

Village of Westphalia

Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan

2026-2030

Adopted: (mo, day, yr)

DRAFT: November 2025



Clinton County, Michigan

PREPARED FOR
Village of Westphalia

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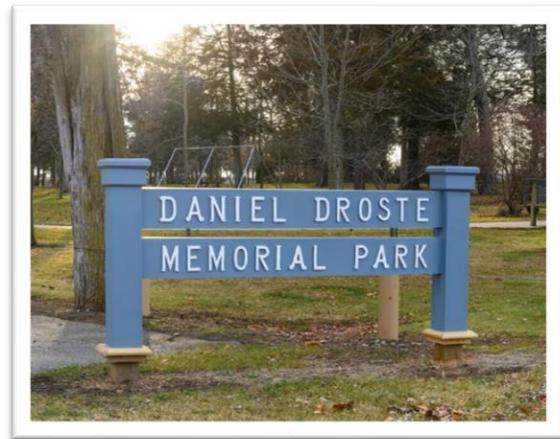
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INTRODUCTION

The Village of Westphalia Parks and Recreation Committee and Village Council have recognized a need for improving the community's parks and recreation options and promoting the Village as a quality sustainable place to live and play. This stems from the growing trends in recreation and the desire to be active, healthy, and conscious of the environment regardless of age, abilities, or disabilities. A comprehensive and sustainable parks and recreation system is vital to a community's physical and mental health, social interaction, protection of natural resources, and economic growth.



As part of this effort, they have chosen to develop a new Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan. This document is intended to serve as a planning tool over the next 5 years for the Committee and Village Officials to make decisions related to future park and recreation amenities and improvements. It identifies attainable goals and objectives as well as an action plan that can then be used to focus on key areas for more specific design and budgetary purposes. It has been created under the guidelines established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants Management.

This plan begins with a **community description** to better understand the landscape and demographics of the Village of Westphalia. The **administrative structure** is then outlined which describes the governmental and jurisdictional methods by which future decisions will be made. This is followed by the existing **recreation inventory** which describes all existing Village owned parks as well as other local and regional recreation opportunities. This section is followed by a description of the **planning and public input process**, public notifications, and survey which were used in determining where improvements are needed. This is followed with a series of **goals and objectives** that were established using recommended planning methods. The goals and objectives are followed by an **action program** describing recommended improvements and potential projects in the form of narratives, charts, and maps. And lastly, the **appendix** holds the support documentation of the survey, public notices, and local adoption which includes minutes and resolutions by the approving bodies.

Community Description

History

The history of Westphalia, Michigan, is long and rich, and is one that is difficult to summarize in just a few pages. The following description does not include all of the village history, but instead highlights interesting points in its history, such as the emigration of the first German Catholic settlers and their establishment of a church in Westphalia.

Information is gratefully taken with permission from *Of Pilgrimage, Prayer, and Promise* produced by the Westphalia Historical Society, *Westphalia Area History*, and from *Sisters of Christian Charity revised* edition 1999.

First Settlers

The first settlers of Westphalia arrived in the port of New York on October 3rd, 1836, aboard the *Leontine* from their long journey which began in the port of Bremen, Germany. Even before the emigrants sailed from Bremen, they had to travel there by land from their home in Sauerland in the western part of Germany. These first few settlers were Father Anton Kopp, Westphalia St. Mary's pioneering priest, and the Eberhard Platte family. By way of the Erie Canal, they landed in Detroit on the 25th of that same month.

Taking the advice of Father Martin Kundig of St. Mary's Parish in Detroit, Father Anton Kopp and Eberhard Platte set out on foot for the newly established land office in the town of Ionia. These two men traveled on foot to Ionia by Dexter Trail, passing through present day cities and towns such as, Ann Arbor, Dexter, Chelsea, Stockbridge, Mason, Lansing, and DeWitt. After arriving at the office on November 4th and waiting six days, they finally made a purchase of 560 acres which would one day become the home of St. Mary's Parish.

Meanwhile, five men, Anton Cordes, Joseph Platte, John Hanses, William Tillmann and John Salter, were waiting in Lyons for Father Anton Kopp and Eberhard Platte. These five had also made their way along the Dexter Trail from Detroit, while the rest of their families stayed in Detroit. A hired trapper and trading post operator guided the settlers to their landholdings. The pioneers named the settlement Westphalia in memory of their German homeland. Work began immediately to pave the wilderness into arable land. More than 300 families immigrated to Westphalia from then until 1923.

Emigrants to Westphalia came from almost every state of present-day western Germany. Early settlers came from Bavaria and the Sauerland, but later settlers came from all over Germany, as well as Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Ireland. Most were from the middle-class who had acquired a trade of some sort, such as blacksmithing, masonry, carpentry, or shoemaking.

The first wave of emigrants, who arrived in 1836-1860, did not flee from religious persecution. They were escaping the depressing feudal like political system. After the overthrow of Napoleon in 1815, the great powers of Europe rearranged the map of Europe, and the Rhineland area in Germany became part of Prussia. The Germans struggled under this feudal like political system and longed for peace and order that was not fulfilled by this map rearranging. Later emigrants, from 1871-1885, came to America to escape the religious persecution of Catholics in Germany.

The valley of the Grand River where Westphalia is located was considered at that time worthless by the land speculators. But the settlers knew that the swampy and heavily forested land was a sign of good soil. And they were correct, as Westphalia is a thriving farming community to this day.

The German Catholic parish was established almost immediately after the settlers first arrived. After buying the land at Ionia, Father Anton Kopp traveled back to Detroit. On November 19th, the day after he arrived back in Detroit, Father Anton Kopp visited Bishop Friedrich Reese and was assigned the new German parish. This appointment has great significance, "It was the beginning of the rural



Catholic Church in Michigan," wrote Father Kopp in his journal. Father Anton Kopp returned back to his assigned parish in September of 1837 and celebrated Masses in the homes of the settlers. In March of 1838 a two-room log house, that served as the first church as well, was completed. Father Anton Kopp stayed with his parish for five years, until he left for his new assignment at St. Mary's in Detroit.

The Churches of Westphalia

Early records reveal that one of the first buildings to be erected in what is now the Village of Westphalia was a log church. It was located about one-half mile west of the present rectory. The location may seem peculiar at the present time, but it must be remembered that there were no roads at that time, and the site upon which our village now stands was dotted with swampy places. The first settlers therefore chose higher ground upon which to build the first church. This church was constructed of logs and contained two rooms. One of these rooms was used as a chapel. The other was used as a living room by the pioneer priest of Westphalia.



ST. MARY'S CHURCH, 1836

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WESTPHALIA CENTENNIAL

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Within several years, more settlers came and the village spread in an easterly direction. The first log church was followed by a larger frame structure in 1847. Known as St. Peter's Church, that structure was replaced in 1869 with a church constructed of brick from Westphalia's brickyard and black walnut from its forests. The new church dedicated as St. Mary's Church served the parish until it was destroyed by fire in 1959. The present church, erected on the site of the original log church was dedicated on May 28, 1962.

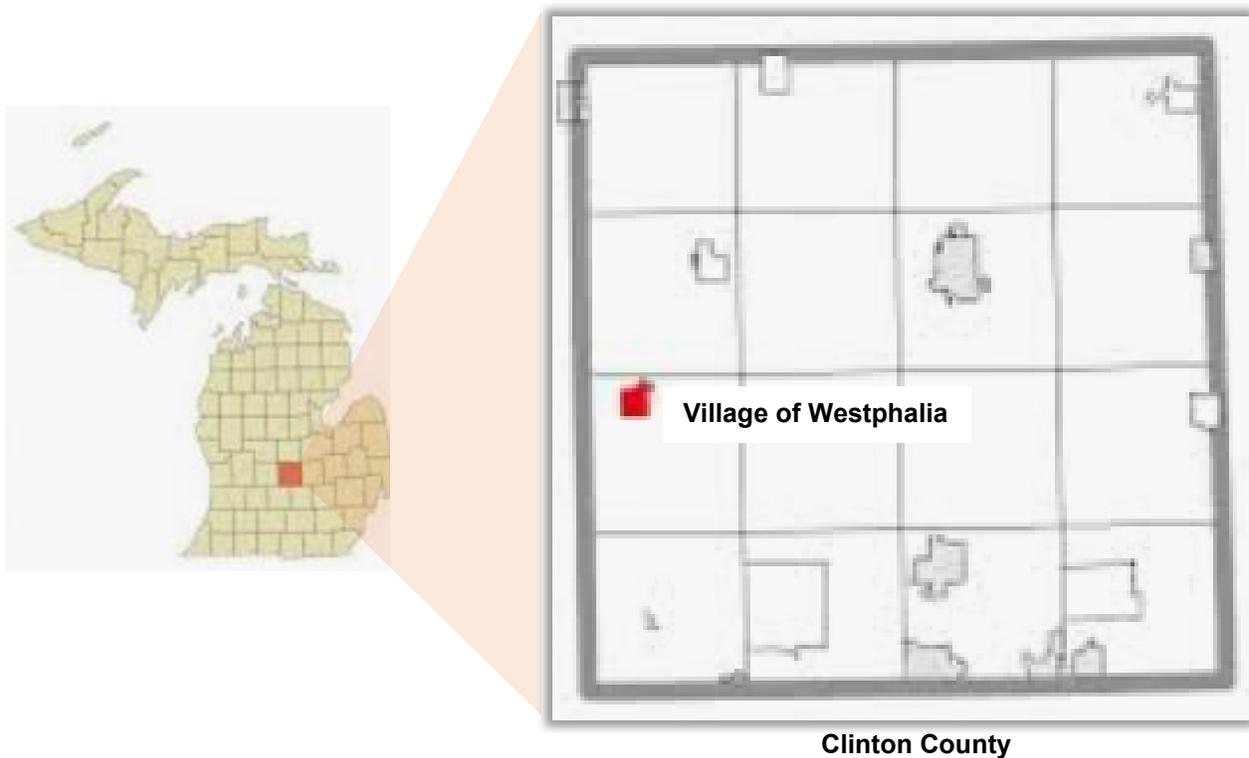
Village of Westphalia

The Village of Westphalia was incorporated in 1882. In 1934 the first village street was paved. In 1951 a municipal water system was built. In 1970 construction was started on a sanitary sewer system to serve the entire village. A planning and zoning commission was formed in 1973 to initiate a program of planning for future growth. The zoning ordinance was adopted by the Village Council on May 19, 1975, and became effective on June 8, 1975. In 1976 most of the Village's unpaved streets were paved. In 1986 the Village purchased land for a water storage tower where construction of the tower was completed in 1987. The Village continues to re-build storm sewers, resurface streets, and install new water and sewer lines to accommodate development.



Geography

The Village of Westphalia is located at the junction of Grange Road and Price Road, in Westphalia Township along the western edge of Clinton County, MI. It is approximately 25 miles northwest of Lansing, Michigan. The Village is conveniently accessed from I-96, approximately 8 miles north of exit 84. According to the United States Census Bureau, the Village has a total area of 1.1 square miles (2.8 km²), all land. The latitude of Westphalia is 42.929N. The longitude is -84.798W. The elevation of Westphalia is 761 feet above sea level. The USGS Topographic Quadrangle Map of Westphalia is included in Appendix.



Clinton County
Map 1 – Village of Westphalia Location

Physical Characteristics

Climate

The Village of Westphalia's weather, like all of West Michigan's, influences the recreational opportunities available throughout the year. The area can support a variety of activities throughout the year from swimming to skiing. Generally, January is the coldest month (27.1°F average daily temperature). December has the highest snowfall (2.05 inches). July is generally the warmest month (79.2°F average daily temperature). May usually has the highest average rainfall (1.77 inches) with February and November tying for the lowest average (0.63 inches). Prevailing winds are from the west.



Demographics

Understanding the characteristics of the population served is essential when assessing parks, recreation facilities, and community needs. According to 2023 American Community Survey by the Census Bureau, the population of the Village of Westphalia was 890, consisting of 442 (48.3%) males and 448 (51.7%) females. The population is predominately White (Non-Hispanic), with less than 5% of persons being of other races. The median age of the residents was 35.4 years. An overview of demographic data is provided in Table 1.

	Village of Westphalia	Clinton County	Michigan
Population, 2025	890	79,720	10,037,261
% of Population 65 & older	11.2%	7.4%	8.6%
% of population under 19	16.1%	12.2%	12.3%
Median Age	35.4	42.5	40.5
Median Household Income, 2023	\$74,750	\$92,503	\$69,183
Per Capita Income	\$36,013	\$45,593	\$38,952
Average Household Size	2.5	2.5	2.4
Persons Below Poverty Line	3.5%	6.7%	13.5%
Median Housing Value	\$225,700	\$276,500	236,100
Poverty Rate, 2023	3.5%	4.9%	13.05%

Table 1 – Village, County, and State Demographic Comparison
 (Source: American Community Survey 2023)

Median Age

While the overall population is the most important consideration, there are other characteristics to consider when planning for a community's recreation. The age distribution of a community influences the types of facilities and programs needed. Table 1 shows that the Village's median age (35.4) is lower than the County and the State of Michigan average. This would indicate that the Village has a younger age base than the rest of the county due to a higher percentage of persons in the 18 and under age groups. It is important to note that the youth population in the Village of Westphalia represents just under one third of the total residents. Access to recreational opportunities (both structured and unstructured) offers valuable benefits for young people, including physical activity, social interaction, and educational development. The remaining population is relatively evenly spread out from ages 30 to 80+. Parks have the power to foster connections across multiple generations and diverse demographic groups. They serve as gathering spaces, offer opportunities for physical activity, encourage community involvement, and enhance the overall quality of life in a community.

Household Size

The size of families in Westphalia follows the Clinton County and Michigan trend for smaller households. The general trend toward smaller household size may be due to many factors including end of the baby boomer generation, divorce, widowed older persons and young people waiting longer to get married.



Physically Challenged

The disability status of a population may be especially significant when considering recreational needs for a community. With approximately 15% of the total Village of Westphalia population affected by some form of disability, these individuals may have difficulty participating in recreational programs, accessing facilities or even getting to designated public areas. Understanding the disability status of the city's population may assist decision-makers in determining adequate programs and appropriate locations for recreational activities. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation became subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs.



