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CITY OF ORCHARD LAKE VILLAGE

MASTER RECREATION PLAN Adopted January 23, 1991 Update Adopted September 21, 2009

INTRODUCTION

From time to time City officials have considered the availability of existing recreation and leisure-time resources for residents, and discussed the need for additional resources. In December 1990, interest in parks and recreation heightened when the Cranbrook Institute of Science announced their intentions to sell a 50-acre nature preserve located between Upper Straits Lake and Orchard Lake. This action helped many residents to realize that “parks and recreation” means more than just baseball fields, swimming pools, and other conventional recreation facilities. Residents realized that preservation of natural areas and wildlife habitats is as much a part of parks and recreation as the other more common recreation pursuits.

As public attention focused on preservation of natural areas, in particular, the Cranbrook site, the need for a more formal plan became apparent and the City’s first Master Recreation Plan was adopted by the Orchard Lake City Council on January 23, 1991. The Cranbrook site was then purchased with financial support from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and is now preserved in perpetuity as the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary. This passive recreational facility is used by many.

In 2008 the City Planning Commission decided to update the plan, recognizing the significant changes in the City’s population, society conditions, and property use in and surrounding Orchard Lake.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The City Clerk and Building Official/DPW Superintendent share responsibility for managing recreation or leisure programs authorized by the City Council. In development of the original Orchard Lake Master Recreation Plan these staff members provided direction throughout the planning process and City Planning Consultants from McKenna Associates, Incorporated developed the plan.

During the updating process the Planning Commission served in an advisory capacity during the planning process. The Planning Commission discussed broad parks and recreation planning goals, as well as specific actions which the City should undertake in the short-term, such as acquisition of the Cranbrook site and, in the longer term, bike path development.

Council input was solicited in the planning process.

Public input was solicited throughout the planning process, including a formal survey regarding acquisition of the Sanctuary and in public meetings of the Commission and Council. Another survey was undertaken in the update to solicit input on the other recreation goal identified in the original plan, bike path or pedestrian path development.

CHRONOLOGY OF STEPS USED IN THE 2009 UPDATE PROCESS

1. City surveyed residents to determine support for pursuing paths and level of path system desired, i.e. traditional paths, road shoulder widening, subdivision connections, and to determine what other recreational activities/facilities residents might be interested in (January 12, 2009)
2. Planning Commission considered response to survey (February 3, 2009)
3. Planning Commission drafted plan amendments in response to the survey and held a public hearing on the amendments (TBD)
4. Planning Commission transmitted plan to City Council with recommendation to approve (TBD)
5. Review and adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan by the City Council (TBD)
6. Submission of plan update to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (TBD)

SCOPE

In the update the planning process began with an evaluation of what the City is and what is available so that community needs can be determined. It includes the physical characteristics of the community, population characteristics, an inventory of parks and recreation facilities in Orchard Lake and in surrounding communities, and an inventory of available parks and recreation programs.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Physical Characteristics

Location

Orchard Lake Village is located in south central Oakland County along the shores of three lakes: Upper Straits Lake, Orchard Lake, and Cass Lake (see Map 1). The City is surrounded on all sides by West Bloomfield Township, except in the northeast, where the City abuts Keego Harbor. Main access routes to the City include Orchard Lake Road, which provides access to I-696 to the south as well as the City of Pontiac; and Pontiac Trail, which provides access to communities located southwest of the City and to M-5, an I-275 connector completed in 2000 that has impacted traffic and development patterns in the area.

Existing Land Use

According to the City of Orchard Lake Village Master Plan, last updated in September 2006:

<u>Land Use Classification</u>	<u>Total Acreage</u>	<u>Percent of Total Acreage</u>	<u>Total Land Area</u>
Single Family Residential	927	36%	65%
Commercial	26	1%	2%
Public	130	5%	9%
Quasi-Public	286	11%	20%
Vacant	59	2%	4%
Orchard & Upper Straits	1,116	43%	
Other Lakes/Ponds/Wetlands	52	2%	
Total	2,596	100%	100%

According to the 2000 Census, there were 805 housing units in the City, compared with 760 housing units in 1990 and 544 in 1980. SEMCOG records through 2009 reflect 853 total housing units.

