



ALMONT FIVE-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

2023-2027

Village of Almont and Almont Township

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INTRODUCTION

This Plan is the product of the Almont Community Parks and Recreation Board in cooperation with the Almont Village Council, the Almont Township Board of Trustees, and residents of the Village and Township who participated in this effort. The Plan is an update of the 2013-2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Its composition and adoption process comply with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. The Plan's adoption will qualify the Village and Township to apply for MDNR grants for a total of five years after its adoption.

More importantly, the Plan will provide a road map for the Parks and Recreation Board as it works to improve recreational opportunities in the community. This Plan was established by identifying community needs in the Almont Area, holding discussions during public meetings, considering State recreational standards, and input from the Parks and Recreation Board. Neither the Village of Almont nor Almont Township are financially obligated to complete any of the future projects proposed by the Parks and Recreation Board. However, both political jurisdictions support community amenities that reflect the best qualities of the Village and Township.



COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Village of Almont is in Almont Township, in the southeast corner of Lapeer County, approximately 40 miles from downtown Detroit and 35 miles from downtown Flint. The population of Almont Township, which includes the residents of the Village of Almont, was 6,961 in 2020 (based on the U.S. Census Population Estimates); this is an increase of 378 from the population in 2010 of 6,583.

The geography of Almont Township and the Village of Almont is roughly 37.1 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water. The Village is only 1.42 square miles located inside the Township. The land around the Township and Village is relatively flat with farming areas located away from the Village.

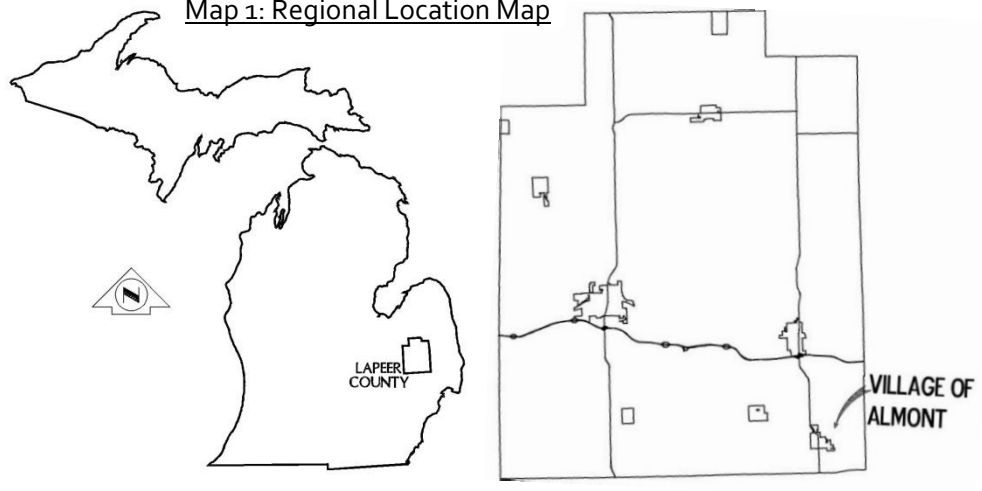
Almont Township and the Village of Almont are within a small residential community setting. Most of the Township is designated as an agricultural or residential use on acreage (based on the Comprehensive Plan). Many of the commerce in the community is based within the area. There are regional amenities that exist in Lapeer County that are available to the residents of the Almont and Almont Township.

Both the Township and Village are bisected by State Highway M-53, which runs north and south through the community. The highway links the City of Detroit to Port Austin, at the northern tip of the “Thumb,” on Lake Huron. A considerable number of residents in the Village of Almont and Almont Township utilize their own method of transportation to get around. Throughout the community, there are options for promoting healthy living through the downtown area.

Table 1: Age Distribution	
Age Distribution – Almont	
Under 18	21%
65 and over	14.1%
Under 18	29.0%

The north branch of the Clinton River runs through the southern half of Almont Township, flowing northeasterly through the Village. The Village Master Plan indicates that much of the land along the river in the Village is comprised of wetlands and woodlands.

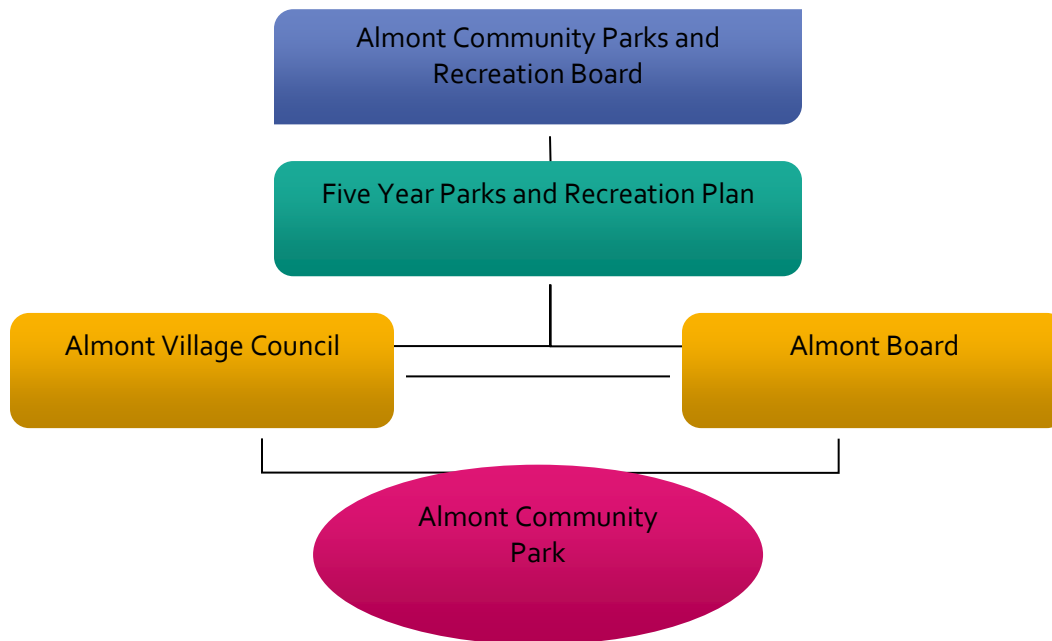
Map 1: Regional Location Map



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Village / Township / Parks and Recreation Board

Any resident of the Village of Almont or Almont Township is considered a part of the general membership of the Almont Parks and Recreation Board by simply attending a meeting of the Board. The general membership elects the Executive Board at the first meeting of the Board each year. The Executive Board consists of a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and the number of trustees determined by the general membership. The Parks and Recreation Board is responsible for developing the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which serves as the vision for the future.



Almont Village Council:

Steve Schneider, President
Tim Dyke, President Pro-Tem
Jacqueline Calka
Peter Feldman
Wayne Glasser
Melinda Steffler
James Aleck

Almont Township Board:

Paul Bowman, Supervisor
Carol Hoffner, Clerk
Roberta Kudsin, Treasurer
Gary Groesbeck
Kimberly Streeter
Randy Eschenburg
Rick Dodge

Almont Community Parks and Recreation Board

Bernard Calka, Chairman
Angelique Howe, Vice Chairman
Jacqueline Calka, Treasurer

Roberta Kudsin, Secretary/Twp. Representative
Wes Wagester-Terry Roach-Melissa Schneider
Cathy McGee-Michael Howe

Staff

The park is maintained by the Village of Almont Department of Public Works (DPW), with a staff of four full-time employees. The staff is charged with general up-keep of the park property such as lawn mowing/leaf collection, minor repairs to equipment, tree removal, and brush clipping.