Administrative Structure

Administration

The Village Council has 7 members including the President and the President Pro-Tem. Councilmembers are elected to four-year terms that are staggered every two years. The President is elected every two years. The Village Clerk and the Department of Public Works (DPW) Supervisor are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Village. The Council adopts and amends Village ordinances, determines Village policies and standards, and authorizes the annual Village budget. The Council also approves contracts and agreements, determines Village tax millage rates, determines utility rates, directs the Village President.

Also part of the Village's team are the Clerk, Treasurer, and Department of Public Works Supervisor and Staff. Day-to-day operation and maintenance of the Village parks lies with the Department of Public Works staff, the same staff is also responsible for the Village streets and sidewalks. The Village of Westphalia does not employ any Recreation Staff but relies on a strong volunteer base, including a Parks & Rec Committee, to oversee park operations and maintenance.

The below chart illustrates the relationship among the various entities involved in recreation within the City. The administrative structure is as follows:

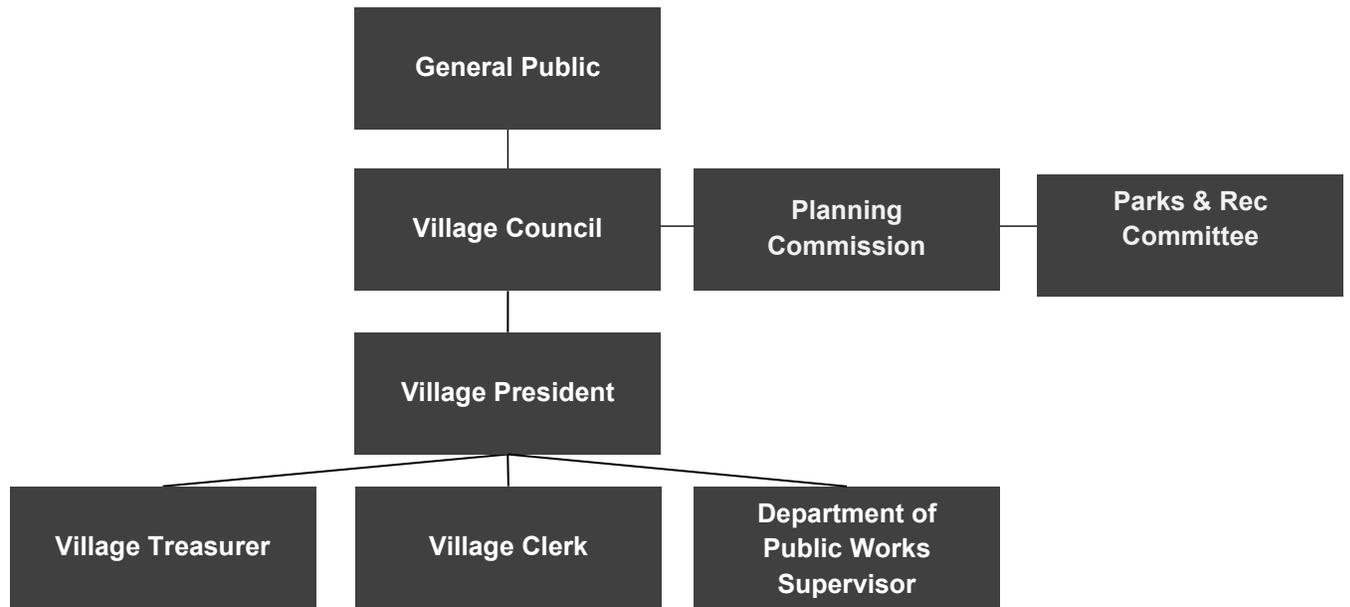


Figure 1 – Village of Westphalia Administrative Structure Chart



Parks and Recreation Committee and DPW Staff

The Parks and Recreation Committee, in collaboration with the Village Council and the Village Department of Public Works (DPW), is responsible for the operation and maintenance of Daniel Droste Memorial Park and corresponding recreational programs. Traditionally, the Parks and Recreation Committee is made up of 5 volunteer members. The Committee operates in an advisory capacity to the Village Council. Decisions and financing relative to park improvements, equipment acquisition and maintenance are ultimately a function of the Village Council.

Budget and Expenditures

The Parks and Recreation budget is established each year as part of the Village’s annual budget and formation process. Typically, the Parks and Recreation Fund receives annual operating subsidies of approximately \$800 from the Village of Westphalia General Fund, and approximately \$5,500 from Westphalia Township. Revenues are estimated each year and included in the yearly Parks & Recreation budget. The Parks and Recreation Fund revenues fluctuate annually based on the amount of pavilion rentals and number of those participating in adult softball leagues. Due to this, the budget is adjusted from the estimate throughout the year based upon the actual amount of incoming revenue. The following table shows the previous three years of budget and expenditures for the Village of Westphalia’s parks and recreation.

Parks & Recreation Budget and Expenditures		
Fiscal Year	Budget	Expenditures
2022-2023	\$ 9,140	\$ 11,415
2023-2024	\$ 10,900	\$ 9,865
2024-2025	\$ 18,100	\$ 12,815

Table 2 – Parks and Recreation Budget & Expenditures (numbers have been rounded to the nearest 5).



Recreational Inventory

An essential element of a recreation plan is the inventory of local and regional, public and private recreation facilities that are available to a community's resident. Such an inventory provides a basis from which a comparison can be made of existing recreation opportunities with the community's identified recreation needs. This inventory process also identifies barrier-free facilities. This will ensure that citizens with disabilities will fully enjoy these facilities. Involving advocate organizations and utilizing the knowledge of the Village staff will help facilitate this element of the inventory process. Further, this facility inventory establishes the foundation from which a recreational improvement program can be developed and implemented. The included map below shows the location of Village owned recreational facilities.

Village Recreational Facilities

The Village of Westphalia has limited recreational resources, there is one community park that exists within the Village limits that has a mix of amenities.

The following is a map of the Village's park facilities:



Daniel Droste Memorial Park

Much of the recreational activity in Westphalia centers around Daniel Droste Memorial Park. The land for the park was initially acquired and placed into operation by the Westphalia Jaycees. Upon abolishment of the Jaycees, the park was subsequently acquired by Westphalia Township. On April 25, 2000, the Village of Westphalia purchased the park property and associated buildings and equipment from Westphalia Township.

The Park is approximately 9.2 acres in size and is located on West Main Street at the western boundary of the Village limits. The park offers a softball field, horseshoe courts, a walking track, a band shell, playground equipment, picnic facilities, restrooms, barbecue area, three pavilions (which can be rented for family reunions and other activities), plenty of open green space and shady escapes. It's a great place to have a family gathering, watch a softball game, take the kids to play, read a book, or just relax and enjoy the serenity.

Vacant Parcel

Recently, an approximately one-acre parcel located on N. Willow Street was donated to the Village. The intended use for this parcel would be to turn it into another community park.



Daniel Droste Memorial Park	
Park Type*	CP
Service Area**	EA
Accessibility***	3
Acres/(Miles)	9
Activity Rooms	
Band Shell	X
Ball Diamond	X
Basketball	
Canoe Access	
Drinking Fountains	3
Fishing Access	
Fish Ladder	
Gazebo	
Grills	
Gymnasium	
Horse Arena	
Ice Skating	
Inline Skating	
Multi-Purpose Field	X
Pavilion	3
Picnic Area	X
Playground	X
Pond/River	
Restroom	X
Sand Volleyball	
Sledding Hill	
Trails/Paths	X
Waterfront Access	



Park Type*

- MP = Mini Park
- NP = Neighborhood Park
- CP = Community Park
- LP = Large Urban Park
- SU = Special Use Park
- TRA = Trailway
- NA = Not Applicable (undeveloped)

Service Area**

- NB = Neighborhood (approx. ½ mile)
- EA = Entire Westphalia Area
- NA = Not Applicable (undeveloped)

Accessibility**

- 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



School Recreational Facilities

In addition to the Village's Daniel Droste Memorial Park, there is a private school with recreation facilities located within the Village. They are briefly described as follows.

Private Schools

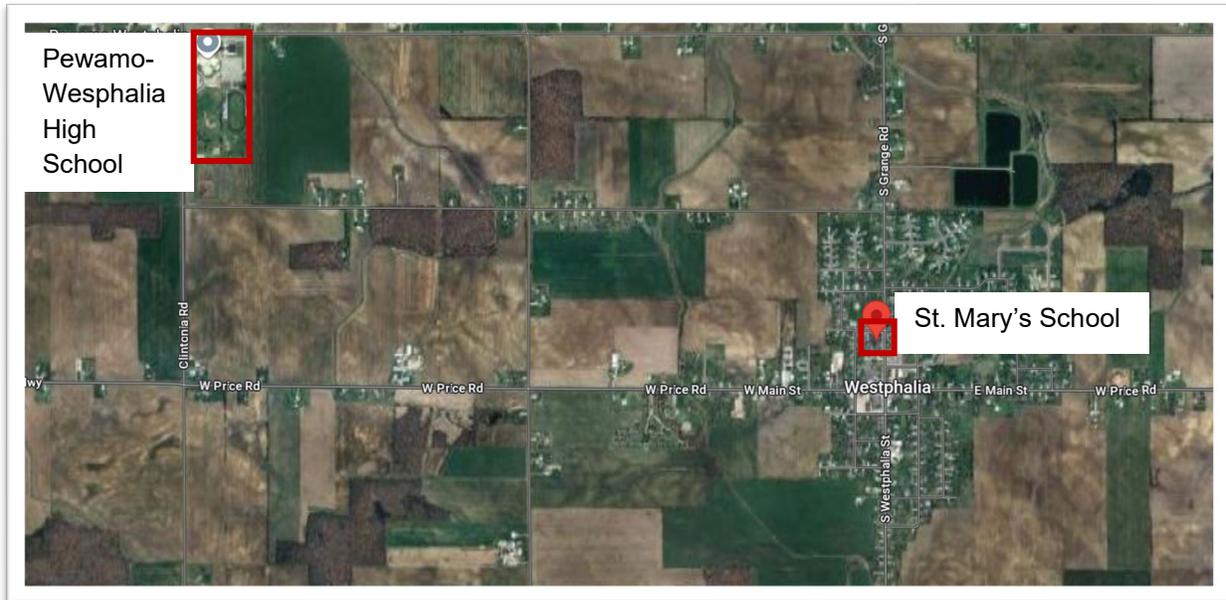
St. Mary School offers residents various recreational opportunities. Playground equipment, a basketball court, and sports fields that can be seasonally modified to accommodate youth baseball, softball and soccer are available.

School	Address	Grades	Enrollment	Facilities
St. Mary School	209 N Westphalia St. Westphalia, MI 48894	K through 6		Playground, baseball and softball fields, multi-purpose field, basketball court

Public Schools

The Village of Westphalia and neighboring Village of Pewamo have a combined school system. The elementary school is located in Pewamo while the middle and high school are on the northwest edge of Westphalia.

School	Address	Grades	Enrollment	Facilities
Pewamo-Westphalia Elementary School	430 W Jefferson St, Pewamo, MI 48873	Pre-K through 5	208	multi-purpose field, sport courts, playground
Pewamo-Westphalia Middle-High School	5101 Clintonia Rd, Westphalia, MI 48894	6 through 12	477	Baseball and softball fields, multi-purpose field



Local & Regional Public Recreational Facilities

Village of Pewamo

Just northwest of Westphalia, Pewamo has two public parks. Sesquicentennial Park is a pocket park in the center of town with a walkway and benches. There is also Blossom Time Park that is nine acres of ball fields, multisport fields, tennis and pickleball courts, playground equipment, a restroom facility, and pavilions for gathering space.

Village of Fowler

The neighboring Village of Fowler has a small number of public parks. Fink Park contains softball/baseball diamonds, playground, and a pavilion and restrooms while Victor Street Park contains an ice rink and playground. The Field of Dreams includes playground and play equipment, picnic area and pavilion.

City of Portland

The City of Portland has a good mix of all types and sizes of park facilities ranging from mini-parks to Natural Resource Areas and Large Urban Parks. There are parks with many active sports amenities such as playgrounds, ball diamonds, and outdoor basketball courts and there are nature and wooded parks. There are fifteen developed park facilities with portions of four parks that are not totally developed at this time. Several of the parks are clustered together and connected by our 8 and ½ miles of ADA accessible linear park which bisects the City and utilizes the Looking Glass and Grand Rivers as a focal point.

Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail

A segment of the Fred Meijer Trail is planned for that portion of the former Central Michigan Railroad that runs east to west through the southern portion of the City of Ionia. The trail is planned to extend to the City of Lowell to the west and to the Village of Muir to the east, eventually extending to the City of Owosso. Construction of the Ionia to Saranac portion of the trail began in 2012.

Clinton County

Clinton County currently owns two areas of land: the 4-H Fairgrounds and Motz Park. Motz Park totals 42 acres in which there is a 17 acre lake that was formerly a gravel pit. This park features boating, swimming, fishing, and picnic areas. The 4-H Fairgrounds is predominantly a special use park and holds events.

Ionia County Bertha Brock Park

Bertha Brock Park is a 186 acre Ionia County park located two miles west of the City of Ionia on M-21. It is a regional park that serves Ionia County and surrounding areas. Bertha Brock Park offers a campground, camping cabins, rental lodges, play areas, picnic shelters, hiking trails, sledding hill, play structures, and various family oriented recreational activities.

Ionia State Recreation Area

This recreation area is located at 2880 West David Highway, southwest of the City Ionia. This 4,085 acre facility located between Saranac and Ionia in Ionia County has 50 campsites and offers a variety of opportunities including picnic facilities, playground equipment, swimming, boating, a beach house, a boat launch, hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, mountain biking and horseback riding.



Maple River State Game Area

Located in Lebanon and Essex Townships, the area is managed for wildlife viewing and hunting as well as a wetland restoration project. There are over 4,700 acres of property in the area with over 11 miles of trails. The Maple River traverses the majority of the area and provides boating opportunities for canoes and other small boats as well as fishing. Various parking areas can be found throughout the area.

Portland State Game Area

Located in the very southwest tip of the county, a portion of the Portland State Game Area is found in Eagle Township. It provides opportunities for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing as well as being used for non-motorized trail activities.

