



Novi Parks, Recreation & Forestry



Strategic Plan 2007-2010

Enriching Lives...Building Community

INTRODUCTION

Novi is a great place to live, work, and play. Our quality of life stands toe-to-toe with many of the best communities across the United States. As noted by City Manager Clay Pearson in his Fiscal Year 2006/07 message, "We, in Novi, have much to be proud of – and thankful for...excellent schools, rising property values, and solid public services." He explained that these benefits are the result of sound planning and decision-making. In a *virtuous circle*, quality actions to preserve, maintain and grow our community's current assets have led to more opportunities to improve what Novi has to offer.

We, at Novi Parks, take very seriously our integral role in strategically planning and implementing those quality actions that will promote the *virtuous circle* process. In living out our mission to *enhance lives and build community*, we are dedicated to managing and growing Novi's parks and recreation assets to assure our citizens an ever increasing quality of life.

The Novi Parks Department preserves and shepherds growth of our community's parks and recreation facilities and programs through several types of careful planning. Our focus in this document is on the strategic planning process. Our over-arching *Strategic Plan* visualizes the social and organizational future of the department's team in meeting and exceeding community expectations. It tells where our business operation is now, where it is going and how it will operate in getting there.

Sound strategic thinking in the past has led to such successful actions as:

- Completion of the Americans with Disabilities Act facility improvements
- Removal and replacement of more than 3000 diseased ash trees
- Generation of more that \$1.2 million in sponsorships, grants and private support
- Significant capital improvements to Lakeshore Park, Community Sports Park and Power Park
- Significant customer service improvements resulting in higher customer satisfaction

During 2006, our focus has been building on these prior successes in shaping new visions and strategies that will carry us to our community's desired future. The following pages will lead you through the thoughtful process and resulting strategies that make up the *Parks, Recreation & Forestry 2007-2010 Strategic Plan*.

Randy Auler, CPRP

Parks, Recreation and Forestry Director



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CITY COUNCIL

- Mayor—David B. Landry
- Mayor Pro Tem—Kim Capello
- Robert Gatt
- Terry K. Margolis
- Andrew Mutch
- Toni Nagy
- Lynne Paul

CITY MANAGER

Clay J. Pearson

PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY COMMISSION

- Chair—Harold “Butch” Wingfield
- Vice Chair—Reagan Schwarzlose
- Charles A. Staab
- Jay Dooley
- Paul Policicchio
- Christina Radcliffe
- Karen Zyczynski
- Student Commissioner—Ashima Goyal
- Student Commissioner—Scott Wagner

PARKS, RECREATION AND FORESTRY DIRECTOR

Randy Auler

Our Process

The City of Novi Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department's strategic planning process began in February 2006 and progressed through three stages:

Stage 1

Are we doing the right things? Are we doing things the right way?

This phase focused on scanning regional trends and critical issues, obtaining citizen input and identifying opportunities to better serve the community.

Stage 2

What do we want to be and do in the future?

We utilized the information gathered in Stage 1 to create the vision, mission and values statement for the organization. We developed strategies that would move the organization towards the achievement of the vision.

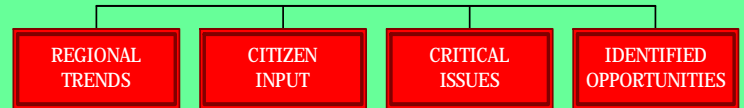
Stage 3

How will we get there?

We developed strategies that will guide staff in the development of their work plans and performance measures. Each division of the department is currently preparing their work plan and key performance measures.



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS



Novi Parks, Recreation and Forestry Vision, Mission Statement and Core Values

The planning team utilized the trends/opportunities analysis, organization analysis, critical issue statements, and citizen/staff input to establish a vision statement (preferred future) and a mission statement (purpose) for the department.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement describes the preferred future for parks, recreation and forestry services to the community. It serves as a foundation for the strategic plan initiatives and outcomes:

"Excellent Park, Recreation and Forestry Services"

MISSION STATEMENT

The business of the department is contained in our mission statement:

"Enriching Lives...Building Community"

The department achieves our mission by:

- Strengthening community image and sense of place
- Supporting economic development
- Strengthening safety and security
- Promoting health and wellness
- Fostering human development
- Increasing cultural unity
- Protecting environmental resources
- Facilitating community problem solving

CORE VALUES STATEMENT

The department's employees make decisions and act within a framework of shared core values to achieve the department's vision and mission.

The department's core values are:

- Teamwork
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Results-oriented
- Creative thinking
- Collaboration
- Courage
- Professionalism

STRATEGIES

- Priority: Strengthening Our Fiscal Management
- Priority: Caring for Our Facilities, Parks, Park Amenities, Forests and Trails
- Priority: Planning Our Facilities, Parks, Park Amenities, Forests and Trails
- Priority: Providing Outstanding Recreation Services
- Priority: Exceeding Customer Expectations
- Priority: Environmentally Friendly
- Priority: Upgrading our Technology
- Priority: Connecting with Community Residents through Marketing and Communications
- Priority: Developing Our Team

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- Financial self-sufficiency
- Good stewardship of assets
- Our parks meet the community's leisure needs
- Our service quality exceeds customer expectations
- Recognition for excellence in innovative programming
- Take leadership in providing environmentally friendly parks
- Upgrade technology for productivity and information
- Citizens value us as an essential service
- Professional development increases staff capabilities



CURRENT SITUATION

Trends, Implications and Opportunities Analysis

There are several clear trends that describe the current situation. For each of these, there are implications and opportunities that describe the potential and preferred effects on department services. The department must utilize emerging trend information to pro-actively develop and implement strategic initiatives, thereby demonstrating our commitment to achieving the preferred future.

Trend: Changing Economy

Global economic development and competition are having an effect on the United States economy. China and India alone are home for 3 billion new capitalists who are making themselves felt on the world stage. Economic growth rates in these countries over the past 15 years have been over 7% annually¹. The affect on the United States economy has been profound. An estimated 2.6 million factory jobs have been lost since 2001². In Michigan, 300,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost since 2000. The auto sector is in the midst of a drastic transformation. Bankruptcies are rippling through the industry and plants continue to close.

A depressed housing market in the face of a weakened economy has adversely impacted taxable values of property. Additionally, state-shared revenue has been reduced. These forces are requiring some local municipalities to struggle with budgets and, in turn, become self-reliant. This major shift is occurring at a time when social needs, population growth, and demand for more park and recreation services are geometrically increasing.

While other Michigan municipalities struggle, Novi continues to flourish. This is because of many reinforcing factors that increase our assets. These include high-quality education, powerful retail draw, a qualified work force, a great location, and a park system that continues to “*Enrich Lives and Build Community.*”

Implications:

The global economy will continue to evolve and affect the United States and its local communities. China is the second-largest consumer of oil in the world. By 2020, China will have 120 million vehicles in use. The increase in demand and oil consumption, coupled with uncertainties of the Middle East’s oil providing countries, will drive the price of oil upward. The transformation of the auto sector will continue to impact the economy of Southeastern Michigan. Novi must continue to recognize, foster, and reinforce the key factors of the *virtuous circle* so that the city will continue to flourish.

