities, and implementation techniques. The information collected and the input from local resource persons and the public identified the need for the continued development of community parks providing a variety of active and passive recreation activities. On January 16, 2023, the Planning Commission completed the final draft copy of the plan for consideration at a public meeting.

Public Viewing – Following their meeting on January 16, 2023, the Planning Commission distributed copies of the final draft to the Pathfinder Community Library and the Village offices for public display. On January 19, 2023, a notice was placed in the Lake County Star indicating that copies of the Plan were at those locations for viewing. Copies of this plan were made available to all interested persons at least 30 days before the public hearing.

Public Hearing - At their regular meeting on February 20, 2023, the Planning Commission received public input on the Plan. The Planning Commission forwarded the Plan to the Village Council on February 21, 2023. On March 13, 2023, the Village Council approved the plan and forwarded it to the appropriate agencies and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Recreation Needs - Many of the older structures in the park system such as lighting and fences need major renovation. These renovations include access for the disabled and maintaining the structural integrity of buildings. Similarly, some trees need pruning, or in some instances, may need to be removed. While repairs and improvements are evident on existing facilities, it is important to entice new park users by anticipating emerging trends. Anticipating new trends in recreation is especially important as the size and diversity of the local population continues to grow.

According to the MDNR, the following standards apply for local recreational opportunities, based on the population of the community. According to these standards, the Village has only slight identified deficiencies in facilities. However, it is felt that Hollister Park should be improved with needed park improvements and maintenance. Efforts should continue to improve and maintain Hollister Park. This facility has broad appeal and potential utilization from a variety of users, but lack of visibility impairs greater use. Crosswalks should be added from all directions, parking

should be improved, the pavilion expanded, and the lighting system improved. The newly installed directional signs directing people to the park should also be helpful.

TABLE 4 RECREATION FACILITY STANDARDS			
<u>Recreational Opportunity</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Deficiency</u>
Ball Fields	1/3,000	2	0
Basketball Courts (Outside)	1/5,000	4	0
Picnic Tables	1/200	8	0
Playgrounds	1/3,000	1	0
Tennis Courts	1/4,000	2	0
Hiking Trails	1/5,000	1	0
Outdoor Ice Rink	1/20,000	0	0
Soccer Fields	1/10,000	0	1
Volleyball Courts	1/10,000	0	1
In-line Skate Park	1/10,000	1	0

Hollister Park should be improved with needed park improvements. In addition, vacant parcels within residential areas would be excellent locations for small "pocket parks" or play lots. This would include the areas between the Central Business District and higher-density housing. Neighborhood playgrounds might also include sidewalks, benches, landscaping, water fountains, play equipment, etc.

Land Area Standards - One of the first steps in planning a park system is to determine the level of service (LOS) to be adopted. This approach enables the use of standards as a means of setting goals for the planning of facility expansion in the park system.

Many communities use the National Recreation and Park Association standard of 20 acres of Village owned land per 1,000 residents. This Plan supports the standard of 10 acres per 1,000 of population, with the Village providing 5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents and other units of

government providing the remaining 5 acres per 1,000 residents. This standard is consistent with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources guidelines. Considering that the Village has approximately 8 acres of parkland and a population more than 902, the amount of existing parkland is adequate.

The Village has determined that the enhancement of existing parks is the highest priority. However, the Plan does provide for new parkland and recommends sites for acquisition. Acting on land acquisition quickly is important. Land for new parks becomes more expensive over time because: (1) less vacant land remains, and (2) opportunities for large parcels diminishes. Fortunately, some property that may be undesirable for land developers may have characteristics suitable for certain types of recreation. Based on the strong support of the Village Council and the citizens responding to the Village-wide survey, the Village should acquire additional acreage or obtain long-term leases to obtain satisfactory parkland for use by future generations.

Standards for individual facilities such as ball diamonds, playgrounds, etc., are also available and often used in the park planning process. The Village of Baldwin uses the standards found in the pamphlet, Community Recreation Planning, published by the Recreation Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (1989). However, the standards found in this booklet will only be used as broad guidelines. Each future park development will have a complete site plan that will identify the best possible uses within that park based on needs, opportunities, and a detailed site analysis. With this method, park user needs can be addressed more effectively, and the park can be designed in harmony with the environment.