Local & Regional Private Recreational Facilities

There are several private facilities around Westphalia which include recreation amenities. While they do not provide public access, they are important in providing recreation opportunities. Some of these facilities are listed below.

Huckleberry Creek Golf Course

Located in Pewamo on N. Hubbardston Road, this is a scenic 18-hole golf course.

Alice Springs RV Park & Resort

Family owned and operated located on M-66 just south of downtown Ionia. Amenities include a 5-acre lake perfect for kayaking and fishing; RV sites and tent sites ranging from full hook-up to rustic, cozy cabins; pool & hot tub; playground, camp store, basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes, and activities for the whole family.

Ionia Skateland

Indoor roller-skating rink located on Jefferson Road in Ionia.

Barrier Free Evaluation & Universal Design

The ultimate goal is to provide recreation opportunities that include everyone. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation are subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs. This planning process should include methods to ensure that the City park and recreation system is accessible to persons with disabilities. The City completed an evaluation of existing facilities in 2010 to determine if they are barrier-free.

When looking at areas to determine their accessibility to all people, we started by asking these simple questions:

Can a person who has a sight or hearing disability, uses a wheelchair, uses a walking aid such as crutches or braces, has a mental disability that affects learning and understanding, safely and independently:

- *Get from the arrival place to the activity area?*
- *Do what others do in the area?*
- *Move around the area?*
- *How can this barrier be removed?*
- *If not, what is getting in the way?*



Universal Access Assessment

Another often overlooked category is Universal Access. This practice goes way beyond typical Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to practice “common and equal experiences for all.” The goal of universal access is, throughout concept and design phases, to incorporate technology, materials and other considerations that promote equal opportunities for people of varied abilities. These concepts should be kept in the forefront as a prime consideration in the 5-year Master Plan and individual parks or projects as they develop and progress. A table of universal access design considerations by type of facility can be found in *Appendix B - Resources*

Common components that need to be looked at to answer these basic questions include: parking, paths of travel from parking, street or sidewalk to activity areas, the activity areas themselves, signage, support facilities such as restrooms, surfacing, and communications required for recreation programs and general use of a facility or area. The existing parks were evaluated on the following criteria and scored 1-5.

- 5 – Facility is fully accessible. Features and facilities meet and exceed the Uniform Building Code and take into consideration Universal Design principles. Main elements such as the washrooms, entrances, parking, and amenities are barrier free.
- 4 – Majority of the facility is accessible; however, there are some accessibility barriers. Some improvements are needed to make the facility fully accessible.
- 3 – Facility is partially accessible. Barriers exist to fully accessing the facility and an alternate facility may be necessary.
- 2 – Facility has limited accessibility. Multiple barriers exist to fully accessing the facility and an alternate facility may be necessary.
- 1 – Facility has poor accessibility. Accessibility barriers may exist at entranceway, recreation area

Droste Park’s accessibility was assessed by Fleis & VandenBrink using the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design as reference. The following is a chart with its respective accessibility ranking.

Summary of Park Accessibility

Daniel Droste Memorial Park	
Overall Rating	3
Accessibility	The park is generally barrier free, has ADA parking available, and restroom facilities meet accessible guidelines.

Recreational Programs & Events

Currently the Village Parks and Recreation Committee operates numerous adult men’s and women’s softball leagues. The Committee also administers rental of the three pavilions for various community and family outings.

Past Grant Status

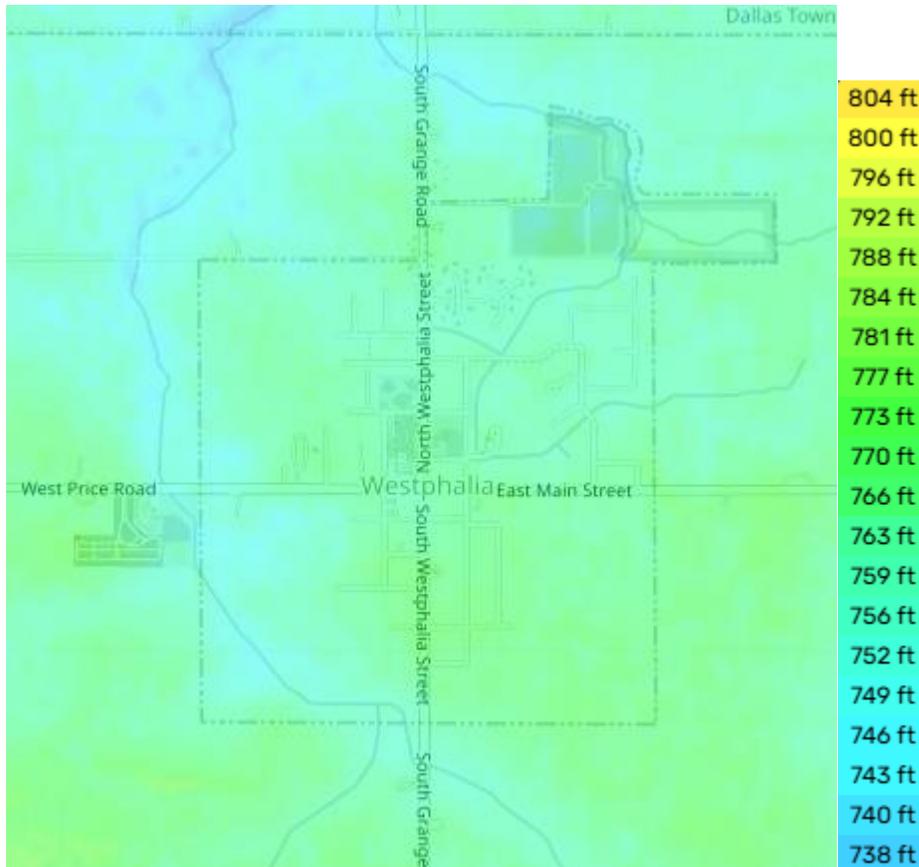
The Village has not obtained any State or Federal Grant Funds for its park and recreational facilities.



Natural Resource Inventory

Topography & Landforms

The slope of land plays an important role in determining the suitable use and development of property. Moderate slopes (10% - 25%) and areas of extreme slope (25% or more) may limit higher density developments from occurring. These limitations include a heightened risk of erosion and the difficulty in installing private septic systems. However, areas consisting of moderate and extreme slopes are sparse within the area. They are generally limited to the Kloeckner and Fuller Creek. Most of the region consists of fairly level terrain which presents little to no restrictions for future development.

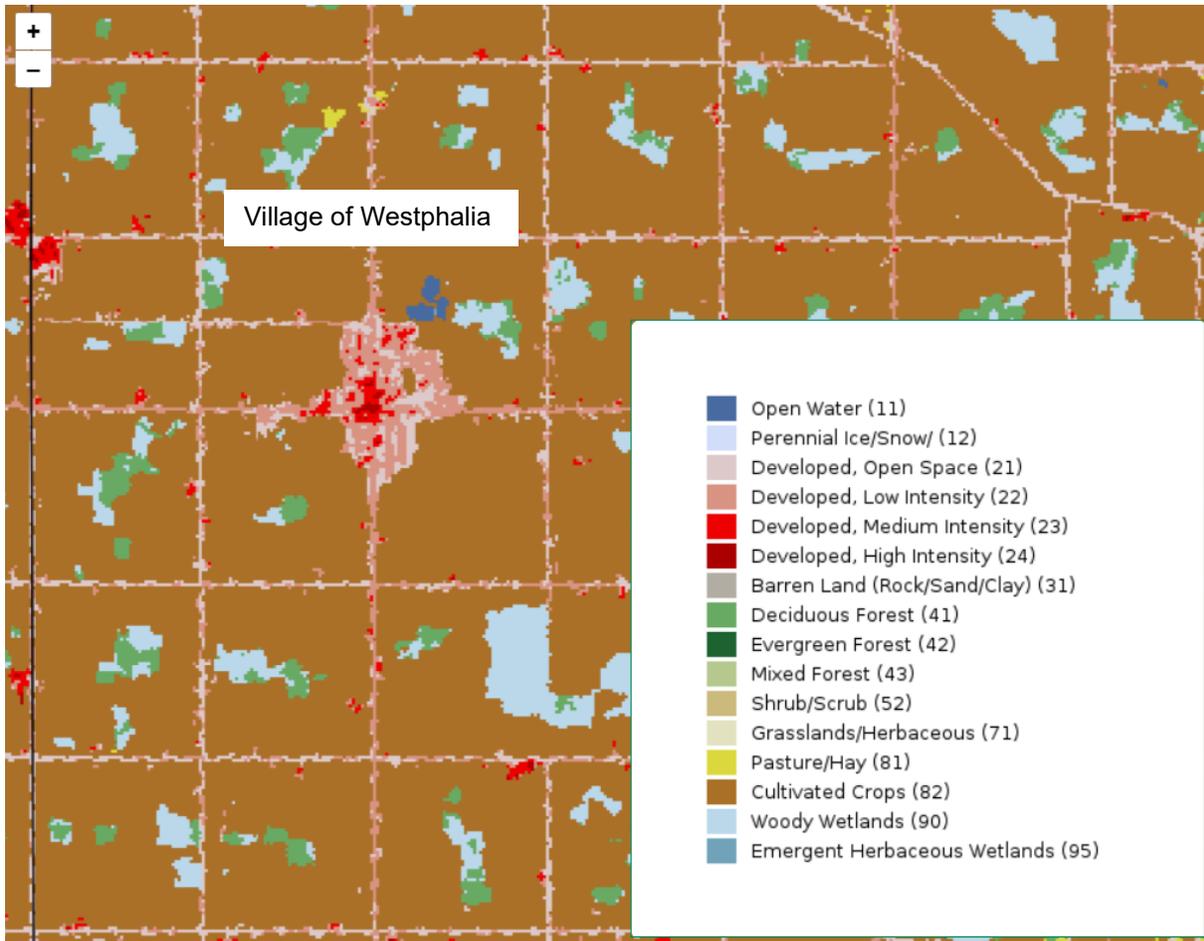


Source: <https://en-us.topographic-map.com>

Woodlands

Originally, Michigan was covered with a dense forest of deciduous trees. As the area was cleared for farming and development, or the trees were removed for timber, the area's forests were replaced by farm fields, open field areas, orchards and smaller forested areas containing both deciduous and coniferous trees. Much of the Village's original vegetation has been replaced due to the land use patterns that typically develop within a densely populated community. Most of the natural vegetation in the Village is located along the floodway/floodplain corridors of the Kloeckner and Fuller Creek. These trees are largely both deciduous and coniferous.





Source: EGLE Wetlands Map Viewer

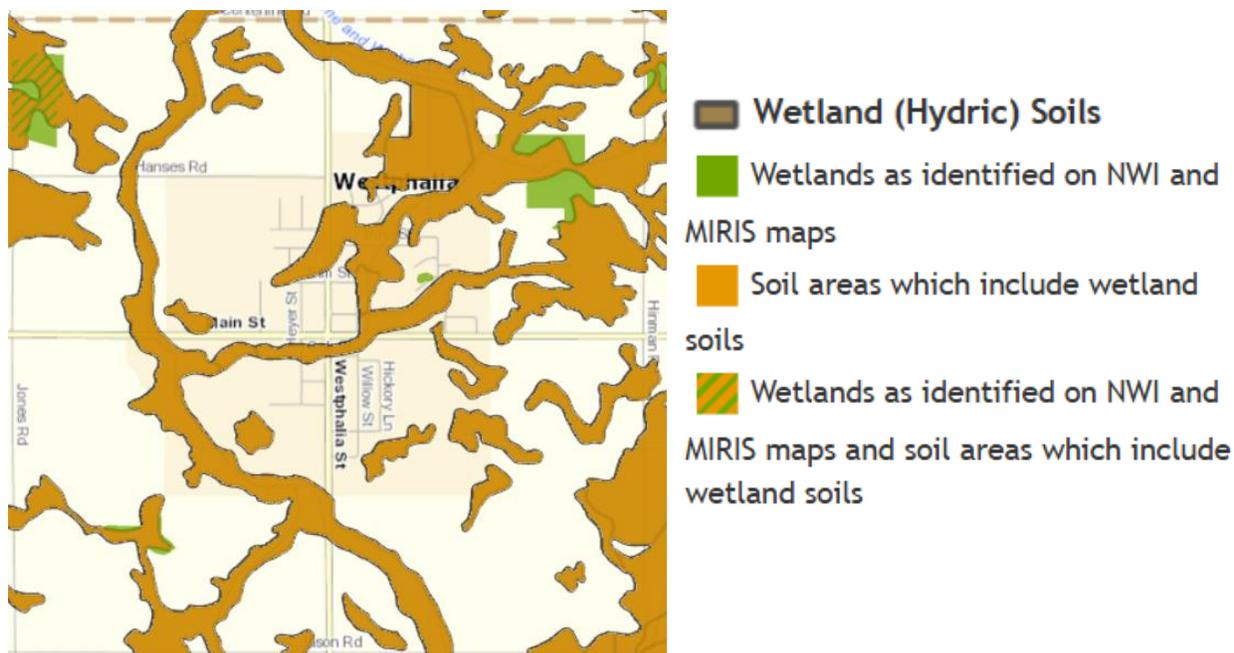
Wetlands

The wetlands in the Village are similar to the County in that wetlands with associated woodlands that existed during the time of large expanses of pre-settlement wetlands have been reduced to small, scattered upland areas or wetlands associated with floodway/floodplain areas. Upland wetlands have been reduced due to filling, subsurface drainage and drain construction undertaken to improve agriculture.

The Wetlands Map shows wetland areas that serve to provide wildlife habitat, stormwater storage, water quality improvement, natural scenery and other benefits. Generally, these areas exhibit severe limitations for the use of individual waste disposal systems. A majority of the wetlands are located along the various water bodies such as rivers, creeks, streams, drainage ditches and other water bodies.

Hydric soils are also identified. These are soils that have formed in the presence of water for sustained periods. They can be used to help locate wetlands, especially those that have been disturbed or altered by fill or excavation. Hydric soils may be unsuitable for certain types of development and can be an indicator of high groundwater levels.