Budget

The Almont Community Park is one of the main recreation facility owned by both the Village and Township (the Village also owns Burley and Murphy Parks, two small memorial parks). For this reason, this facility serves as the focus for recreational development in the Plan. The facility is shared by the Village and Township, which also share the costs for development and maintenance in the park. The Township also has 13.7 acres of former school property that is used for recreational fields. The park fund is billed by the DPW for maintenance work performed. The Village and Township each contribute one half of the annual budget. Table 2 below shows the 2016-2017 budget (not including revenues or funding sources) for the Almont Community Park:

Table 2: Parks and Recreation Budget (Fiscal Year 2023-2027)

Operating Supplies	\$1,000
Maintenance and Service Contracts	\$19,700
Picnic and Festival	\$5,000
Liability Insurance	\$500
Electrical	\$600
Water Utilities	\$900
Equipment/Building Repairs	\$5,000
Total	\$32,700

Funding Sources

Recreation is funded through the allocation of general fund revenue by the Village and Township. In addition, the Village and Township also receive donations from time to time from local organizations to help with the funding of specific improvements. Finally, the Village and Township also collect revenue by renting the park pavilion and kitchen to residents and guests throughout the year.

Some of the improvements in the park have been covered through MDNR grants that the community has applied for previously. The latest grant was awarded in 2022 from Michigan Township Par Plan RRGP and donation from DTE Energy.

Status Report of All Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

To date, the Village of Almont and Almont Township have received three grants from the MDNR for park developments and improvements. In 2022 3 grants were awarded from Michigan Township Par Plan RRGP as well as a monetary donation from DTE Energy.

Table 3: Recreation Grant History

Village of Almont/Almont Township Recreation Grant History				
1981	Almont Community Park Project No. 26-01187	Development will include tennis courts, foot bridge and LWCF sign.	\$21,500	Closed
1999	Almont Community Park Pathway Project No. CM99-352	Construction of paved pathway in the Almont Community Park to provide access to the Clinton River.	\$21,656	Closed
2014	Almont Community Park Improvement Project Project No. RP14-0069	To improve the community park by renovating site pavilions, adding barrier-free parking, universal accessibility throughout the park, walking trails and receptacles.	\$44,800	Closed
2022	Almont Community Park Security Lighting Project	Provide new lighting outside and under pavilion, & light poles for safety at each end of bridge.	\$12,750	Closed

Table 4: Parks and Recreation Funding Sources (Fiscal Year 2022-2023)

Township	\$12,500
Village	\$15,000
Park Rentals	\$900
Donations	As Received

Volunteer Activities

The Village and Township rely on volunteers from a range of local organizations to assist with recreational activities and park beautification efforts. These groups contribute greatly to the quality and quantity of such events. These organizations also promote other recreational activities within the community, as listed below:

- **Almont Lions Club** –Sponsors an annual Easter egg hunt in the park, participates in the Spooky Time Bash, supports the Music in the Park program.
- **Almont Chamber of Commerce** –Promotes ideas & info needed to keep local businesses growing.
- **Almont American Legion Post** – Conducts Memorial Day services at Veterans Park.
- **Almont Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts/Cub Scouts** – Undertakes service projects in the park as needed.
- **Almont Masonic Lodge** – Participates in local events.

- **Almont Youth Baseball Association** – Coordinates baseball, softball, and tee-ball leagues for children from 3 to 16 years old in the community, in conjunction with Almont Township and the Park Board.
- **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** – Provides assistance at the park as needed.

Relationship with Almont Community Schools and the Almont DDA

The best relationship exists between the Township and the Village as they share the fiscal responsibility and maintenance of the park property in the Almont community. Both municipalities are represented on the Parks and Recreation Board by members of their respective communities and they make decisions for the parks programming and operations in the community.

The Village and Township work closely with the Almont Community Schools system as well as the Almont DDA to provide quality recreational opportunities in the community.

The Almont Community Schools system also provides recreational and personal enrichment programming for its own facilities, which include several outdoor facilities, gymnasiums and its administration building. Programs other than school sport teams include:

- Tennis
- Boys Basketball
- Yoga
- Volleyball
- Cheerleader Clinics

The Almont DDA was established by the Village of Almont as a quasi-independent organization to promote development within the Village’s downtown. In keeping with its mission to cultivate development, the DDA organizes or supports several events to promote the community, including:

- The Heritage Festival
- The Spooky Time Bash (sponsored by the Lions Club)
- The Holly Day Light Parade

Prosperity Region Designation

In 2012, Governor Rick Snyder divided the State up into various regions identifying them as Prosperity Region Destinations. The designation allows for State and Federal funding to provide Quality of Life improvements in the counties within the region. As residents and business locate to these regions, the State would provide resources to provide amenities that would promote the region. The Almont community is within the Eastern Michigan corridor with Genesee and Shiawassee County.

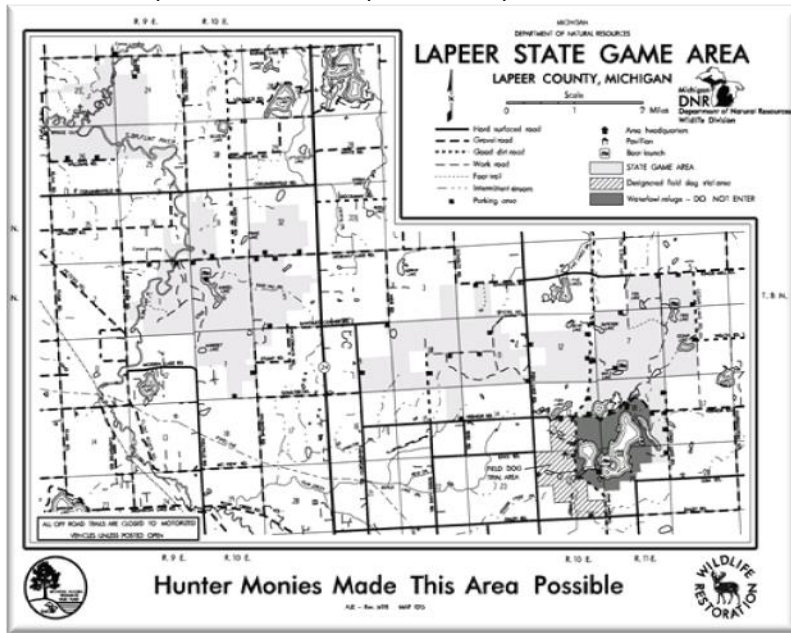
RECREATION INVENTORY

Regional Facilities

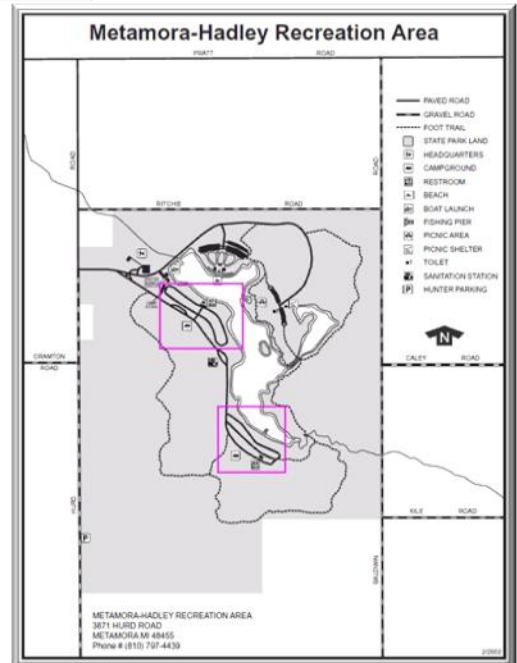
On a regional level, the Village of Almont and Almont Township are located within a 30-mile radius of several State and Lapeer County recreation areas and game areas.