Because of the many large residential lot sizes in Orchard Lake Village, many residents have sufficient space to install recreation facilities, such as tennis courts, swimming

pools, and playgrounds, which are frequently provided by the public sector in other communities. Consequently, the need for certain types of recreation facilities may be less in Orchard Lake Village, compared to the other communities.

Commercial and office uses, primarily along Orchard Lake Road, occupy only about one percent of the total area of the City. Outdoor recreation and conservation areas occupy about five percent of the total land area in the City. The Sanctuary and Apple Island are the two most prominent conservation areas.

The amount of vacant land has steadily declined over the years as the remaining home sites are built upon. The decline in vacant acreage emphasizes the need to preserve the remaining open space and natural areas for the future enjoyment of all residents.

Natural Features

Water Resources and Wetlands. The most prominent natural features in the City of Orchard Lake Village are the lakes: Orchard Lake, Upper Straits Lake, and Cass Lake (see Map 2). All of Orchard Lake and a portion of Upper Straits Lake are within the boundaries of the City. The edge of Cass Lake forms the northern boundary of the City. In addition to these three lakes, there is another small lake, Dow Lake, connected to Cass Lake, located in the north central portion of the City.

Public lake access in the City is provided at the Orchard Lake public boat launch site located on the southeast edge of Orchard Lake, near the intersection of Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail, which is managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. 324 homes (44 percent of the total) have direct frontage on a lake or a canal, and several more have indirect access via a subdivision outlot. Additional public access to three other lakes is available within five miles of the City limits.

There are a number of wetlands located in the City which filter storm water runoff before it enters the lakes, thereby helping to preserve water quality. The wetlands are valuable wildlife habitats for a variety of birds and small animals. The wetlands at the western edge of Cass or Orchard Lakes are reported to be a good habitat for migrating birds, including Canada geese and Mallard ducks. Other wetlands throughout the City are also important groundwater recharge areas.

Many of the wetlands have been preserved through sensitive subdivision design. Large lot development has made wetlands preservation achievable because of the amount of leftover buildable land on each parcel. However, as the land values increase and the amount of vacant land diminishes, the preservation of wetlands and wetlands habitats has become more difficult. Consequently, it is increasingly important to retain the few remaining natural areas in the City which have wetlands, such as the Sanctuary site.

In addition, federal standards have been imposed on local communities to regulate surface water discharges. The City has developed a Storm Water Management Plan and been issued a Storm Water Discharge Permit by the MDEQ in 2006.

Physical Features

Topography and Soils. As shown on Map 3, Orchard Lake Village has a gently rolling topography with about a 20 foot range in elevation. There are a few areas with a more significant grade change, particularly on the west side of the City adjacent to Upper Straits Lake and Orchard Lake.

Major soil types in the City include: Oshtemo-Boyer, Marlette, and Owosso. According to the Oakland County Soils Survey, these soils are generally characterized as sandy loams, and are generally well drained. Coldwater shale of the Mississippian geologic period underlies the City.

Vegetation. The pre-settlement forest in the Orchard Lake area consisted of oak and hickory forest on the dry, sandy upland soils, and beech and sugar maple forests on the wet, loamy soils. Unlike many other communities where the trees were cleared to permit development, a substantial number of trees survived the large lot residential development that occurred in Orchard Lake Village. Today, a number of attractive wooded areas are scattered throughout the City. Many of these wooded areas are on private residential lots, but the two most prominent wooded tracts of land are the Sanctuary and Apple Island.

The remaining forested areas are threatened by continued development on the few remaining vacant parcels in the City. The tree population also faces threats from pests and disease, most recently the Emerald Ash Borer and Oak Wilt. Consequently, it is increasingly important to preserve large tracts of wooded acreage, such as the Sanctuary and Apple Island.

In an effort to supplement replacement efforts for tree loss, the Green Vision Program was developed. It includes selling trees to residents at substantially discounted prices and includes City purchase of street trees planted along road rights-of-way to enhance the tree canopy as existing trees age. A variety of native trees are offered and encouraged. The City also has purchased and planted a substantial number of native trees in the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary.

Wildlife Habitat. Whitetail deer, squirrel, raccoons, and forest birds inhabit the wooded areas in Orchard Lake Village. Quail, rabbits, pheasants, coyote, fox, and songbirds inhabit the lowland brush and open areas. The lakes support bass, pike, perch, sunfish, and other species of fish, and also provide a suitable environment for ducks, Canada geese, and other shorebirds. Other small animals such as muskrat, opossum, ground hogs, frogs, toads, and snakes are prevalent throughout the City.

