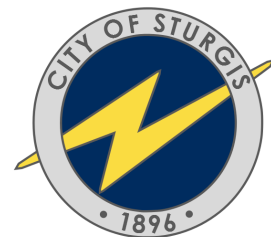


# CITY OF STURGIS 2015 – 2020 PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

DRAFT 1/23/15

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**DRAFT 1/23/15**

**City of Sturgis**

130 N. Nottawa Street  
Sturgis, Michigan 49091

**Elected City Commission**

Ken Malone – Mayor / 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct

Robert Hile – Vice Mayor / 4<sup>th</sup> Precinct

Michael Austermann – 1<sup>st</sup> Precinct

Rob Sisson – 1<sup>st</sup> Precinct

Ina Taulbee – 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct

Charles Huber – 2<sup>nd</sup> Precinct

Mark Dvorak – 3<sup>rd</sup> Precinct

Karl Littman – 4<sup>th</sup> Precinct

Mike Gay – At Large

**City Officials**

Michael Hughes – City Manager

Rick Miller – Director of Public Services

Rick Bir – Parks Supervisor / Cemetery Sexton

Mike Liston – Director, Doyle Community Center

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## **CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION**

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Parks, Recreation, and Open Space are important elements of all communities and provide many recreational, social, and environmental benefits that contribute to a high quality of life. The Sturgis community has recognized the importance of proper recreation planning and has chosen to take an active role in the delivery of recreational opportunities by updating the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Recreation planning is an exercise engaged by local governments to anticipate change, and promote the development and expansion of recreational development and services for the benefit of its community. Parks and recreation facilities provide many benefits to the community and the natural environment. Parks provide people with a place to gather, be active, socialize, and connect with the environment and community. Developing a green infrastructure also enhances the livability of a community by increasing property values and connecting the community. Having the ability to recreate has also been shown to improve the quality of life by contributing to overall mental and physical health and reducing obesity brought on by inactivity. As the community continues to grow and change over time, the City and surrounding communities continues to dedicate themselves to improving recreational offerings for the community. This plan represents the culmination of the planning efforts of the community and local officials; and reflects the communities desire to blend the available recreational resources and activities with the natural beauty of the surroundings and the environmental and cultural elements of the community.

### **PLAN PURPOSE**

This plan represents a policy statement about what the community values and what the residents hope the community will become in regards to parks and recreation facilities and services. This Five-Year Recreation Plan serves a guide for future development of park development projects and recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors of the Sturgis community. The City of Sturgis recognizes the significant role that recreation plays in providing a high quality of life and improved physical health of its citizens. This appreciation has been manifested in this effort to update the 2008 Community Parks and Recreation Master Plan with the hopes of improving local park systems and public trails, promoting the preservation of natural areas, and establishing a strong commitment to strengthening a sense of community. The Recreation Plan provides a policy and decision making guide regarding future development of recreation opportunities for the residents and visitors of the Sturgis Community. The plan addresses current recreation issues and identifies future needs of the community and the means for meeting those needs over the upcoming five-year period.

The City's Recreation Plan was last updated in 2008. The former 2008 plan documented many current conditions and trends and contained many ideas for improvements, some of which have been realized. This new Plan builds on what was completed in the 2008 plan and has been developed to reflect the changing needs and goals of the Sturgis community. The plan also meets the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for qualifying for Federal and State funding assistance.





These funds are available for land acquisition, facility development and improvements to new and existing parklands.

## **PLAN SCOPE**

The scope of this plan includes suggestions for the management, improvement, and expansion of the recreation system within the Sturgis community. The plan also considers recreational facilities within the county and neighboring townships that are available to citizens of the Sturgis community. Key planning issues are identified, a clear set of goals and objectives are outlined, and specific implementation strategies are identified. The scope will include all of the City's recreation facilities, undeveloped open space, trail systems, and linear "green" corridors. Recreational programming is also a consideration in the plan. The area of the planning effort is essentially limited to the City boundaries. However, consideration is also made of regional facilities that influence use patterns, and two City facilities located outside of the City limits, north of Centreville. The use of City facilities by residents living in the surrounding Townships, which have limited or no recreation facilities of their own, is also a consideration of the planning process. In terms of an implementation timeline, the Action Program section of this document covers development over the next five years.

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**2. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

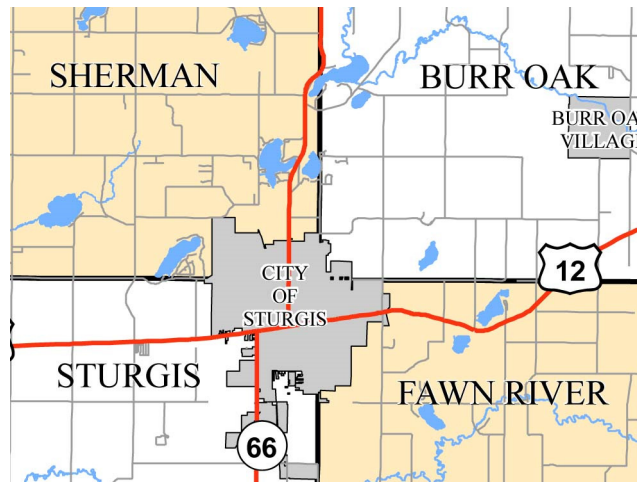
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## CHAPTER 2. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

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### REGIONAL SETTING

The City of Sturgis is located in the southeast section of St. Joseph County in southwest Michigan, less than one mile from the Indiana State line. It is almost centrally positioned between Detroit and Chicago, with the closest large cities being Kalamazoo to the north and Fort Wayne to the south. The City is bordered by Sherman Township to the northwest, Burr Oak Township to the northeast, Sturgis Township to the southwest, and Fawn River Township to the southeast. The following location map shows the relationship of the City of Sturgis to neighboring communities.



*Figure 1- Location Map*

The city covers approximately 5 square miles in area and has a population of 10,994 according to the 2010 U.S. Census. The City is served by two major highways, US-12 (Chicago Rd) running east/west, and M-66 (Centreville Rd) running north and south, and is just one-mile north of Interstate 80-90 (Indiana Toll Road). Due to its location, Sturgis is one of 88 communities designated as a Core Community which makes the City eligible for development funding. The City is within easy driving distance to full service airports in Kalamazoo and South Bend, and also is home to Kirsch Municipal Airport, which has a mile long runway suitable for corporate jet aircraft. The distance from major highways has helped the City maintain its rural small town identity, but transportation links are sufficient to encourage continuing commercial and residential development.

### HISTORY

The history of Sturgis dates back to 1827 when Judge John Sturgis and George Thurman arrived in the area. The Sturgis family built a log cabin in the present location of the City, which was officially named in honor of its founder by the State Legislature in 1857.

The City grew through the 1800s with establishment of the "Chicago Military Road",



a regular state route between Chicago and Detroit being a major influencing factor. The construction of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad and the Southern Michigan and Lake Shore Railroad also ensured Sturgis's economic development, which included four furniture companies and other notable manufacturing facilities by the early 1900s. To help support this growth, Sturgis founded its own electric company in 1911 with a hydro-electric plant located on the St. Joseph River near the County Seat of Centreville.

A charter form of government was adopted in 1920 to keep pace with the organizational needs of the community. Development of the City has continued with the dedication of the Sturges- Young Auditorium in 1955, the construction of Sturgis High School in 1962, followed by the current City Hall and Library in 1966 and the commencement of the Sturgis Hospital construction in 1969.

The City downtown area exhibits many 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings, while more modern commercial development continues along South Centerville Road and Chicago Road.

## POPULATION

The review of trends in population growth is helpful in developing an understanding of the City's recreational needs. Also understanding other demographic indicators, such as age, education, income, and employment trends, can assist in determining the type of recreational facilities may be needed or desired and will allow facilities and programs to keep pace with demand.

The 2010 U.S. Census indicates a population in the City of Sturgis of 10,994, which represents a 2.6% decrease from the 2000 Census. The following table illustrates population growth comparisons to adjacent local communities. This is useful in attempting to forecast areas of future growth and the future demands on the Sturgis park system.

*Table 1: Population Comparison*

Community	1990 Population	2000 Population	2010 Population	Rate of Growth 2000-2010	2015 Estimate	2020 Estimate
Sturgis, City	10,130	11,285	10,994	-2.6 %	10,968	10,942
Sherman Twp	2,978	3,248	3,205	-1.3 %	3,210	3,215
Sturgis Twp	1,965	2,403	2,261	-5.9 %	1,988	1,885
Burr Oak Twp	2,542	2,739	2,611	-4.7 %	2,608	2,605
Fawn River Twp	1,571	1,648	1,477	-10.3 %	1,507	1,537
St Joe County	58,913	62,422	61,295	-1.8 %	61,111	60,950
State of MI	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	-0.5%	n/a	n/a

*Data Source: US Census Bureau*

It is important to note that the recreation service area of the City also includes the neighboring Townships of Sherman, Burr Oak, Sturgis, and Fawn River which has a combined population of 9,554. These townships have limited recreational facilities and rely on the City of Sturgis to provide recreational opportunities for the residents.



The median age of City of Sturgis residents in 2010 is 32.3, well below the median age of St. Joseph County as a whole (38.7) and the State of Michigan (45.5). The population based on gender is 5,203 male and 5,791 female. The table below illustrates the breakdown of population based on age.

*Table 2: Population by Age*

Age	Persons	Percentage
Under 18	3296	30%
18 & over	7698	70%
20-24	735	6.7%
25-34	1579	14.3%
35-44	1298	11.8%
45-64	2409	22%
65 & over	1390	12.6%

*Data Source: US Census Bureau*

About one-third of the population falls in the 18 and under age range (30%) indicating a strong need for youth oriented recreation. About one-third of the population falls within the 18-44 age group (32.8%) indicating there is also a strong need for family oriented recreation. It is also important to note that 34.6% of the City's population is 45 years of age or older, of which 12.6% is 65 years of age or older, indicating the need for accessible facilities with senior activities. The 2010 census data for individuals with disabilities indicates there was 3.2% of persons under 18 years of age, 10.4% of persons 18-64 years, and 43.9% of the population over 65% living with disabilities. The City's age distribution and high percentage of those over 65 living with disabilities reflects a need for park and recreation facilities that serve young, active families, as well as provide accessible facilities for the elderly population.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census data, the primary occupation among City residents is manufacturing, accounting for 34% of the working population. The data also indicates a relatively low Per Capita Income level of \$18,233, compared to \$20,570 in St Joseph County, and \$25,681 in the State of Michigan. In addition, the 2010 Census data indicates a median household income level of \$35,245 compared to \$33,838 in 2000. The median income level in the City is about 20% lower than that of the County (\$44,051) and about 28% lower than that of the State of Michigan (\$48,411). The census data also indicated that about one-quarter of the population (25.9%) is living below poverty level. This demonstrates the need for affordable recreation opportunities or the provision for assisted funding opportunities for low-income families. In terms of ethnicity, the City of Sturgis is a predominantly Caucasian community with 80.6% of the population being white.

## **LAND USE**

Sturgis is mostly developed, with a central downtown, well-kept historic neighborhoods, and newer commercial and industrial development in the outlying areas. The City of Sturgis provides a variety of different housing opportunities based on both age and



density. According to the 2010 U.S. Census data, there are a total of 4,595 housing units in the City of which 4,088 are occupied. Sturgis has strong residential neighborhoods on both the north and south sides of US-12. Historic neighborhoods are found closer to the downtown area while newer, suburban style residential developments are located south and east of downtown. Medium density residential is concentrated in the east of the City and generally shows a good relationship to the City's Parks and Schools. Pockets of high density residential are scattered throughout the City, but more concentrated along the commercial corridors of Chicago Road and Centerville Road.

Sturgis has a wide variety of businesses and commercial development which is located downtown and on arterial streets that lead to and through the downtown. There are four industrial districts located in the northwest and south areas of the City. Sturgis has over 70 industries, most of which are local companies which have expanded in Sturgis over the last century. Sturgis draws its labor force from a wide range of local communities including St Joseph, Cass, and Branch Counties in Michigan and LaGrange, Noble, and Elkhart Counties in Indiana. The City also owns and operates its own electric company with a hydro plant located on the St. Joseph River near the County Seat of Centerville. Given that a high percentage of residents drive automobiles to work, expanding the current network of trails, pedestrian walkways, and bicycle lanes may encourage residents to use alternative modes of transportation which in turn promotes a healthier lifestyle and high quality of life.