1. State Parks

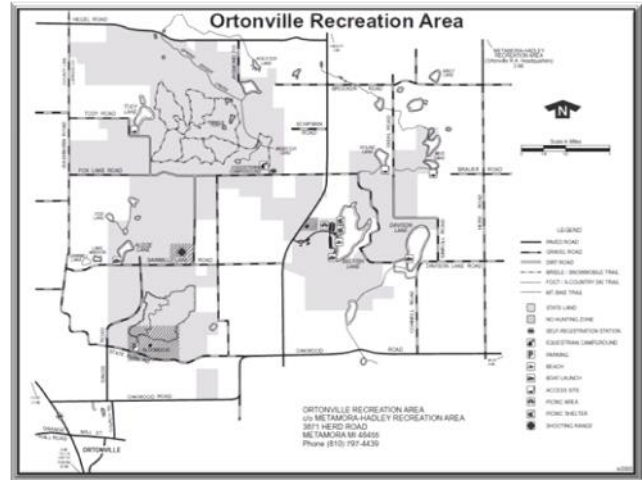
- A. The Lapeer State Game Area covers over 13,000 acres in Oregon, Mayfield, and Arcadia Townships, in northern Lapeer County.



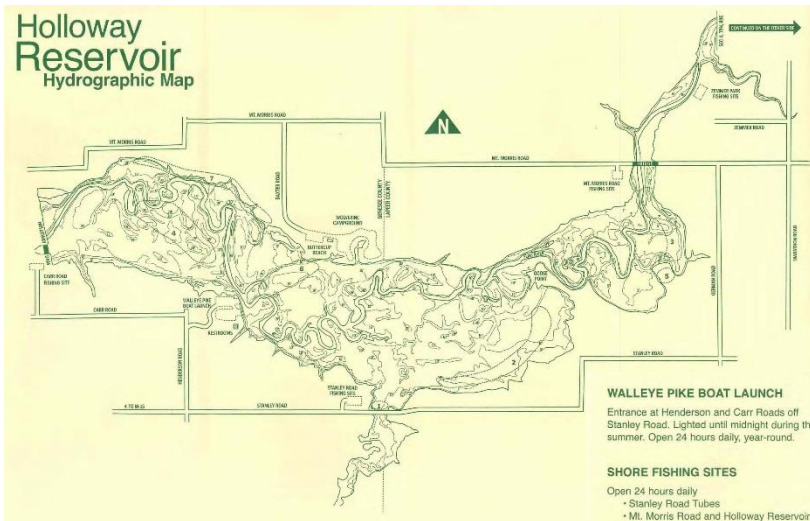
- B. The Metamora–Hadley Recreation Area is 723 acres in size and provides beach facilities, camping, mini-cabins, a picnic area, picnic shelters, restrooms, showers, 6 miles of hiking trails, a beach, concessions, 214 campsites, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, and a store.



- C. The Ortonville Recreation Area is a 5,400-acre facility that is under the jurisdiction of Oakland County, although a portion of the park is in Hadley Township. The area provides a wide range of facilities including 25 campsites, a bathroom and showers, a picnic area, a boat launch, fishing, swimming, cross-country skiing, nature trails, playgrounds, and hunting.



- D. A portion of the Holloway Reservoir is in Oregon Township. The reservoir is a heavily used facility for boating and water skiing. The boat launch facilities on the reservoir are under the jurisdiction of Genesee County.



WALLEYE PIKE BOAT LAUNCH
Entrance at Henderson and Carr Roads off Stanley Road. Lighted until midnight during the summer. Open 24 hours daily, year-round.

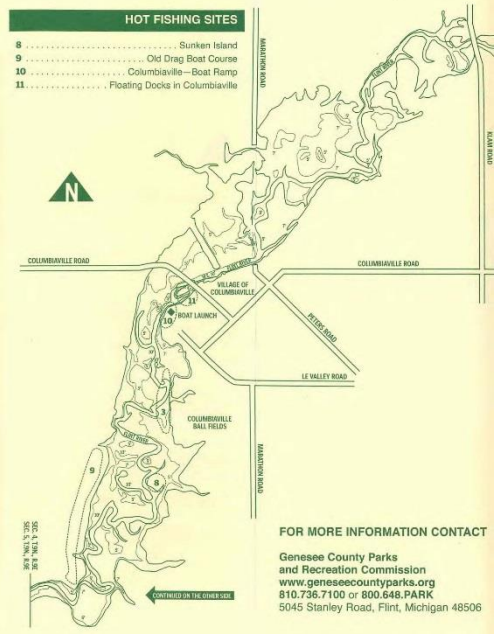
SHORE FISHING SITES
Open 24 hours daily
• Stanley Road Tubes
• Mt. Morris Road and Holloway Reservoir
• Below Holloway Dam
• Carr Road Fishing Site

CANOE LAUNCH SITES (FLINT RIVER)
• Located off Carr Road between Henderson and Carr Roads below the Holloway Reservoir Dam.
• On the north side of Richfield County Park. Entrance off Irish Road between Mt. Morris and Coldwater Roads.

BUTTERCUP BEACH
Located at 7130 N. Baxter Road off Mt. Morris Road.

RANGER ASSISTANCE
For Park Ranger assistance, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM, call 810.736.7100, ext. 0. For all emergencies call 911.

WATER LEVEL OF HOLLOWAY RESERVOIR
Use of Holloway Reservoir for fishing and other recreational purposes is made possible through the cooperation of the City of Flint. The water level of the Reservoir is controlled by the Water and Sewer Division, City of Flint.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
Genesee County Parks and Recreation Commission
www.genesee-countyparks.org
810.736.7100 or 800.648.PARK
5045 Stanley Road, Flint, Michigan 48506

2. County Parks

A. Torzewski County Park



Torzewski County Park in Oregon Township provides a wide range of facilities including a children's play pool, water slides, boat rentals, a picnic area, nature trails, a ball diamond, fishing, cross-country skiing, sledding, an amphitheater, and pavilions.



B. General Squire Park

General Squire Park in Dryden Township provides a baseball diamond, a water play area, a picnic area, cross country skiing, nature trails, sledding, fishing, restrooms, and meeting halls.