The presence of unspoiled habitats which have an abundance of wildlife provides residents with the various recreation opportunities, such as fishing, nature photography, bird watching, and nature study, now and in the future.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Before the arrival of white settlers in the Orchard Lake area in the mid-1800's, the Ottawa Indians enjoyed hunting and fishing throughout the area. Indian lore abounds in

Orchard Lake, including stories regarding the Ottawa Chief Pontiac, who may have plotted his unsuccessful siege of Fort Detroit in 1764 on “Me-nah-sa-gor-ning”, now known as Apple Island.

During the 1850s much of the land surrounding the lakes was cleared for farming. Prominent names from the early years include Colin Campbell, James Dow, Willis C. Ward, General F. S. Strong, Jr., and their decedents. The Scottishsettlers, in 1832, founded the first curling club in America.

A few buildings dating from the 1800’s still stand, including the Fred Stevens home at 4012 Oak Grove. One of the oldest buildings in the city is the “Castle,” located on the campus of the Orchard Lake Schools. The Castle was built in 1858 as the private residence of Joseph Tarr Copeland, a Michigan Supreme Court Justice. It was converted into a resort-hotel in 1872, became the headquarters of the Michigan Military Academy in 1877, and is now the residence of the Chancellor of the Orchard Lake Schools. A number of other buildings on the campus date from the turn of the century, including the barracks dormitory, the old dining hall, and the administration building.

Another landmark structure is the Orchard Lake Community Church, Presbyterian, located on Commerce Road. The cornerstone for this church, which was originally known as the Orchard Lake Christian Church, was laid in 1871. The Church has been expanded many times, most recently in 2008.

The Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society, located adjacent to the City Hall on Orchard Lake Road, was built in 1939 from materials salvaged from the old Orchard Lake Hotel which once occupied the site.

Other historical sites identified by the Greater West Bloomfield Historical Society include: the Hatch house near the intersection of Seminary and Orchard Lake Roads (pre-1896); Apple Island, site of Indian apple orchard and birthplace of Chief Okemos; Chief Pontiac historical marker, at the public launch site on Orchard Lake Road; Emmendorfer house, south side of Pontiac Trail (1840); Ward boathouse, north side of Pontiac Trail (c1900); Doc Morley house, north side of Upper Straits Lake (1929); Orchard Lake Country Club Clubhouse (1929); Cuthbertson house, west side of Orchard Lake (1908); Cummins house, west side of Orchard Trail (pre 1872); and the Ward-Strong house, south side of Pontiac Trail (1920).

Transportation

The transportation system in Orchard Lake Village consists of three road classifications:

Major thoroughfares circle the City and provide access to other communities, other thoroughfares, and the freeways. Orchard Lake Road, Pontiac Trail, and Commerce Road are classified as major thoroughfares.

Collector roads provide access from the residential areas to the major thoroughfares and connect major thoroughfares. Old Orchard Trail and Indian Trail are collector roads.

Local roads provide access to individual properties within the residential areas.

There are two prominent features about the roads and road system in Orchard Lake Village. First, because of the shape of the City and the presence of the lakes, the road system is non-symmetrical. Second, many of the roads are narrow and the roads have narrow rights-of-way. These two features create challenging conditions on many roads for pedestrians and bicyclists. Consequently, there is a need for pedestrian paths or sidewalks in certain areas to provide safe passage off of the road surface.

Additionally, the concern for the environment, fuel availability, and health considerations have created a need for improved recreational facilities closer to home, which results in a greater need to accommodate pedestrian and non-motorized traffic.

The opening of M-5 through to Pontiac Trail in Commerce Township in 2001 had contributed to traffic flow into the City via Pontiac Trail and conceptual plans for a traffic improvement, such as a roundabout for the Orchard Lake Road and Pontiac Trail intersection, have been drafted to address the increased flow.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Trends and Projections

Population projections for Orchard Lake Village have been prepared by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) as a part of its Small Area Forecast prepared in June of 2008. These projections indicate that the population that began to level off in the mid-1990's will continue to level off, or even decline, as fewer houses are built and household size declines. SEMCOG estimates a population of 2,296 in June 2008.