Source: EGLE Wetlands Map Viewer

Because Hydric Soils occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in the management of our water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan habitat type. Wetland species also comprise a critically important segment of these species.

Benefits of wetlands are many. Wetlands help:

- Reduce flooding by absorbing runoff from rain and melting snow and slowly releasing excess water into rivers and lakes - a one-acre swamp when flooded to a depth of one foot contains 330,000 gallons of water.
- Filter pollutants from surface runoff, trapping fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, and other contaminants and helping to break some of them down into less harmful substances, improving water clarity and quality.
- Recharge groundwater supplies when connected to underground aquifers.
- Contribute to natural nutrient and water cycles, and produce vital atmospheric gases, including oxygen.
- Provide commercial or recreational value to our human economy, by producing plants, game birds (ducks, geese) and fur bearing mammals - many fish are directly connected to wetlands, requiring shallow water areas for breeding, feeding and escaping from predators.
- Serve as nutrient traps that then enrich the larger body of water of which they are part when wetlands occur adjacent to inland lakes or streams.

The last century has seen a greatly increased rate of wetland loss due to filling and drainage by man. Prior to World War II, drainage to expand agricultural lands accounted for most of this loss. Recently, much wetland destruction has been caused by commercial, industrial, and residential expansion. The estimated 11 million acres of Michigan wetlands existing in pre settlement times has now been reduced to less than 3 million acres. Recent legislation has slowed the loss rate somewhat but threats to these habitats, particularly the smaller wetlands, continue in many areas.



Prior to park & recreation development, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) should be consulted to review the results of a wetlands determination. The impacts of development within wetland areas should be carefully considered, and a permit from the MDNR should always be obtained if regulated wetlands are to be impacted.

Fish and Wildlife

The area's wildlife is typical of that found in most of Lower Michigan. Common wildlife includes deer, raccoons, opossums, rabbits, muskrats, beavers, squirrels, rodents and other small mammals. The area is home to a variety of birds including owls, wild turkeys, pheasants and many others. The area is also a seasonal home to many migratory birds including ducks and Canada Geese.

With the Village of Westphalia being located on the Kloeckner and Fuller Creek, the wetlands here provide habitats for a variety of animals such as salamanders, raccoons, shrews, and frogs.



Description of Planning Process

In its continuing effort to provide quality recreational opportunities for Village residents and visitors, the Village of Westphalia Village Council authorized the development of the 2026-2030 Village of Westphalia Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan. The plan was directed by community volunteers in consultation with the Village Council and the Parks and Recreation Committee. The plan represents the culmination of efforts to establish recreational goals, objectives and action plans for the next five years. The plan will also enable the Village of Westphalia to apply for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to assist in reaching its recreational goals.

The Village of Westphalia engaged Fleis & VandenBrink to assist the Parks and Recreation Committee in developing this plan. Throughout 2025, Fleis & VandenBrink met with the committee and maintained regular communication to ensure the successful completion of the plan.

The first step in the development of the plan involved gathering and updating information about the Village of Westphalia and its recreational opportunities. Physical characteristics of the Village, demographic information about the community, and an inventory of existing park facilities helped to provide the base from which future recreation decisions will be made.

An analysis of data gathered from the Public Input Process helped identify and prioritize additional recreational opportunities. From the accumulated data, a draft of the plan was developed and presented to the Village Council prior to its November 3, 2025 meeting. Following a 30-day comment period, a public hearing was held by the Village Council on December 1, 2025. The plan was then approved by the Village Council on **(INSERT DATE)**. The plan was then transmitted to the Clinton County Planning Commission and the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

This plan reflects a prioritized list of improvements to existing facilities and the development of new facilities that best address the needs and desires of the citizens of Westphalia. Copies of the advertisement affidavits, the public hearing minutes, meeting minutes, and the resolutions, are included in Appendix of this plan.



Description of Public Input Process

The Village of Westphalia Planning Commission, Village Council, Village Clerk, and individual volunteers from the citizenry worked diligently to acquire and accumulate citizens' opinions for this plan. In early 2024, the Village of Westphalia and its Parks Committee began preliminary discussions on the future of Droste Park. These early conversations identified a need to gather public input before advancing any long-term planning or grant application efforts. The goal was to provide residents with an opportunity to share their opinions, priorities, and ideas regarding potential improvements to the park and its facilities.

Development of the Survey

To guide this effort, the Parks Committee drafted a community survey intended to collect meaningful and actionable feedback.

- The initial draft was developed collaboratively during a special committee meeting and refined through shared comments and edits using a Google Drive document.
- The resulting 6-question survey provided context about the park's history, past improvements, and the purpose of updating the Village's Parks and Recreation Plan.
- It included questions on current park usage, desired amenities or additions, demographic information, and open-ended space for additional feedback.

Draft versions of the survey were then presented to both the Village Planning Commission and the Village Council for review, feedback, and formal approval prior to distribution.

Distribution and Outreach

Following approval from the Parks Committee, the survey was made available in both paper and digital formats to ensure accessibility for all residents.

- A SurveyMonkey link and QR code were created to allow residents to complete the survey online.
- Printed copies were mailed to every household within the Village of Westphalia and Westphalia Township using address information provided by the township.
- Mailing preparation was handled by Parks Committee members, who assembled and labeled the envelopes for distribution.
- Surveys were mailed on April 20, 2024, with a response deadline of May 13, 2024.

Residents were able to submit completed paper surveys by returning them to the Village Office drop box which is available 24/7 or by mailing them back to the Village Office. The QR code to link to the online version of the survey was printed as part of the mailing and residents could choose to fill out the online form instead.

Opportunities for Discussion and Public Input

In addition to the survey, an open discussion opportunity was scheduled and held during the Planning Commission meeting on May 6, 2024, held at the Village Office. Community members were



encouraged to attend, ask questions, and share their thoughts directly with committee and council members. Several residents attended this session to provide in-person feedback.

Compilation and Analysis of Results

Survey responses submitted through SurveyMonkey were automatically compiled into a linked Google Sheets document. A total of 209 responses were returned, with 114 received through the digital form, 94 surveys submitted by paper via the drop box at the Village Office, and one survey returned by mail. All physical survey responses were entered manually into the same Google Sheets document to maintain a unified dataset.

Once the collection period ended, the combined data was analyzed and summarized. A PowerPoint presentation was created to visually communicate key findings, including charts, graphs, and tables summarizing resident feedback and priorities.

The survey and comments from the survey are included in *Appendix B, Survey & Results*. Highlights from the survey include:

Droste Memorial Park:

- 76% of respondents currently use Droste Park, with 41% of those respondents using the playground equipment the most
- The softball and baseball fields are the next most used with 24% of respondents
- 43% of individuals believe that the restrooms need to be updated the most followed by playground equipment, buildings, and softball and baseball fields

Presentation and Public Availability of Results

The summarized results were presented to both the Planning Commission and the Village Council during the June 2024 meetings for review and discussion. To ensure transparency and continued community access, both the PowerPoint summary and the Google Sheets dataset (with personal identifiers removed) were made publicly available on the Village of Westphalia website. These resources remain accessible for residents and stakeholders interested in reviewing the survey results in detail.

Public Meetings

Finally, residents were provided one last opportunity to voice their opinion during a Public Hearing held by the Village Council on (insert date). Prior to the Public Hearing the draft Recreation Plan was available for review in the Village Office from (insert date) to (insert date). Documentation supporting the public hearing can be found in *Appendices C and E*.



Goals and Objectives

In defining the action program, the formulation of community goals and objectives for the provision of recreation is a vital component. The goals and objectives represent the purposes for a community's role in providing recreation to its residents as well as outlining the direction that the community's effort should take in the long term. Goals are the general targets for which a community aims for while objectives are the specific steps that can be taken towards that goal.

The goals and objectives for the Village of Westphalia in meeting the recreational needs of residents are outlined below. The actions program that relate to each goal can be found in the next section.

Goal 1: Maintain existing recreational facilities throughout the village.

Objective

Maintain a balanced system of parks by having well-operated and maintained facilities. Conduct quarterly inspections of all recreational facilities and complete identified maintenance and repair tasks within 30 days of each inspection to ensure facilities remain safe, functional, and visually appealing throughout the year.

Goal 2: Strengthen safety and security at all the Village recreational facilities.

Objective

Within five years, upgrade security infrastructure at 100% of Village recreational facilities, including but not limited to lighting, cameras, and parking to provide safe environments for recreation.

Goal 3: Continue the improvement and development of Universal Design Concepts at all Village park locations in accordance with the park's development master plan.

Objective

Develop new and expanded facilities at the park including new restrooms, picnic facilities, paved parking, walking paths, new play equipment and lighting within the next 7 years.

Goal 4: Create new partnerships and collaboration in the community. Create community awareness of recreational opportunities and promote them to our local citizens as well as to visitors of the community.

Objective

Develop at least three new community partnerships within the next year to collaboratively promote and expand awareness of local parks and recreational programs. Implement cost-effective strategies to deliver diverse recreational opportunities, increasing community participation by 15% and improving visibility of available parks and programs among both residents and visitors.

Goal 5: Effectively manage the financial resources of the Parks Department through regular assessment, budgeting and revenue generation.

Objective

By the end of the next fiscal year, develop and implement a comprehensive financial management strategy that ensures all parks and recreation facilities remain up to date, financially stable, and accessible to everyone. Conduct quarterly budget reviews and cost analyses to improve fund



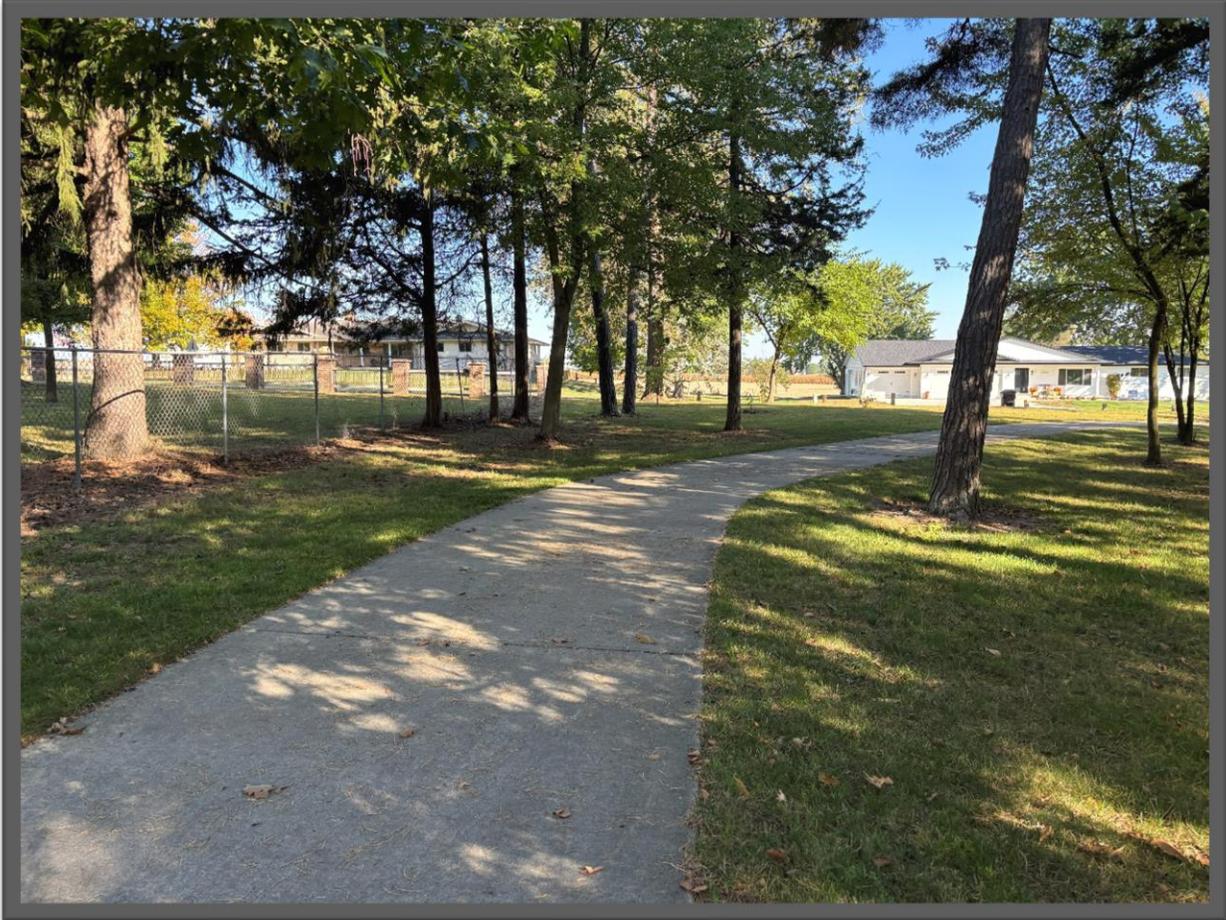
allocation efficiency, identify and secure a minimum of two new outside funding sources or grants, and implement cost-effective operational practices to reduce expenses. Support facility improvements and new construction efforts that meet community needs, while progressing toward national accreditation standards for excellence in parks and recreation management.

Goal 6: To continually improve the quality of and the opportunities for recreation in the Village by reassessing community recreation needs, trends, and characteristics.

Objective

Conduct a comprehensive assessment of community recreation needs, trends, and demographics every two years to guide program and facility planning. Actively engage Village residents through surveys, public meetings, and advisory committees to identify, prioritize, and develop new recreational opportunities and facility improvements that enhance the overall quality and accessibility of recreation within the Village.





Action Program

With goals and objectives in place, the Village of Westphalia Parks & Recreation Committee has developed an accompanying Action Plan. This is a tool that will enable the Village of Westphalia Community to move toward accomplishing their goals and objectives. The action plan is used to highlight the steps necessary to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of parks and recreation opportunities.

The following Table shows the potential actions for each goal from the previous section. The action list is not a fixed element, nor is it exhaustive. It reflects the results of the input received from the City staff, the public hearing, and the online survey. Future circumstances, especially availability of funding, may influence the order in which the projects are completed. Projects that arise in relation to these actions do not currently have funding plans. Financing mechanisms for future projects can be found in *Appendix B – Resources*.