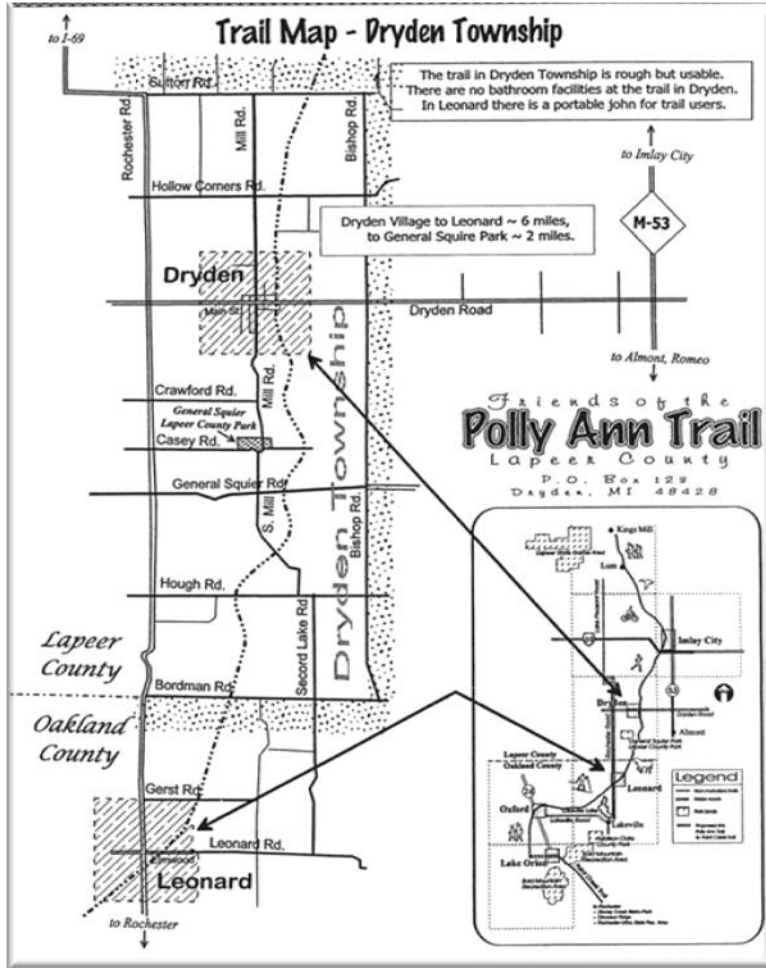
3. Other Parks

A. The Seven Ponds Bird Sanctuary and Arboretum

The Seven Ponds Bird Sanctuary and Arboretum is a 188-acre facility located west of Rochester Road in Dryden Township.



B. Polly Ann Trail



Technically two trails, the Polly Ann Trail in Lapeer County and the Oakland County Polly Ann Trail, runs a total of 36 miles from Orion Township north through the Village of Dryden and Imlay City to Kings Mill. The trail crosses General Squire Road less than 4 miles west of downtown Almont.

Almont Community Recreation Facilities

The following Recreational Inventory is a comprehensive list of public and private recreation areas and facilities in the Almont Community (see Map 2). This inventory will be used as a basis to determine the need for specific recreational facilities in the community. Grant history of each park is included. Post Completion Forms for MDNR funded projects are included in the appendix. The summaries also address the accessibility of parks and recreation facilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). In general, all construction since 1991 was required to comply with these guidelines.

A general ranking for each park was determined through site visits 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

Village Owned:

1. Almont Community Park

<i>Size:</i>	14 Acres
<i>Purpose:</i>	Community Park
<i>Service Area:</i>	Almont Community
<i>Facilities:</i>	



- Playground equipment (*new play scape in 2022 per Township & Village ARPA donation*)
- A picnic pavilion with kitchen and bathroom facilities
- Picnic tables, benches, and barbeque grills
- A ball-diamond
- Swing sets
- Tennis court (in poor condition to be renewed)
- A large sledding hill

Accessibility: **Accessibility Rating - 2:** Some but not all facilities are accessible.

Previous Grant Assistance: **Project No. 26-01187 - Awarded 1981, \$21,500:** Funded tennis courts and foot bridge. Foot bridge recently rehabilitated with new boards.
Project No. CM99-352 - Awarded 1999, \$21,656: Funded 1,760' of paved pathway. Pathway is well used and needs some maintenance due to tree roots at east end.
Project No. RP14-0069 - Awarded 2014, \$44,800: Funded renovations to the pavilion, adding accessible parking, walking route, picnic table, recycle bin, and landscaping.

Lighting Project Grants from Michigan Township Par Plan- Awarded 2022, \$12,750 & monetary donation from DTE Energy: Funded New safety lighting in & around pavilion & light poles at each end of bridge.



2. Burley Park

Size: 0.5 Acres
Purpose: Memorial
Service Area: Almont Community
Facilities: • Flag Pole
Accessibility: 1: Does not meet accessibility guidelines
Previous Grant Assistance: No DNR grants to date

3. Murphy Park

Size: 0.5 Acres
Purpose: Memorial
Service Area: Almont Community

- Facilities:* • Flag Pole
- Accessibility:* 1: Does not meet accessibility guidelines
- Previous Grant Assistance:* No DNR grants to date

Township Owned:

1. Township Recreational Property

- Size:* 13.7 Acres
- Facilities:* • Baseball diamonds
- Accessibility:* 1: Does not meet accessibility guidelines

Almont Community Schools Facilities (85 Acres)

As in many Michigan communities, the local school districts provide a valuable resource of facilities and programs for local community recreation.

1. Orchard Primary School

- Facilities:* • Soccer fields
- Playground
- Indoor gymnasium



2. Almont High School and Middle School

- Facilities:* • Ball diamonds – 4 (3 softball, 1 baseball)
- Tennis courts – 4 regular courts (2, lighted courts)
- Football field
- Running track
- Basketball nets
- Indoor gymnasium