Recreation Standards - Convenient and worthwhile recreational opportunities are a vital component of the Village's growth. Recreation plays an increasingly important role in a family's decision to move to a community. In addition, recreational facilities provide an opportunity for entertainment, giving people within the community constructive leisure time. The role of this Plan in recreation is to identify recreation deficiencies and needs and to suggest facility improvements.

Village recreational facilities are divided into two classifications: (1) neighborhood parks and playgrounds, and (2) community parks. A summary of these park classifications is provided below:

Neighborhood parks and playgrounds are areas for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, and playgrounds. Neighborhood parks should be easily accessible to a neighborhood population, centrally located, with safe pedestrian access. The service area should be approximately 1/4 mile.

Community parks are passive and active recreational areas serving the entire community. Community parks are larger and may provide passive recreation, such as walking trails, seating areas, skating, and picnic areas. Service areas for community parks should be within 2 miles.

For this plan, the MDNR's recreation standards will be used. These standards are shown in the following table:

TABLE 5 RECREATION AREA STANDARDS		
<u>Desirable Recreational Area</u>	<u>Service Size Area</u>	<u>Acres per 1,000 People</u>
Neighborhood Park	1/4 Mile	1.5 to 2.0
Community Park	2 Miles	2.0 to 3.5

Future Hollister Park improvements might include sidewalks, benches, landscaping, drinking fountains, play equipment, and parking areas. Projects that might help enhance the recreational aspects of the Village include an ice-skating rink, and a band shell in an open-air grassy setting.

The Village should ensure that an approved Recreation Plan meeting the MDNR's standards is prepared and kept up to date to apply for state and federal grant monies. The Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund are the two possible funding sources for land acquisition and/or facility development. When applying for state grant monies for recreational facilities, those recreational opportunities determined to be deficient would receive greater consideration.

Constraints - Parks and recreational programming usually suffer because they compete with other essential public services. The creation of a "Baldwin Area Parks Foundation" and a "Friends of the Parks" program has the potential to augment funding from the Village general fund. It may

be a good time to take a closer look at these possibilities. Together with grants, these funding sources can be used to meet the additional needs of the Village Parks identified in the Plan.

SECTION 6

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In this section, the goals and objectives that have been developed during the preparation of the Plan are described. Much of what is described was developed as the direct result of the public meetings and the knowledge of the Planning Commission. The overall goal of a park and recreation program is to provide recreation opportunities for the community and for tourists. However, some goals are based more on the specific demographic characteristics of the local population.

The proposed recreational opportunities are based on:

- A consideration of the demographic subgroups in the community
- The recreation opportunities each of these subgroups want
- Where the subgroups live
- How they will get to the parks and recreational opportunities
- How much they can afford to pay

Because the Village is only one square mile in size, protection of open space was not a primary issue. However, several of the goals involve either using or retaining recreational opportunities oriented toward water or passive recreation. The planning process identified the following general goals and objectives:

GOAL: PROVIDE QUALITY RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR VILLAGE RESIDENTS.

Policy Recommendations:

- Maintain an approved recreation plan and apply for state and federal recreation grant monies.
- Expand the Village Park and other recreation opportunities to include a wide range of recreational opportunities for Village residents.
- Maintain existing facilities in peak condition.
- Optimize the utilization of all existing facilities, including school properties.
- Make better utilization of natural features such as the Baldwin River for recreational use.

GOAL: PROVIDE ADEQUATE RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF ALL CITIZENS.

Policy Recommendations:

- Acquire, develop, and preserve that portion of the landscape with the highest potential for public recreational use.
- Make facilities accessible to people with disabilities.

GOAL: PROVIDE A VARIETY OF RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL RESIDENTS.

Policy Recommendations:

- Identify the recreation needs of all residents, recognizing different age groups and work to meet those needs.
- Maximize the use of existing facilities.
- Provide a variety of active and passive recreation activities.

GOAL: DESIGN ALL RECREATIONAL FACILITIES TO BE ACCESSIBLE AND USABLE BY ALL VILLAGE RESIDENTS DESIRING USE OF SUCH FACILITIES.

Policy Recommendations:

- Develop and support community level recreation facilities and programs to ensure the possible participation of all residents, including senior citizen, handicapped, and preschool populations.