Opportunities:

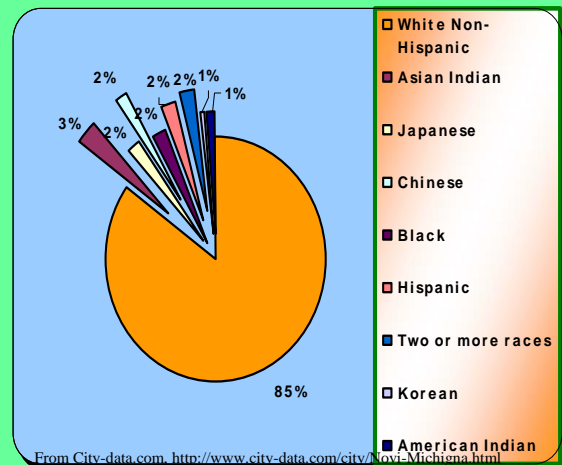
Economic development and the attraction and retention of high-technology and medical businesses is very competitive. Parks, recreation and forestry services serve a critical

role in the community’s economic growth plan. A survey of corporate siting managers and real estate executives who make business location decisions indicated recreation and cultural amenities were in the top three reasons to locate a business. Research data from the Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Development Services indicates that subdivision lots adjacent to natural areas and parks results in a 12% price premium. Additionally, the research reveals that there is a 20% premium on residential real estate located within two miles of a trail network. Parks and recreation services are serving a central role on the economic growth and quality of life in Novi.

Trend: Growing Ethnic Diversity

The national population is becoming more ethnically and racially diverse. Hispanic citizens now represent the second largest minority group in the United States with a population projected to reach 102.6 million by 2050³. The City of Novi population is roughly 2% Hispanic, 2% Black, 2% Chinese, 2% Japanese and 3% Asian Indian.

**City Population by Race
(based on the 2000 census)**



Implications:

Our staff must be sensitive to different recreational preferences and needs, such as ethnic holidays, cultural and family practices, languages, etc.

Opportunities:

Emphasis will need to be placed on programs and services that include and enrich all residents of the community. Examples of these services include the Asian Pacific Program, Sunday afternoon soccer programs, international festivals, cultural programs, and non-traditional recreation facilities, such as cricket fields.

Trend: The Age Wave

In 1900, the life expectancy was 47, today it is 75. The aged population is growing quickly with the addition of the, “baby-boomers,” who are entering retirement. The population over 75 years of age will increase from 16.9 million to over 49 million by the middle of the century. The American Association for Retired Persons (A.A.R.P.) is gaining a perspective member every eight seconds for the next 18 years. Novi’s “boomer” and “senior” population is increasing rapidly. This increase is expected to be 269% over the next 14 years³.

Implication:

Since few families own long-term care insurance, the burden for the care of aging parents will likely be placed on families and the community’s social infrastructure. This will require additional partnerships and resources in the social services, health care, mental services, transportation, meals, housing, and recreation services. Additionally, as the baby-boomers age, their definition of recreation continues to change, becoming progressively more active both in physical and intellectual activities. This requires providing programs and services that will range from sports, fitness, computer labs, to opportunities to volunteer and give back to the community³.

In Novi, the need for programs, services and facilities is increasing. The new “older population,” is expected to differ in distinct ways. They will be healthier and wealthier, better educated and have a desire to make contributions beyond retirement and there will be a longer life expectancy. Partnerships are essential to provide services and programs necessary to sustain the active *lifestyle* that the “new senior” seeks. We will need to find innovative ways to use volunteers, such as in satellite locations (libraries, schools, computer labs, mentoring programs, etc.) Additionally, providing social services to the elderly population will be important. These services will include transportation, assisted living information and referrals to those in need.

Opportunities

Many communities across the country include the recruitment of seniors as part of their economic development strategy.

The appeal of retirees to these government entities stems from their potential for stimulating local economies. If 100 retired households come to a community in a year, each with a retirement income of \$40,000, their impact is similar to that of new business spending \$4 million annually in the community.

The financial impact of senior housing is so significant that some communities are beginning to view them as more desirable than business relocations. Social security

and pension benefits of retirees are stable so their incomes are steady and not subject to the down falls of economic business cycles.

Novi is experiencing economic benefit as a result of the increasing boomer/senior population. This is evident from such senior living developments as Fox Run and Walton Woods in Novi.

Opportunities to expand programs, services and facilities should be explored. Furthermore, opportunities to create effective partnerships that would expand facility space, programs and services should also be explored. Potential partnerships include:

- Government cooperation (library, schools, Oakland County Parks, and neighboring communities)
- Not-for-profit agencies (hospitals/medical offices)
- Private sector (transportation/travel/colleges/sports organizations)



¹ From: From: *Proposal for Assistance in the Strategic Visioning Process for the City*, Leonard J. Brzozowski, Walsh Consulting Group, Walsh College; *The Dawn of a New Oil Era?*, By Paul Samuelson, Newsweek

² From: From: *Proposal for Assistance in the Strategic Visioning Process for the City*, Leonard J. Brzozowski, Walsh Consulting Group, Walsh College; *The Changing Nature of Corporate Global Restructuring: The Impact of Production Shifts on Jobs in the US, China, and Around the Globe*, by Dr. Kate Bronfenbrenner, Director Labor Education Research, Cornell University, October 14, 2004 report Submitted to the US-China Economic and Security Review Commission

³ From: *Proposal for Assistance in the Strategic Visioning Process for the City*, Leonard J. Brzozowski, Walsh Consulting Group, Walsh College

ORGANIZATION ANALYSIS

Organization Analysis

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis of each departmental division was performed by the staff and the Strategic Planning Committee. This analysis enabled the committee to define the department's current practices, future vision and community benefits.

Public Awareness and Advocacy

Current Practices –

- Comprehensive customer service plan is not in place
- Promotional and communication efforts limited
- Promote features instead of benefits
- Lack of strategic marketing initiatives

Future Vision –

- Comprehensive strategic marketing plan
- Responsive to and anticipate market conditions
- Promote benefits (outcomes) rather than features
- Proactive customer service policies
- Build a community support and advocacy base

Community Benefit –

- Increased education of park and recreation services as a valuable community asset
- Greater understanding of services provided
- Build a support base
- Builds life-long relationship with community

Revenue and Resource Development

Current Practice –

- Traditional approach and use of fiscal and physical resources
- Limited dedicated funding streams
- Partnerships not always equitable
- Lack of cost recovery targets

Future Vision -

- Expand utilization of new revenue sources
- Dedicated funding streams for preventive (lifecycle) maintenance and capital improvements
- Activity Based Costing (*ABC*) applied to park maintenance standards
- Increase revenue generation and balance to program service value
- Maximize and formalize partnership relationships

Community Benefits -

- Consistent and stable funding will ensure the department's ability to sustain facilities and programs desired by the public
- Market-driven and priced to match values and benefits
- Better community understanding between fees for service and value and benefits received
- Partnerships will expand the provision of needed services