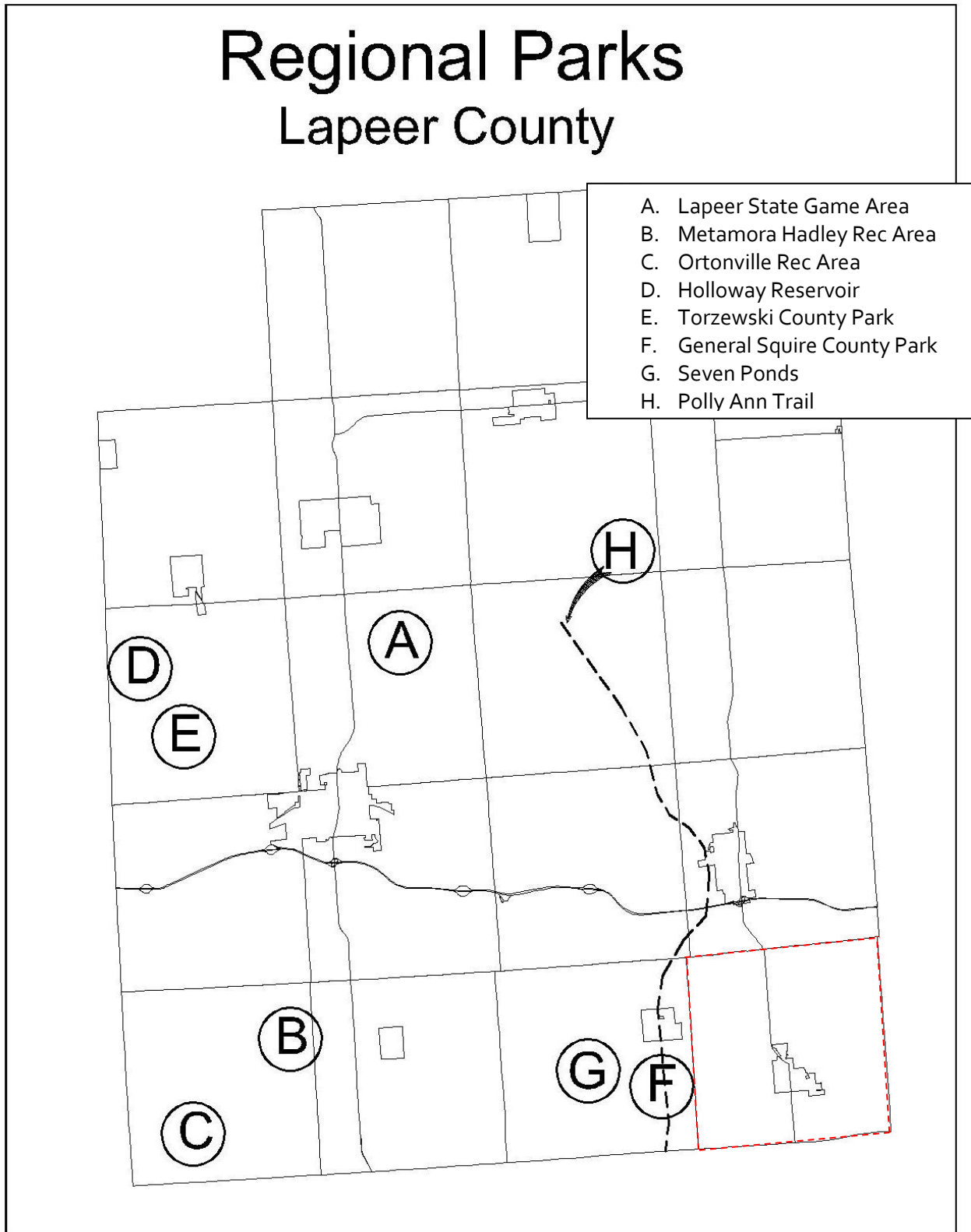
Private Recreation

There are private recreational facilities that are located within a 30-mile radius of the Almont community that provide recreational activities for residents. These facilities are privately operated and, in some cases, require a user fee for admittance. They are included in the recreation analysis because they meet a specific need in the community. These private facilities include:

- **Bowling Alley:** Hideaways Lanes
- **Fitness Clubs:** First Generation CrossFit
- **Golf Courses:** Heather Hills Golf Club, Greystone Golf Club, Bruce Hills Golf Club
- **Dance:** Jocelyn's Dance Academy
- **Miscellaneous Facilities:** Skyline Conference Center, Simpson Park Camp

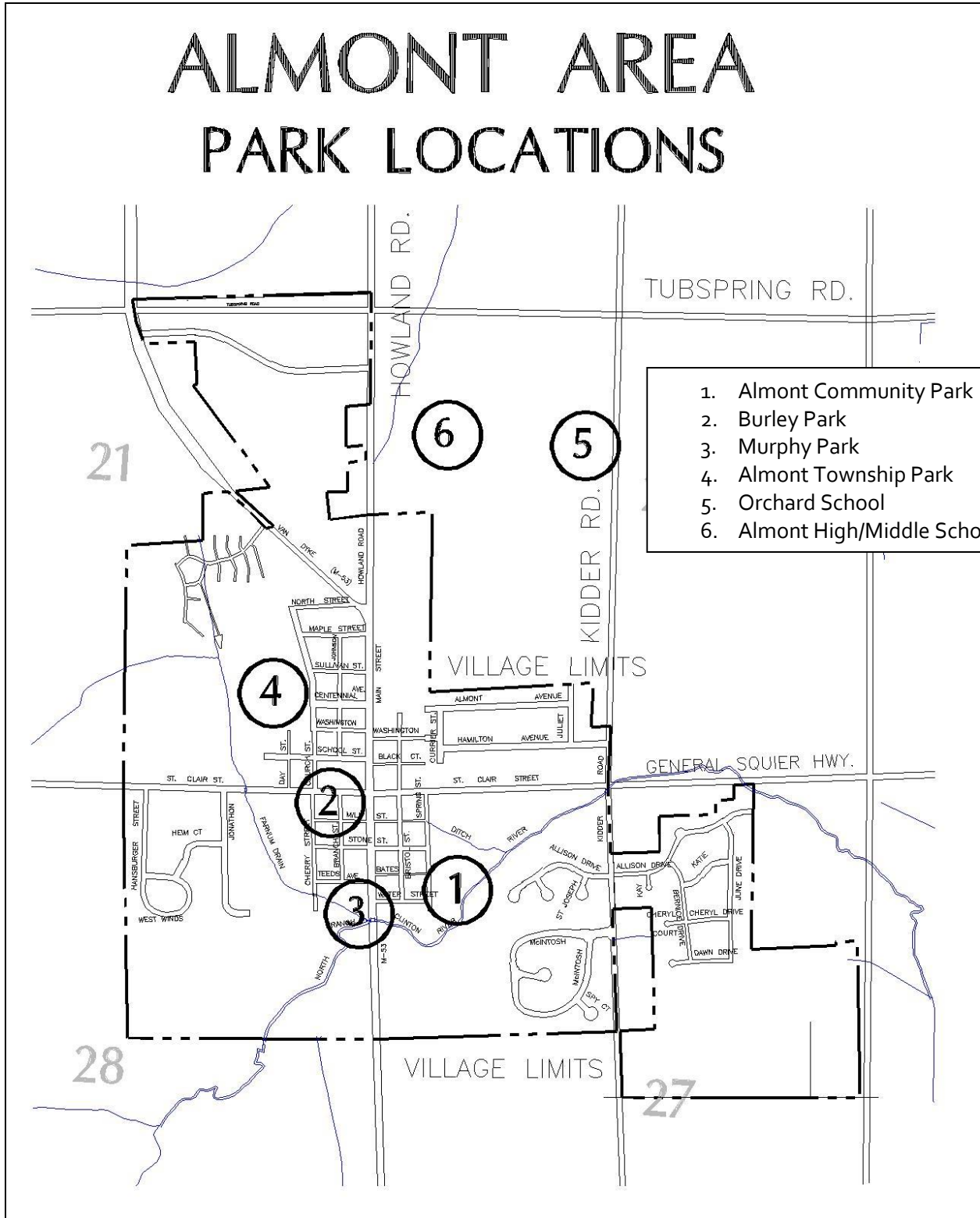
Map 2: Regional Park Location Map

Regional Parks Lapeer County



Map 3: Park Location Map

ALMONT AREA PARK LOCATIONS



PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Public Input

The Almont Parks and Recreation Board was formed to oversee park improvements in the Village and Township. The Board is comprised of representatives of the Village and Township, active citizens, and volunteers. In 1999, the Board developed, and the Village and Township adopted a Parks and Recreation Plan for the community; this Plan expired in 2022. In 2022, the Village and Township decided to update the Plan. The planning process began in July 2022.

Public input was solicited primarily through Park Board meetings, along with an information board presented at community events, to gather information about potential projects that the community would like to see the Board promote. The meetings were advertised to the community and residents were invited to attend.

After the information from the meetings was reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Board, the goals and objectives and action plan were developed based on what were high priority items to address in the parks and programming. The goals and objectives were drafted and were presented to the Park and Recreation Board and comments were held to define other potential amenities to the parks program. The Draft Plan was then ready to begin the 30-day review process. The dates for the 30-day review were Dec. 5, 2022 – Jan. 5, 2023, and the Plan was available at the Almont Village Offices.