## **PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS**

The topography of the City and immediate surrounding area is relatively flat, with no significant natural barriers to recreational development. Land to the northwest, north and northeast is characterized by more undulating topography with a number of lakes, streams and wetlands.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The City of Sturgis is served by two major highway trunk lines, Chicago Road (U.S. 12) running east west and Centerville Road (M66) running north south. The Indiana Toll Road (Interstates 80/90) one mile south of the city, also allows convenient access. In addition, the Michigan Southern Railroad provides service to the city. These transportation links helped to ensure the past economic development of the community and today serve Sturgis manufacturing companies. The Kirsch Municipal Airport is located in the northwest section of the City and features a mile long runway suitable for corporate jet aircrafts.



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**3. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

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## **CHAPTER 3 – ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

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The Director of Recreation is responsible for the administration of the recreation facilities and programming for the City of Sturgis. The Director of Public Services oversees the Superintendent of the Parks & Cemetery. Each receives input from two separate advisory boards: the Parks and Cemeteries Board and the Doyle and Recreation Board. These boards were restructured in 2003 from the Recreation, Parks and Forestry Board and the Doyle Community Center Board to improve efficiency in the way the boards functioned. The Boards are established under the Recreation and Playgrounds Act 1917 PA 156.

The provision of recreation programs for the City of Sturgis has historically been managed primarily through the school district as part of their community education program, with funding assistance from the City. Changes in school funding led to the City taking over this function, with the commencement of adult recreational programming in 1996 and youth programming in 1998. The School District still manages a full range of interscholastic sports programs, the Sturgis Community Pool, and is involved in the management of Camp Fort Hill. A good working relationship between the City and the Schools is maintained through the shared use of some facilities.

Below is a description of the staff and advisory boards that are responsible for overseeing and managing the City's parks, recreation and cemeteries. A City Organizational Chart also follows showing how these functions relate to the overall structure of the City Departments.

### **DIRECTOR OF RECREATION**

The Director of Recreation and the Doyle is under the supervision of the City Manager. Responsibilities include management of The Doyle Community Center, recreation programming and planning including the programming of events, center staffing, maintenance, and the sale of memberships. The Director works closely with the Doyle and Recreation Board in the planning and implementing of policies.

### **PARKS AND CEMETERIES BOARD**

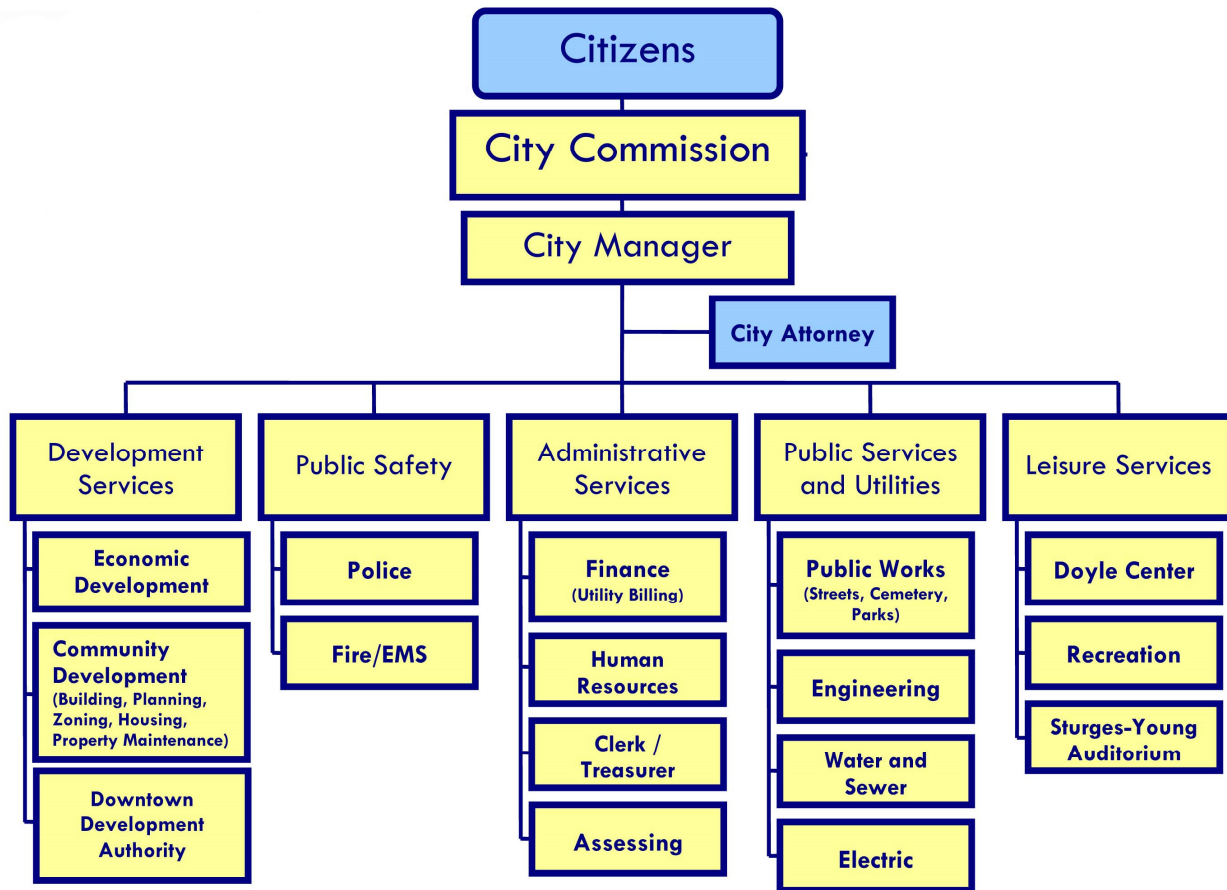
The Parks and Cemeteries Board is made up of five members of the community appointed by the City Commission. The Board advises the City concerning the policies and procedures related to development and maintenance of City grounds.

### **PARKS AND CEMETERIES SUPERVISOR**

The Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor administer all aspects of the parks and cemeteries maintenance under the direction of the Director of Public Services. The supervisor oversees a staff of 1 full-time employees and seasonal employees and also directs the purchase and maintenance of equipment. In addition, the supervisor assists the Director in the planning and implementation of park improvement projects.



Figure 2 – Administrative Structure Diagram



## DOYLE COMMUNITY CENTER AND RECREATION PROGRAMMING

### ***Doyle and Recreation Board***

The Doyle and Recreation Board is made up of eleven voting members, including seven and 4 appointed from the Sturgis Foundation Board. The Board advises the City concerning the policies and procedures for development and maintenance of the Doyle Community Center and recreational events and programming provided by the City.

### ***Recreation Leader***

Under the supervision of the Director of Recreation, the Recreation Leader plans, organizes and coordinates City recreational programs, sports leagues and a variety of special events. The Recreation Leader oversees and supervises all personnel involved in the recreation program at the Doyle Community Center.

### ***Doyle Community Center Staff***

The Doyle Center currently employs one full-time administrative staff. There are also 25 to 30 part-time employees working as front desk staff, and fitness instructors, with additional instructors/sports officials hired on a contract basis.



### **Recreation Budget**

Parks, Cemeteries, Recreation and the Doyle Community Center all receive annual contributions from the City General Fund. However, the Doyle Community Center relies heavily on membership revenues to generate income.

### **Doyle Community Center**

The Doyle Community Center is more-or-less financially self-supporting. The total revenue for 2014-2015 is estimated to be \$382,530 with expected expenditures of \$417,990. The majority of income is generated from membership fees, with programming, court rental, day passes and endowment fund support also making significant contributions. Expenditures include wages and benefits, utilities, operating and maintenance supplies, printing and advertising, etc. However, there is very little capital outlay and the revenue received is not sufficient to cover any major improvements or additions to the facility. Typically any funding deficit will be made up from the Doyle Center Funds and/or the City's General Fund. The City has budgeted a \$35,000 contribution to the Doyle Fund from the General Fund for 2014-2015.

### **Recreation Programs**

Recreational programming is funded by the City General Funds and by revenues generated by the programs. The total revenue for 2014-2015 is estimated to be \$67,850 through donations, concessions, and participation fees, with expected expenditures of \$176,065. The City has budgeted a contribution of \$100,000 to the recreation fund from the City General Fund to assist with recreation expenditures.

### **Parks**

Parks maintenance and improvements are funded by the City General Funds. In 2014-2015, \$320,010 is budgeted for this purpose. Primary expenses include wages and benefits, operating supplies, utilities, transportation and field maintenance. Only \$13,900 is allocated for Capital Outlay.

### **Cemetery**

Cemetery maintenance and improvements are funded by revenues generated from burials and lot sales, the City General Funds, and the cemetery endowment. In 2014-2015, the total revenue is estimated at \$69,335 and the total expenditures is estimated at \$277,170. Primary expenses include wages, benefits, mowing, transportation, operating supplies and capital outlay. The City has budgeted a contribution of \$57,500 from the Endowment and \$150,000 from the General Fund.

### **Sturges-Young Auditorium and Civic Center**

The auditorium is funded by revenues generated from private contributions, food and liquor sales, admission fees, and the City General Fund. In 2014-2015, the total revenue is estimated at \$457,860 and the total expenditures is estimated at \$728,495.



Primary expenses include wages, benefits, food supplies, utilities, operating expenses and capital outlay. The City has budgeted a contribution of \$220,000 from the General Fund.

### ***School District***

The Sturgis School District serves over 21,000 people who live within the boundaries of the district. City maintains a good working relationship with the School District and the shared use of some facilities is of mutual benefit. The School District also manages the following recreational programs and facilities:

- Interscholastic sports programs
- Summer sports clinics and wrestling programs Camp Fort Hill
- Management of the Sturgis Community Pool Winter ski programming

### ***Sturgis Area Community Foundation***

The Sturgis Area Community Foundation (SACF) is a 10 million dollar community foundation dedicated to serving, supporting and meeting the charitable needs of the Sturgis area. The Foundation, formed in 1962, supports a broad range of programs and projects, returning thousands of dollars each year to the Sturgis area. Foundation grants support arts and culture, community well-being, health and recreation, and youth education programs. In 2014, the foundation distributed over \$900,000 in grants to support a wide range of charitable programs. The foundation also assisted with the relocation of the old railroad depot structure. One aspect of the SACF is the Youth Advisory Council. Operating as a permanently endowed fund within the Foundation, the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) identifies and helps meet youth related issues in the Sturgis area. Established in 1996, the YAC fund has assets over \$900,000. In 2014 the YAC has returned in excess of \$33,000 in support of projects and programs relating to area youth. The SACF also supported the construction of the Doyle Community Center in 1995, where the Foundation maintains its offices with two co-Directors and a Manager of Operations appointed by a Board of Trustees.

## **RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING**

Recreational programs are mostly provided through the Doyle Community Center and through the School District. These programs are open to all participants, but at a reduced rate for City residents. Refer to the Recreation Inventory section of this report for a detailed description of recreational programming.

## **PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGETING**

The following diagrams describe the various estimated budgets related to parks and recreation for the City of Sturgis for 2014-2015. This information was obtained from the City of Sturgis 2014-2015 Operating Budget which was approved by the City Commission on August 13, 2014.