Park Maintenance and Infrastructure

Current Practice –

- Preventive maintenance management practices not formalized
- Facility usage not managed to capacity standards
- Community accessed school facilities not presently funded to support maintenance activities
- Minimal technology support for maintenance operations

Future Vision –

- Preventative maintenance plan established and funded
- Maintenance standards developed that support level of use
- Schedule outdoor facility usage to levels that do not degrade facility
- Proportionally fund maintenance for school facilities
- Efficient use of technology for park management

Community Benefits –

- Manage park assets to their highest productivity
- Improve sustainability and longevity of park assets
- Consistent outdoor facility maintenance
- Creates a decision-making tool to balance service level with cost

Enhancing Recreation Programming

Current Practice –

- Programming is limited by facilities and organizational structure
- Inconsistent application of activity lifecycle and trend management
- Age segment/interest based
- Cost recovery based on historical performance

Future Vision –

- Programming based on outcome benefits
- Key future focus areas: performance arts, youth sports development, senior services, adult sports and tournaments, teens, pre-school, and family programs

Community Benefits –

- Services provided are geared to demographic appeal
- Reduce cost per experience
- State-of-the-art facilities
- Design for revenue generation



CRITICAL ISSUES

The following critical issues describe our current situation. Our department is using this information to develop and implement strategic initiatives that enable us to overcome these challenges and achieve a preferred future.

Critical Issue: Funding

The park operation millage is rolled back (reduced) annually and state-shared revenue has also been reduced. This has required local governments across the state to become more self-reliant. Our department receives a general fund subsidy for operations, and all capital improvements are funded from the general fund. While the traditional sources of funding through millage and state-shared revenue are being reduced, the demand for our parks, recreation and forestry services is increasing. These forces place greater emphasis on seeking creative solutions to becoming financially self-sufficient.

Critical Issue: Deferred Capital Improvements / Maintenance

Deferred park and facility infrastructure investment and increased demand for recreation services have resulted in facilities that do not meet the community's needs. A clear example is the growing use of existing sports fields. The explosive participation in soccer and lacrosse has resulted in the over-utilization of these fields to three times their capacity. This over utilization has resulted in poor field conditions, increased repair costs, potential injuries to participants, reduced participation time, and cancelled games. (Appendix C).

Critical Issue: Lack of Partnerships

Partnerships should be financially beneficial to both parties and be created with a shared vision and shared responsibilities. For us, such partnerships need to enhance service and reduce costs. Because of historically low fee structures, the department loses revenue opportunities, therefore subsidizing many of the user groups that reserve and exclusively utilize department facilities.

Critical Issue: Organization Structure and Entrepreneurship

An organization that fails to plan and change is destined to flounder. A review of the trends, critical issues, and the department's ability (staff competencies and organizational structure) reveal that the current organizational structure and staff competencies will not enable the department to achieve its vision.

To be successful, the staff must acquire an entrepreneurial mind set, become innovative thinkers, envision and seize community challenges and opportunities, and become excellent communicators that articulate the mission to the community. In essence, staff must become "owners," of

their respective operations and be accountable for not only the success of their operation, but for the success of other department owners and entire community goals. Staff who prefer the status quo do not recognize the forces that affect the community, do not become "owners" of the department and community goals will struggle.

Additionally, the organization must be re-organized to align resources with desired outcomes. This re-organization will be done by utilizing existing resources, part-time and contractual employees (Appendix E).

Photo Courtesy of : Crescent Rose Photography, Novi, MI



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

We utilized the trends analysis, critical issues, vision and mission statements to create strategic priorities to lead us toward the achievement of our vision.—"Excellent Parks, Recreation and Forestry Services." These priorities will align budgets and work plans for the staff and Parks, Recreation and Forestry Commission. Specific performance measures will be reported quarterly to chart success towards the vision.

Priority: Strengthening Our Fiscal Management

Performance Measure—We achieve financial self-sufficiency by utilizing resources efficiently and developing alternate revenue sources.

Explore alternate means to fund acquisition, development and operations, thereby lessening our dependence on our tax base.

- Develop an effective parks foundation
- Develop an effective grant program to maximize funding and development opportunities
- Operate facilities, programs, and partnerships based on self-sustainable revenue philosophy
- Develop an effective and efficient sponsorship program
- Explore beneficial facility, land, park, park amenities, recreation programs and trail partnerships
- Evaluate and document the cost-effectiveness, productivity, customer satisfaction and efficiency of programs and services annually to ensure optimum performance and return on investment
- Evaluate the potential for establishing a capital improvement millage
- Evaluate the presentation of legislation for other types of funding (i.e., hotel/motel tax, impact fees)

Strengthen our fiscal responsibility by maximizing our monetary resources.

- Establish strategic bond issue dates for funding future projects
- Consider enhancing or returning the parks and recreation fund millage to the charter level
- Develop and implement a revenue and pricing policy
- Establish standard wage ranges throughout the department
- Review opportunities for use of contractual services
- Establish and include capital equipment, facilities and vehicle replacement account in the annual budget for future needs (similar to reserve fund for the ice arena)

Establish financially equitable partnerships that improve services and minimize/reduce costs.

- Identify examples of effective partnerships to utilize as models for future partnerships
- Expand efforts to pursue partnerships that support

program and facility development. Examples include:

- ◆ Sports user groups (facility development/maintenance)
- ◆ Hospital and medical (program and facility development)
- ◆ Businesses (program and facility development)
- ◆ Conservation and historical groups (program interpretation, and trail development)
- ◆ Homeowners associations (adopt a park/landscape development)
- ◆ Schools (shared facilities and programs)
- ◆ Regional opportunities with adjacent communities and county parks (program and facility development)

Priority: Caring for Our Facilities, Parks, Park Amenities, Forests and Trails

Performance Measure—We are good stewards of properties and keep them safe, attractive and well-maintained.

Maintain all facilities, parks, park amenities and trails to maintenance quality standards

- Establish quality standards for all facilities, parks, park amenities and trails
- Conduct an audit of existing facilities, parks, park amenities and trails to determine compliance with standards
- Develop, prioritize and implement a maintenance strategy using audit-identified needs, based on funds and personal resources
- Provide staff development opportunities to improve knowledge, procedures and safety
- Acquire and implement a technology-based maintenance management system
- Acquire equipment that improves efficiency and effectiveness and maximizes performance
- Pursue partnership opportunities to enhance operation and maintenance costs, i.e., adopt a park programs



Priority: Planning Our Facilities, Parks, Park Cemeteries, Forests and Trails

Performance Measure—Our parks and park system meet our community's current and future leisure needs through comprehensive planning.