Table 2: Population Trends and Projections

Source: U.S. Census, SEMCOG Small Area Forecast (Version 05 data)

Year	Total	Numerical Change	Percent Change
1940	295	- - -	- - -
1950	696	+ 401	+ 136%
1960	1,127	+ 431	+ 62%
1970	1,487	+ 360	+ 32%
1980	1,798	+ 311	+ 21%
1990	2,286	+ 488	+ 27%

2000	2,215	(71)	- 3.1%
2005	2,290	+ 75	+ 3%

Age Structure

As a whole, the Orchard Lake Village population is somewhat older than the populations of other communities in Oakland County. SEMCOG projections for 2005 indicated that 36% of the Orchard Lake population is age 50 and older. In comparison, the age 50 and over population of Oakland County was 27% of the total.

Available data suggests that more mature families are choosing to reside in Orchard Lake Village. In the future it is expected that the number of children will remain level and the adult and elderly population will increase.

These factors, along with the increased awareness of the benefits of exercise, reinforce the need to provide pedestrian facilities for exercise opportunities and for safe access to other recreational facilities.

**PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
LOCATED IN ORCHARD LAKE VILLAGE**

Parks and recreation facilities available to residents within Orchard Lake Village include the following.

1. Apple Island

Orchard Lake, City of Orchard Lake Village

Apple Island is unique 36-acre wilderness island in the center of Orchard Lake. The island is owned by the West Bloomfield School District, and is accessible only by boat. It is used for nature interpretive programs and is available for access with a permit from the West Bloomfield School District.

Type of Facility: Special Use Facility
Accessibility Rating: 1

2. Apple Island Access Site

North side of Pontiac Trail between old Orchard Trail and Orchard Lake Road

The West Bloomfield School District owns this 1.21-acre site, which is used to transport groups to Apple Island via pontoon boats.

Type of Facility: Special Use Facility
Accessibility Rating: 1

3. Abbott Middle School

Intersection of Commerce and Orchard Lake Roads

This 26-acre school is owned by the West Bloomfield School District and contains a playfield, woods, and two baseball fields with backstops and bleachers.

Type of Facility: Functions like a neighborhood park, although some key elements usually founding a neighborhood park are missing.
Accessibility Rating: 3

4. Our Lady of Refuge School

North side of Commerce Road between Indian Trail and Orchard Lake Road

Our Lady of Refuge School is a private school situated on an 11.38-acre school site in the north part of the City. The site contains a playground with play sets, a sports field that can be used as two baseball fields or one football field, and a gymnasium. The outdoor facilities are used by the general public when school is not in session.

Type of Facility: Functions like a neighborhood park, although some key elements usually founding a neighborhood park are missing.
Accessibility Rate: 3

5. Orchard Lake Schools

Between Commerce Road, Indian Trail, and Orchard Lake Roads.

This 100-acre campus is the home of St. Mary's College, St. Mary's Preparatory, and SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary. The campus contains various athletic facilities including a field house, gymnasium, football field with bleachers and scoreboard, track, a practice field, an ice arena, two outdoor tennis courts, four outdoor basketball courts, a baseball field, a regulation baseball field with bleachers, covered benches and fencing, and a swimming beach with a dock.

Type of Facility: Special Use Private Facility, although some parts of the facility are open to the public.
Accessibility Rating: 3

6. Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary

West of Old Orchard Trail and north of Pontiac Trail

This 50-acre site, purchased by the City with assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund in 1991 (Grant No. 91-0140), has frontage on Upper Straits Lake and Orchard Lake. 35 acres were donated to the Cranbrook Institute of Science by Harold Ward in 1969 and another 15 acres were purchased by the Institute from Ward and his wife in 1978. After the City acquired the Sanctuary from the Institute, the site has been improved by the City and with assistance from the MDNR in the addition of nature trails, a viewing dock, lake overlooks, boardwalks, stairs, and intermediate resting areas, and substantial repairs to the pavilion. The Sanctuary has been described as a valuable wildlife habitat having a variety of ecosystems to support many different species of birds and animals. Portions are heavily wooded and other areas are occupied by wetlands. The site is used by school groups for nature interpretive programs and by individual residents and non-residents who appreciate the natural features of the site.

With the City's purchase of the Sanctuary site, the City also obtained the reversionary rights to Apple Island should the West Bloomfield School District ever decide to terminate ownership.