Figure 3 – Recreation Fund

## 264 Recreation Fund

	Actual 9/30/2013	Budget 9/30/2014	Estimated 9/30/2014	Budget 9/30/2015
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Concession Sales	500	500	260	0
Adult Fees	36,511	38,000	32,500	32,300
Youth Fees	26,019	19,000	23,500	24,000
Contributions - Private	0	0	0	0
Contributions - United Way	11,077	11,000	11,375	11,500
Miscellaneous	65	100	35	50
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>74,172</b>	<b>68,600</b>	<b>67,670</b>	<b>67,850</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Wages - Regular	70,197	73,065	70,000	73,755
Wages - Overtime	84	100	100	100
Benefits	16,368	18,880	15,180	16,205
Office Expense	895	800	800	800
Operating Supplies	7,233	6,000	6,000	6,000
Professional Services	22,889	18,000	18,000	21,300
Communications	891	500	1,325	1,205
Transportation	6,541	6,300	6,300	6,660
Programs	9,650	8,000	7,000	7,000
United Way	18,354	14,000	15,500	15,600
Printing & Publishing	5,747	6,000	6,000	6,000
Rentals	7,095	10,000	8,000	8,000
Capital Outlay	0	0	0	0
Administrative Reimbursement	13,091	11,880	11,880	13,440
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>179,035</b>	<b>173,525</b>	<b>166,085</b>	<b>176,065</b>
NET INCOME OR (LOSS)	(104,863)	(104,925)	(98,415)	(108,215)
Contribution from General Fund	105,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>15,053</b>	<b>10,128</b>	<b>16,638</b>	<b>8,423</b>





Figure 4 – Doyle Community Center Fund

## 265 Doyle Community Center Fund

	Actual 9/30/2013	Budget 9/30/2014	Estimated 9/30/2014	Budget 9/30/2015
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Concession Sales	0	0	1,200	1,200
Programming	20,265	24,000	24,000	24,000
Contract Service Fees	13,657	8,000	18,000	18,000
Silver Sneakers	2,964	3,000	3,000	3,000
Court Rental	47,157	42,000	40,000	42,000
Office Rental	2,400	2,400	2,400	2,400
Contributions - Private	652	1,000	2,415	1,000
Contributions - Foundation	19,142	22,000	74,450	35,000
Memberships	237,429	230,000	240,000	237,000
Day Passes	16,621	14,300	15,000	14,500
Miscellaneous	1,794	2,300	15,640	1,930
Interest Rebate	2,671	2,500	2,500	2,500
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>364,752</b>	<b>351,500</b>	<b>438,605</b>	<b>382,530</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Wages - Regular	138,338	134,110	138,000	140,000
Wages - Overtime	458	300	300	300
Benefits	39,994	41,300	40,650	42,270
Training	1,400	1,000	0	0
Office Expense	3,922	3,800	4,000	3,800
Operating Supplies	14,445	14,500	14,500	14,500
Professional Services	12,290	12,000	12,000	12,000
Housekeeping	24,236	24,200	29,200	36,000
Contract Services	11,291	9,000	17,000	17,000
Communications	1,932	2,400	2,000	2,000
Transportation	1,200	1,200	1,200	1,200
Programs	9,144	8,000	10,500	9,000
Silver Sneakers	4,440	4,300	4,300	4,300
Printing & Publishing	11,445	12,000	12,000	12,000
Insurance & Audit	3,198	3,000	4,932	5,000
Utilities	49,944	46,000	50,000	50,000
Repair & Maintenance	21,391	15,000	28,500	15,000
Capital Outlay	10,738	15,000	93,664	24,000
Debt Service - Energy Project	14,496	14,500	14,500	14,500
Administrative Reimbursement	14,018	14,820	14,820	15,120
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>388,320</b>	<b>376,430</b>	<b>492,066</b>	<b>417,990</b>
NET INCOME OR (LOSS)	(23,568)	(24,930)	(53,461)	(35,460)
Contribution from General Fund	25,000	25,000	25,000	35,000
Contribution from Capital Reserve	26,905	0	0	0
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>29,394</b>	<b>29,464</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>473</b>



Figure 5 – Cemetery Fund

## 209 Cemetery Fund

	Actual 9/30/2013	Budget 9/30/2014	Estimated 9/30/2014	Budget 9/30/2015
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Foundations	15,145	11,000	11,000	11,000
Grave Openings	33,254	36,500	36,500	36,500
Cemetery Lots	24,013	18,500	18,500	18,500
Monument Sales	0	0	0	0
Rent	1,386	1,385	1,385	1,385
Miscellaneous	2,528	1,910	1,950	1,950
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>76,326</b>	<b>69,295</b>	<b>69,335</b>	<b>69,335</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Wages - Regular	69,697	95,500	90,000	97,890
Wages - Overtime	6,504	5,000	5,000	5,125
Wages - Mowing	27,558	25,000	25,000	25,625
Benefits	33,016	44,545	37,350	45,810
Office Expense	2,324	2,500	2,500	2,500
Operating Supplies	11,787	8,000	10,000	9,000
Professional Services	926	500	500	500
Communications	191	200	200	200
Transportation	24,418	12,540	12,540	14,640
Insurance & Audit	1,563	1,700	1,300	1,500
Utilities	4,645	4,000	4,000	4,400
Repair & Maintenance	7,586	4,500	4,500	4,500
Miscellaneous	1,508	200	0	0
Capital Outlay	0	50,000	0	50,000
Administrative Reimbursement	17,378	16,500	16,500	15,480
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>209,101</b>	<b>270,685</b>	<b>209,390</b>	<b>277,170</b>
NET INCOME OR (LOSS)	(132,775)	(201,390)	(140,055)	(207,835)
Contribution from Capital Reserve	0	0	0	0
Contribution from Endowment	7,276	60,000	7,000	57,500
Contribution from General Fund	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>24,501</b>	<b>33,111</b>	<b>41,446</b>	<b>41,111</b>





Figure 6 – Parks Maintenance Budget

## 101 General Fund - Expenditures

	Actual 9/30/2013	Budget 9/30/2014	Estimated 9/30/2014	Budget 9/30/2015
<b>PARKS MAINTENANCE</b>				
Wages - Regular	103,706	99,090	99,090	103,000
Wages - Overtime	3,343	5,000	5,000	5,000
Wages - Mowing	23,318	20,000	20,000	20,000
Benefits	30,608	42,300	28,400	45,550
Office Expense	1,322	500	1,000	1,000
Operating Supplies	12,951	16,000	16,000	16,000
Professional Services	11,511	15,000	15,000	15,000
Communications	191	1,000	500	500
Transportation	51,852	49,800	49,800	52,560
Insurance & Audit	1,212	1,000	550	1,000
Utilities	18,549	15,000	19,000	20,000
Repairs & Maintenance	29,881	14,150	14,150	15,000
Field Maintenance	3,835	11,500	5,000	11,500
Capital Outlay	52,860	15,000	15,000	13,900
<b>Total Parks Maintenance</b>	<b>345,139</b>	<b>305,340</b>	<b>288,490</b>	<b>320,010</b>

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Figure 7 – Auditorium Fund

## 261 Auditorium Fund

	Actual 9/30/2013	Budget 9/30/2014	Estimated 9/30/2014	Budget 9/30/2015
<b>REVENUE</b>				
Services Rendered	51,871	55,180	52,000	55,180
Food, Cake, & Pastry Sales	251,076	276,050	251,100	271,950
Liquor Sales	23,681	25,700	26,500	26,500
Use & Admission Fees	17,199	4,000	5,700	5,700
Rent	40,174	48,700	43,000	45,000
Contributions - Private	2,600	37,230	87,170	41,230
Miscellaneous	7,169	100	900	900
Interest Rebate	11,772	11,455	11,455	11,400
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>405,542</b>	<b>458,415</b>	<b>477,825</b>	<b>457,860</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>				
Wages - Regular	243,469	251,085	253,830	255,365
Wages - Overtime	522	1,230	550	1,000
Benefits	83,997	94,180	79,870	92,440
Office Expense	9,371	14,000	11,500	14,000
Operating Supplies	26,567	25,000	25,000	25,000
Liquor Supplies	6,692	6,425	9,600	9,500
Food Supplies	108,423	114,620	109,000	114,000
Professional Services	6,898	4,000	4,000	4,000
Communications	1,616	1,900	1,500	1,600
Transportation	1,133	1,680	1,680	1,700
Programs	23,464	0	50	0
Printing & Publishing	12,942	12,000	10,000	13,000
Insurance & Audit	5,569	6,000	5,500	6,000
Utilities	45,975	46,500	54,760	50,000
Repairs & Maintenance	12,109	20,400	19,600	17,400
Roof Lease Payment - Prin. & Int.	11,781	0	0	0
Capital Outlay	0	50,000	125,020	45,600
Capital Outlay - Energy Project	0	0	0	0
Debt Services - Energy Project	63,894	63,185	63,185	63,130
Administrative Reimbursement	15,527	14,100	14,100	14,760
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>679,949</b>	<b>726,305</b>	<b>788,745</b>	<b>728,495</b>
NET INCOME OR (LOSS)	(274,407)	(267,890)	(310,920)	(270,635)
Contribution from (to) Capital Res.	49,781	0	0	0
Contribution for Debt Service	46,100	51,730	51,730	51,730
Contribution from General Fund	220,000	220,000	220,000	220,000
<b>FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>75,498</b>	<b>79,338</b>	<b>36,308</b>	<b>37,403</b>



**4. RECREATION INVENTORY**

*DRAFT 1/23/15*

## **CHAPTER 4 - RECREATION INVENTORY**

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In order to understand the recreational needs of the City of Sturgis, an inventory and analysis of the existing facilities and programs was completed. The intent of the analysis is to provide a comprehensive perspective of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing recreational opportunities the City has to offer its citizens. The inventory is based on information provided by City staff and site reviews carried out by VIRIDIS Design Group, National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Standards, and informed opinions of interested citizens who participated in the public input exercises as part of the planning process.

### **CITY OF STURGIS FACILITIES**

There are fourteen (14) City parks, two (2) indoor facilities, and ten (10) public school sites that have existing recreational facilities on approximately 227.4 acres of public or quasi-public land in the City of Sturgis.

The NRPA has established generally recognized standards for classifying types of parkland based on size and function. These designations have been adopted by the MDNR, are adapted from "Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines," J. D. Mertes and J. R. Hall, 1995, and provide one method of defining the purpose and use of facilities. The City park properties, which include two sites outside of the City limits, can be classified as follows: four mini parks, three neighborhood parks, five community parks, one natural resource area, and one special use park (located outside of the City limits). A more detailed description of the various public, quasi-public, and private recreation facilities follows.

An Existing Recreation Facilities map at the end of this section illustrates the location of public park/recreation areas within the City, and an Existing Recreation Facilities matrix provides a summary of the facilities provided at each site. A Park Accessibility Assessment is also provided at the end of this section.

### **MINI PARKS**

Mini-parks are specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. The service area of a mini-park is less than a ¼ mile radius and the park size is typically less than 1 acre. There are currently four parks that fit this description.

**Free Church Park** is located in the Central Business District at the corner of E. Chicago Road and S. Monroe Street. This 0.6 acre site is used primarily as a resting spot for residents and shoppers using downtown area. Facilities include a permanent stage accommodating community events, benches, picnic tables, brick pavers, floral displays and Santa's House.



**Rest Stop Park** is a 0.5 acre unimproved grass area that provides a resting spot for pedestrians traveling between businesses on South Centerville Road and the nearby apartment complexes.

**Pioneer Park** is a 0.5 acre site that has a stone marker and flower beds, and marks the historic location where Judge John Sturgis first settled in 1827.

**Shadowlawn Park** is a 0.5 acre site located at the corner of East Congress Street and Electric Court. It is used informally by parents and children before and after school.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**

A neighborhood park is the basic unit of the park system and typically serves a residential area of ¼ to ½ mile distance. A size of 5-10 acres is considered optimal for this type of park. The focus is on informal active and passive recreational activities, such as field games, court games, playground equipment, and picnicking. Although smaller than the typical size, due to their location and facilities offered, four of the City's recreation areas are considered to fit into this category.

**Langrick Park** is a popular neighborhood park located in a residential district in the northwest section of the City and is approximately 1.8 acres. Langrick Street borders the park to the east, Jerolene Street to the north, and Market Street to the west. Paved parking provides space for approximately 12 cars. Facilities include a basketball court, playground equipment, a sand volleyball court, two tennis courts, and two handball courts.

**Old Depot Park** is a 2.3 acre site located at the historic train depot on the corner of West Main and Clay Street. The park facilities include a small gazebo, a train play climber, and picnic areas. In 2014, the Depot building was moved to its new home on Chicago Road and will be further renovated and continue as a Museum. The park in which the Depot building was relocated from will continue as a Park for the use of the citizens in that part of town.