Table 3. 2026 – 2030 Actions	
Goal 1: Maintain existing recreational facilities throughout the Village	
	Schedule regular quarterly inspections, to ensure all parks and facilities are neat in appearance and well-operated and maintained.
	Coordinate and assist in planned events in public spaces, parks, and facilities.
	Remove any existing physical barriers that limit the use of parks and facilities.
	Prune, trim, and remove overgrown vegetation.
	Lease recreational facilities to private organizations to operate when such a lease will significantly lower the Village costs while maintaining the level of service of the facilities to Village residents.
Goal 2: Strengthen safety and security at all the Village recreational facilities.	
	Remove all outdated and non-compliant play equipment from Village parks.
	with the Village operations and neighborhoods to enhance security and use in parks by both organized private and public programs and activities.
	Conduct playground safety audits for all playgrounds throughout the Village and start a program to address non-compliant issues on a regular basis until all playgrounds are compliant.
	Continue to selectively prune, trim, and remove overgrown vegetation to open up views and provide natural surveillance of public gathering places.
	Review current parking area and security lighting at the various park facilities and improve as necessary to alleviate safety concerns.
	Research options for security camera systems at the various parks with input from the public safety department and residents.
Goal 3: Continue the improvement and development of Universal Design Concepts at all Village park locations in accordance with the park’s development master plan.	
	Improve restroom facilities.
	Install universally accessible play areas, picnic facilities and shelters.
	Provide paved parking areas and trails to provide barrier-free access to all areas.
	Provide additional non-motorized trails to better connect community destinations and areas.
	Replace signage to accommodate for any visually or physically impaired park users.
Goal 4: Create new partnerships and collaboration in the community. Create community awareness of recreational opportunities and promote them to our local citizens as well as to visitors of the community.	
	Coordinate existing recreational projects and programs with Westphalia Township, Pewamo-Westphalia School District, St. Mary Parish & Elementary school, & local businesses.
	Encourage the participation of volunteers and input in the development of recreational facilities.



Continue to seek out and work with other regional non-profit groups in helping to develop parks and programs.

Continue to communicate with the public whenever possible through various means such as but not limited to Social Media and Westphalia Village & Township Websites..

Goal 5: Effectively manage the financial resources of the Parks Department through regular assessment, budgeting and revenue generation.

Provide funding for capital development projects which allow the renovation of existing facilities and the development of new facilities that meet changing recreational needs and desires.

Maintain a level of restricted fund balance to ensure the availability of funds for cash flow, grant matches, and desired property acquisitions.

Strive for a degree of cost recovery that is designed to make the facilities and programs available to all residents.

Actively seek grants and other outside funding sources to support existing and new programs and facilities.

Frequently evaluate cost effective methods of service delivery, such as in-house, contracted, or collaborative to obtain the highest and best economic and qualitative value.

Complete the national accreditation process for Parks and Recreation Departments through the National Recreation and Parks Association.

Goal 6: To continually improve the quality of and the opportunities for recreation in the Village by reassessing community recreation needs, trends, and characteristics.

Update this Recreation Plan every 5 years.

Develop an expanded survey to ensure public needs and desires in areas of parks & recreation.

Expand and develop community park advocates through the ongoing efforts of the existing parks & recreation board.

Monitor the effectiveness of the Village efforts in fulfilling identified goals and objectives by providing opportunities for Village residents to evaluate the progress of recreational development.

Monitor the effectiveness of the Village efforts in providing fully accessible opportunities for Village residents.

Create mechanisms to maintain positive public relations.

Continue working with neighborhoods to build partnerships and create a sense of ownership at neighborhood parks.

Facilitate regular meetings of the Recreation Board.



Appendix A
Survey & Results

As a member of our community, you may have noticed some of the Droste Park facilities' aging infrastructure. Village Council and Planning Committee members have recently received significant feedback, ideas, and suggestions for Droste Park from various residents.

- Did you know that Droste Park originated in 1964?

- Did you know the pavilions, restrooms, and bridge were finished in 1980?

In response, Droste Park has been a prominent topic of discussion at recent meetings, and a need to develop a new Parks and Recreation Plan has been determined. Some preliminary ideas and plans for Droste Park have been discussed, including:

- New pavilions
- New restrooms
- Moving and improving the existing ballfield (fences, lighting)
- Adding two additional fields with 200' fences to accommodate girl's softball and little league baseball
- Ensuring green space for volleyball & flag football
- Adding pickleball or pickleball & tennis courts
- Increasing parking options
- Adding additional walking trails
- Updating playground equipment

Please take a few minutes to complete this simple survey for the Village and Township of Westphalia's Droste Park. Information gathered from this survey will help inform the Village and Township of public opinion and help direct goals and objectives for the upcoming Parks and Recreation Plan update.

Additional opportunities for questions or information will be available at the upcoming Planning Meeting at the village office. Planning will meet on **Monday, May 6, 2024 at 6:00PM. The village address is 200 N. Willow St.**

Submission options include printing and filling out this paper survey and returning it to the Village Office (24/7 mail drop box) or completing the survey online. Access the survey by scanning the QR Code below with your phone, or by clicking the survey link through the village website. **Please submit your response submitted by May 13, 2024.**



(Printed survey on the back)

1. In general, would your household approve of potential changes as described previously for Droste Park? (Please include any reasoning you would like to share in the space below) Yes No

2. Are there any proposed additions/changes your household would be interested in or support? (Circle any that apply). Additionally, please include any reasoning you would like to share in the empty space below

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. New pavilions | e. Ensuring green space for volleyball & flag football |
| b. New restrooms | f. Adding pickleball courts |
| c. Moving and improving the existing ballfield (fences, lighting) | g. Adding tennis courts |
| d. Adding two additional fields with 200' fences to accommodate girl's softball and little league baseball | h. Increasing parking options |
| | i. Adding additional walking trails |
| | j. Updating playground equipment |

3. Does your household currently use any of the Droste Park facilities? Yes No

If Yes, please rank the facilities below by household usage (1-most used to 5-least used. Leave blank if not used).

- ___ Playground Equipment
- ___ Walking Trail
- ___ Softball/Baseball Field
- ___ Building Rental
- ___ Green Space (ex. Volleyball, flag Football)

If Yes, please rank the facilities you feel need to be updated the most (1-most, 4-least).

- ___ Bathrooms
- ___ Softball/Baseball Field
- ___ Playground Equipment
- ___ Buildings

If Yes, how would you rate on a scale of (1-Low, 5-High):

- The overall quality of facilities at Droste Park? _____
- The general upkeep and maintenance at Droste Park? _____
- The park for accommodating users of every ability and accessibility level? _____

If No, please include any park changes that would encourage you to start using Droste Park in the space below:

4. Where is your full-time residence? (Circle the answer that applies)

Inside the Village & township Inside just the township Another township: _____

If you reside in the village or township, would you support an annual Parks millage to allocate money specifically for Village Parks facility improvements and development, matching dollars for outside grant funding, and/or new property acquisition? Yes No Maybe, depending on the amount

If you support an annual park millage, how much would your household be willing to contribute? \$20
\$50 \$75 \$100 Other: _____

Additionally, please include any reasoning you would like to share in the space below:

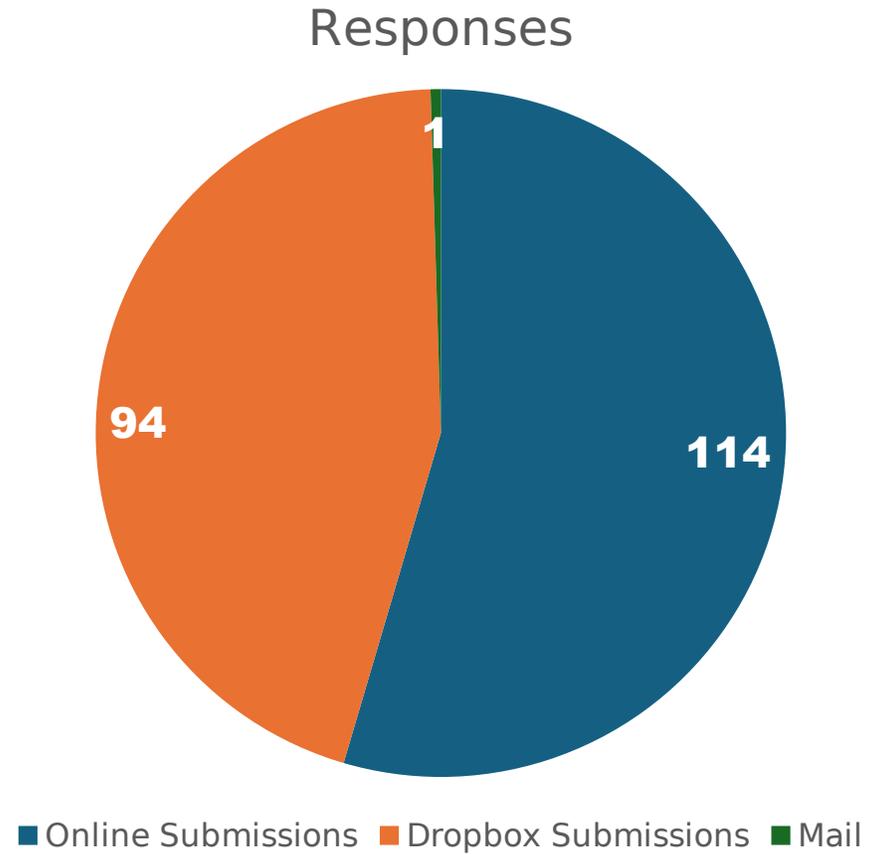
5. What is your age? 18-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

6. Do you have children or grandchildren who play any of the following outdoor sports? If so, which sport(s)? (Circle all that apply) Baseball Softball Flag Football Volleyball

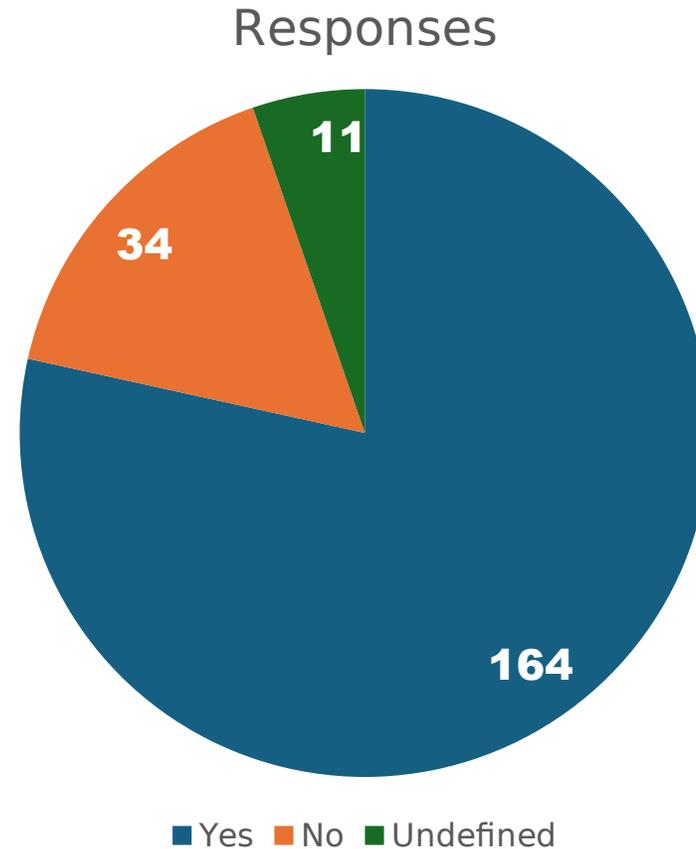
Please leave any final thoughts or comments at the bottom of the page. We appreciate your involvement in the process and your willingness to participate to help improve Droste Park!