The Sanctuary is managed by a ten member board with members from Orchard Lake, West Bloomfield, and surrounding areas, including land conservancy representatives, and other advocates. The board meets quarterly and decisions are focused on keeping the Sanctuary in a pristine condition.

Type of Facility: Resources Based Facility

Accessibility Rating: 2

7. Public Access Site

Orchard Lake Site - West side of Orchard Lake Road, between Pontiac Trail and Long Lake Road

This 7.5-acre public access site on Orchard Lake is administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The site contains four boat launching ramps, two docks, paved car/trailer parking and toilets. A launching fee is required and the facility is open year round.

Also, within five miles of the City limits public access sites are located on Union Lake, Long Lake, Middle Straits Lake, and Cass Lake.

Type of Facility: Special Use Facility

Accessibility Rating: 2

8. Trail Network

Beginning at Arrowhead in West Bloomfield Township, extending through to Pontiac

The trail network is a limestone surfaced trail extending through many communities in Oakland County and the State of Michigan. The portion beginning off Arrowhead on the south side of Pontiac Trail in West Bloomfield Township and extending through Sylvan Lake to Pontiac travels along Orchard Lake's southern border and is accessible from the Orchard Lake City Hall.

Other trail networks in surrounding communities are also accessible, such as to trails along Commerce Road constructed by West Bloomfield Township.

Type of Facility: Linear Park
Accessibility Rating: 2

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Although provided for in a City ordinance, a Parks & Recreation Commission is not currently active in Orchard Lake, but the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary Board, consisting of ten volunteers from the community appointed by the Orchard Lake City Council, meets on a quarterly basis to manage the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary. Six members live within the City limits and include the City Treasurer, a City Planning Commissioner, and a former Councilmember. Four do not live within the City and include the City Forester, a member of the Detroit Audubon Society, a Naturalist, and a member of the St. Francis Foundation of Michigan.

The majority of funding for maintenance of the Sanctuary is provided by ad valorem property taxes assessed by the City of Orchard Lake Village and the balance is funded by the St. Francis Foundation, a charitable foundation created by a previous owner of the property, Ms. Mary Ward. Over the past five years, the Foundation has funded \$33,000 of the total maintenance costs, \$89,716. As discussed under Funding in the Implementation section of this plan, the City Council has considered and continues to consider extending debt service levied for acquisition of the Nature Sanctuary, and water and sewer systems that will retire in 2013 through 2015 to fund a walking/bike path system.

The City Forester is a full time City employee working for the Department of Public Works under the Superintendent of Public Works and the Superintendent reports to the City Clerk. Most Sanctuary maintenance is performed by the DPW; their effort is supplemented with some contract work, such as in eradication of invasive plants. Volunteer help assists with garlic pulks, wildflower planting, etc. Assistance is also provided by individuals in community service capacities, such as Eagle Scouts, high school assigned service, and court assigned service, all under City supervision.

BASIS FOR THE RECREATION PLAN

RECREATION FACILITIES CLASSIFICATIONS

The National Recreation and Parks Association publishes community standards for parks and recreation facilities. For example, as applied to Orchard Lake, the standards suggest that the City should have 0.7 acres of mini-parks, 5.2 acres of neighborhood parks, and 12.9 acres of community parks to meet the needs of the population in 2010. According to the NRPA's facility development standards, the City meets the threshold for just one tennis court. All other facilities require a larger population.

The NRPA standards fail to taken into account the demographics, economics, land development patterns, and size of the City. Consequently, the NRPA standards provide a misleading picture of the parks and recreation needs of residents of Orchard Lake. A more relevant analysis of needs must consider the following:

1. **Demographics.** As might be expected in an upscale community where housing costs are among the highest in Oakland County, Orchard Lake attracts a number of more mature residents who have made their mark in the world and can afford to live in the City. Consequently there is less of demand for facilities for younger residents. Looking at age distribution, for example, 35% of the population is over

50 years of age. Only 595 residents are under 18, amounting to 26.9% of the population.