**Memorial Park** is a 3.7 acre park located in a prominent location on the northeast intersection of Centerville Road and Chicago Road on the southern edge of an older residential neighborhood. This park was originally built as a memorial to veterans who served in World War I. Facilities include a large grass area with mature tree cover and a basketball area. Also included in the park is a large flower planting bed and a monument honoring the men and women of the armed forces. In 2012, a parking lot and rain garden was installed and in 2013 a new accessible playground was added.



## **COMMUNITY PARKS**

Community-wide parks serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks and provide a range of facilities and areas capable of supporting structured and unstructured community participation. These areas are typically between 30 and 50 acres in size and serve two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3 mile distance. Facilities may include wooded or natural areas, picnic shelters and grills, bike or hiking trails and other semi-active and passive uses for large groups of people. They may also contain specialized recreational facilities such as swimming pools, community centers and lighted ball diamonds. Community Parks should be serviced by arterial or connector streets and should be easily accessible from throughout their service area by interconnecting trails. Currently there are five City parks classified within this category.

**Wall Fields** is a 15 acre property located at Wall Elementary School in the northeast area of the City. This heavily used facility is leased to the City from the schools and was re-developed using CMI Grant Funds in 2002. Facilities include four multi-purpose ball diamonds, one Sandy Koufax diamond and modern restroom facilities. In 2013, a concession area was also added.

**Spence Fields** is a 9.4 acre softball complex located in an industrial district off N. Centerville Road. This site is owned by Sturgis School District, but maintained by the City and used primarily for City sponsored recreation leagues and activities. This older facility features two-lighted full size fields and one practice field with dugouts, scoring booths, concessions building, paved parking on the north side of the site and informal gravel parking to the south.

**Thurston Woods Park** is the largest of the City's parks, covering 27 acres. It is located behind the Doyle Community Center off N. Franks Avenue. Facilities include the Trojan Timbers Playground, a large wood structure developed by the community in 2001, other older play equipment, a multi-purpose paved loop trail through the site, picnic areas, three picnic shelters and paved parking. Portable toilets are made available in the summer months. This is a popular park developed in a mature oak and hickory forest with a residential neighborhood to the west and Thurston Woods Retirement Village on the east side of N. Franks Avenue. The Doyle Community Center is located to the east of this park.

**Franks Park** is a 19.5 acre sports complex providing seven soccer/football fields for area youth programs. Supporting facilities include a large paved parking area, a playground, and a modern restroom, shelter and concessions building. The park is located near the southern City limit, on the west side of S. Lakeview Avenue. Although residential neighborhoods are located to the north, primary access is currently by car.





**Oaklawn Terrace Park** is one of the oldest City Parks, developed on the site of a former City dump in the 1930s. This 26 acre recreational area is located off S. Nottawa Avenue in the south west of the City and combined with the large cemetery on the opposite side of S. Nottawa Street, creates a large green space with a number of mature trees. The park is divided into two areas by Magnolia Avenue, which runs east to west across the site. Facilities include three covered picnic shelters, which can be reserved or used on a first-come basis, steeply sloped grass areas used informally as a sledding hill in the winter, an amphitheater, stage, and some older individual pieces of play equipment. A skating/roller hockey rink is located in the center of the site, but is in poor state of repair rendering it almost unusable. Paved parking is also provided, but is not adequate to support this popular park. Portable toilets are made available in the summer months.

### **NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS**

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, landscapes and open space. These sites are typically unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential and can support recreational activities at a level that preserves the integrity of the natural resource. The location and size of these parks are largely governed by availability. There are no significant natural resource areas within the City limits, however the City owns one park that falls into this category that is located outside of the City in the location of the Sturgis hydro-electric dam north of Centreville.

**Pahl Point Park** is a 15 acre site along the St. Joseph River north of Centreville and the historic Langley Covered Bridge. The site has a gravel access road and parking, vault toilet, limited picnic facilities and nature trails through the woods and wetlands to the St. Joseph River. There is a fishing pier for area anglers, although this is in a poor state of repair, and scenic views are provided to the river. Maintenance of this park is mandated by the hydro-electric plant license agreement.

### **SPECIAL USE PARKS**

Special-use parks are parks that have a specialized or single-purpose activity such as golf courses, nature center, boat launches, arenas, outdoor theaters or stadiums. There are no special use parks within the City limits, but Covered Bridge Park, also in the location of the Sturgis Hydro-electric dam north of Centreville, is owned by the City and is described below.

**Covered Bridge Park** is located on the south side of the St. Joseph River opposite Pahl Point Park. This 12 acre waterfront site provides access to the river for small boats, gravel parking, ample picnic facilities, a picnic shelter, vault toilet, nature trails, nature ponds, and older play equipment. Maintenance of this park is mandated by the hydro-electric plant license agreement.



## **INDOOR FACILITIES**

The City owns and maintains two important indoor recreation and cultural centers that complement the outdoor park facilities.

**Doyle Community Center** is a 75,000 square foot facility on N. Franks Avenue that houses a range of recreational facilities. Facilities include: three fitness rooms featuring a 12 station circuit training room, free weights and cardiovascular activities; an aerobics, dance and martial arts room; meeting rooms; childcare; four multi-purpose courts designed for tennis, basketball, volleyball, roller hockey and indoor soccer; one racquetball court; and a four lane indoor walking/running track. The Community Center is also home to the Parks and Recreation Department offices. This is a membership-based facility, although the amenities are also available to non-members for an additional cost. Many of the Recreation Department programs utilize the Doyle Community Center. The complex is adjacent to Thurston Woods Park and additional outdoor facilities include two sand volleyball courts..

**Sturges-Young Auditorium** is a Civic Center & Auditorium located opposite the City Hall on N. Nottawa Street. The Auditorium is owned by the City but managed by an Executive Director. The building features an auditorium with seating for 1,000, meeting rooms & banquet facilities.





Table 3 – Existing Recreational Facilities

	Free Church Park	Rest Stop Park	Pioneer Park	Shadowlawn Park	Langrick Park	Old Depot Park	Memorial Park	Wall Fields	Spence Fields	Thurston Woods Park	Franks Park	Oaklawn Terrace Park	Pahl Point Park	Covered Bridge Park	Doyle Comm. Center	Sturges-Young Audit.	Totals
Acres	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	1.8	2.3	3.7	15	9.4	27	20	26	15	12			134
Asphalt Parking Spaces					12	12	17	42	65		352	30			113		643
Gravel Parking									1				1	1			3
Ball Diamonds								5	3								8
Soccer											7						7
Indoor Soccer															1		1
Football																	7
Playground Equipment					1	1	1			1	1	1		1			8
Tennis Courts					2												2
Basketball Courts					1		1										3
Handball Courts					1												1
Indoor Multi-Use Courts															1		1
Skate Park																	
Sand Volleyball					1										2		3
Picnic Shelter						1				3	1	3		1			9
Bench	3	1			2		1			3							10
Concession Building								1	1		1	1					4
Pool																	
Nature Trail													1	1			2
Walking Trail										1							1
Fishing													1				1
Flush Toilets								1			1	1			1		4
Vault Toilets													1	1			2
Boat Launch														1			1
Grills						2						3					9
Picnic Table	3				1	1	3			3			1	1			17
Horseshoe Pits									12								12
Stage/Band Shell	1											1					2
Sledding Hill												1					1
Ice Rink												1					1
Roller Hockey												1					1
Racquetball Courts															1		1
Auditorium																1	1
Fitness Facility															1		1
Indoor Track															1		1
Historical Marker	1		1				1										3



*Table 4 – Park Accessibility Assessment*

<b>PARK</b>	<b>RANK</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS</b>
Free Church Park	3	Stage area and Santa house are accessible and internal paths provide accessible routes. Picnic tables are not accessible.	Provide accessible route and hard surface for picnic tables.
Rest Stop Park	1	One bench in poor condition and open space	Replace bench and consider development of open space.
Pioneer Park	1	Historical marker that does not have an accessible path to or any seating	Provide accessible path to historical marker and provide benches.
Shadowlawn Park	1	Facility includes a landscaped area and lawn.	Accessible benches
Langrick Park	2	Existing playground equipment is accessible via a concrete sidewalk. The basketball court, tennis courts, and sand volleyball courts are not accessible. Parking lot does not have barrier-free parking designation.	Provide paved accessible paths to all facilities. Mark pavement in parking lot to delineate barrier-free parking.
Old Depot Park	1	Existing gazebo does not have a paved path to it and it is elevated with stairs making it not accessible. Play climber has no paved connection to it and is not accessible. Picnic tables and grills do not have accessible path connections. Parking lot does not delineate barrier-free parking spaces. There is no sidewalk on the north side of the park (south side of Main St.) making the park not accessible from adjacent neighborhood.	Provide accessible routes to all park facilities. Provide accessible gazebo or modify existing gazebo to provide barrier free access. Install sidewalk on the north side of the park (south side of Main St) to connect to adjacent neighborhood.
Memorial Park	2	New parking lot has barrier free spaces and is connected to the playground with an accessible route. New playground has current equipment and accessible surface. Most of the park interior is lawn and not accessible.	Provide barrier free pathways in the internal areas of the park to allow for accessible connections to picnic areas and monument areas.
Wall Fields	1	There are no accessible paths connecting the fields to each other or to the parking lot.	Provide accessible path system to connect parking lot, ball fields, restrooms, and concessions.
Spence Fields	1	There are no accessible paths connecting the fields to each other or to the parking lots.	Provide accessible path system to connect parking lot, ball fields, horseshoes area, and concessions.



Thurston Woods Park	3	Existing loop path provides barrier free access throughout the park. Picnic areas and shelters are lacking accessible connections.	Provide accessible connections to all park facilities including picnic areas, playground, and shelters.
Franks Park	3	Parking lot has barrier free spaces designated. Parking lot, playground, restrooms, concessions, and shelter are all connected by accessible routes. There is no accessible route provided to the soccer fields.	Provide internal loop trail to provide an accessible route to the soccer fields.
Oaklawn Terrace Park	2	Shelters and parking areas are connected with barrier-free routes. There is no accessible routes to connect the ice rink/roller hockey, picnic areas, or the amphitheater.	Provide accessible routes to connect the picnic areas, amphitheater, and ice rink/roller hockey.
Covered Bridge Park	2	The nature trail provides barrier free connections to some of the facilities, but most of the facilities are not accessible. The gravel parking area is not accessible.	Provide barrier connections to picnic areas, vault toilets, playground areas, and parking lot.
Pahl Point Park	2	The boardwalk provides barrier free connections to some of the facilities, but most of the facilities are not accessible. The gravel parking area is not accessible.	Provide barrier connections to picnic areas, vault toilets, playground areas, and parking lot.
Augspurger Tennis Facility	3	All of the tennis courts, buildings, and parking areas are connected by accessible paths. Only the basketball courts are not connected by an accessible path.	Provide a paved accessible connection to the basketball courts.

The ranking system is as follows:

- 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

The recommended improvements are scheduled to be completed during the renovation of each specific park as outlined in the Action Program.



## SCHOOL FACILITIES

There are ten (10) public school sites located within the City of Sturgis, providing additional recreation opportunities for community residents.

**Community Pool** is located north of the High School.

**Sturgis High School** is located on a 35 acre site in the southeast section of the City. Facilities include ball fields, football, soccer, a track and gymnasium. A skate park is located on the school property, adjacent to the community pool. It was developed with the assistance of City funds, but is not well used due to a fee policy for users and limited opening hours.

**Sturgis Middle School** is located on 50 acres in the northeast section of the City. Approximately 30 acres are developed, with recreational uses including Ball fields, soccer, tennis and a cross-county trail. The remainder of the property is undeveloped (except for the trail).

**Congress Elementary School** is located on a 2 acre site and contains a playground, gym, and play equipment.

**Eastwood Elementary School** is located on a 12 acre site on the east City limits, south of the high school. Facilities include 2 ball fields, a soccer field, and play equipment.

**Jerolene Elementary School** is located on a small 0.8 acre site and includes a playground.

**Park Elementary School** is located on a small 0.3 acre site and includes limited play equipment.

**Wall Elementary School** is adjacent to the City managed Wall Fields and provides additional recreational facilities including two playgrounds and a basketball court.

**Wenzel Elementary School** is located on a small 0.8 acre site and includes play equipment and a gymnasium.

**Augspurger Tennis Courts** is a 4.7 acre stand-alone facility, owned and managed by the school district but on City property. This facility includes 12 tennis courts, 3 of which are lit, a basketball court, restrooms, and pavilion building. Paved parking is also provided off of South Lakeview Avenue.