Summary - The Village's Recreation Plan should encourage a variety of recreational programs to provide opportunities for all user groups. It should be based on an established line of

communication to encourage public awareness and involvement in the recreation process. An effective recreation program should include the following:

- Work with community groups, the business community and service organizations to develop public brochures that describe available recreational facilities and programs.
- Use the news media as a forum to release news regarding programs and facilities and overall public relations.
- Identify projects/programs that private individuals and organizations can undertake (i.e., shuffleboard, horseshoes).

The Recreation Plan should consider the development of recreational trails for bicycling, running, and in-line skating. These could be conveniently developed using local road rights-of-way. Trails of this type can be developed to link local trails with the Pere Marquette trail and other parks.

SECTION 7 ACTION PROGRAM

RECREATION NEEDS AND ACTION PLAN

Based on the MDNR's standards, there is a need for additional acreage for both neighborhood and playground facilities. Consideration should be given to establishing a neighborhood park in at least one of the four quadrants of the Village so that at least for most children in the largest neighborhood, it is not necessary to cross major roads to get to a neighborhood park.

The service area of Hollister Park extends beyond the entire Village. However, all the Village's recreational areas should be connected with the existing and proposed residential areas throughout the Village by pedestrian-ways such as sidewalks and bike paths. The Pere Marquette Trail serves this function well.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section identifies the high-priority projects to be accomplished over the next 5 years, including brief project descriptions, and estimated costs.

Consideration must be given to how these projects will be funded. The best possible method is to apply for Land and Water Conservation Funds or the Michigan Land Trust Funds programs. These programs require a 25 to 50 percent match, which can be in the form of cash outlay, land and labor donations, and other direct services. Another method of financing is with local donations or Village general revenues. The Village of Baldwin Downtown Development Authority also has objectives that include recreational type projects to promote tourism and economic development. A promotional program may be the key to gaining the interest of residents to donate land, money or services (labor and/or building materials) for recreational purposes.

The primary concern in the implementation of any plan is funding. It will be the responsibility of the Village to monitor short-term project goals and to ensure that funds are made available to complete this short-term program. The Village Council will no doubt remain the governing board responsible for organizing these improvements primarily through the energies of the Village public works employees and interested community groups. Projects will be funded by a combination of

active work by these community groups and public funds. The Village should continue to encourage local and tourism-oriented active recreation through the improvement and maintenance of existing facilities and the addition of facilities that are consistent with the needs of our Village and surrounding community.

The following enhancement techniques are recommended to effectively preserve, protect, and enhance the recreational opportunities in Baldwin Village:

- Improvements and maintenance to Hollister Park
- Bicycle and pedestrian trail system
- Natural features promotion
- Park development
- Creation of Neighborhood Parks