2. Economics. According to statistics, residents of Orchard Lake are substantially wealthier than residents in most other communities in Oakland County. For example, the median household income in 1999 in Orchard Lake was \$121,126, compared to \$61,907 in Oakland County (2000 US Census). These statistics suggest that residents of the City are able to acquire recreation facilities that many other families in other communities rely on parks to provide.
3. Land Development Patterns. Most lots in the City are located in either Zone 3 or Zone 4, which means that the minimum lot size is either 40,000 square feet or 60,000 square feet. With lots of this size, residents are able to accommodate their desires for a variety of recreation facilities on their own properties. It should also be noted that about 40% of the residents have direct frontage on one of the three lakes in the City (Orchard Lake, Cass Lake, Upper Straits Lake), providing them with access to one of the most outstanding recreation assets available.
4. Size of the City. Orchard Lake is a small city with very little land to accommodate new public parks and recreation facilities. According to the 2006 Master Plan, the City contains about four square miles. However, 1.8 square miles are occupied by lakes or wetlands, leaving only 2.231 square miles of buildable upland. A sizeable portion of this upland – about 9.1% - is already dedicated to public use, including the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Boat Launch.

The size of the community can also be viewed from another perspective – population, which is estimated to be approximately 2,300 (SEMCOG 2009 estimate). A population of this size generates a theoretical need far below the minimum recommended size for various types of parks, particularly neighborhood and community parks.

5. Public Opinion. It is the intent of this plan to consider and respond to the opinions of residents and community leaders, as recorded in a public opinion survey and in public meetings. The recent survey revealed that 82.7% of the respondents supported development of paths in the City. About half preferred a walking/bicycle path separate from the road, about one-quarter preferred neighborhood connectors, and just under a quarter of the respondents preferred bicycles lanes attached to the existing roads.
6. Nearby Facilities. Within a reasonable distance in adjoining communities, there are a variety of parks and recreation facilities to serve the needs that are not met in the City. These include several schools (elementary, middle and high school), several golf courses and country clubs, the West Bloomfield Trails Network, the West Bloomfield Township Civic Center, the West Bloomfield Woods Nature Preserve, the West Bloomfield Community Sports Park, Marshbank Park, Dodge Park No. 4, and Drake Road Sports Center.

This analysis demonstrates that conventional public parks and recreation facilities would not address Orchard Lake Village's leisure needs. Rather, evidence indicates that the most prominent need in the community currently is for linear park facilities – pedestrian and bicycle paths.

PUBLIC INPUT

In December 1990, a public opinion survey was sent to all households in Orchard Lake Village to solicit their opinions concerning acquisition and use of the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary. The survey confirmed acquisition and protection of this property was a main concern and, with assistance from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, the property was purchased.

In January 2009 another survey soliciting input on recreational facilities was sent to all Orchard Lake households in a Mayor's Newsletter and the results of that survey were considered in development of the plan update.

The City Planning Commission then held a Public Hearing on the draft updated plan on August 4, 2009 and _____. Notice of the hearing was published in The Spinal Column Newsweekly, designated for all City publications, on June _____, 2009, and notice was included on the City's web site, CityofOrchardLake.com.

SUMMARY OF RECREATION FACILITIES EVALUATION

The recent survey confirmed:

- 82.7% of respondents supported pursuing paths and 17.3% were opposed
- 50.7% preferred a walking/bike path separate from the road
- 25.4% preferred neighborhood connectors
- 23.9% preferred bike lanes attached to existing roadways.

In analyzing the survey results, the Planning Commission acknowledged that individual responses were likely influenced by the specific area in which they live. Additional comments were returned in the survey, some relating to recreation and some to other issues.

Based on published recreation standards, recreation facilities in the City may appear to fall short of minimum requirements. In particular, the standards indicate the City is deficient in mini-park and neighborhood park acreage. However, when school facilities and nearby parklands in adjoining communities are taken into account there is sufficient park acreage within a reasonable distance to satisfy Orchard Lake Village residents' needs.

This analysis revealed that more than just the published recreation standards must be taken into account to properly assess the need in Orchard Lake Village. Other important considerations include:

Many residents of the City have access to recreation facilities commonly found in public parks, such as tennis courts and swimming pools on their own property or provided by subdivision associations. In other words, people in Orchard Lake Village have the ability to satisfy their need for many types of recreation facilities without public sector involvement.

The need for a Recreation Advisory Board to become permanently established has not been demonstrated and interest in a conventional municipal active recreation program is not evident.

Even if a need for sports fields and other types of active recreation facilities had been identified, there are few, if any, locations in the City where such a facility could be accommodated and many are nearby.