Table 5 – Existing School Facilities

	Community Pool	Sturgis High School	Sturgis Middle School	Congress Elementary	Eastwood Elementary	Jerolene Elementary	Park Elementary	Wall Elementary	Wenzel Elementary	Augsburger Tennis Courts	Totals
Acres		35	30	2	12	0.8	0.3	8	0.8	4.7	<b>93.6</b>
Asphalt Parking Spaces	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	61	
Gravel Parking											
Ball Diamonds		2	1		2						<b>5</b>
Soccer		2	1		2						<b>5</b>
Indoor Soccer											
Football		2	1		2						<b>5</b>
Playground Equipment			1	1	1	1	1	2	1		<b>8</b>
Outdoor Track		1									<b>1</b>
Tennis Courts			8							12	<b>20</b>
Basketball Courts								1		1	<b>2</b>
Handball Courts											
Indoor Multi-Use Courts		1									<b>1</b>
Skate Park		1									<b>1</b>
Sand Volleyball											
Picnic Shelter										1	<b>1</b>
Bench											
Concession Building								1		1	<b>2</b>
Pool	1										<b>1</b>
Nature Trail											
Walking Trail					1						<b>1</b>
Cross Country Trail			1								<b>1</b>
Flush Toilets										1	<b>1</b>
Vault Toilets											
Boat Launch											
Grills											
Picnic Table											
Horseshoe Pits											
Stage/Band Shell											
Sledding Hill											
Ice Rink											
Roller Hockey											
Racquetball Courts											
Gymnasium		1		1					1		<b>3</b>
Fitness Facility											
Indoor Track											



## **OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES**

**Sturgis Bowl** is located on South Centreville Road.

## **REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES**

St Joseph County is characterized by six major rivers and over 50 lakes and other bodies of water offering many recreational opportunities including swimming, boating, and fishing. A description of the regional recreational facilities serving the Sturgis area community follows.

**Cade Lake County Park** is located two miles east of the City of Sturgis. The site includes 52 acres on the shores of the 32 acre Cade Lake, offering 62 sites of modern and primitive camping, a swimming beach, fishing, boat rentals, picnic shelter, playground, volleyball, and hiking trails.

**Camp Fort Hill**, is a 228 acre park on Tamarack Lake, 12 miles from Sturgis. Camp Fort Hill was historically used by Native Americans as a signal hill and is now owned and operated by a non-profit organization. The site features swimming, a climbing wall, nature trails, day camps and camp programs, providing recreational and educational opportunities for families, church groups, schools, scout and other groups.

**Hoshel Canoe Park** is located 3 miles southwest of Centreville and offers a scenic island on the Prairie River. Facilities include a canoe launch and picnicking.

**Meyer Broadway Park** is located west of US-131 near Three Rivers and offers 149 acres of natural areas and woodlands. Facilities include: walking trails, wildlife and bird watching, playground, picnic pavilion, modern restrooms, sand volleyball and an 18-hole disc golf course. The park also features winter activities including a tubing hill and cross country skiing.

**Nottawa Park**, is located approximately 10 miles north of Sturgis and is a popular lakefront park. This 12 acre park features camping on the shores of Sand Lake, a public swimming beach, fishing opportunities, picnic areas and picnic shelter, softball field and volleyball.

**Olney Bridge Park** features canoe access to the Nottawa Creek, north of M-60 on Olney Road.

**Palmer Lake Beach** is located on the east of the County and offers a swimming beach, picnic pavilion and restrooms.

**Rawson's King Mill Park** is located off M-60 on the northeast side of the



County. This park on Nottawa Creek includes scenic views of the mill and dam, two islands, fishing access, picnic pavilion, restrooms and walking trails.

**Jim Timm County Park** is a 95 acre nature area located 12 miles northwest of Sturgis and features a small parking lot, a half-mile hiking trail, wooded areas and wetlands. Future development would include a boardwalk and additional trails.

**Three Rivers State Game Area** is located northwest of Constantine and features approximately 2,125 acres of public hunting land.

**Wahbememe Historical Monument** is located at US 131 and US 12 in White Pigeon and features a historical marker and stone recognizing the achievements of Patawatomí Chief Wahbememe.

## **CAMPGROUNDS**

A number of private campgrounds are located within easy reach of the City of Sturgis, providing both primitive and modern campsites.

**Dogwood Lodge** is a rustic log cabin located adjacent to the Prairie River on Maystead Road, providing facilities as a family vacation spot or hunting lodge.

**Leidy Lake** is located on Bennett Rd in Colon and offers primitive and RV camping, with water and electrical hookup available, as well as cabins. Other facilities include beach, hiking trails, fishing, picnic areas and a canoe and kayak launch.

**Steinke Resort and Campground** is located on Steinke Road in Burr Oak. A summer resort featuring cottages and 140 mobile home and camping sites on Long Lake. Other facilities include boat and dock rentals, swimming and play area, and bait and tackle store.

**Fisher Lake Cottages** is located on 347 acres on Fisher lake near Three Rivers.

**Sand Lake Rentals** is located on a 101 acre sports lake near Nottawa.

## **GOLF COURSES**

There are a number of private and public golf courses in the local area, as described below:

**Cedar Lake Golf Course**, 3355E 700N, Howe, Indiana Public, 18 holes

**Freedom Hills Golf Course**, 68162 County Farm Road, Sturgis. 9 hole executive course with year-round golf simulator and driving range.

**Green Valley Golf and Health Club**, 25499 Fawn River Road, Sturgis, Public,



18 holes with a health club and camp site.

**Island Hills Golf Club**, 23510 Island Hills Drive, Centreville, Public, 18 holes, championship course.

**Klinger Lake Country Club**, 51050 W. US 12, Sturgis, 18 holes, private.

**Prairie River**, 1015 Bronson Road, Bronson, 18 holes, public course, west of Sturgis

**St. Joe Valley Golf Club**, 24953 M86, 18 holes, public

## **BOAT RAMPS**

Numerous municipal and MDNR ramps provide access to a variety of lakes for fishing and water sports throughout the County.

**Clear Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10 vehicles.

**Fish Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10 vehicles.

**Fishers Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 12 vehicles

**Klinger Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 20 vehicles.

**Lee Lake** - Gravel ramp, 4 parking spaces.

**Long Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 15 vehicles.

**Mendon, Saint Joseph River** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 12 vehicles.

**Mud Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 5 vehicles.

**Noah Lake** - Gravel ramp, toilet, 5 parking spaces.

**Omena Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 11 vehicles.

**Palmer Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10 vehicles.

**Pleasant Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10 vehicles.

**Portage Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 31 vehicles.

**Prairie River Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10





vehicles.

**Stump Bay, Three Rivers Impound** - concert ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 21 vehicles.

**Sturgeon Lake** - concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 20 vehicles.

**Thompson Lake** – concrete ramp with toilet facilities and parking for 10 vehicles.

## **PRIVATE FACILITIES**

**St. Joseph County Conservation and Sportsman Club**, provides a location for skeet, trap and target range shooting. Hunter's safety courses are offered to the public.

## **CEMETERIES**

There are two (2) cemeteries located in the City.

**Oaklawn Cemetery:** Oaklawn Cemetery was established in 1867 with a twelve (12) acre plot. There are currently forty acres in the cemetery. The cemetery is located at the northeast corner of S. Nottawa Street and E. South Street and contains a 48 niche columbarium. There have been approximately 10,000 burials in Oaklawn Cemetery. There are currently 2,000 new double lots that have been developed for use. The cemetery averages about 100 full burials, 25 cremations, 2 baby burials, and 1 disinterment per year.

**Memorial Gardens:** Memorial Gardens was established in 1983 with formal dedication in 1985. The cemetery is located on the south side of E. Fawn River Road east of S. Nottawa Street. It was started as a low maintenance alternative to Oaklawn Cemetery. A low maintenance cemetery has no headstones, only flush mounted markers are allowed. There have been 112 burials in Memorial Gardens since it opened.

## **DNR RECREATION GRANT INVENTORY**

The City of Sturgis has received several grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to assist with park projects. The following projects received funding:

Memorial Park received funding in 2012 through the Passport Grant for the development of a new playground which included new play equipment, surfacing, and an accessible path to the parking lot.

Wall Fields received a CMI grant in 2000 for the development of five (5) irrigated ball



fields with fencing, dugouts, bleachers and batting cages. Supporting elements included parking expansion, site lighting and landscaping. This park is widely used by City residents and community sports programs.

Langrick Park received funding in 1980 for the development of a parkign lot, basketball court, playground, tennis courts, handball courts, shuffleboard courts, and landscaping.

Old Depot Park received funding in 1978 for the development of a gazebo, play climber, and picnic areas.

## **RECREATION PROGRAMMING**

The City of Sturgis began providing adult recreational programming in 1996 and youth programming in 1998 after taking over this function form the Sturgis School District. The City provides a comprehensive range of adult and youth programs and events, complimented by interscholastic sports programs managed by the schools, and programs managed by other organizations but supported by the City.

All Recreation and Doyle programs are available to anyone, regardless of Doyle Community Center Membership. Program fees are based on residency, with City of Sturgis residents receiving a discount on recreational programs. This is based on a "fare-share" concept that allows Sturgis citizens to receive a reduced fee based on the taxes they pay that go towards recreational programming.

### **Youth Programming**

The Sturgis Recreation Department provides a fun and safe environment which promotes physical fitness, sportsmanship, teamwork and positive parent involvement. The department's goal is to provide children with the highest quality youth sports program available. Youth programming includes: basketball, dance, cheerleading, girls' volleyball, roller hockey, flag football, Saturday Night Free-For-All (featuring open gym type activities), summer adventure club, Tae Kwon Do, T-ball and tennis. The majority of the programs are held at the Doyle Community Center with summer tennis camps held at the Augsperger Tennis Courts. Baseball, football, soccer and wrestling programs are provided by other organizations, but using City facilities and are supported by the City. A breakdown of numbers of youth participating each year is included in this section. Although participation levels have been falling since 2002, there are still over 2,200 participants recorded.

### **Adult Programming**

Adult programming includes leagues for women's volleyball, adult indoor soccer, coed volleyball, sand volleyball, men's league basketball, floor hockey, and men's, church, women's and coed softball. Softball leagues play at Spence Field with the remainder of the activities held at the Doyle Community Center. Registration is by team, with between 6 and 28 teams registering for each program annually. A report of participation levels follows.



### **Aerobic and Fitness Classes**

A full range of aerobics and fitness classes are also available at the Doyle Community Center. Participants may purchase a punch card allowing users to attend any class, or pay a drop-in rate. These rates are reduced for Doyle Community Center Members. Classes include general fitness, step, ball classes, senior aerobics, Pilates, yoga, and indoor cycling.

### **Special Events**

The Sturgis Recreation Department also organizes a number of annual events for the community. These include a Teen Dance Party for 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, a 5K run or a 5K walk open to all ages, Michigan Gun and Knife shows, a Date with Dad, a Mom to Mom sale, Color Run 5K and a Mud Run.

Other events are sponsored by the Sturgis Area Chamber of Commerce, the most notable of which is Sturgis Fest. The weeklong festival begins with a kick off dinner as well as a walk/run, competitions, sidewalk sales, arts and crafts, a car show and many more activities. To end the week on Friday evening a huge fireworks display is planned. On Saturday live music is enjoyed. A great week for community fun and enjoyment.

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## 5. RECREATION NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES

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## **CHAPTER 5- RECREATION NEEDS AND DEFICIENCIES**

Chapter 5 identifies recreation deficiencies in the community. The following elements were sources of information or considerations during the analysis:

- The professional expertise and informed opinions of City staff and officials, and interested and committed citizens and stakeholders who participated in the public input exercises associated with the plan.
- National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Standards.
- Geographic distribution of existing facilities

While each of these methods may have its limitations, using a combination of methods will yield a more accurate assessment of recreational needs and deficiencies. The following is a brief description of each of the methods used.