Droste Park Survey Results

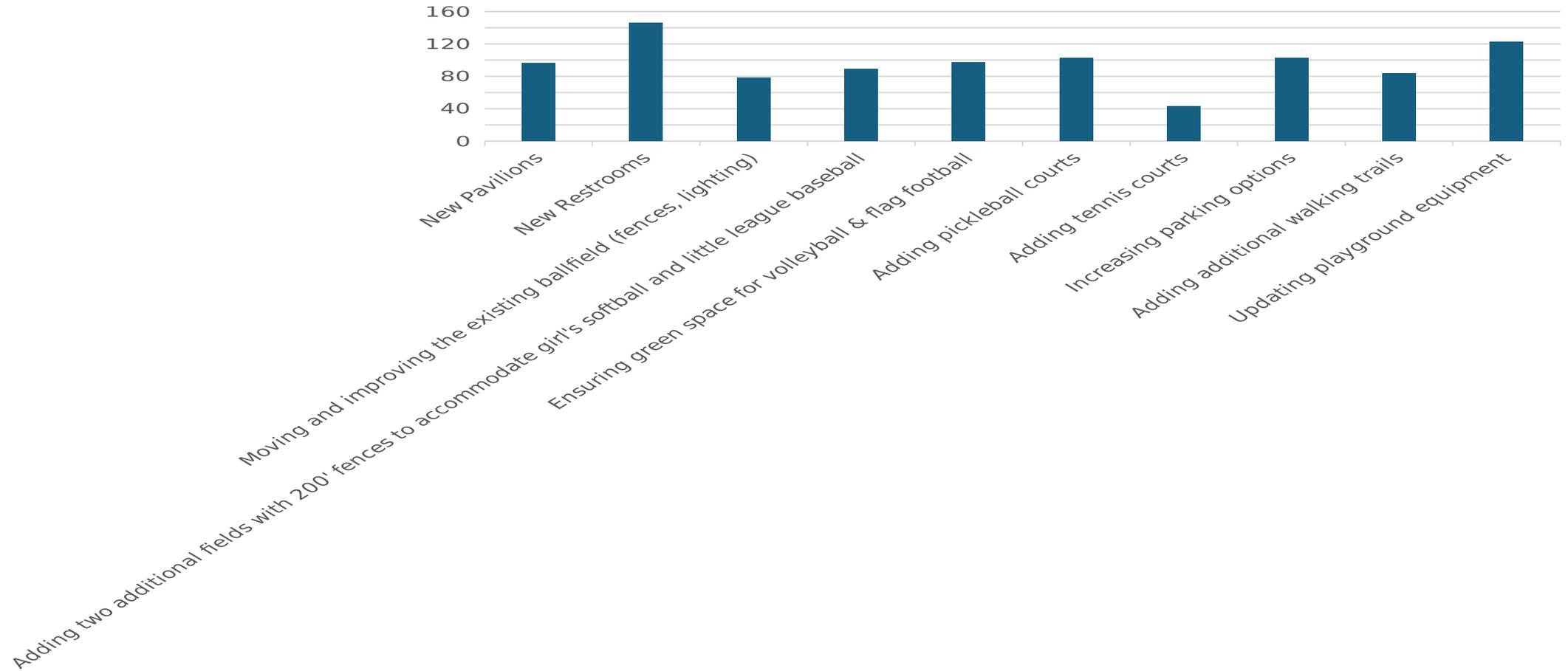
209 Surveys Returned



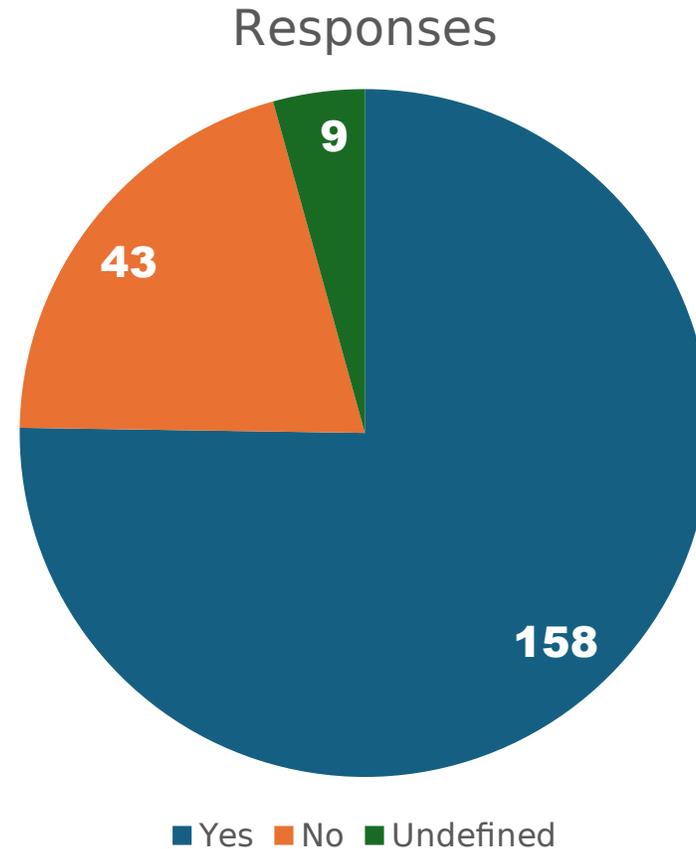
In general, would your household approve of potential changes as described previously for Droste Park?



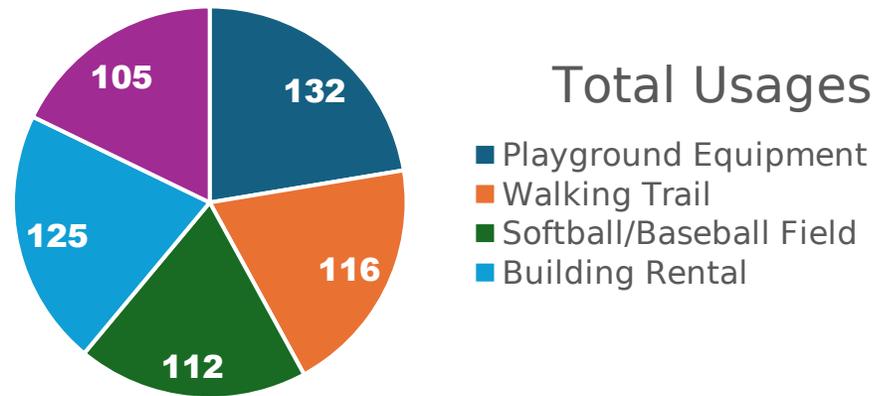
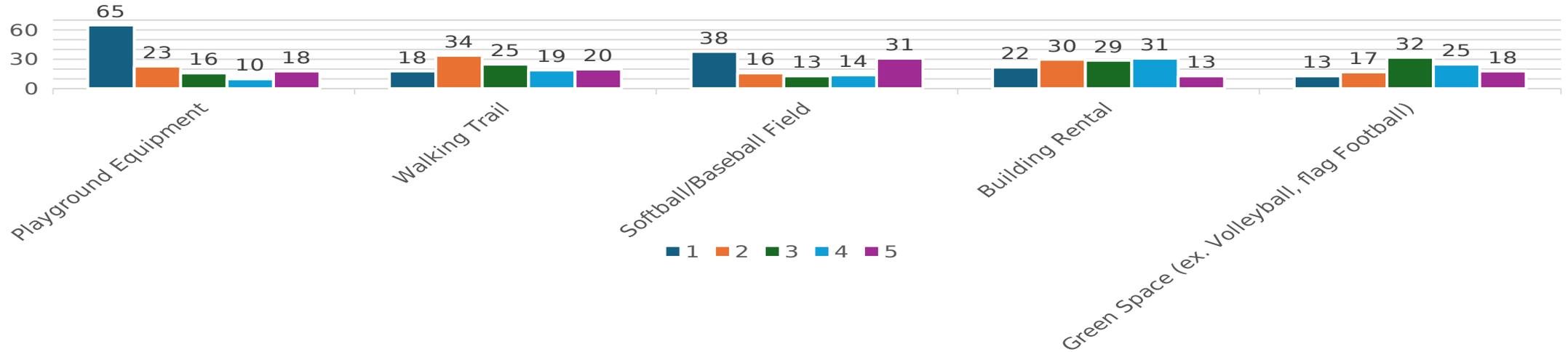
Are there any proposed additions/changes your household would be interested in or support?



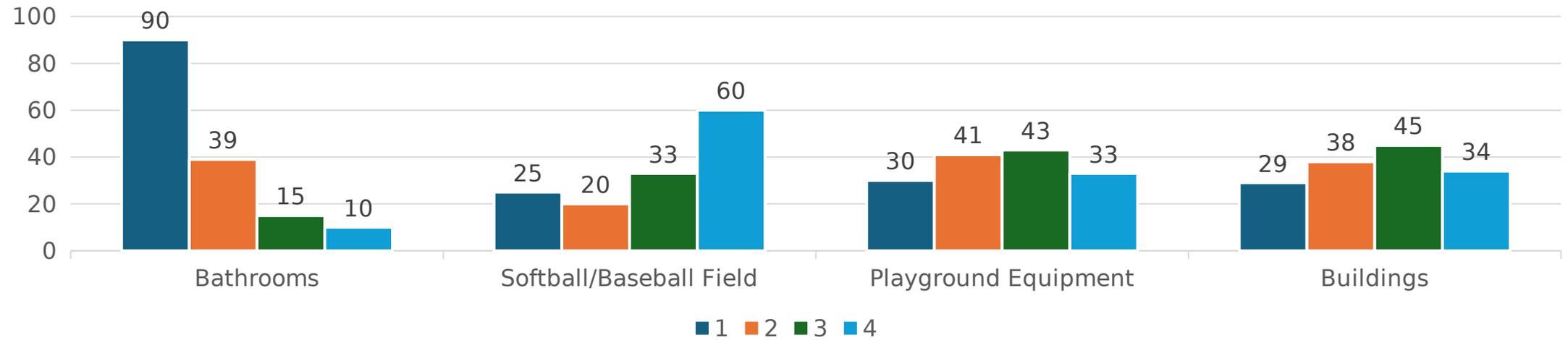
Does your household currently use any of the Droste Park facilities?



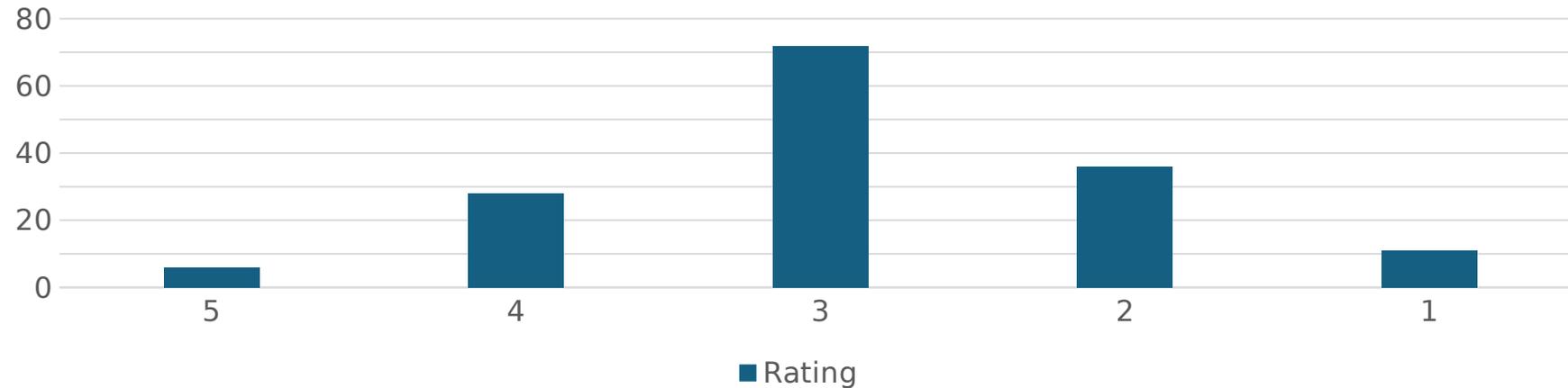
Please rank the facilities below by household usage. (1-most used to 5-least used. Leave blank if not used)



Please rank the facilities you feel need to be updated the most. (1-most, 4-least)

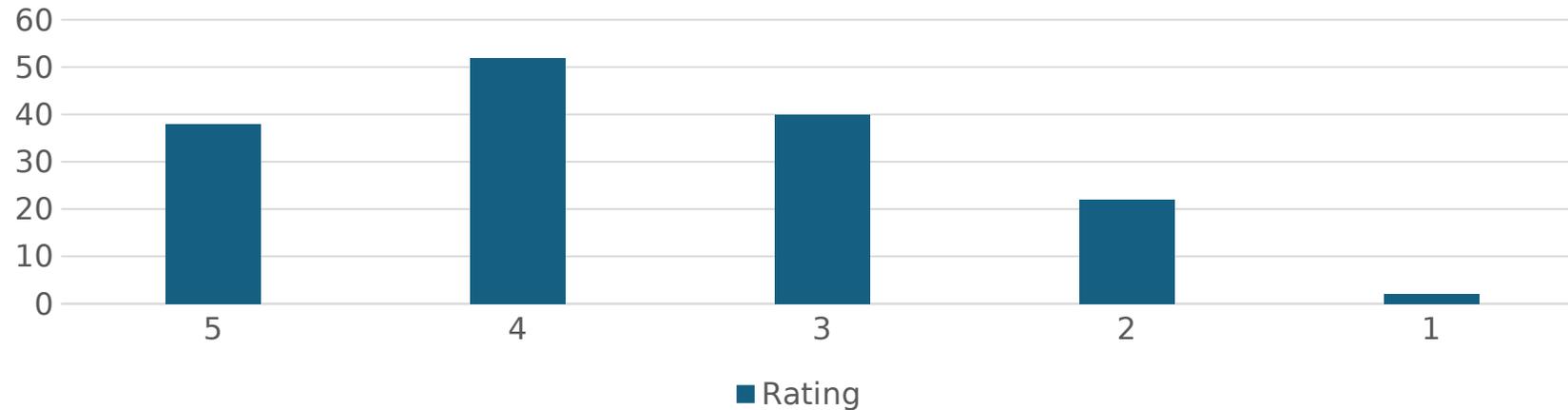


How would you rate the overall quality of facilities at Droste Park?



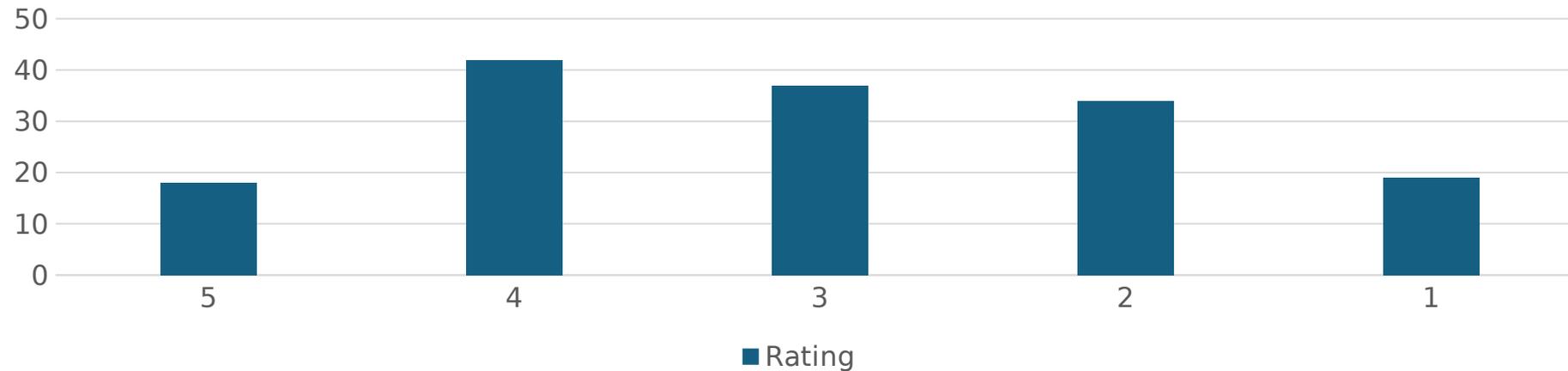
Average Rating: 2.88

How would you rate the general upkeep and maintenance at Droste Park?