Provide a comprehensive park system by developing and implementing a park acquisition plan

- Conduct an audit of existing parks and facilities
- Identify available acreage for either existing park expansion or new park acquisition
- Develop, prioritize and implement a land acquisition strategy using identified audit needs based on funds or partnership opportunities to achieve desired outcomes
- Better communicate department acquisition and development needs to city staff, developers, and the Oakland County Parks Commission
- Develop park and facility master plans.
The community currently needs 80-100 acres of additional park land to meet active recreation needs

Develop a multi-use recreational pathway system (PEOPLE TRAILS)

- Complete the greenway/pathway study
- Coordinate planning with the Oakland County Government and Southeast Michigan Greenway Initiative
- Provide accurate information to the community regarding priorities and use of the system
- Identify and pursue funding opportunities through grants and the development community

Develop a plan to meet the increasing demand for sports facilities, senior facilities, and performing arts facilities

- Conduct an audit of existing facilities, including a capacity management study
- Identify needs and opportunities to meet the needs
- Prioritize the facility development plan—Communicate plan with city staff, developers, Oakland County Government developers and citizens

Priority: Exceeding Customer Expectations

Performance Measure—Our service quality exceeds customer expectations.

Develop consistent, exceptional service throughout the department

- Establish department-wide customer service standards
- Conduct audit of all services to determine compliance with standards
- Develop and implement a customer service strategy using audit findings and based on funding
- Create and implement customer service training program

- Make program registrations and reservations hassle-free
- Establish a customer research program

Priority: Provide Outstanding Recreation Programs and Events

Performance Measure—Our programs are recognized for excellence because they are innovative and exceed customer expectations

Develop and provide quality programs that customers will recognize as excellent

- Develop department-wide program standards
- Conduct an audit of existing programs to determine compliance with standards
- Develop, prioritize and implement strategy using identified audit needs to improve service in core program areas (seniors, theatre, youth sports, adult sports, events, and ice arena programs)

Seniors

- ◆ Develop strategies to serve additional program space
- ◆ Develop strategies to improve the operation of the transportation program
- ◆ Expand programs for the “new senior” who wants active, short commitment and individual interests and has little interest in traditional senior programs

Youth

- ◆ Continue expansion of program offerings in youth sports, sports camps, and youth recreation by employing part-time recreation coordinators and by establishing effective partnerships
- ◆ Achieve high participation and high customer satisfaction ratings

Performing Arts

- ◆ Continue the implementation of strategies for the expansion of the performing arts through camps, classes, workshops, marketing and effective partnerships

Adult Sports

- ◆ Identify and secure indoor facility space for adult sports programs
- ◆ Implement strategies for the expansion of the adult sports program

Events

- ◆ Plan and implement one revenue-producing event per year

Ice Arena

- ◆ Continue implementation of business strategies and maintain financial self-sufficiency
- ◆ Build capacity for the organization to manage the facility in the future

Goal: Maximize current field space available for athletic activities

- Continue annual evaluation of field capacity and field use demand based on the work done with this planning project to forecast the need for renovation and new field development
- Build routine forecasting of future trends and monitoring of needs into the priority field use policy
- Pursue an enhanced partnership with the School District to maximize use of turf
- Create a “community council of sports providers” that will meet periodically to review the use and scheduling of fields and will sustain an on-going conversation with community sports groups regarding the expanding need for sports fields
- Coordinate policy decisions regarding scheduling and use of sports fields with the department field development goals and strategies
- Determine the appropriate provision of facilities for select sport programs

Priority: Environmentally Friendly

Performance Measure—Become recognized as a leader in the provision of environmentally friendly parks, natural areas, trails and recreation facilities.

Assure the most efficient and effective overall department operations

- Better define the term “sustainability” as it applies to the department’s operations and the provision of park and recreation services
- Evaluate operational procedures to assure the department is using sustainable practices in all service areas
- Institute an on-going best practice and trend survey at least once every two years to benchmark the department’s service level to its users
- Investigate the use of alternative energy sources where they may be appropriate
- Conduct an energy audit of all department facilities and functions to identify potential efficiencies and improvements

Develop a sustainability education program internal to the department

- Focus internally initially in order to establish buy-in among staff
- Facilitate the effort through other agencies, contractors, and local knowledgeable persons to train staff in skills needed
- Create opportunities for staff to help develop model programs for the department and for other agencies

Priority: Upgrade our Technology

Performance Measure—Technology enhances customer access to information and improves staff productivity.

Upgrade technology to improve productivity

- Conduct an audit of existing technology, new technology and staff training needs
- Develop, prioritize and implement a plan based on funds

Priority: Connecting with Community Residents through Marketing and Communications

Performance Measure—Citizens are well-informed of department services, understand the benefits of our services and value us as an essential service

Develop a comprehensive marketing and promotional plan that creates recognition and identity of the department as the primary community recreation provider and strengthens community understanding and appreciation of the benefits the department provides

- Utilize the information obtained in the Community Interest and Opinion Survey done for this Plan and in future periodic surveys
- Review and revise marketing strategies and use of materials in order to better position the department, including consistent brand, style, formats and message
- Build upon identity and reputation in order to enhance public awareness and credibility of existing offerings
- Better coordinate public relations efforts and develop a new campaign to include a speaker’s bureau and increased media exposure
- Produce and distribute an annual “State of the Department” report providing information to the public about parks and recreation funding, stewardship of tax dollars, and fees and charges
- Embrace concepts from the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association VIP program and other statewide and nationally endorsed park and recreation marketing programs
- Win the National Recreation and Parks Association Gold Medal Award

Assure marketing strategies incorporate the needs and desires of new, as well as existing, residents

- Assure that strategies for reaching new residents as they move into the department are included into the Department’s Marketing Plan
- Institute an ongoing, statistically valid community survey at least once every two years to assess broad community need, reaching both users and non-users of the Novi Parks, Recreation and Forestry system
- Incorporate the ongoing survey results into the depart-

ment's decision making process and in marketing and public relations efforts

- Work with organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, Newcomers Club, etc to promote department services to new residents

Priority: Developing Our Team

Performance Measure—Services are provided by a well-trained team of professionals as a result of our investment in, and support of, professional development.

Develop team skill sets to allow for the re-alignment of department organization necessary for achievement of the vision

- Conduct an audit of training needs
- Utilize the audit to establish training and education plans: "Novi University"
- Provide knowledge and skill-training opportunities that align staff with the ability to achieve the vision
- Develop a reward and recognition program
- Capture and respond to team member input
- Align resources to activate vision

Realign the organization structure to achieve strategic priorities.

- Further develop staff competencies
- Align staff into new structure based on competency development and opportunities



APPENDIX A

The Making of an Excellent Park

Great cities are known for their quality of life, and one measure of any city's greatness is its ability to provide parks, recreation, natural beauty and signature open spaces for its citizens. Successful parks, recreation and forestry services pay dividends for cities by building civic pride; contributing to healthy, active lifestyles; protection of environmental resources; increasing property values; and attracting economic benefit.

Characteristics of an Excellent Park System

Excellent park and recreation systems have common characteristics. The following is a brief overview of the characteristics.

1. *A Clear Expression of Purpose*

The community must clearly set forth the park systems purpose. The department must use this purpose to define the core services expected by the community and periodically review its purpose and core services to stay on course and best serve the community.