After the 30-day review in the community, the public from the Almont community was invited to participate in the public hearing for the draft on Jan. 9, 2023. After the public hearing, any comments were reviewed and anything that needed to be adjusted in the Plan was reviewed. After this review, the Plan was forwarded to the Township Board and Village Council for review. The Village Council reviewed and adopted the Recreation Plan on Jan. 17, 2023; the Township reviewed and adopted the Plan on Jan. 9, 2023. Copies of the public hearing and recommendations for adoption from both municipalities are included in the Recreation Plan.

The final copy of the Plan was uploaded to the MDNR with a transmittal letter noting that copies had been send to the local and regional planning agency for acceptance.

Standards for Need

The MDNR has adopted a set of standards to determine the need for certain recreational facilities, based on the population of the community. Table 5 compares the facilities located in the Almont Community as identified in the Recreation Inventory to the State’s recreational standards.

Table 5: Almont Community Recreational Inventory, 1997 And State Recreation Standards

Park Land (acres)	28.7	85	10/1,000	66	37.6
Soccer Field (A)	—	1	1/20,000	1	1

Playground (A & Park)	1	1	1/3,000	2	1
Ball Field (A)	4	3	1/3,000	3	-
Outdoor Basketball Court (A)	—	1	1/5,000	2	1
Ice Rink (outdoor)	1	—	1/20,000	—	—
Picnic Areas (tables)	15	—	1/200	33	18
Sledding Hills	1	—	1/40,000	1	—
Bicycle Trails/Walkways (mi.)	0.3	—	1/40,000	1.5	1.2
Tennis Courts (A)	0	6	1/4,000	2	—

(A) Recreational facilities on school grounds or private property are not counted toward meeting local recreational needs.

1. Summary of Table 5

Table 5 identifies the types of recreational facilities (Column #1) owned by the Village of Almont or Almont Township (Column #2) as well as those owned and operated by private interests, schools, or regional authorities within Almont Township (Column #3). The State Recreational Standards are listed in Column #4. These standards have been adopted by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources to serve as a measurement of need for recreational facilities. Column #5 shows the present demand for each facility, assuming State standards are to be met. Column #6 illustrates the deficiencies in the current number of facilities within the Almont Area, assuming a 2020 combined Village and Township population 6,961 people.

Table 5 indicates there is a significant demand for most of the recreational facilities listed in Column #1. An additional 13.7 acres has been provided to the Township by the school district for use as a recreational destination for the communities. While efforts are made to encourage Village and Township residents to utilize school facilities whenever possible, during school hours and extracurricular activities, the availability of these facilities for public use is limited. For this reason, it appears that there is demand for recreational park land that is owned, developed, and maintained by the Village and/or Township. The intent would be to develop available space in the community to be used as parks land for various programming in the area.

Table 5 indicates the need for the following: 1 soccer field, 1 playground, 1 outdoor basketball courts, and 18 picnic tables. The State standard for Bicycle Trails/Walkways is 1 mile per 5,000 population. This appears low, particularly given the recent list of recreational priorities established by the MDNR, which emphasizes the development of pedestrian pathway systems throughout the State. A standard of 1 mile per 5,000 people appears to be more appropriate. Based on this observation, it appears that there is a need for about 1.2 miles of bike trails in the Village and Township.

As noted, most amenities and programming revolve around the Almont Community School system. To make up the deficiencies that exist in the area, the community must be proactive in providing these services and recreational activities that are accessible to all the residents.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

An overall guide for the recreation goals for the Village and Township of Almont will be to focus efforts on developing additional recreational programming and defining key opportunities for developing vacant properties in the area. The information for the goals and objectives was also collected from the data collected from the comprehensive plan developed for the Township and Village. Of the goals and objectives listed, the top priorities ranked in order include:

- Upgrade and renovate existing park properties to meet the current needs and requirements for ADA-accessibility.
- Expanding program opportunities for park facilities in the service area.
- Replace or renovate existing athletic fields or surfaces.
- Construct new facilities where necessary to provide additional amenities for residents.
- Acquire additional vacant properties that could potentially serve as future park properties.

The overall theme for improving recreation will be to develop and maintain recreational programming that will support the growing needs of Almont Township and the Village of Almont.

The following goals support this (not listed in any order of priority):

Goal 1

Provide a variety of activities and recreational opportunities for residents of every age group, including youth, families, and senior citizens.

Refurbish & repurpose the defunct tennis court inside the fenced area to make it a multi-function recreational area for multi ages, size skills & abilities for residents to safely choose from.

- Tear down & repurpose or recondition tennis court
- Provide: Basketball – Pickleball – Skateboard – Roller Blade – Bike Ramps – ETC.
- Apply for grants – Purchase Equipment – Paint Lines

Goal 2

Promote community ownership in the provision of recreational services and provide a transparent and accessible process through which individuals can offer feedback for continuous improvement.

- Provide ongoing opportunities for public input on recreation issues through the Village, Township, and DDA websites.
- Identify opportunities for citizen involvement in recreation, recruit volunteers to undertake those tasks, and provide a method of public acknowledgment for their contributions.
- Increase public awareness of the Community Park by purchasing property adjacent to Main Street and extending park facilities to that property.
- Promote and maintain existing partnerships that exist in the community that aid in recreational programming and opportunities (i.e. Girls Scouts, Boys Scouts, Lions Club, etc.).

Goal 3

Expand recreational activities with an emphasis on drawing visitors from the broader thumb region and throughout the State into the Community Park.

- Community residents have been involved in starting a BMX bike path on the south side of the river. The site has begun to be cleared, dirt added and progress must be ongoing. This area has many trees possibly providing the best area for a Zip-Line after considering the costs; grants; set times with supervision.
- Identify regional recreational needs and work to provide them through government or private sector investments.
- Across the bridge is the unused baseball diamond, which leaves ample space for additional use.
- Get input from the AYBO or AYSO for options. Possible area for dog park; smaller pavilion to rent; synthetic ice rink.

Goal 4

Continuously analyze opportunities to enhance modes of recreation transportation throughout the park (including the expansion of the walking trail and creation of a children's bicycle path).

Identify potential non-sidewalk pathways that could connect the Community Park to the surrounding community.

- The clearing of property for a walking path has begun. Across the bridge to the north along the river, along the back of the baseball diamond, to the sledding hill, along the south side of park property. Brush to be cleared to lay mulch and signage installed for the path.
- Refurbish the existing bike/walking path from the park to Kidder Rd.

Goal 5

Park entertainment and rentals are increasing steadily. The use of park facilities must be updated. Local professional volunteers and grants should be applied for.

- Expand the bandstand
- Remodel both bathrooms
- Remodel the kitchen
- Refurbish pavilion floor
- Repair or pave parking lot

Goal 6

Due to the many events the park supports, parking is frequently an issue. Purchase of adjacent property to the park is being pursued, which would include installing a walking bridge across river.