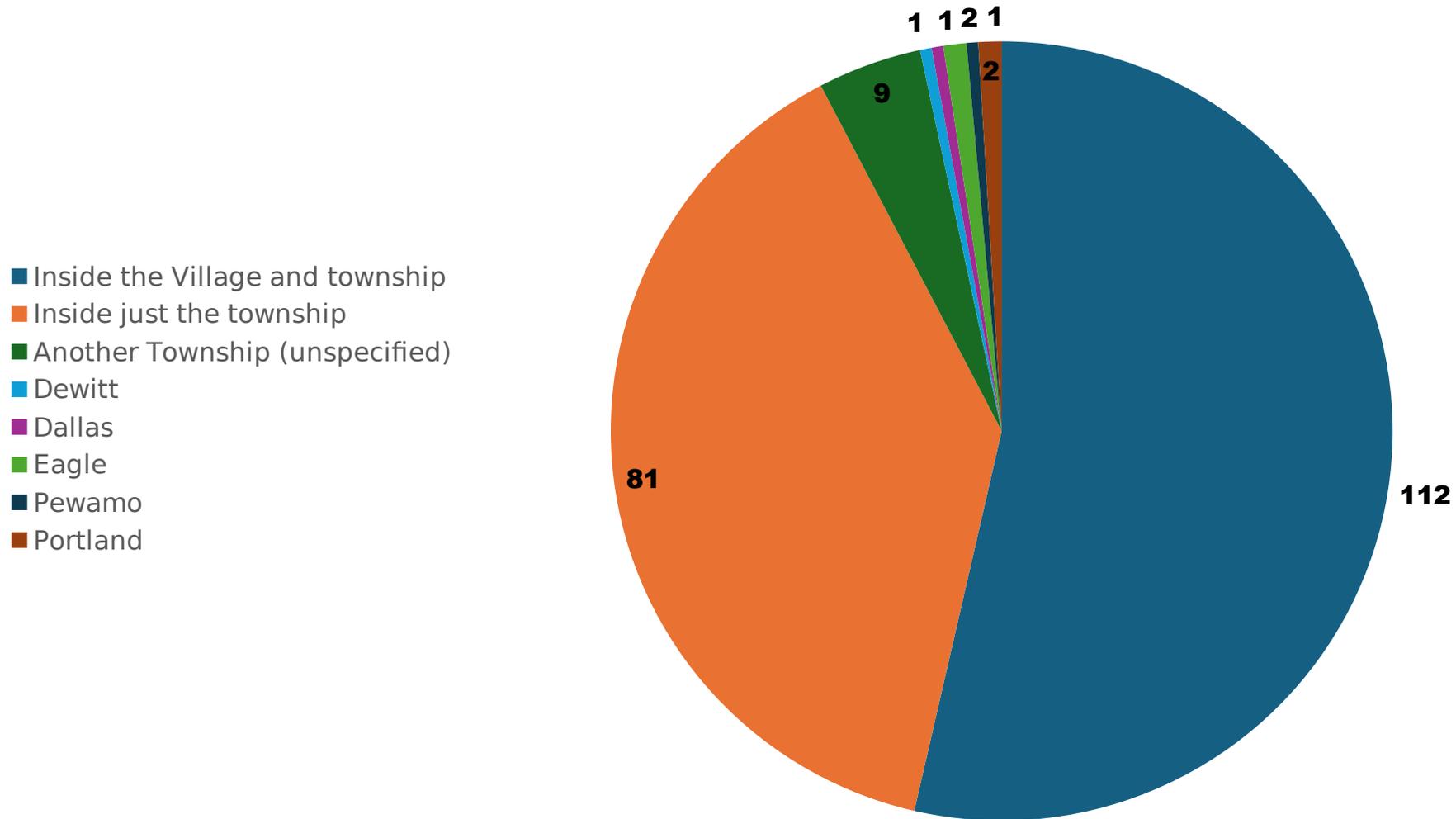
Average Rating: 3.66

How would you rate the park for accommodating users of every ability and accessibility level?



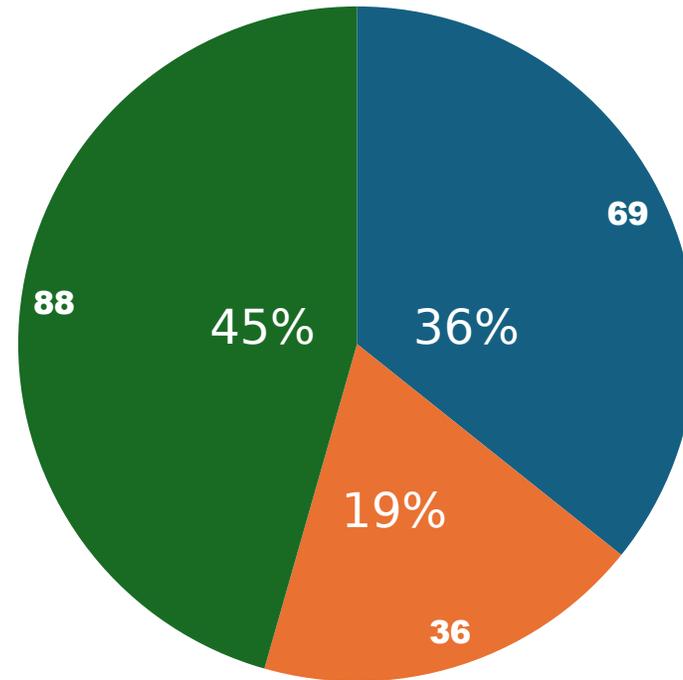
Average Rating: 3.03

Where is your full-time residence?



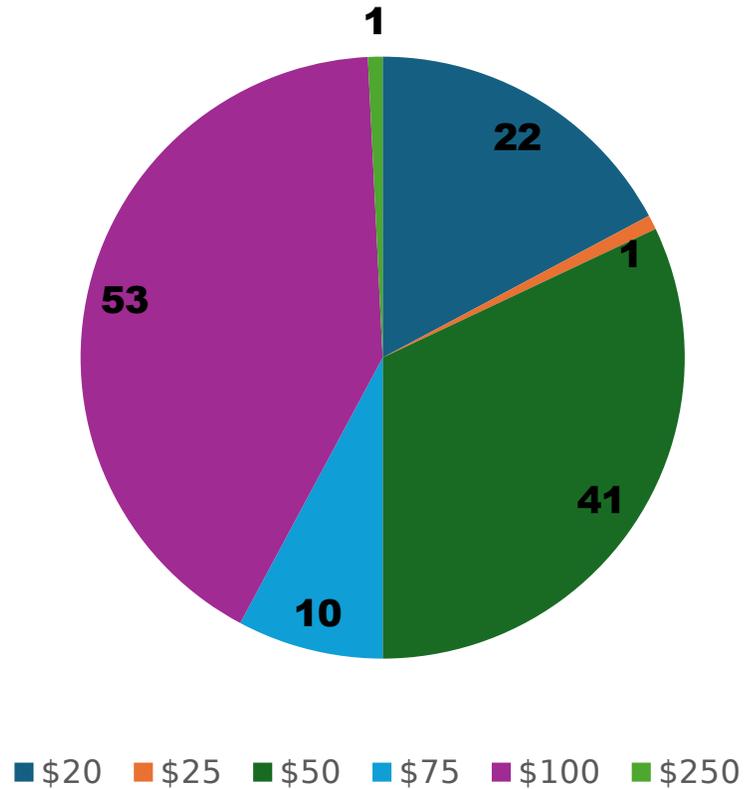
92% of respondents were in the village and township or just the township.

Would you support an annual Parks millage to allocate money specifically for Village Parks facility improvements and development, matching dollars for outside grant funding, and/or new property acquisition?



■ Maybe, Depending on the amount ■ No
■ Yes

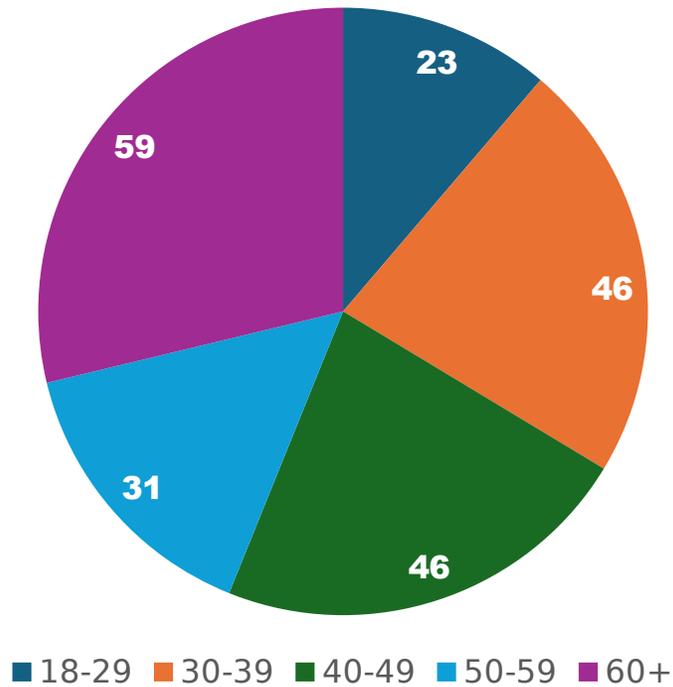
How much would your household be willing to contribute?



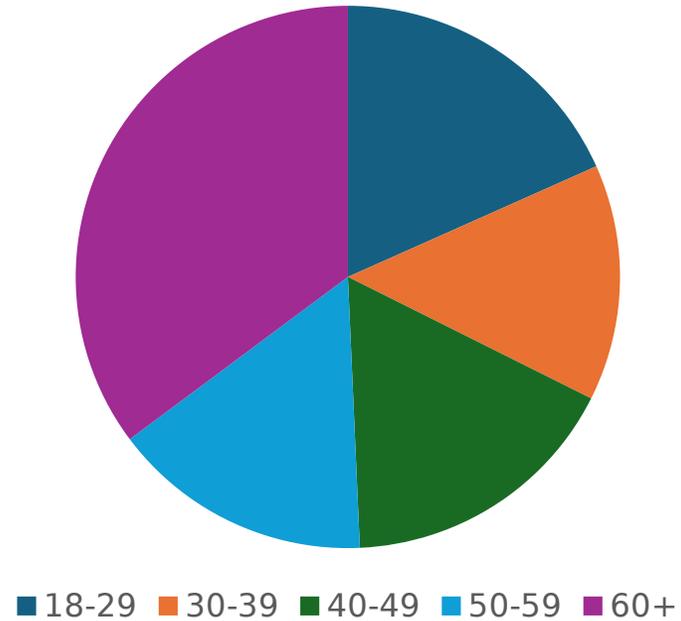
Average Amount: \$68

What is your age?

Respondents

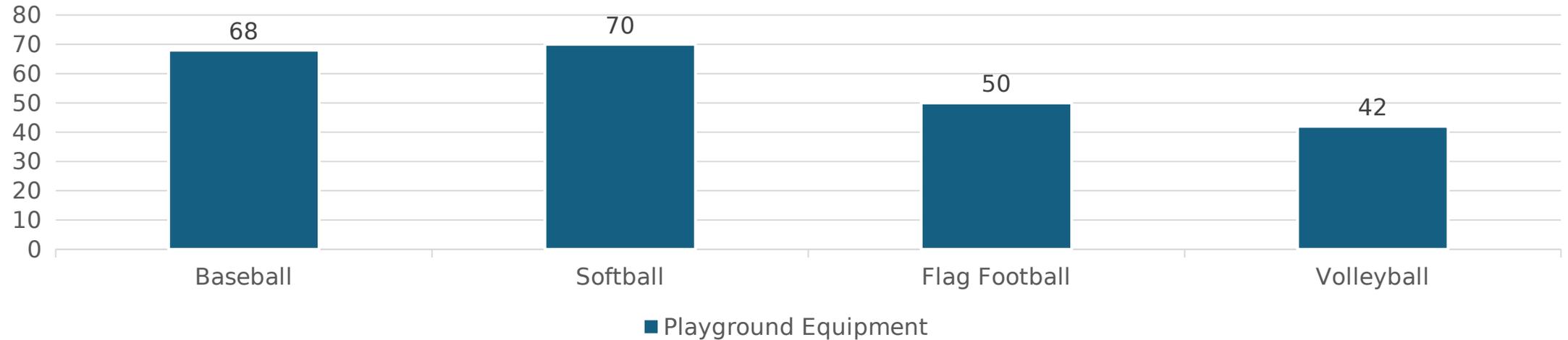


Breakdown of Westphalia Township age range according to Census Reporter.org



<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/06000US2603786140-westphalia-township-clinton-county-mi/>

Do you have children or grandchildren who play any of the following outdoor sports? If so, which sport(s)?



We appreciate your involvement in the process and your willingness to participate to help improve Droste Park!