2. *Continuous Planning and Community Involvement*

Planning should include the development and utilization of strategic plans, park development plans, revenue/business plans, marketing/communication plans, resource management (environmental) plans, and organizational audits. The community should be involved in the planning and in the evaluation of services.

3. *Quality Standards and Performance Measures*

The use of quality standards and performance measurements ensure the quality delivery of services and identify continuous improvement areas.

4. *Utilize Equitable Partnerships to Enhance Service Delivery*

Partnerships are utilized to provide, expand, and enhance service delivery. The partnerships must be financially equitable and achieve the desired outcomes of each partner.

5. *Quality People and Effective Organizational Structure*

Organizations that employ quality people, invest in the employees skill development and empower the employee receive results in outstanding service for the community. The organizational structure should align key positions and resources with desired community outcomes.

6. *Deliver "Core" Services*

Organizations that provide resources to its primary business excel at meeting the community's expectations and needs.

7. *Provide Community Benefit*

Parks, Recreation and Forestry services provide significant economic, environmental, community and individual benefits. There has been extensive research conducted to validate the benefits.

APPENDIX B

Public Benefits of an Excellent Parks, Recreation and Forestry System

As contributors to the quality of life of the community, parks, recreation and forestry services are equal to roads, utilities and other infrastructure elements. The cost of investing in these elements is justified by public benefits derived from their availability. Parks, recreation and forestry departments deliver significant public benefits. Public benefits are defined as those that accrue to most people in the community, even if some people in a community do not participate in programs or use facilities. Public benefits are classified into three broad categories: economic development, alleviating social problems, and environmental stewardship. The following is an overview of the public benefits provided by parks, recreation and forestry services.

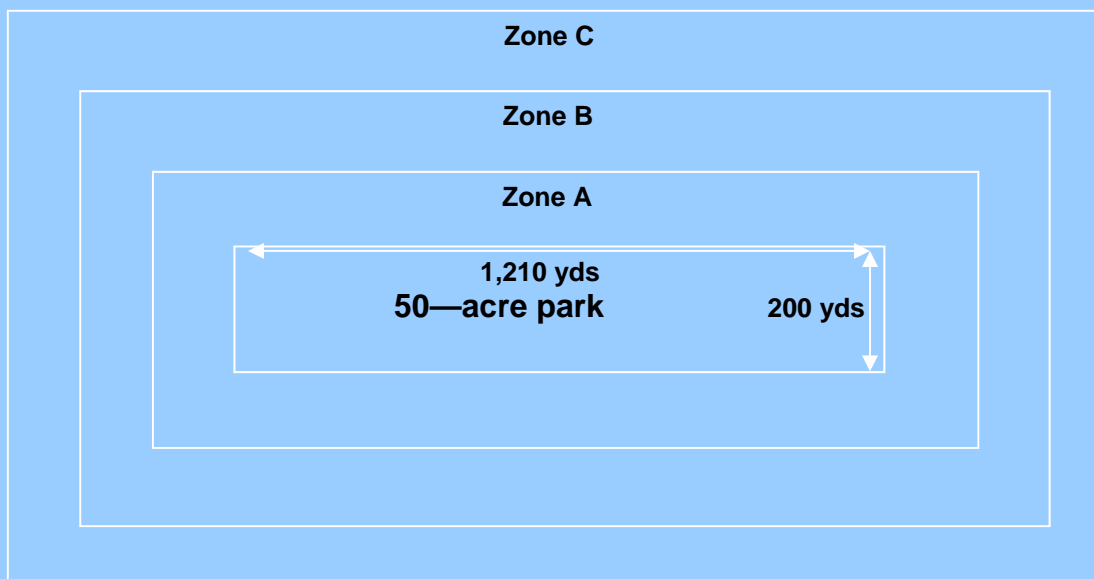
I. Economic Development

A. Enhancing Real Estate Values

People are prepared to pay more to live close to parks and greenways. The Oakland County Department of Planning and Economic Development studies reveal a 20% premium on subdivision lots adjacent to natural areas and a 12% premium on residential real estate within two miles of a greenway/trail network. The enhanced values of these properties result in their owners paying higher property taxes to governments. If the incremental amount of taxes paid by each property that is attributable to the park is aggregated, it is often sufficient to pay the annual debt charges required to retire the bonds used to acquire and develop the property. This concept is illustrated in the hypothetical 50-acre park shown below.

It is a natural, resource-oriented park with some appealing topography and vegetation. The cost of acquiring and developing it (fencing, trails, supplementary planting, some landscaping) is \$20,000 an acre, so the total capital cost is \$1 million. The annual debt charges for a 20-year general obligation bond on \$1 million at 5 percent are approximately \$90,000.

Layout of a 50-acre natural park and the proximate neighborhood area.



A projected annual income stream to service the bond debt was calculated as follows:

1. If properties around the park were 2,000-square-foot homes on half-acre lots (40 yards by 60 yards) with 40-yard frontages on the park, there would be 70 lots in Zone A (30 lots along each of the 1,210-yard perimeters, and 5 lots along each of the 200-yard perimeters).
2. Assume total property taxes payable to city, county, and school district are 2 percent of the market value of the property.
3. Assume the market value of similar properties elsewhere in the jurisdiction beyond the immediate influence of this park is \$200,000.
4. Assume the desire to live close to a large natural park creates a willingness to pay a premium of 20 percent for properties in Zone A; 10 percent in Zone B; and 5 percent, in Zone C, and that there are also 70 lots in Zones B and C.

Table 2-1 shows that, given the above assumptions, the annual incremental property tax payments in the three zones from the premiums attributable to the presence of the park amount to \$98,000. This is sufficient to pay the \$90,000 annual bond charges.

Zone	Market Value of Each Home	Incremental Value Attributed to the Park	Total Property Taxes at 2%	Incremental Property Taxes Attributed to the Park	Aggregate Amount of Property Tax Increments Given 70 Home Sites
Outside the park's influence	\$200,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$0
A (20% Premium)	\$240,000	\$40,000	\$4,800	\$800	\$56,000
B (10% Premium)	\$220,000	\$20,000	\$4,400	\$400	\$28,000
C (5% Premium)	\$210,000	\$10,000	\$4,200	\$200	<u>\$14,000</u>
					\$98,000

TABLE 2-1 How property taxes pay the annual debt for acquisitions and the development of the park.

The flow of this investment cycle are shown in Figure 2-2:

1. The council invests \$90,000 a year for 20 years (annual debt charges on a \$1 million bond) to construct or renovate a park,
2. Causing the values of properties proximate to the park to increase,
3. Leading to higher taxes paid by proximate property owners to the council,
4. Which are sufficient to fully reimburse the \$90,000 annual financial investment made by the council.