Basis for Action Plan

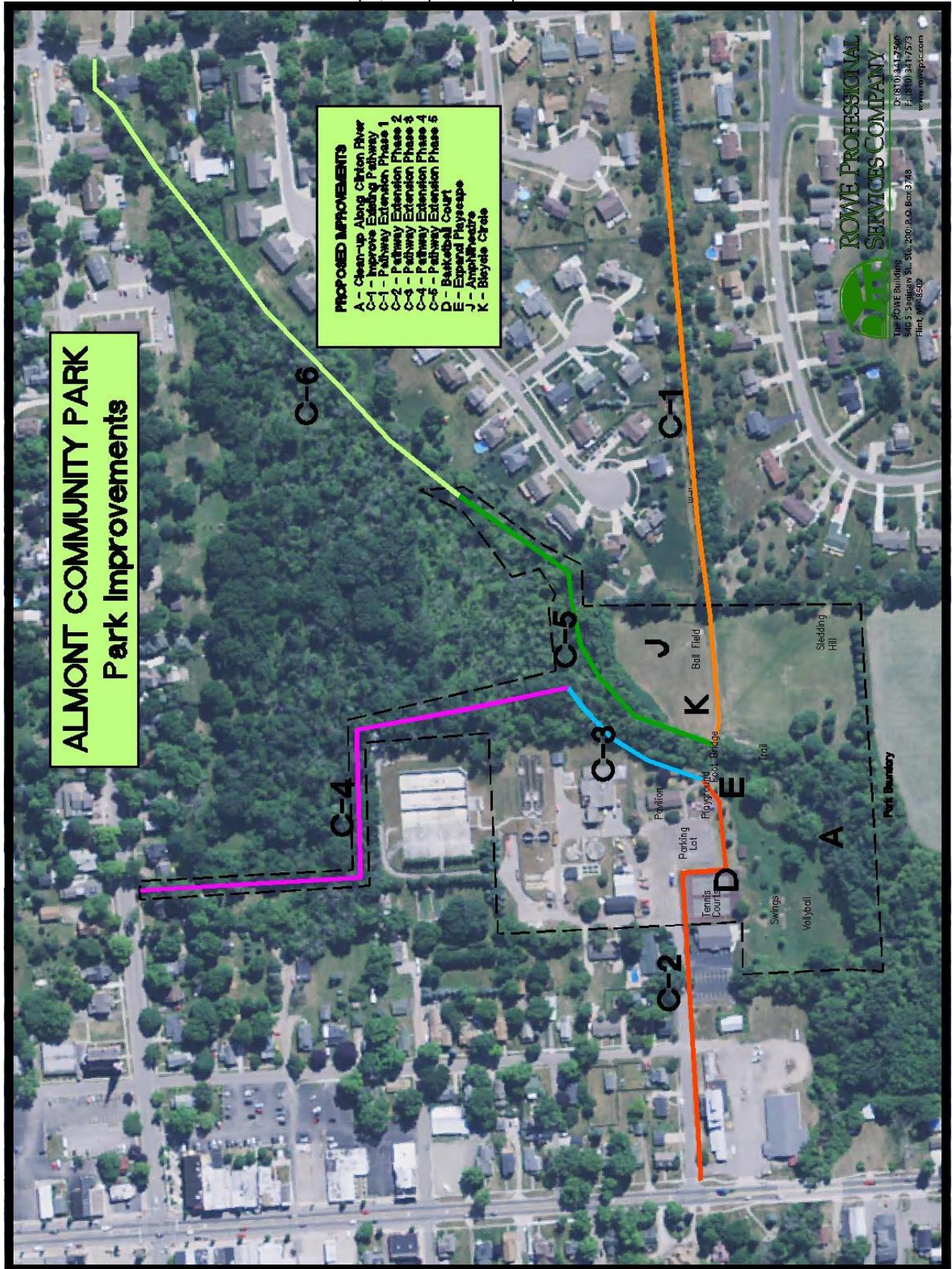
The basis for this action plan is the Parks and Recreation Board’s review of its goals and objectives, along with the previous Plan’s action plan, improvements undertaken since 2018, and improvements proposed by recreation providers and the public.

Action Plan

The following is a list of recommended parks and recreation improvements for the Almont Community, along with justifications for each. Cost estimates for each improvement are included in this Plan.

Proposed improvements are shown on Map 4, which shows the Almont Community Park and areas around it. The Almont Community Park is the largest park facility in the Almont Area. The park is jointly-owned and maintained by both the Village of Almont and Almont Township. Note that while specific locations have been identified by the Board as preferred locations for improvements, the map is intended to be conceptual in nature. It is possible that some of the property proposed for acquisition and development may not become available to the Village or Township. The Plan is to be considered flexible in terms of specific parcels and facility location.

Map 4: Proposed Improvements



1. *Improve Park*

The Clinton River is a significant natural feature. It has significant potential as an educational and interpretive recreational facility. There is an established dirt footpath southwest of the bridge along the south side of the river; however, the area is overgrown with trees and shrubs. This area slopes upward from the river to the south. If the area were to be cleaned up, it could be an attractive nature trail and would improve accessibility to the Clinton River. The State recreational standards indicate a need for 1.5 miles of nature trails in the Village and Township.

Actions towards improving the park includes:

- Clean brush and weeds from river banks and obstructions, cut dead trees, and plant new trees where necessary.
- Improve site amenities around the park to include new BBQ grills, benches, and athletic equipment (i.e. volleyball, basketball court).
- Update and expand playground area.
- Renovate restroom facilities.
- Repurpose or recondition tennis courts.
- ADA accessibility to all park amenities (playground equipment, picnic tables, and restrooms).

The Township acquired ballfields from the school district. Within this property, the Township would like to develop soccer fields or practice football fields for public use since the only other facilities in the community are programmed by the school.

2. *Acquisition of Property*

Per the recreational inventory, the Township and Village have some deficiencies in the park properties in Almont. While there is over 30 acres of park property in the Village and Township, much of this is either wooded, hilly, or lies in the floodplain. Except for pathways, the potential for facility development is limited. Acquisition of property adjacent to the park or a new site would expand the potential for park facility development and would allow the Village and Township to address a wider range of recreational needs. Also, as the population of the Township and Village continues to increase, it would be beneficial for the Parks and Recreation Board to review new parcels of land and areas that could serve as recreational lands.

3. *Recreational Trail Connections*

The State standards indicate a need for a 1.2-mile bicycle trail/walkway system in the Village and Township. An expanded, paved pathway system would provide a safe, multi-use pedestrian pathway that could be used year-round. Accessibility to the Clinton River would be improved. The facility could be used by residents of all ages and interests. The asphalt surface would be suitable for walking and running, wheelchairs and strollers, bicycles and inline skates.

Also, the Parks and Recreation Board should also seek to:

- Provide walking paths along west side of the Clinton River to downtown Almont.
- Expand options for other trail locations throughout the community to other locations.
- Identify a "champion" within the schools to pursue a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) grant.

By incorporating the above renovations and expanding the trail network through the community, the Township and Village will meet or exceed the recreational inventory standards.

4. *Expanding Current Programming, Promotions and Partnerships*

Presently, the communities of Almont Township and the Village of Almont have developed great relationships with various community partners and volunteer organizations. As the new Plan is implemented, it would be best to continue to support the current programming and allow for innovative programs and recreational amenities. The community is made aware of park & community events through the technology of the Almont Community & Park Facebook pages, Township & Village websites, and local newspaper articles.

With programming, it also becomes important that the Parks and Recreation Board and school district do not duplicate services and where the need to collaborate for programs exist that the Board and School District are actively engaged in doing so. Also, to stay current with the residents of both communities in what the desires of the community are towards certain recreational amenities and programs.

5. *Safety and Security*

The Parks and Recreation Board should ensure that the amenities and recreational structures are safe and reliable. By adding safety surface, we provide surfaces that allow for easy transitional access between the pavement to the playground equipment. Other elements that would need to be addressed would be providing access to the small pavilion for accessibility.