### **RECREATION STANDARDS**

The NRPA has established generally recognized standards for classifying types of parkland based on size and function. These designations have been adopted by the MDNR and provide one method of defining the purpose and use of facilities. Recreation standards provide a benchmark for evaluating the relative adequacy or inadequacy of the City's recreation system. This Plan has used as a guide the *1983 Recreation, Park, and Open Space, Standards and Guidelines* and *1995 Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines* published by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Typical recreation standards establish a certain number of activity-specific recreational facilities per 1,000 of population (e.g. 1 tennis court per 2,000 persons). Other standards establish a certain number of acres per 1,000 of population for different types of park facilities, such as neighborhood, community and regional parks. These standards are adapted to reflect the City's character and compared with the City's existing and projected population. This Plan will combine both approaches to ascertain deficiencies in recreational facilities and acreage. The 2010 Census figures were used for the purposes of this analysis study. In addition, the potential growth of neighboring communities and the service area as a whole should be taken into consideration.

There are two basic types of recreational experiences: "active" and "passive." "Active" recreation requires space and facilities capable of accommodating exertive activities. Such facilities include: sports fields, play apparatus areas, open areas, special facilities, such as pools and court areas, and areas for organized activities. On the other hand, "passive" recreation requires little more than space and furniture for quiet, non-exertive activities for limited numbers of users. Recreation areas must provide for both types of use and preferably include a variety of opportunities for each to respond adequately to a wide range of interests and age groups. Parks are generally classified by purpose and area per population served. They range in type from mini-play lots and green areas to large regional and national parks.



The categories used for this plan will be as follows:

1. Mini-Parks
2. Neighborhood Parks
3. Community Parks
4. Natural Resource Areas
5. Special Use Parks
6. Trails

## **RECREATION STANDARDS FOR ACREAGE**

### **1. Mini-Parks**

**Description** - Mini-parks are used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs, and may serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group, such as tots or senior citizens, as determined by the distance that can be easily traveled by the local user.

**Service Areas** - The area served by a mini-park is generally considered to be less than one-quarter (1/4) mile radius in size. This may, in reality, vary slightly depending on ease or difficulty of access and the character of the facility.

**Mini-Park Acreage Standards** - Nationally accepted standards for mini-parks recommend 1/4 to 1/2 an acre per 1,000 of population with one (1) acre as a desirable size.

**Existing Mini-Park Recreation Acreage** – Sturgis currently has four (4) City mini-parks and a few school sites which fall into this category as follows.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Free Church Park	0.6
Rest Stop Park	0.5
Pioneer Park	0.5
Shadowlawn Park	0.5
Park Elementary	0.3
Jerolene Elementary	0.8
Wenzel Elementary	<u>0.8</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.0</b>

**Table 6 Needs and Deficiencies** – The table below compares the 2010 City population to the recreation standard of one-half (0.5) acres per 1,000 persons.

2010 Population	Mini Park Rec. Acreage Required	Mini Park Rec. Acreage Available	Deficiency/Surplus
10994	5.5	4	-1.5



The figures indicate a small deficiency in mini-park land. However, as many of the functions of mini-parks are also served by neighborhood parks these should be looked at together rather than individually.

## 2. Neighborhood Parks

**Description** - Neighborhood Parks remain the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. They can serve individual neighborhood populations as determined by the distance that can easily be traveled by local users for relatively short periods of recreation. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation for all seasons. Facilities provided in these parks may include court games, play structures, open play areas, landscaping, site furnishings and possibly a shelter.

**Service Areas** - A neighborhood unit is a concentrated residential development which, ideally, would be provided with a neighborhood school, playground and park facility. The playground would provide an area for active recreation and the neighborhood park for more passive recreation and for neighborhood recreation play fields.

The area served by neighborhood parks is generally considered to be a one quarter (1/4) mile to one half (1/2) mile radius in size and should be uninterrupted by non-residential roads or other physical barriers.

**Neighborhood Park Acreage Standards** - Nationally accepted standards for neighborhood parks recommend 1-2 acres per 1,000 of population with five (5) acres as a minimum size and 5 to 10 (5-10) acres optimal. It is recommended that the minimum of two (2) acres per 1,000 population projected ten (10) years hence be used as a guide for site selection.

It is also recommended that neighborhood facilities be combined with elementary schools. In such cases, the minimum site size should be five to seven (5-7) acres.

**Existing Neighborhood Recreation Acreage** – The City of Sturgis currently has the following neighborhood parks:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Langrick Park	1.8
Old Depot Park	2.3
Memorial Park	3.7
Congress Elementary	2.0
Eastwood Elementary	12.0
Wall Elementary	<u>8.0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.8</b>





**Table 7 – Needs and Deficiencies:** The table below compares the 2010 City population to the recreation standard of two (2) acres per 1,000 persons.

2010 Population	Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Required	Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Available	Deficiency/Surplus
10994	22	29.8	7.8

Although this comparison indicates a surplus in Neighborhood recreation acreage, a large portion of the land is made up of School property which is outside of the control of the City and not available for public use at all times. If the school sites were not counted, the total acreage for neighborhood parks would be 7.8 acres, which would be well below the national standard.

The distribution, location, and accessibility of the recreational acreage within the park system service area should also be considered. Ideally, the parks should be centrally located and parks and schools should be adjacent to each other to provide the fullest complement of neighborhood recreation developments. Additionally, the parks should be accessible on foot without having to cross busy streets or negotiate physical barriers.

When analyzing the adequacy of the neighborhood park facilities several factors stand out. First, all of the City neighborhood parks are outdated and in need of upgraded facilities, especially in relation to barrier-free accessibility, walking paths and play equipment. Second, all the City owned properties are below the recommended minimum size of 5 to 10 acres, therefore limiting potential site uses and the ability to support a diversity of recreation opportunities.

When evaluating the geographical distribution of neighborhood parks, it is evident that there is generally a balanced distribution of neighborhood parks/school sites and they relate well to the residential neighborhoods.

### **3. Community Parks**

**Description** – Community parks serve a broader purpose than neighborhood parks and focus on meeting community based recreation needs capable of supporting organized community participation programs that would not be appropriate in neighborhood parks because of their average size or traffic volume generated. Community parks also strive to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. Facilities should be centrally located, diverse enough to accommodate all age groups for both active and passive experiences, and organized so that compatible uses relate to one another by both type and intensity of use. Adequate parking and vehicular circulation is also an important consideration, since park users will generally arrive at these parks by vehicle. Lighted use areas significantly increase the recreational value of parks of this type and should be provided on athletic fields, court areas and special gathering areas whenever



possible. Typical facilities recommended for community parks include ball fields, open use areas, tennis courts, horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, picnic areas, play apparatus areas, restrooms, shelters and landscaping. Additional special facilities could include band shells, amphitheaters, swimming and wading pools, community-meeting buildings, skating facilities, and bicycle courses.

As with neighborhood parks, it is often beneficial to develop community parks in conjunction with junior or senior high schools where practical because of the athletic fields and courts potentially available for public use. This arrangement assures the maximum level of use as well as the most practical expenditure of development funds.

**Service Area** - The area served by community-wide parks varies significantly from one municipality to another because of the distribution of population and related factors. However, a Community Park usually serves 2 or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3 mile distance.

**Community Park Acreage Standards** – The size of a Community Park varies according to the desired uses, but is usually between 30 and 50 acres. It is recommended that a range of five (5) to eight (8) acres per 1,000 population be used as a standard basis for development.

**Existing Community Recreation Acreage** – The City of Sturgis currently has the following community parks:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Wall Fields	15.0
Spence Fields	9.4
Thurston Woods Park	27.0
Franks Park	19.5
Oaklawn Terrace Park	26.0
Augspurger Tennis Courts	4.7
Sturgis Middle School	30.0
Sturgis High School	<u>35.0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>166.6</b>

**Table 8 – Needs and Deficiencies** - The table below compares the 2010 City population to the recreation standard of eight (8) acres per 1,000 population.

2010 Population	Community Rec. Acreage Required	Community Rec. Acreage Available	Deficiency/Surplus
10994	88	166.6	78.6

Although this comparison indicates a surplus in Community Park recreation acreage, a large portion of the land is made up of School property which is



outside of the control of the City and not available for public use at all times. If the school sites were not counted, the total acreage for neighborhood parks would be 96.9 acres, which would still be above the national standard. The sites are generally well positioned within the city and provide a range of recreational facilities. When addressing Community Park needs, the popularity of a given recreational activity, such as soccer, volleyball, softball, etc. or the need for a special activity unique to that community also needs to be taken into consideration.

The City of Sturgis is a main provider of recreation facilities in the region, with limited facilities provided by the neighboring Townships. The City is also located some distance from the more sophisticated recreational facilities provided in the cities of Kalamazoo, Battle Creek and Fort Wayne, In. However, the City is fortunate to have a good network of County parks as well as numerous lakes in the region to supplement the City facilities providing water related activities such as swimming, boating and fishing.

As the City facilities serve a wider area than just those residing in the City, the entire Sturgis school district should also be considered.

**Table 9 – Needs and Deficiencies** - The table below compares the 2010 School District population to the recreation standard of eight (8) acres per 1,000 population.

2010 Population	Community Rec. Acreage Required	Community Rec. Acreage Available	Deficiency/Surplus
21323	170.4	113.6	-58.8

For the school district service area, there is a significant deficit in acreage of Community Parks. Again, a large proportion of the acreage is made up of School property, which is not always available for public use.

#### 4. Natural Resource Areas

**Description** - Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space and visual/aesthetic buffering. These sites are typically unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential and can support recreational activities at a level that preserves the integrity of the natural resource. The location and size of these parks are largely governed by availability.



**Existing Natural Resource Area Acreage** - Sturgis currently has one park that fits into this category.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Pahl Point Park	<u>15</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>

**Needs and Deficiencies** - There are no recognized acreage standards for natural resource areas. It is important to identify and protect natural resources under the control of the City. It is also important to provide improved access and facilities, while maintaining integrity as a wildlife habitat.

This site is at the hydro-electric plant, on the St. Joseph River, the primary natural resource in the area. A desire for increased access to the river for fishing, walking and canoeing has been identified. This is to be balanced with the need to protect this valuable resource. Opportunities to make improvements to this resource are available under the hydro-electric plant license agreement.

## 5. Special Use Parks

**Description** - Special use parks are areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities. The specialized recreational activities may include boat launches, swimming beaches, plazas or squares, historic sites, stadiums, urban green-spaces, and nature centers. There are no generally accepted standards for the size or service areas of these parks.

**Existing Facilities** – Sturgis currently has one park that fits into this category.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Covered Bridge Park	<u>12</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>

**Needs and Deficiencies** - There are no recognized acreage standards for special use parks. There have been no deficiencies determined for this category. This park is a unique waterfront property located above the dam. Some improvements are needed to meet ADA guidelines.

## 6. Trails

**Description** – There are a number of different types of trails that can provide both transportation and recreation opportunities. Trails may be located within parks, on an independent right-of-way, or within the road right-of-way. Connector Trails are defined as "multi-purpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the Community" (J.D. Mertes and J.R. Hall, Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, 1995). These trails are generally located within the road right-of- way and can be divided



into two types. Type I has separate paths for different user types, such as pedestrians and bicyclists. Type II has mixed uses and is suited to lighter use patterns.

**Existing Facilities** - The City of Sturgis has no significant trail systems. Thurston Woods is the only park with a multi-purpose loop trail, but this is of limited size.

**Needs and Deficiencies** - There have been no deficiencies determined for this category and needs vary depending on the community. The need to develop walking and biking trails was identified as a much needed resource at the public input meeting. New trails should be developed both within the City parks and across the City to link recreation areas with schools and residential neighborhoods to provide a safe and enjoyable method of transport as well as a healthy recreational resource.

Expansion beyond the City boundaries, using abandoned railroad right of ways and other easements, in coordination with regional and neighboring municipalities, should also be investigated.

## **RECREATION STANDARDS FOR ACTIVITIES/FACILITIES**

A comparison of activity-specific recreational facilities within the City to recreation standards indicates that Sturgis contains many of the recreational facilities desirable for the current population. However, there are two facilities that are lacking: walking trails and bicycle routes.

The current recreation facilities were also analyzed using the population of the Sturgis School District, which more accurately reflects the use of many of the facilities, especially those that support organized programming. This showed a deficiency in the following facilities: volleyball, softball, walking trails, and bicycle routes.