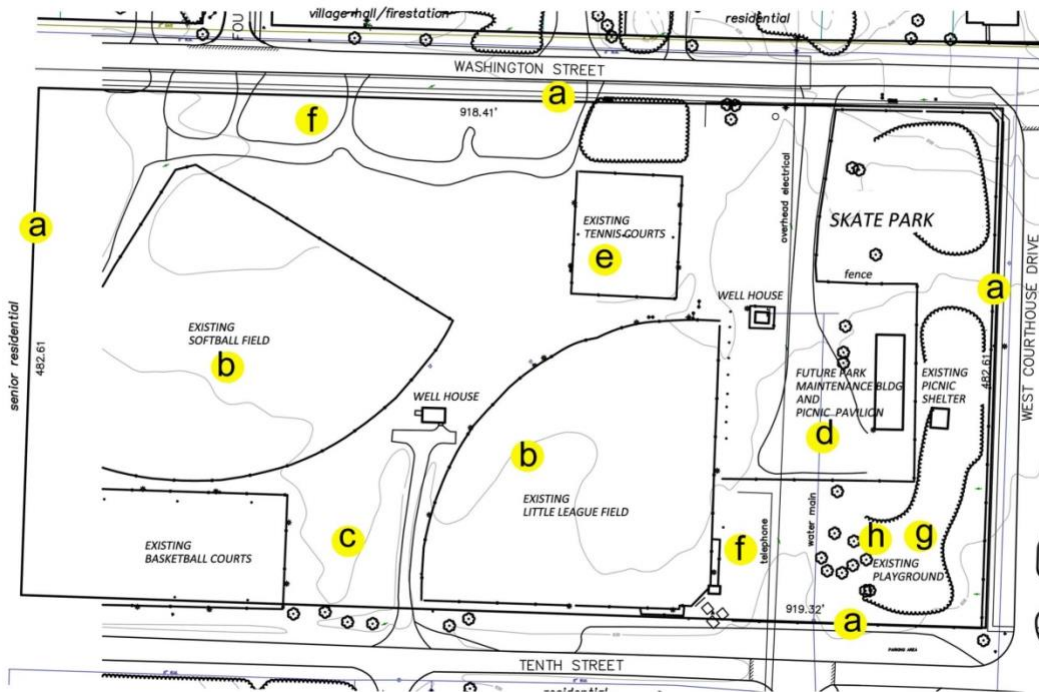
ACTION PROGRAM

Several projects have been identified to fulfill the objectives and recommendations of the Parks and Recreation Plan action program. They are:

1. HOLLISTER PARK IMPROVEMENTS & FACILITY UPGRADES

Numerous improvements are desirable at the Hollister Recreational Complex from paving of parking areas to new play equipment, fencing, scoreboards, lighting, etc. This project should include reworking the ball fields, parking, restrooms, and improving accessibility.

Figure 3 - Hollister Park Proposed Improvements



LEGEND

- a. Park Fencing
- b. Ballfield Upgrades
- c. Parking Area Upgrades
- d. Existing Picnic Area Upgrades
- e. Tennis Court Resurfacing
- f. Drinking Fountains
- g. Spray Pad Area
- h. Playground Area Expansion

Village of Baldwin

Hollister Park Proposed Improvements



- A. **Park Fencing**: The existing Hollister Park fencing has been identified as a need to be upgraded. Vinyl coated, 48" chain link fencing should be used as a replacement for the rusty current park fencing. Fencing may vary in height and detail as per specific site use in Hollister Park. Plastic fence topper in bright yellow should also be installed. This fence topper is a safe, good looking, corrugated plastic protective way to cost effectively cover the fence tops. It protects individuals from injury and dresses up the park.

Estimated Project Cost \$61,275

- B. **Ball field Upgrades**: The need for several upgrades in the ball field(s) area at Hollister Park has been identified. New fencing should be of vinyl chain link and of the height required for ball fields. Yellow, plastic fence topper should also be installed for the protection of players and spectators.

Estimated Project Cost \$26,500

- C. **Parking Areas**: Parking areas for the ball fields should be re-graded and new gravel to provide for proper drainage installed.

Estimated Project Cost \$22,500

- D. **Existing Picnic Area Upgrade**: The current picnic area at Hollister Park has been identified as needing upgrades in parking and the addition of barbeque grills and picnic tables. The intent of the Hollister Park Picnic Area is to allow residents a safe, convenient, usable place to enjoy the outdoors. The current paved areas should be extended along the east side of the park from the north to the south. This would allow for easier access of all residents and easier access for maintenance by park/village employees. Barbeques and hot coal receptacles should be located outside of the normal circulation routes in the picnic area. The barbeques and hot coal receptacles shall be located on non-combustible surfaces such as a concrete pad or an area of stabilized gravel. Placement of grill(s) should allow for clearance of a mower if needed. One picnic table for each grill should be provided. Additional picnic tables for larger gatherings should be located under the pavilion

type structure. Picnic tables should be of commercial/park quality. ADA accessibility should be provided.

Estimated Project Cost \$15,200

- E. **Drinking Fountains:** The addition of drinking fountains at Hollister Park has been identified as an essential upgrade. The park/ball field area shall have at least one drinking fountain. Where softball/little league backstops are included, one drinking fountain for each backstop or group of backstops should be provided. A wall mounted drinking fountain on the exterior of the proposed bathroom building or a pedestal style drinking fountain in the immediate vicinity could also be included. When a drinking fountain is building mounted, all plumbing shall be concealed within the walls of the building or within the plumbing chase; plumbing exposed to the public is not acceptable. All drinking fountains shall comply with current accessibility standards.

Estimated Project Cost \$12,500

- F. **Spray Pad Area** – Construct a spray pad of 60-feet diameter consisting of numerous underground water pumps to provide entertainment and interest.

Estimated Project Cost \$104,000

- G. **Playground Area Expansion** – Upgrade the existing areas and add a new play structure.