Also, the community members around the park play a significant role in providing a safe environment. Residents can assist in park monitoring and informing the Parks and Recreation Board when playground equipment or park amenities need repair or have been damaged. Also, all playground equipment that is installed should be vandal-resistant.

6. *Facilities*

Along with renovations and improvements to the existing park, the Board also intends on additional facilities for parks and recreational programming. Currently, the Township and Village do not have a facility to convene programs that is enclosed without using school property. As the park program expands, it would be necessary to review potential opportunities through acquiring property to construct other facilities that would promote recreational activities in the community. Some of those facilities include:

- Construction of a community center that would be multi-use and would provide athletic and programming opportunities for all ages. The facility also could be a revenue stream for the community for rentals by residents for various programs. Some of the amenities to include would be swimming pool, weight rooms, meeting space, and indoor basketball courts.
- The development of an amphitheater would help promote outdoor activities in the park; with this park land being in Almont Community Park. Natural seating would be encouraged and locations for ADA-accessibility would be ideal.

7. *Funding*

Various grant opportunities and programs exist that are useful in leveraging funding for projects and property acquisition. A summary of funding resources in the State of Michigan include:

- **Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund (MNRTF)** – Provides funding assistance for the purchase of land (or interest in land) for recreation or protection of land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, and the development of recreation facilities. This assistance is directed at creating and improving outdoor recreational opportunities and

providing protection to valuable natural resources. The improvement grants are between \$15,000 and \$500,000 with a required minimum local match of 25 percent. Acquisition grants vary depending upon the value of property and local match amount; therefore, there is not a minimum or maximum amount. This grant is ideal for implementing Community Park Plans and for land acquisition in the future. Applications are due in April and September of each year for acquisition projects and April of each year for development projects.

- **Michigan Recreation Passport** – Provides Capital Improvement Plans and development projects in communities throughout Michigan. Projects must be in public recreation use for the life of the project rather than perpetuity. Indoor recreation facilities and existing park locations are eligible for the grant. The primary focus is on improving and renovating existing parks. The application deadline is April 1st, with a November grant award announcement. Duration of the grant usually runs three years. Minimum grant request must be \$7,500 with a maximum request of \$75,000; there is a 25 percent match by the local municipality or organization. The 25 percent match can either be cash/credit (for locally assumed costs including labor and equipment) donations of goods and services from non-government entities, cash donations from non-governmental entities, or repurposed land.
- **Special Millage** – A property tax millage can be used to finance specific park and recreation projects such as park land improvements and facility upgrades. A millage is an effective method to divide costs over time amongst all the taxpayers in the community to provide matching grant funds or finance projects out-right. A millage allows more flexibility in how the money is utilized than a bond.
- **Community Forestry Grants** – To provide information and technical assistance to municipal governments, schools, nonprofit organizations, and volunteer groups for urban and community forest activities such as tree inventories, management plans, planting and other maintenance activities. Criteria: Projects that develop or enhance urban and community forestry resources in Michigan. Project categories are: Management and Planning, Education and Training, Library Resources and Tree Planting. Applications are announced each summer (June-July), submitted to the Forest Resources Division and then reviewed by Division staff. Applications are approved, adjusted, or denied. Applicants are notified, and agreements signed. Grant requests may be up to \$20,000, depending on the project type. Contact Forest Resources Division/Kevin Sayers (517-284-5898) sayersk@michigan.gov.
- **DTE Energy Tree Planting Grants** – To increase the number of properly planted, established, and maintained, trees within the service territory of DTE Energy. Applications are due annually each Fall. Visit www.michigan.gov/ucf. Grant requests may be up to \$3,000 each.
- **Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)** – LWCF provides funding assistance for communities to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation. The minimum award is \$15,000 and the maximum of \$500,000 with a 50 percent local match. The eligibility criterion emphasizes preservation of natural resources such as waterways. This grant is ideal for implementing Community Park Plans for land acquisition in the future.
- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** – TAP is a competitive grant program that funds projects such as non-motorized paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance Michigan's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability and improving the quality of life. The program uses federal transportation funds designed by Congress for these

types of activities. TAP grant funding requires matching funds of at least 20 percent of the eligible project cost.

- **Public-Private or Public-Public Partnerships** – Reduced funding at the public and private sector has created a need for various partnerships between public and private entities as well as between two or more public entities, to accommodate specialized large-scale recreation demands. Crowd funding on-line has been a growing source to reach individuals as well. Several examples are provided below:
 - <https://www.rotary.org/myrotary/en/take-action/apply-grants>
 - <https://kaboom.org/grants>
 - <http://homedepotfoundation.org/page/grants>
 - <http://www.tgci.com/funding-sources/michigan>
 - <http://www.crowdfundingmi.com/1-2/>
- **The Michigan Municipal League** has launched a website, www.crowdfundingmi.com, which will provide extensive background information, how to get started, as well as highlight successful funding projects and serve as a clearing house for Michigan Investment crowdfunding projects as they develop. The website will also act as a portal to “Fundrise” and Localstake, two existing leading crowdfunding platforms. Although they both serve as web portals for crowdfunding investment, “Fundrise” lets you invest directly in local real estate. It will connect investors directly to individual properties online. Local stake helps connect businesses looking for capital with local investors.
 - Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program Community Development Initiatives; contact Ryan Kilpatrick, rkilpatrick@michigan.gov
- **The Lapeer County Community Foundation**, henceforth known as the Foundation, builds and manages permanent endowment funds from a wide variety of donors to provide grants that enhance the quality of life in Lapeer County, now and for future generations.
 - Several types of permanent endowment funds, often referred to simply as “funds,” are entrusted to the foundation by donors throughout Lapeer County. The Foundation invests and manages these funds with the goal of increasing their principal and returning part of the earnings to the community through grant making.
 - Donors establish designated funds for a wide variety of purposes, such as providing scholarships, benefiting specific charities, or supporting a purpose. Grants from designated funds are awarded considering input from the donor(s) or a committee which advises the fund.
 - Discretionary funds are earmarked for an area of philanthropic interest (e.g., the arts, human services, or environment), or created for unrestricted grant making purposes. In the case of area of interest and unrestricted funds, the donor entrusts the Foundation with the task of awarding grants that address current or emerging community needs.
 - Lapeer County Community Foundation, 264 Cedar Street, Lapeer, MI 48446.
 - (810) 664-0691 – awhite@lapeercountycf.org
 - The Four County Community Foundation is committed to serving the current and emerging needs of our local community, continuing the tradition of philanthropy begun generations ago.
 - The foundation is dedicated to bringing together human and financial resources to support progressive ideas in education, health, community, youth, and adult programs.
 - The Foundation provides a secure, flexible vehicle for individuals, families, foundations, and organizations to positively impact the quality of life in our community.

- Funds are available for a variety of charitable purposes for non-profit organizations, public schools, and governmental agencies.
- Four County Community Foundation, 231 East St. Clair, PO Box 539, Almont, MI 48003
Phone: (810) 798-0909; Fax: (810) 798-0908.
- Deadlines: January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1.

LOCAL ADOPTION

- **Notice of Public Recreation Plan Review**
- **Notice of Public Hearing**
- **Meeting Agenda**
- **Notice of Special Meeting**
- **Minutes from Public Hearing/Special Meeting**
- **Post Completion Self-Certification Form**
- **Transmittal Letters**
- **Checklist Form**