The following tables compare the recommended number of facilities per population for the City of Sturgis and the entire Sturgis School District with the existing facilities available and illustrate any current or projected deficiencies.



Table 10 – Recreation Standards and Deficiencies  
City of Sturgis: 2010 Population – 10,994

FACILITY	STANDARD	RECOMMENDED FACILITIES	EXISTING FACILITIES*	FACILITY DEFICIENCIES
Volleyball	1:5,000	2	3	+1
Picnic Shelters	1:2,000	5	9	+4
Playground equipment	1:3,000	3	7	+4
Basketball (outdoor)	1:5,000	2	2	0
Tennis	1:2,000	5	13	+8
Baseball (Official)	1:5,000	2	3	+1
Baseball (Little League)	1:30,000	1	5	+4
Softball	1:5,000	2	2	0
Football	1:20,000	1	7	+6
Track	1:20,000	1	0	-1
Soccer	1:10,000	1	7	+6
Sledding Area	As Available	-	1	+1
Bicycle Route	As Available	-	0	0
Walking Trails	1 System	1	3	+2
Gymnasium	1:5,000	2	0	-2
Ice Rink	1:20,000	1	1	0
Pool	1:20,000	1	0	-1
Beaches	As Available	-	0	0
Auditorium	1:20,000	1	1	0
Community Center	1:20,000	1	1	0

\*Public park facilities only

Table 11 – Recreation Standards and Deficiencies  
Sturgis School District: 2010 Population – 21,323

FACILITY	STANDARD	RECOMMENDED FACILITIES	EXISTING FACILITIES*	FACILITY DEFICIENCIES
Volleyball	1:5,000	4	3	-1
Picnic Shelters	1:2,000	10	9	-1
Playground equipment	1:3,000	7	15	+8
Basketball (outdoor)	1:5,000	4	4	0
Tennis	1:2,000	10	22	+12
Baseball (Official)	1:5,000	4	5	+1
Baseball (Little League)	1:30,000	1	9	+8
Softball	1:5,000	4	4	0
Football	1:20,000	1	12	+11
Track	1:20,000	1	1	0
Soccer	1:10,000	2	12	+10
Sledding Area	As Available	-	1	+1
Bicycle Route	As Available	-	0	0
Walking Trails	1 System	1	4	+3
Gymnasium	1:5,000	4	3	-1
Ice Rink	1:20,000	1	1	0
Pool	1:20,000	1	1	0
Beaches	As Available	-	0	0
Auditorium	1:20,000	1	1	0
Community Center	1:20,000	1	1	0

\*Public park facilities and school facilities combined.



While standards for comparison address the quantity of facilities desirable for a particular number of persons, they do not address quality or location concerns. Consequently, any community that has the appropriate numbers of facilities may not have facilities of a useful or desirable quality, or may not have facilities located where they would be most accessible to residents.

## **RECREATION FACILITIES SUMMARY**

The City of Sturgis recreation system consists primarily of older facilities that need to be upgraded to meet barrier free accessibility, safety, aesthetic, and play standards. In particular, the accessibility and safety of playgrounds needs to be enhanced and barrier-free routes should be provided to all City facilities. Additional parking facilities are also needed in some locations to meet the demands of existing parks and programmed activities.

The deficiencies listed and described in the Recreation Standards based on population are an important consideration of the current City needs for additional recreation opportunities. However, information that was received during the public input sessions also needs to be taken into consideration. Walking trails, picnic facilities and bike trails were the facilities most people wanted to see expanded or upgraded in the City. These are family-oriented recreational facilities that can be used by all members of the Community. Trails both within parks and linking recreational facilities to each other, residential areas, and schools should be considered.

Of the "active" recreation facilities, baseball/softball fields were cited as the most in need of improvement. Spence Field is an older facility, which no longer meets the demands of the Community, both in terms of quality of the fields or size of the site. Spence Field also needs improvements to meet ADA guidelines; but is limited in size and it is owned by the School District. Oaklawn Terrace Park has insufficient parking; poor accessibility with no connecting walkways; play equipment that does not meet current safety guidelines; and the hockey/skating area is so badly in need of repair that it is virtually unusable.

A new facility that showed a lot of support was a disc golf course. Currently the nearest facility is at Meyer Broadway Park near Three Rivers. Other new facilities that showed support was a dog park and a splash pad.

Comments received also focused on up-grading existing parkland recreation facilities, particularly the larger community parks such as Thurston Woods and Oaklawn Terrace.

Minutes of the Public Hearing are included in the Appendices.



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## 6. PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

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## **CHAPTER 6 – PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

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### **PLANNING PROCESS**

The residents of the Sturgis Community take an active role in planning for their community's recreational opportunities. The City appreciates the fact that recreation planning plays an important role in maintaining the quality of life in a community and therefore tries to be responsive to citizen needs and desires for parks and recreation. Recreation planning is one means of obtaining a perspective on the needs and desires of the community and engaging in a process that includes; developing realistic alternatives; formulating goals, policies, and recommendations for public and private decisions; developing criteria to measure change; and involving people in the planning, design and decision processes. City residents were encouraged to participate and comment throughout the planning process.

The recreation planning process included understanding current recreational based challenges, anticipating future needs and forming a plan of action. During the early phase of the planning process background data was gathered from site investigations and available reports in order to develop a current snapshot of the City and a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the community. This snap shot was also reviewed in comparison to national park standards to help determine where deficiencies may exist. In order to understand the preferred future of the parks and recreation system the City also engaged in a public input process that included a public workshop, a public review period, and an open commission meeting.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan presents an evaluation of the City's recreational needs and opportunities. It considers the existing amenities in and around the City, the current and anticipated demand for additional or improved facilities, and the means for providing those facilities.

This plan is to serve as a guideline for directing the City in the operation and maintenance of existing and future facilities and programs to meet the recreational needs of its citizen's. The plan summarizes long-term recommendations intended to guide the development of recreation\ opportunities, and describes an action and capital improvement program for implementation over the next five years.

### **PLAN PROCESS AND DEVELOPMENT**

This 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed by the City of Sturgis, with the assistance of VIRIDIS Design Group., a park and recreation planning consultant.

Criteria considered and evaluated for plan development evolved from the examination of goals and recreation standards determined through a wide variety of input sources. This information was collected from the inventory and review of existing facilities; the identification of recreation needs and deficiencies; public opinion; current statewide recreation issues and priorities; and future expectations.



Public input was sought throughout the process by means of a Public Input Meeting to solicit public desires and concerns regarding parks and recreation. The public meeting took place on Wednesday, January 14, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. at the Sturgis City Hall on N. Nottawa Street. The meeting was advertised in the local media and newspaper. Meeting minutes summarizing comments and discussion items can be found in the appendices of this report.

Specific recreation needs and deficiencies were identified at the public input meeting and are recorded in the minutes in the Appendices of this report. Meeting attendees were also asked to complete a visioning questionnaire at the meeting. A sample questionnaire document is included in the appendix of this report. Comments from the public input meeting and the commission meeting were incorporated into a final draft of the Plan, which was made available to the public for thirty days commencing on January 23, 2015, to solicit further comments prior to a public hearing and plan adoption.

Following the one month review period, the final plan was presented during a public hearing to the City Commission on February 25, 2015. The Resolution to formally adopt this plan can be found in Section 9.

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**7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

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## **CHAPTER 7 - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

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As a result of the recreation inventory and needs assessment, and direct input from citizens, City officials, and City staff, the City of Sturgis has developed the following goals and objectives in order to guide the management and development of recreation opportunities for the next 5 years. Goals and objectives are meant to guide the intent of the actions to be taken but flexible enough to reflect changing attitudes and opportunities. A degree of flexibility is essential for the City to be responsive to its citizens. The goals are long-range in nature and intended to be broad in scope to accommodate future change. The objectives are short-range in nature and intended to direct specific program and development decisions to be made in the next five years.

### **GOAL 1**

**Provide a geographically balanced system of park and recreation facilities.**

#### **Objectives**

- Develop new recreation facilities on property already owned by the City
- Acquire new property for future facility expansion
- Encourage the provision of recreational land as part of new developments
- Develop recreation opportunities in Downtown
- Provide recreational facilities within walking distance of all neighborhoods
- Develop new neighborhood and mini parks

### **GOAL 2**

**Expand the diversity of recreation facilities available at existing recreation facilities to offer year-round opportunities for individuals of all ages and abilities in order to meet current and future demands.**

#### **Objectives**

- Find ways to attract more users to the parks
- Improve playgrounds to offer more diverse activities
- Provide a wider range of active and passive recreational facilities
- Develop winter recreation facilities within the City
- Provide improved opportunities for seniors to exercise
- Improve lighting at City Parks to expand use
- Develop new recreation facilities such as disc golf, dog park, and splash pad



### **Goal 3**

**Upgrade and enhance existing recreation facilities to provide a high quality, aesthetic, and safe recreational experience at all City parks and facilities.**

#### **Objectives**

- Enhance existing facilities to meet or exceed barrier-free requirements
- Make improvements to the amphitheater at and other facilities Oaklawn Terrace Park
- Update/replace existing playgrounds to meet current safety and ADA guidelines
- Promote a sense of identity and pride in all City parks and facilities
- Improve picnic facilities at all City parks

### **Goal 4**

**Develop new parks and recreational facilities to further expand the standards and range of recreational opportunities available to area residents.**

#### **Objectives**

- Develop land already in City ownership as appropriate
- Meet the needs of organized sports activities in the community
- Review opportunities for new neighborhood parks in areas of population growth
- Develop new facilities for a splash pad, a dog park, and a disc golf course

### **Goal 5**

**Strive towards providing universal accessibility to recreational facilities and institute a transition period to update existing amenities to meet or exceed barrier-free accessibility standards.**

#### **Objectives**

- Incorporate concepts of the Promoting Active Communities (PAC) initiative
- Bring all developed park properties in line with ADA guidelines within the 5 year planning period
- Conduct a walkability audit.
- Implement improvements as identified in the Accessibility Assessment for each facility.

### **Goal 6**

**Preserve, protect, and improve historic, natural, scenic, or environmentally sensitive areas for appropriate public use and enjoyment and habitat protection.**

#### **Objectives**

- Develop management/maintenance strategies for natural areas owned the City.
- Design parks to encourage appropriate use and minimum impact to important natural features.



- Provide environmental and historical education opportunities as appropriate
- Continue to make improvements at Covered Bridge Park and Pal Point Park
- Maintain and enhance historical sites and monuments in City Parks

### **Goal 7**

**Promote and maintain strong working relationships with St Joseph County, neighboring Townships, the Sturgis Public School District and private entities to enhance recreational opportunities available to area residents.**

#### **Objectives**

- Work towards the development of an Area Recreation Authority
- Identify potential opportunities for regional non-motorized trail connections.
- Pool resources with neighboring municipalities to increase funding potential
- Work with the School District to make the most efficient use of sports facilities
- Encourage philanthropic investment in City park and recreation facilities
- Continue to support Doyle Recreation Programs and develop / maintain facilities that meet the demands of the programming.

### **Goal 8**

**Continue to implement the Non-Motorized Trailway Plan throughout the City and beyond to provide a safe, attractive and enjoyable recreational experience and non-motorized transportation.**

#### **Objectives**

- To provide alternative multi-modal modes of transportation
- Connect recreation facilities to schools, residential areas, and to one another
- Continue to update the Non-Motorized Trailway Plan

### **Goal 9**

**Acquire property as it becomes available to ensure recreational opportunities keep pace with the needs of the community.**

#### **Objectives**

- Continue discussions with the railroad company regarding the purchase of the abandoned railroad right of way.
- Acquire land to provide greenway corridors between the City and neighboring Townships
- Acquire property and easements along the railroads for development of rail trails
- Acquire property to protect natural resources.