Appendix B
Resources – Universal Design & Financing Mechanisms

Resources

Universal Design

The goal of universal access is, throughout concept and design phases, to incorporate technology, materials and other considerations that promote equal opportunities for people of varied abilities. The following concepts should be kept in the forefront as a prime consideration in the 5-year Master Plan and individual parks or projects as they develop and progress.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
Archery range	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All stations ▪ Route to retrieval area for each target ▪ Targets also useable with cross bows ▪ Arrow back stop to limit retrieval distance ▪ Larger maneuvering spaces to accommodate archers with shooting assistants
Beach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Routes over the beach and into the water can be portable/temporary matting if it needs to be taken in and out for beach cleaning/dragging or in the off season ▪ Wide enough for side-by-side walking/passing ▪ At beach route end have an accessible area at the water's edge large enough to park multiple chairs while the owners are in the water ▪ With a transfer system at the water's edge so people can get down to the ground level and into the water
Boardwalk wetland and water access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 6 feet minimum width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass ▪ Edge treatment to prevent roll/step off ▪ If side rails are used, more than 25% must be lowered for easy viewing in various places along the boardwalk ▪ Interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc.
Campgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All sites and amenities ▪ Accessible surface on all sites, including rustic sites ▪ Larger spaces to accommodate side lifts on campers and vehicles ▪ Accessible tables, grills (15" minimum, 34" maximum height), and fire rings on all sites ▪ Centrally located restrooms on easy routes from each site
Camping Cabins and Yurts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Larger clear space and maneuvering spaces in between all furnishings, including when all are in use (beds, tables/chairs with people seated at the table, shelves within lowered reach ranges, lowered wall hooks, etc.) ▪ Larger clear space thoughtfully located for typical portable items such as coolers, luggage, equipment/food bins/tubs, etc.
Canoe/kayak/boat launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wider route so someone can hand wheel boat on dolly to launch pulling boat next to them if they are in a wheelchair or two person carry down ▪ Accessible surface to water's edge and into water at launch

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More gentle slopes for easier entry and exit when hand wheeling a boat ▪ Some type of “rack” to stabilize boat at a transferable height then some type of mechanism/roller system to move, while seated in the boat, into the water Some means of transfer assistance such as overhead bars ▪ Some type of wench system to help pull boat out of water back into the rack to exit/transfer out. ▪ If there is a dock provide a transfer system on the dock so a person can be seated on the dock to transfer over to a boat in the water that is in some type of a stabilizer rack ▪ Adaptive kayaks available for use ▪ Shore station with a platform (instead of “V” rack) with a transfer system on the deck of the shore station, located next to a dock so someone could roll/get on the platform and lower it to the right level to transfer into a boat
Fishing dock/pier and observation/viewing decks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than 25% of the rails are lowered in various locations or no rails at all with only an edge treatment to prevent roll off ▪ Sitting benches (all with backs and arm rests) scattered about so anglers can choose to sit or stand to fish ▪ Tackle box stands next to one bench end (not both) leaving one end clear space for sitting side by side with someone in a wheelchair ▪ A variety of fish landing cutaways strategically placed ▪ Variety of accessible opportunities—over-water fishing, shore fishing, in-water fishing, etc. ▪ Transition plates between access route and deck/pier
Nature center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc. ▪ Creative use of technology such as mp3 players for auditory descriptions (this gives the info. directly to the individual) closed loop assistive listening devices and closed-circuit captioning of all interpretive presentations ▪ All displays at lowered heights for sitting or standing viewing ▪ All operating mechanisms that are operable with one hand and do not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than minimum number of accessible spots ▪ Each connected directly to an accessible route to the park elements and NOT into the traffic flow ▪ Thoughtfully located nearest the activity entrance, which might require multiple lots (some near the beach, some near the playground, some near the bathhouse, etc.)
Picnic areas and elements: Pavilions, picnic tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All located on accessible routes ▪ all tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc. accessible ▪ Level routes onto pavilions with no changes of level from path to pavilion surface

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Wider routes and clear space with firm surface around all elements so someone with mobility limits can easily move around the element (table, grill, etc.) ▪ A variety of table styles, some with clear sitting space on the side, some with extended tabletops on the end ▪ Some fixed tables to ensure they remain accessible (not moved off into a grassy or sandy area, etc.) ▪ Clear space all around each element so people can approach and use the grill, fire ring, etc. from the front, back and either side ▪ Grills you can lower/raise the cooking surface with one hand ▪ Raised fire building surfaces so you can place wood without leaning too far over from a standing or seated position
Playgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ramps and transfers ▪ Has both ramp and transfer access to all play components ▪ Ramps to every “getting on spot” or “sit/stand & do it spot” of every play component ▪ Transfer system from the ground up to the main deck located near the exits of slides and climbers furthest from the ramp onto the structure ▪ Only unitary safety surfaces such as poured-in-place or rubber tiles NOT any loose fill materials like shredded rubber, wood chips, engineered wood fiber, or any other non-unitary surface material ▪ On deck transfer platform at the entry point of every slide ▪ On deck transfer platform with one open transfer side and one side with transfer steps to every entry/exit point of every climber, so kids climbing up can get down to the deck to move to another component, as they may have left an assistive device at the ground ▪ A good variety of things to manipulate that make noise or music, have high contrast/bright colors, games that two kids can play (to foster social interaction), Braille and sign language panels to teach awareness, easy to operate with just one hand with a whole fist (does not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate) ▪ Different high contrast colors for decks versus transfers so kids with low vision can perceive a change in level ▪ Play panels are located at heights so they can be used from a seated position or standing
Restrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ More than the minimum number of accessible units ▪ Multiple unisex/single user toilet rooms/units so opposite sex care givers can assist; also good for parents of young children of the opposite sex so kids aren’t sent alone into the multi-user restroom ▪ Thoughtfully located near areas of activity such as play areas, beaches, fishing piers, etc.

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessible door pulls and water faucet handles - all accessible port-a-johns, again big enough for individual use or care giver/parental assistance.
Skiing/sledding hill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessible route to top (no steps), possibly using a “magic carpet” lift ▪ Level surface for sled mounting at hilltop ▪ If staffed, provide ATV transport or have policy that allows personal ATV use Transfer at hill bottom to help transfer
<p>Sports fields/courts</p> <p>Fields: soccer, football, baseball, etc. Courts: tennis, basketball, bocce, horseshoes, etc. Other: skate parks, frisbee golf</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Routes to both sides of all fields and courts, not just end zones ▪ Accessible seating spaces both ground level and elevated if risers/bleachers are provided ▪ Accessible seating spaces scattered throughout all viewing areas and levels with companion seating on both sides of the space ▪ All lowered service windows at all concession areas ▪ Wider gate openings into court areas (tennis, bocce, basketball) and skate parks to accommodate wider sports wheelchairs ▪ Routes to both horseshoe pits and along both sides of the route between pits ▪ Level routes onto bocce courts with sitting benches at both ends
Trail: nature trail, walkway, pathway, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-use trail - 8 feet, with slopes under 2%, wider width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass ▪ Walkways within a site – at least 6 feet wide and have slopes under 2% ▪ Regional trail system - at least 10 feet wide, with 1-foot buffers on either side, with slopes under 2% ▪ Unitary surface like concrete, boardwalk or asphalt, crushed aggregate/screenings that have been “stabilized” or natural soils enhanced with soil stabilizers ▪ Transition plates between trail and pedestrian bridges, decks, etc. ▪ Contrasting color treatment of the surface and textured surface treatments such as brushed concrete at intersections or interpretive stations to cue people who have vision impairments that there is something to pay attention to at that spot ▪ Close to level cross slopes (side to side) and very gentle running slopes, no steep sections, larger (greater than 60” X 60”) level areas at all turns and intersections

Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thoughtfully laid out on the site to maximize the experience with minimal difficulty ▪ Accessible amenities such as benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.

Common components that need to be looked at to answer these basic questions include parking, paths of travel from parking, street or sidewalk to activity areas, the activity areas themselves, signage, support facilities such as restrooms, surfacing, and communications required for recreation programs and general use of a facility or area. The existing parks are evaluated on the following criteria and scored 1-5.

- 5 – Facility is fully accessible. Features and facilities meet and exceed the Uniform Building Code and take into consideration Universal Design principles. Main elements such as the washrooms, entrances, parking, and amenities are barrier free.
- 4 – Majority of the facility is accessible; however, there are some accessibility barriers. Some improvements are needed to make the facility fully accessible.
- 3 – Facility is partially accessible. Barriers exist to fully accessing the facility and an alternate facility may be necessary.
- 2 – Facility has limited accessibility. Multiple barriers exist to fully accessing the facility and an alternate facility may be necessary.
- 1 – Facility has poor accessibility. Accessibility barriers may exist at entranceway, recreation area

Financing Mechanisms

The following paragraphs briefly outline existing sources of funds for financing the future recreational improvements in the City.

1. General Funds

The City's general fund has been the primary source of funds for operating and maintaining its current facilities. Future site improvements, acquisition, and development will remain dependent on these tax-supported funds, as will the continued operation and maintenance of these facilities. Consequently, recreation planning has to be coordinated with the yearly budgeting process for the City's general funds.

2. Donations and Gifts

The availability of donated land, labor, equipment, and funds from individuals and organizations is an attractive and effective way to improve recreational opportunities in The City. Over the past few years, several groups and individuals have contributed significantly. Such support should be encouraged to continue.

3. Multi-jurisdictional Funding

One of the primary goals of establishing a trail authority comprised of adjacent townships would be to establish a joint source of funding for acquisition, development and maintenance of multi-jurisdictional trail projects. It is too premature to discuss levels or formulas for financial participation/contribution, but by forming such a coalition, the individual townships will collectively be in a stronger position in seeking future matching grants than if pursuing projects individually.

4. Non-Local Financial Assistance

Many communities seek outside sources of funds to supplement their local sources when providing recreational improvements. There are several programs administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) that can provide some financial assistance to local recreation projects. Funding amounts available to communities vary from year to year depending on Federal support and State legislative agendas.

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation that funds projects such as nonmotorized 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 designated by Congress for these types of activities. Some key information on the TA program is as follows:

- Funding will be reduced from the current \$23 million a year to \$14-16 million a year. Project funding will be more competitive than previously with the average per capita award in the \$44-50 per person range.
- Minimum match is still 20% however historic average is 34% and the 2011 average was 44% local match to grant. Any project request for over \$2,000,000 total project cost must be 50%-50%. The most favorable grant request will likely be in the \$500,000 range.
- Regional Trails will still be a priority, as will urban area streetscapes. Museums and historic preservation projects will be phased out for funding consideration.
- Preliminary grant application review with regional staff is encouraged to determine competitive nature of project and gather suggestions from TE staff. Project narratives should focus on intermodal transportation opportunities as they relate to the larger picture in the community,

traffic calming, improving safety and improving water quality through best management practices.

The **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)** is administered by the MDNR. The MNRTF program utilizes the royalties from oil, gas, and other mineral developments on state-owned lands to help finance the acquisition and the development of outdoor recreation facilities. The CMI program is the result of the passage of Proposal C of 1998.

Any unit of government, including school districts, may apply for grants to develop or acquire land(s) for public recreation or resource protection purposes. Application forms are available on February 1 of each year. The application deadlines are April 1 and September 1, of each year. The MDNR submits a list of recommended projects to the legislature the following January and funds are available after legislative appropriation, usually the following fall.

All local units of government must provide a local match of at least 25 percent of total project costs. For **MNRTF** development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000, and the maximum is \$300,000. Proposals must be for outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes. Outdoor recreation support buildings and other facilities are eligible for development funding, as is the renovation of existing recreation facilities.

All applicants must have a current DNR-approved community recreation plan, documenting the need for project proposal.

In addition, any private individual may nominate land for public acquisition under this program. All nominations are reviewed by the MDNR for possible acquisition and the landowner is not required to be the person nominating a parcel of land for public acquisition. Nomination forms are available at any time from the DNR Recreation Division, and may be submitted to the Department year round.

The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (**LWCF**) program makes money available to the States for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. From 1965 to 1996, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received over \$100 million in LWCF assistance for more than 1,500 projects, over 1,100 of which have been grants to local governments. The objective is to provide grants to local units of government and to the State to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation.

Applications are evaluated on established criteria including project need, capability of applicant, and site and project quality. At least 50 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local government applicants with a \$30,000 minimum and \$100,000 maximum funding limit. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) makes recommendations to the National Park Service (NPS), which grants final approval. Criteria are spelled out in the "Recreation Grants Selection Process" booklet given to all applicants.

PA 32 of 2010 created the Local Public Recreation Facilities Fund to be used for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Money for this fund is derived from the sale of the **Recreation Passport** which replaces the resident Motor Vehicle Permit (MVP) — or window sticker — for state park entrance. The passport will be required for entry to state parks, recreation areas and boating access sites. Ten percent of remaining revenue will be used to fund the **Recreation Passport local grant program**. A 25% minimum local match is required for the Passport grant program with a maximum grant amount of \$150,000 and a minimum of \$7,500.

The grant program may only be used for local development projects. The program is focused on renovating and improving existing parks, but the development of new parks is eligible. In addition, projects must fulfill the following requirements in order to be eligible:

- Current annual capital improvement plan (CIP) – plan must include the proposed project. If your community does not have a CIP, you must have a current approved recreation plan on file with the DNR.

Organizations with an interest in developing fishing conditions in their areas may be able to get financial assistance from a program established through the ***State Game and Fish Protection Fund***.

This fishing development grant is offered through the MDNR and can be as much as \$200,000 annually, in cash or in-kind services. Projects eligible for funding include: culvert modifications for improved stream flow; livestock or sheet erosion control projects; the development of spawning riffles, fish cover structures, or spawning reefs; and the construction of fishing piers and rough fish barriers.

The MDNR accepts grant proposals from organized fishing groups and local units of government. In all cases, projects are able to approach other sources such as the federal government for additional matching funds.

The ***Historic Preservation Grant Program*** is administered by the Department of State with funds made available through the National Park Service of the Department of Interior. The intent of the program is to conduct surveys of architectural, engineering, archaeological, and historic resources, to identify and nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and to plan for the protection of those cultural/recreational resources.

The funds for this program are apportioned by the National Park Service directly to the State, which, in turn, allocates funds on a project-by-project basis to local governments, organization, and individuals.

In Michigan the Historic Preservation Grant program is administered by the Michigan Department of State. The amount of assistance is up to 50% of the project expenses. Grantees are reimbursed at the completion of the project for work done within the days of a contract between the Department of State and the grantee. EXPENSES INCURRED PRIOR TO THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT ARE NOT ALLOWABLE PROJECT COSTS AND WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.

The ***Inland Fisheries Grant Program*** offers grants up to \$30,000 for projects that enhance the state's aquatic resources. This program may be applicable to the scenic overlook fishing platforms and educational kiosks.

The City is committed to review all available funding sources and prepare the necessary plans, reports, cost estimates, and funding applications, to achieve the goals of this recreation plan.

5. Millage

In an effort to raise matching funds or fund projects with local money, many community leaders have placed ballot proposals before their residents for a dedicated increase in their existing mill property tax to fund park maintenance and repair, including care for new parks and newly acquired parks, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as safety and security improvements. Establishment of a Park Improvement/Development, Maintenance and Repair Millage will assure that parks and facilities will be maintained at the level of quality expected by park users and that new parkland will have adequate amenities.

Appendix C

Public Notices – 30-Day Review & Hearing of Draft Recreation Plan

Appendix D
Resolution of Plan Adoption

Appendix E
Meeting Minutes

Appendix F

Transmittal of Plan to County and Regional Planning Agencies