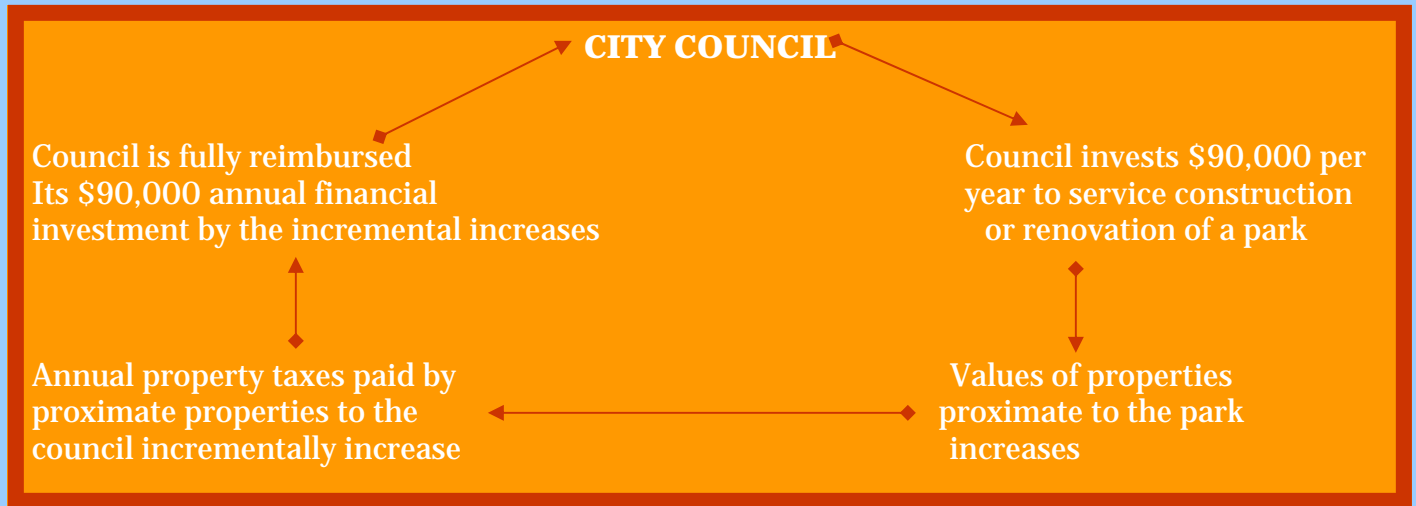


FIGURE 2-2 The investment cycle associated with a local government's investment in a park.

Four additional points are worth noting that may further strengthen the economic case.

First, this illustration assumes no state or federal grants are available to aid in the park's acquisition or development. If they were available to reduce the community's capital outlay, the incremental property tax income stream would greatly exceed what was required to serve the debt payments.

Second, the incremental property tax income will continue to accrue to the community after the 20-year period during which the debt charges will be repaid, at which time the net return to the community will be substantially enhanced.

Third, a park of the size shown in Figure 2-1 is likely to improve the quality of life and, thus, have some economic value to urban residents living beyond Zone C. The empirical data suggest that the capitalization of benefits ceases at a selected distance, usually somewhere between 500 feet and 3,000 feet away from the park perimeter in urban contexts (Crompton, 2001). It is unlikely, however, that park users and beneficiaries will be restricted to only those individuals located within such a narrowly defined service area.

Finally, evidence suggests that investment in parks effects the comparative advantage of a community in attracting future businesses and desirable residential relocators, such as retirees. The proximate capitalization approach, however, does not capture the secondary economic benefits attributable to park provision that accrue from such sources.

B. Attracting Businesses

In many cases, the viability of businesses in the highly recruited high-technology, research and development, company headquarters, and service sectors is dependent on their ability to attract and retain highly educated professional employees. The deciding factor of where these individuals choose to live is often the quality of life in the geographic vicinity of the business. No matter how quality of life is defined, park and recreation opportunities are a major component of it.

- Research has shown that corporate decision makers in high-technology companies, research and development companies and corporate headquarters rank quality of life as the most important determination to locate their company (REX 1990).
- A survey of corporate CEOs indicated that the quality of life for their employees is the third most important factor to determine the location of a business. (Rand Corporation/Rabianski 1991).
- Small company owners indicate the parks and recreation services is the highest priority in determining location for their businesses (Rand Corporation).

C. Attracting Retirees

A new clean-growth industry in America today is the increasing number of relatively affluent, active retirees. Their decision as to where to locate with their substantial retirement incomes is primarily governed by two factors: climate and recreational opportunities.

Communities that have invested substantial effort to expand their tax bases by attracting new businesses are recognizing that recruiting mobile, retiring persons may be an effective complimentary strategy. Members of this mobile retiree cohort have been termed “Grampies,” Growing Retired Active Monied People in Excellent Shape. This group lives longer, retires earlier, has an active lifestyle, and has high personal income. Retirees stimulate local economy, transfer significant financial assets, and provide a large pool of volunteers.

D. Attracting Tourists

The major factor considered by tourists when they make a decision about which communities to visit on a pleasure trip is the attractions that are available. In most cities, those attractions are dominated by facilities and services operated by parks and recreation agencies and their non-profit partners (parks, beaches, events, festivals, athletic tournaments, museums, historical sites, cultural performances, etc.) Without such attractions, there is no tourism.

- Festivals and sporting events are good for the economy of a community or city—the money generated locally exceeds the public or private dollars invested. Therefore, the direct dollars that are allocated provide leverage for the total investment in the economy.

* *Example of the Economic Return and the Financial Return*

A city that hosted an Amateur Softball Association Men’s 40-and-Over Fast-Pitch National Tournament—

All 37 teams that qualified for the tournament were from outside the local area. The average number of players per team was 15. Some players brought family and friends with them, so the average size of the contingent associated with each team, including the players, was 21. Because it was an elimination tournament, the length of time that the teams stayed in the community varied from two to six nights.

Economic Return—

A survey of the players revealed the following:

- Total expenditures in the local are by the players and their family and friends: \$287,000
- An input-output model that calculated multipliers concluded the following:
 - ◆ Total economic impact on sales: \$525,000
 - ◆ Total economic impact on personal income: \$164,000

Financial Return—

- Income to the city parks and recreation department from entry fees: \$4,625
- Costs incurred by the department, including manpower, to host the event: \$14,000
- Net financial loss to the city: \$9,375

Pay-Back-Period-

The cost of constructing the softball complex was almost \$2 million. Based on economic return to the residents in terms of personal income, the capital cost of the complex would be repaid after 14 similar tournaments.

The difference between the financial and economic approaches is illustrated above. The financial balance sheet, a net return of \$273,000, \$511,000, or \$150,000 is the result, depending on whether economic impact was reported in terms of direct expenditures, sales impact, or impact on personal incomes. (These figures were calculated by taking the gross amounts shown and subtracting from them the \$14,000 costs incurred by the department to host the event.)