Estimated Project Cost \$61,250

BASIS FOR ACTION PROGRAM

A general overview of our Community Recreation Plan reveals that anticipated improvements to Hollister Park will meet with four community-wide standards by:

1. Striking a good balance between the two priorities of promoting the tourism industry and providing for the local community-based recreational needs.

2. Providing a scheduled action plan for the many interested community groups such as the Rotary, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Baldwin Community Schools working with the Village Council in developing and maintaining recreational facilities.
3. Recognizing the local limitations in funding the local matches of grant programs and continuing future maintenance of the recreational facilities.
4. Providing for further recreational opportunities at which interaction can occur among our various population groups commonly organized along racial, generational, and economic lines.

Specifically, each of our proposed improvements and additions to our community recreational facilities meets needs within the community:

Hollister Park - This facility is a focal point for the Village of Baldwin and its general appearance reflects upon the community. Further improvements made in landscaping, signage, parking, and lighting help make the facility safe for its regular usage. Such improvements will also enhance the already-completed projects within the park, fencing around the playground area, and renovations to the ball field and tennis courts.

Baldwin is the economic and governmental center of Lake County in which Hollister Park functions as a regional park facility. A 1984 survey indicated that 70% of its users, who lived within the county, were residents from outside of the Village. The development of new playground equipment and improving the ball fields and parking arrangements are included in the action plan because of this survey.

The location of the park underscores the need to improve and make additions to the facility. Two separate housing projects of Senior Citizen residents are located adjacent to Hollister Park. Since no facility primarily designed for the Senior Citizens is in the park, shuffleboard courts and horseshoe pits can meet some of the recreational needs of this age population. An apartment complex serving families is located nearby and may soon expand its operations; increased usage of the park by people of all ages and races is expected. The proximity of county government offices and the downtown business community mean that a newly upgraded picnic grounds will

be attractive to workers. With an increasing population, potential usage of Hollister Park is increasing.

Pere Marquette Trailhead - This unique facility has great potential for economic growth because of its location. It is adjacent to M-37 extending to the east Village limits and on to Midland. The trail benefits residents by linking up together Baldwin with Idlewild, two population centers. Idlewild, for example, is the location of the closest public swimming facility to the Village of Baldwin and is the location of the local school district's middle school – each made more accessible by the trail. The local economy will benefit from developing the trailhead to the Fish Farm location as well. First, the combination of these two unique facilities will be a popular draw for tourists, and second, by designing the trail to intersect with Eighth Street at the western edge of the Fish Farm, the Baldwin Downtown area will be made more accessible to users of the trail. The Downtown has ready-made services including a Tourist Center and Historical Museum, many interesting and unique businesses and municipal parking.

Figure 4 - Proposed Recreation Facilities



PROPOSED
2-22-22.pdf

SECTION 8 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

Purpose of the Capital Improvement Schedule

The Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS) details anticipated acquisition and development for at least the next five years. For each item listed, the expected year(s) it will take place, the nature of the improvement and its location (park name or location of parkland), estimated cost, and break down of the cost by anticipated funding source, is included. If more than one acquisition or development project is called for in a year, the relative priority of each is indicated. For barrier-free accessibility at existing facilities, projects will address this need, as discussed in the Action Program. A map showing the location of all proposed projects listed in the CIS is included.

The Action Program and CIS both include projects that will be undertaken with local funds as well as those projects that are dependent on grant funding. A realistic approach has been used to guide funding options since it is not realistic to expect a grant every year or for every project. At this time, a site for new park development has not been specifically identified for acquisition. Acquisition needs are listed in terms of the types of land desired and/or the geographic areas targeted for acquisition rather than by specific locations. In some cases, the types of improvements needed have been identified without regard to a specific park.

The following table shows the five-year capital improvement schedule outlining the years, cost, and funding sources for various activities. The purpose of a capital improvement schedule is to provide a general idea of the costs and funding sources for future park needs. Actual costs may vary regarding the specific design and site conditions. Development costs have been based on means construction estimates, comparison to similar recent projects in other communities, and construction costs provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Recreation Division. These estimates are based on normal development costs and do not allow for any unusual circumstances that may be unique to a specific site (i.e., heavy clay soils and utility needs).