## **Goal 10**

**Continue to provide policies and programming that will allow recreation to be a fulfilling experience and promote healthy lifestyles.**

### **Objectives**

- Ensure a variety of programming options to provide opportunities for all residents, regardless of race, income, and age
- Provide quality cultural activities for people of all ages and backgrounds
- Continue to make facility upgrades to the Doyle Center to provide adequate facilities for high quality programming
- Maintain and hire additional quality staff

## **Goal 11**

**Continue to encourage and seek out philanthropic, grant based, and other donor driven funding mechanisms for financial support of park facilities.**

### **Objectives**

- Evaluate fee rates for programs and events
- Consider the development of programs to assist low-income families
- Update and implement this planning document to ensure funds are spent efficiently and to maintain eligibility for State funded grants
- Develop a branding campaign to educate the public on the benefits of supporting and using park facilities
- Continue to use social media to promote parks and recreation and maintain a high profile presence
- Seek available granting programs for park and recreation development and maintenance

## **Goal 12**

**Develop the vacant property on East Lafayette into a baseball/softball complex.**

### **Objectives**

- Develop a conceptual design to include new ball fields, concessions, parking, trails, and new playground equipment
- Seek recreational based grant funding opportunities and solicit donations from private organizations
- Develop construction documents for the site and implement the master plan.



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**8. ACTION PROGRAM AND CAPITAL  
IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE**

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## **CHAPTER 8 - ACTION PROGRAM AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE**

### **ACTION PROGRAM**

The Action Program and Capital Improvement Schedule of the City of Sturgis Parks and Recreation Master Plan states the proposed course of development or improvement that will be taken over the next five years. The Goals and Objectives, from the previous section, serve as guidelines for the development of the Action Program. The Capital Improvement Schedule which follows will focus on the needs identified in the Action Program and will project potential expenditures for the five-year action period on a year-by-year basis. The five-year period will begin in 2015 and extend through 2020. This time period will not be sufficient to accomplish all of the goals and objectives, but begins to prioritize those projects that may be achievable within the initial five years.

The Action Program focuses on reduction of deficiencies, and expansion and improvements of facilities in a manner that not only meets current needs, but also diversifies the type and quality of recreational opportunities within the City. The Parks and Recreation Plan identifies these needs in general terms in the Recreation Needs and Deficiencies section; the Action Plan describes specific actions to be taken to address these needs; and the Capital Improvement Schedule specifically itemizes those projects which will be most feasible during the next five years. The proposed schedule will allow for flexibility as funds become available and as opportunities are presented. The following actions are comprehensive and may require more than five years to complete.

#### **Doyle Community Center**

Future expansion of facilities should consider a warm water family fitness swimming pool, expanded cardio/strength training facilities and senior center/meeting rooms.

#### **Franks Park**

There is a need to provide surfaced walks to the fields and paved barrier-free viewing areas. The following improvements were identified as desirable at the public input meeting: Additional parking, lighting, improved signage, barrier free access, and ball field improvements. In addition, there is property to the south that the City could consider purchasing for expansion of the park.

#### **Langrick Park**

There is a need in the future for a picnic shelter, updated play equipment, and barrier free access.

#### **Memorial Park**

This is an older park, in a prominent location, in need of upgrading and enhancement and has a master plan that should be implemented. In 2011 a DNR grant was instrumental in the addition of a rain garden and a pervious parking lot. In 2012 a grant from the State of Michigan was received for new play equipment with barrier-free path to the playground. The site was master planned and calls for additional improvements



such as renovation of the basketball court, site furniture, a picnic shelter, picnic tables, fitness stations for seniors, a memorial wall, and a spray fountain to act as both a focal point and a water play item.

### **Oaklawn Terrace Park**

Oaklawn Terrace is one of the City's largest park sites with a range of facilities in need of improvement to bring them in line with current safety and barrier-free requirements. The development of a new park master plan is recommended to guide future development and realize the full potential of this unique site. Improvements to consider in the master-planning process include: increased parking capacity with designated barrier-free spaces; paved access to picnic shelters, with barrier-free picnic tables and grills; new play equipment with barrier-free surfacing; a loop walking trail connecting all of the park's facilities; renovation of the amphitheater area; and renovation of the ice rink area.

### **Old Depot Park**

This is a smaller neighborhood park that would benefit from community planning to determine future community use. Some minor improvements could be made to provide accessible picnic tables and grills, new play equipment with barrier-free surfacing and a paved walkway to provide barrier-free access to park facilities. Since the Depot structure was moved from the site, the park has struggled to find its identity. This park could be a potential trail head site due to its proximity to the existing railroad property that could be a future rail trail.

### **Spence Field**

This is an older softball facility owned by Sturgis School District, but maintained by the City. Short term improvements should include the provision of designated barrier-free parking spaces and paved walkways and spectator areas. The City is currently considering developing a new ball field complex on Lafayette Road, which would afford the opportunity to remove the ball fields at this park and repurpose the property.

### **Thurston Woods Park**

Thurston Woods is the City's most popular and well-used community park. One of the reasons for its high use is the existing multi-purpose loop trail. The provision of more lighted walking trails was discussed at the public input meeting, as well as the extension of the existing trail to create a larger multi-purpose/fitness trail linking the park with Thurston Village. Additional connecting pathways to the shelters, play area and parking area, and the provision of barrier-free picnic tables and grills are also required to bring the facilities in line with current ADA requirements. Adding public restroom facilities was also discussed as a desirable improvement at the public input meeting.

### **Covered Bridge Park**

This site offers an important opportunity for waterfront recreation for area residents. Enhancements in line with federal re-licensing requirements are planned, including: a new ADA compliant boat ramp, 2 new ADA compliant vault toilets, designated barrier-free parking spaces, accessible hand pumps, accessible picnic facilities, accessible



walks, canoe launch improvements, new play equipment and barrier-free surfacing, swimming area improvements, signage and lighting improvements and wildlife enhancements. These improvements will greatly increase the accessibility and use of the site for persons of all abilities.

### **Pahl Point Park**

This waterfront site is largely undeveloped at present and consequently does not appear to be well-known or well-used. Planned improvements include: designated barrier-free parking spaces, the installation of a new barrier-free fishing pier, a new walkway to the picnic area and fishing pier, a new ADA compliant vault toilet, an accessible hand pump, and signage improvements. Improvements should be sympathetic to the natural habitat and wildlife potential of this site.

### **Free Church Park**

The site is located in the business district and is mostly used for a resting spot for downtown shoppers mainly due to the lack of facilities. Improvements to the stage area would be desirable as well as barrier free accessibility improvements. This site, due to its location, could also be considered for development of a downtown festival space.

### **Pioneer Park, Rest-Stop Park, Shadowlawn Park**

These are very small park sites that are mostly used as resting places. Enhancing these sites with additional landscaping, site furnishings, and barrier free access could attract more users to the facilities.

### **Non-Motorized Facilities**

The development of non-motorized facilities including sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and walking trails were strongly supported by the participants of the public input meeting. The City has developed a Non-Motorized Trailway Master Plan and has started implementing portions of the bicycle lanes as part of road construction projects. The City should work towards continued implementation of the plan to connect parks, schools, residential areas, and commercial hubs to each other and to neighboring communities. As part of this effort the City may consider engaging in walkability and bikability audits to identify opportunities and deficiencies for improving the walkability of the City to promote a healthier lifestyle and encourage alternative modes of transportation.

### **Disc Golf**

Disc golf was discussed at the public input meeting as a very desirable facility. The City will investigate possible locations for the development of a disc golf course to meet the demand expressed during public consultation.

### **Dog Park**

The addition of a dog park was also heavily discussed at the public input meeting. The City will investigate possible sites and opportunities for development of a new dog park. One particular site that was discussed is the site on the corner of Clay St and St Joseph Street. The proposed park would be completely fenced, have water and shade available



and would allow dogs to run off-leash under owner supervision.

### **Splash Pad**

The attendees at the public input meeting also discussed the need for a splash pad in the City to provide recreational opportunities for younger residents. The City will need to consider an appropriate location that can accommodate the infrastructure needs of a splash pad.

### **New Ball Field Complex**

At this time the City is looking to develop a new softball complex on property located on Lafayette St across from the new Sturgis Middle School

### **Winter Recreation**

It was conveyed during the public engagement process that there is a need for developing recreational activities during the winter months. Such activities include cross-country skiing, sledding, ice skating, and snowmobiling and repair of the ice rink.

### **Land Acquisition**

The City will work to purchase land for recreational purposes or natural resources value as it becomes available within the City limits. This could include land for new sports field development, a new roller hockey/skate board complex, land to expand the facilities and acreage available for parks in residential areas, and for potential trail easements.

### **Miscellaneous**

During the public engagement process the following items were also discussed as being desirable improvements to the park facilities: security lighting at all parks, recycling bins, dog waste pick up bag stations, festival space, public art display, historical and cultural facilities, improved signage, and additional parking at all sites.

### **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE**

As stated in the Action Program, improvements and development will occur as funds and opportunities evolve. Assistance will be solicited from all available sources and will include both physical and financial support. Local businesses, service organizations, land developers, governmental agencies and the school district will be solicited for monetary and material support. The City will also seek funding assistance from all available sources such as trusts, charitable foundations, and all Federal and State funding programs.

The following schedule is a breakdown of the anticipated projects and projected funding for the next five years. All projections are based upon year 2015 costs and will be refined as the program progresses.



## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

<u>Year</u>	<u>Project</u>	<u>City Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Project Cost</u>
2015	<u>Oaklawn Terrace Park</u> Develop Master Plan for park improvements	\$10,000		\$10,000
2016	<u>Oaklawn Terrace Park</u> Develop construction documents for park improvements based on master plan	\$80,000		\$80,000
	<u>Old Depot Park</u> New play equipment and picnic facilities, accessibility improvements	\$10,000		\$10,000
2017	<u>Oaklawn Terrace Park</u> Implement phase 1 construction items for park improvements based on master plan	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$400,000
	<u>Doyle Community Center</u> Addition of new improvements as determined by Strategic Plan	TBD		TBD
	<u>Thurston Woods Park</u> Add lighting, restrooms, site furnishings, and trail connection to Thurston Woods Village	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000
	<u>Franks Park</u> Barrier free improvements, lighting, signage.	\$100,000		\$100,000
2018	<u>Oaklawn Terrace Park</u> Implement phase 2 construction items for park improvements based on master plan	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$400,000
	<u>Memorial Park</u> Accessible paths, site furnishings, basketball renovation, picnic shelter, and spray fountain	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$300,000
2019	<u>Free Church Park</u> Improve stage, provide site furnishings, and accessible paths	\$100,000		\$100,000
	<u>Pioneer Park, Rest Stop Park, Shadowlawn Park</u> Site furnishings and accessible paths	\$90,000		\$90,000
2020	<u>Covered Bridge Park</u> Improvements to boat ramp, picnic facilities, play equipment, accessible paths	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
	<u>Pahl Point Park</u> Improvements to picnic facilities, fishing dock, site furnishings, accessible paths	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000





A range of prices is given for a number of items above as the scope of work is yet to be determined. Changes in the program may occur if projected funding levels increase or decrease, but it is anticipated that the changes would be related more to adjustments in the time schedule rather than specific projects

Other funds include: Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, MDOT, Michigan DNR Waterways Grant, Michigan Land and Water Conservation Fund, Recreational Passport Grant, and private donations/foundation grants.

The following projects have been placed within the 2015 through 2020 time period and are either on-going or will be acted upon as property becomes available and funds identified.

2015-2020	<u>Disc Golf Course</u> Develop an 18-hole course at a location to be determined.	Likely site at an existing park site. Expected cost \$15,000-\$20,000
	<u>Softball Complex</u> Develop new softball complex on 17.5-acre site on East Lafayette St.	Currently in the schematic design phase. Expected cost \$900,000 - \$1,000,000
	<u>Dog Park</u> Develop Dog Park at a location to be determined. Include fencing, parking, water, benches, and accessible paths.	Acquire property and develop as land becomes available, cost unknown at this time.
	<u>Splash Pad</u> Develop a splash pad at a location to be determined that can provide the necessary infrastructure (sewer and water)	Acquire property and develop as land becomes available, cost unknown at this time.
	<u>Area Recreation Authority</u> Work with neighboring communities to establish a Regional Recreation Authority.	
	<u>Non-Motorized Facilities</u> Continue to implement in road facilities with road construction projects. Look for opportunities to develop recreation trails. Continue to construct sidewalks. Work with River County Trail Alliance and railroad companies to acquire abandoned railroad right of way for future rail trails.	Consider applying for DNR Trust Fund Grant and/or MDOT TAP funding for non-motorized improvements.



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## **9. APPENDICIES**

**(to be added for final report)**

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