II. Alleviating Social Problems

A. Healthy, Active Lifestyles

There is a growing recognition that the key to curtailing health care costs lies in prevention of illness so that there does not need to be treatment by the expensive medical system. Park and recreation services contribute to this end, not only by facilitating improvements in physical fitness through exercise, but also by facilitating positive emotional, intellectual, and social experiences. People with high levels of wellness have proclivity to act during their free time, rather than merely be acted on. The following list encompasses the range of why parks and recreation lead to healthy, active lifestyles:

- Each mile walked or run by a sedentary person would give him/her an extra 20 minutes of life
- Starting an activity program reduced the risk of dying by 51% in men compared to those who remained sedentary
- 2/3 of older adults who visit parks report moderate or high levels of physical activity during¹
- Active users of public parks have a lower body mass index (a ratio between weight and height people who use parks passively or not at all¹
- Park users who were more physically active and who made frequent contact with through leisure time were less likely to report feeling depressed¹
- Users of a community-based senior wellness program had significantly higher endurance level after controlling for their level of physical activity³
- Stress relief, clearing one's mind, and exercise were the most common benefits that older adults attributed to their park visits¹. In addition, leisure activities in parks improve moods, reduce stress and enhance a sense of wellness⁷
- People who visited parks with companions (as opposed to visiting alone) reported significant levels of physical health²
- Citizens who had better access to parks, visited parks more frequently, and engaged in physical park behaviors also made fewer visits to their doctor (for reasons other than a regular check)
- People who visited parks more frequently were more likely to have a positive perception of their health¹
- 50% of older adults who participated in light to moderate aerobic park activity reported being in a good mood after visiting parks⁴

B. Environmental Stress

Environmental stress may involve both psychological emotions (e.g. frustrations, anger, fear and coping responses) that use energy and contribute to fatigue. It is experienced daily by many who live or commute in urban or blighted areas. Parks in urban settings have a restorative effect that releases the tensions of modern life. Evidence demonstrating the therapeutic value of natural settings has emerged in both physiological and psychological studies. The cost of environmental stress in terms of work days lost and medical care is likely to be substantially greater than the cost of providing and maintaining parks, urban forestry programs, and oases of flowers and shrubs.

III. Environmental Stewardship

A. The Natural Environment

People turn to the natural environment, preserved by humans as a park, wilderness, or wildlife refuge, for something they can not get in a built environment. The quality of human life depends on an ecologically sustainable and aesthetically pleasing physical environment. As Novi continues to grow, parks, recreation and forestry services will continue to play a vital role in the preservation and protection of woodlands, wetlands, waterways, wildlife habitat, and the community's green infrastructure.

- One acre of wetlands is estimated to generate \$150,000 to \$200,000 in economic benefit
- Forest lands control erosion, clean the air of pollutants, absorb carbon dioxide, and reduce harmful greenhouse gases
- Provide accessible places to enjoy nature
- Help control pollution
- Preserve plant and animal wildlife
- Improve air, water and soil quality
- Protect the ecosystem
- Enhance environmental health and protection
- Reduce stress
- Provide a source of community pride

B. Historical Preservation

Without a cultural history, people are rootless. Preserving the historical remnants offers lingering evidence to remind people of what they once were, who they are, what they are, and where they are. It feeds their sense of history.

Summary

Parks, Recreation and Forestry services are **ESSENTIAL** to making a great community. These services contribute to healthy, active lifestyles; protect environmental resources; increase property values; and provide significant economic benefit.

Enriching Lives...Building Community.



Sources:

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- (2) Orsega-Smith, E., Mowen, A. Payne, L., & Godbey, G. (2004). The interaction of stress and para... psycho-physiological health in older adults. *Journal of Leisure Research*.
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- (7) Richard J. Dolesh; Monica Hobbs Vinluan; Michael Phelps; National Parks and Recreation Web article (2006), "Top 10 Reasons Parks Are Important."
- (8) Oakland County Parks and Recreation
- (9) The Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario. (1992) *The Benefits Of Parks And Recreation—A Catalogue*.



APPENDIX C

“Organized Soccer” Field Use Summary

2006 Spring Soccer Fields

Game Fields	11
Practice Fields	22
Total Teams	120
Total Players	1350
Total Practice Hrs	1770
Total Games	310

Total Game Fields	11
Average Games per field per season	28.25

Game Field Event Number 98.18

2006 Fall Soccer Fields

Game Fields	10
Practice Fields	18
Total Teams	120
Total Players	1530
Total Practice Hrs	1940
Total Games	330