The results of the most recent survey, and other public input, indicated that the most critical recreational need in the City is to provide for bicycle and/or pedestrian paths. The paths offer their own recreational use as well as provide for non-vehicle access to other nearby recreational facilities. The paths should provide access not only to recreational areas, but also to business districts as, in the future, walking to these districts may provide recreation and functional benefits.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS

After reviewing the findings set forth in the previous chapters, the following goals and objectives were developed to guide future improvements to the parks and recreation program in Orchard Lake Village:

Improve access and transportation to parks and recreation facilities and to business districts, such as:

Accelerate efforts to develop bicycle and pedestrian paths throughout the City.

Provide pedestrian and bicycle paths that are separate from the vehicular routes wherever possible.

Continue to work with other agencies to maintain and improve public pedestrian transportation services, particularly for the elderly and handicapped.

Provide special use facilities (such as natural areas, bicycle and pedestrian paths, etc.) to address particular recreation or leisure interests of residents, including improvement of access to businesses.

Coordinate recreation plans with those of public conservatories adjoining communities, Oakland County, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, SEMCOG, and State of Michigan.

Cooperate with the school districts in the planning and development of school sites in the City.

Provide residents with access to high quality parks and recreation facilities.

When planning and developing a park or open space site, consider its overall appearance and its potential impact on adjoining uses and the surrounding neighborhood.

Adhere to high quality of design specifications when developing or replacing recreation facilities or equipment.

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The preparation of this recreation plan and the plan update both began with a thorough analysis of the community, including its physical and population characteristics. Existing recreation facilities, including municipal facilities in adjoining communities, school facilities, and privately-owned facilities were inventoried and evaluated.

The **Basis for the Recreation Plan** assessed the need for recreation facilities, based on local age and income distribution, neighborhood structure, recreation interests of the community etc. The plan also considered the opinions and observations of residents and community leaders, recorded in a public opinion survey and in public meetings.

The **Parks and Recreation Plan** is the culmination of this planning program. The projects identified in the 1990 plan to address recreation deficiencies, including acquisition of the Orchard Lake Nature Sanctuary (Cranbrook Site) and implementation of Cranbrook Site improvements, have been accomplished.

The priority in the 2009 Master Recreation Plan for the City of Orchard Lake Village is to **Implement a City Wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Path Plan** as set forth in the Summary, which coincides with the City Master Plan Transportation Chapter that identifies several recommended strategies, including promoting bicycling and walking.

Objectives later identified by the Planning Commission and City Councilmembers include:

- ❖ Connect subdivisions
- ❖ Create walking circle opportunities for 2-3 mile walks
- ❖ Create access to amenities, area businesses, West Bloomfield’s trailway, and the Sanctuary
- ❖ Paths should be low profile, well-screened, unobtrusive and not widely publicized to protect security concerns
- ❖ Provide safety improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists
- ❖ Establish rights to existing paths

The survey reflects a preference for an extensive, longer term project, walking and bicycle paths separate from roadways. In the interim, paths connecting neighborhoods can be pursued to enhance public support for a City wide system.

FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Separate Walking Biking Paths	Appoint Advocates	Fund Design Study	Complete Design	Approve Funding	Bid & Contract
Neighborhood Connectors	Appoint Advocates	Design & Seek Funding	Bid & Contract		

Bike Lane added to Road Shoulders

Further Study Support for this Alternative

FUNDING

Develop a financial plan to fund construction of a walking/bike path system in the City.

Pursue all available funding sources for acquisition, capital improvements, and maintenance, including local sources, state and federal grant programs, and private sources.

Consider extending debt service levied for acquisition of the Nature Sanctuary, and water and sewer systems, to fund a walking/bike path system.

Cooperate with the schools and adjoining communities in providing recreation resources to avoid duplication of services and make efficient use of public funds.

PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS

Protect natural features, such as wooded areas, wetlands, wildlife habitat, natural drainage ways, and unusual topography.

Take measures deemed necessary to preserve woodlands, wetlands, and other natural areas for the future benefit of all residents.

Develop programs and utilize sites in a manner that results in a greater appreciation of the City's natural resources.

STAFFING

Hire and/or assign personnel as necessary to oversee the development and maintenance of municipal parks and recreation or open space sites.