The plan has identified why each project has been selected as the highest priority at this time, and documents that efforts were taken to ensure citizens were made aware of and allowed an opportunity to influence this decision.

TABLE 6
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

Year	Project	Cost	Funding
2024	Hollister Park Fencing	\$61,275	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2025	Hollister Park Ball Field Upgrades	\$26,500	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2026	Hollister Park Parking Area Upgrades	\$22,500	1, 2, 4, 5
2027	Hollister Park Picnic Area Upgrades	\$15,200	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2028	Hollister Park Drinking Fountains	\$12,500	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2029	Hollister Park Spray Pad	\$104,000	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2030	Hollister Park Playground Expansion	\$61,250	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

1 = local funds, 2 = grant funds, 3 = DDA funds, 4 = private funds, 5 = other

MAINTENANCE

Maintaining Park facilities is an important element in ensuring user safety and satisfaction. Park maintenance can be provided from a single source or a combined effort between an organization sponsoring a league or activity and the community. An example would be a softball league and the Village working together to provide adequate park maintenance.

The frequency and type of maintenance will vary depending on the size and type of park as well as the amount of use the park receives. The actual cost of park maintenance may vary depending on the level of maintenance and the extent of future improvements. An average cost for an independent contractor to provide minimal maintenance for the existing facilities may range from \$4,000 to \$7,000 per year.

SECTION 9 PLAN AMENDMENTS

Prior to expiration of a plan, a community may want to update portions of the plan to add new projects to the Action Program and Capital Improvement Schedule. An approved plan may be amended at any time during the five-year period of eligibility to reflect significant changes in community conditions or needs or changes in recreation priorities. It is especially important to amend a recreation plan if a community is considering a grant application for a project that is not in the Action Program or Capital Improvement Schedule. An amendment does not extend the five-year life of the plan. Amendments should include an updated Action Program and Capital Improvement Schedule.

Amendment Content

At a minimum, a plan amendment must include:

- A description of the public involvement process used in development of the amendment, including a discussion of the public input methods and opportunities
- An amended Action Program and CIS and rationale for the changes
- Documentation of local adoption of the amendment

Amendment Format

Plan amendments must consist of one of the following:

A complete, revised plan with a letter of explanation that indicates what aspects of the original plan have been revised and how,

or

Revised or additional pages to the approved recreation plan, with an explanation of where the new pages fit within the original plan. Each page should explain the changes and the reasons why the changes were made. If the amendment is to be inserted into the existing plan, it must be in a similar format to the approved plan and indicate the precise location for insertion. Amendments submitted in a format significantly different than that of the approved plan will not be approved.

Amendment Adoption

Amendments must be adopted in a like manner to the recreation plan. Therefore, the same governing body or bodies that adopted the original plan must adopt the amendment, unless the resolutions adopted for the original plan included specific language delegating the authority to make and adopt amendments to another entity.

MDNR APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY RECREATION PLANS AND PLAN AMENDMENTS

Complete community recreations plan or plan amendment package that is submitted to the MDNR for approval must include the following:

- The final plan or plan amendment, not a draft
- If a local planning commission, park and recreation commission, recreation advisory board, or another formal board or commission was involved in development of the plan, the plan must include a signed and dated resolution of that body recommending adoption by the Village council.
- A signed and dated resolution of the Village council.
- Copies of letters transmitting the plan to the county and regional planning agencies.

Upon receipt of the adopted plan or amendment and required documentation, the MDNR will review the checklist and ensure that the needed resolutions and transmittal letters to the appropriate planning commissions are included in the submittal. The plan itself will not be reviewed If the recreation plan submittal package is complete, the MDNR will sign the checklist, which indicates MDNR approval of the plan or plan amendment. A copy of the signed checklist will be returned to the community to notify them that the plan or amendment has been approved and that the community is eligible to apply for recreation grants. Grant eligibility expires five years from the date of local plan adoption.

Recreation plans will be read during the evaluation of grant applications. If at that time the MDNR determines that the plan is incomplete (i.e., does not include the required content as indicated by

the local government in their signed certification checklist), the DNR's approval of the plan can be revoked.

APPENDIX A

Resolution of Planning Commission Recommendation

APPENDIX B

Resolution of Plan Adoption

APPENDIX C
Public Hearing Notice

APPENDIX D

Plan Certification Checklist