Total Game Fields	10
Average Games per field per season	33

Game Field Event Number 126.5

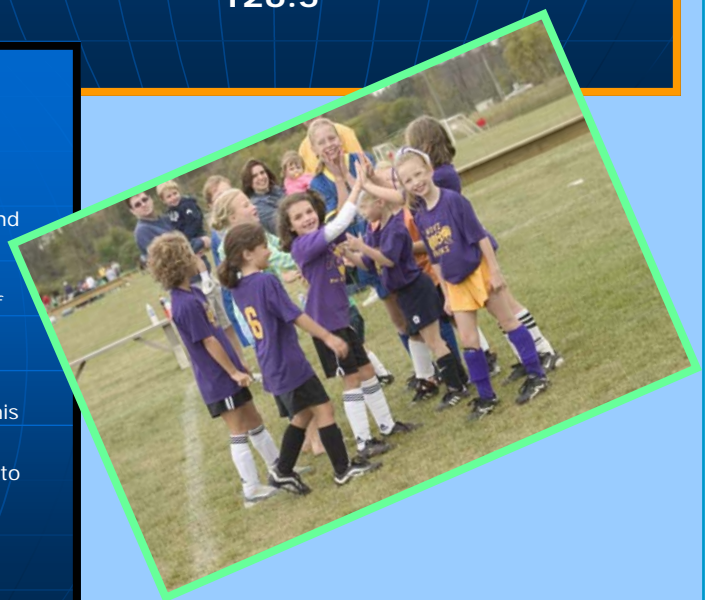


Field Wear Tolerance Summary

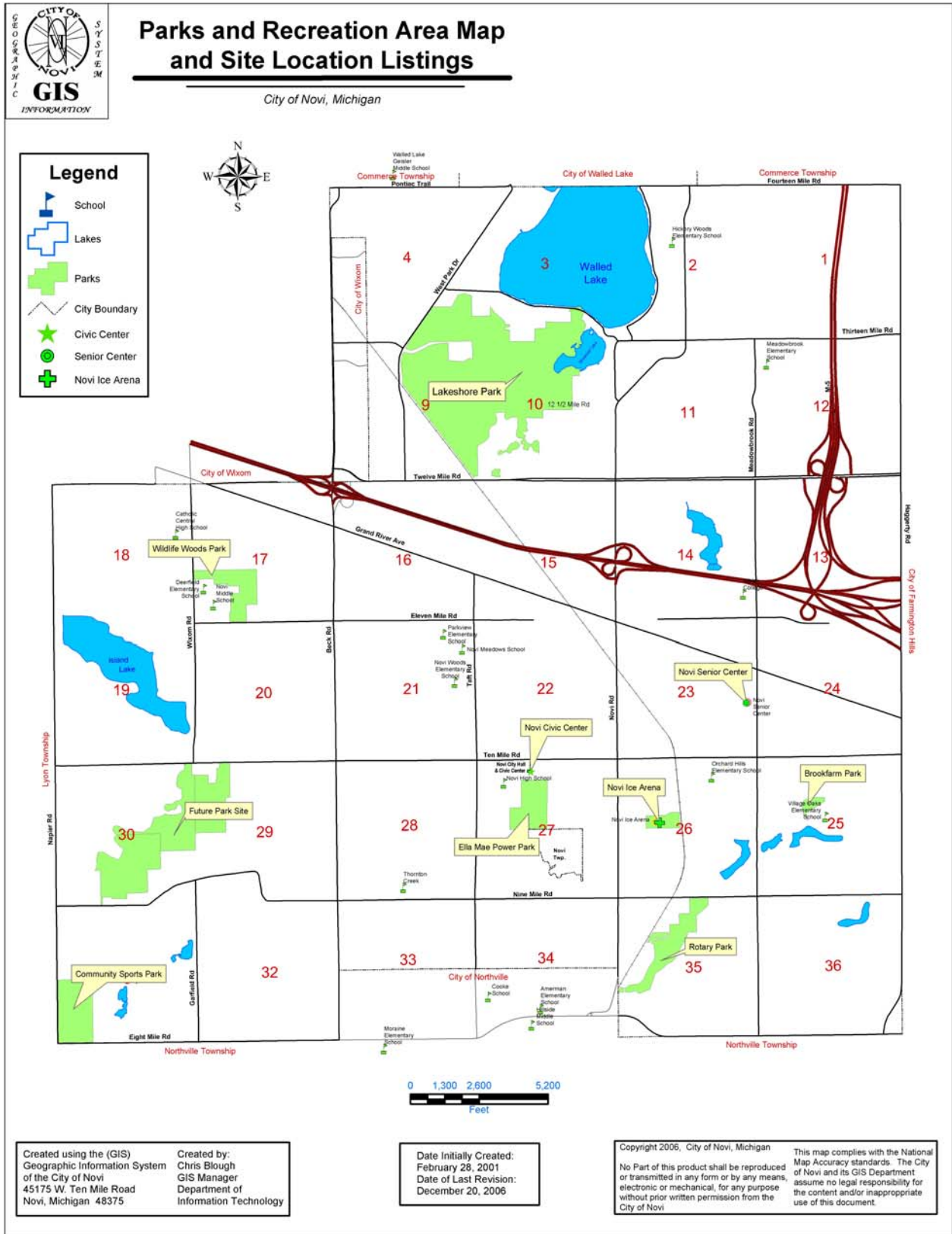
- One Game Facility
- Average soccer field can recover after 35-40 events.
- Average soccer field will not recover after 65-70 events.
- Spring Total Event Number Per Game Field
98.18
- Fall Total Event Number Per Game Field
126.5

Action Strategies

1. Install sports turf on the sports fields. Many high schools, colleges and professional stadiums have installed artificial sports turf which enables increased use, better playability, and decreased maintenance costs.
2. Limit the number of hours or events the sports fields are utilized weekly. Many complexes maintain quality sports turf for competitive athletic events. However, this would limit or reduce the number of users in the programs and would eliminate the ability to secure the fields.
3. Acquire and develop additional land for active sports use. This requires significant investment
4. Establish partnerships with public and private sector entities to develop land for sports programs.
 - “Bosco” property
 - Property adjacent to Novi Ice arena
 - Residential or commercial land donations for recreational use



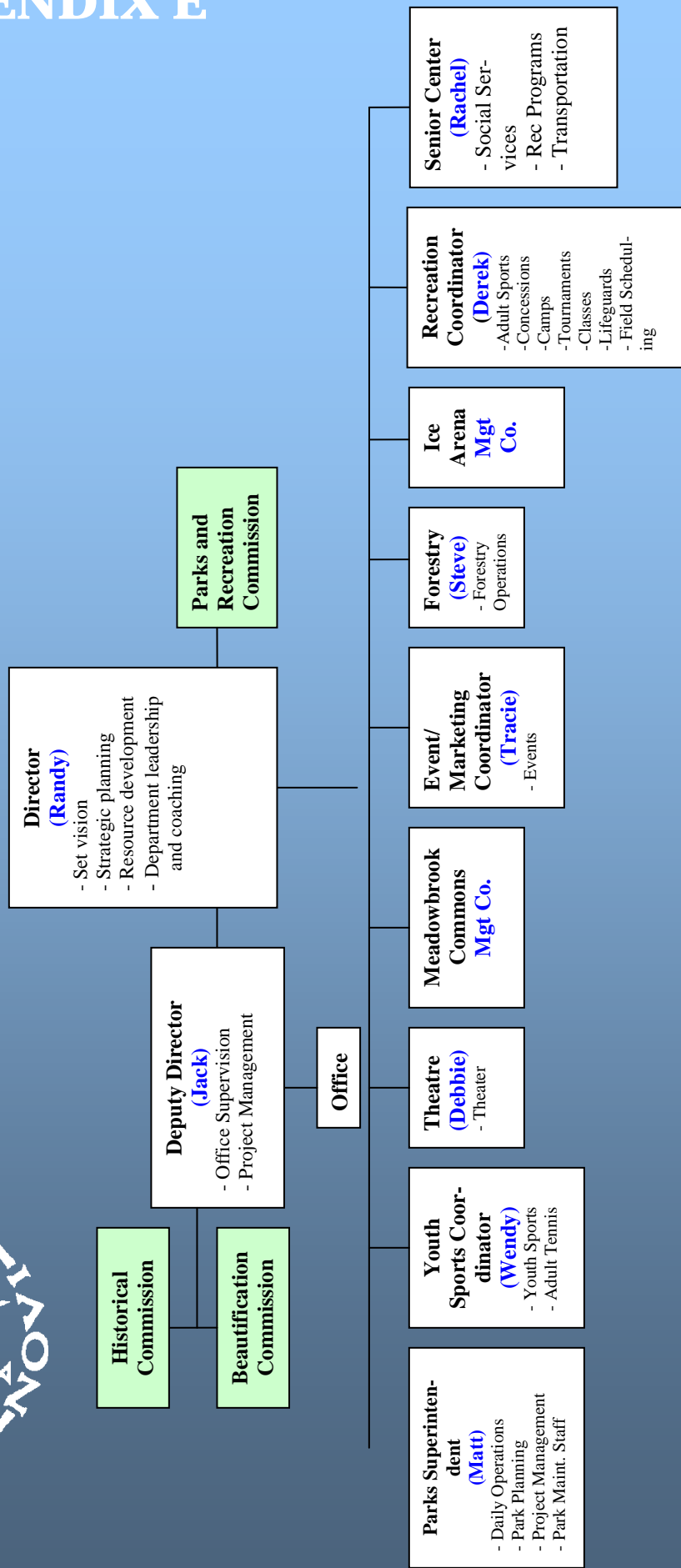
APPENDIX D



APPENDIX E

CURRENT STRUCTURE

Issues: Director required too much in day-to-day supervision of ten direct reports, thereby having less time for visioning, strategic activities, etc.; recreation side of business needs more business segment and strategic coaching; business segment areas not always consolidated under one segment leader for optimum planning and management; daily communications opportunities inhibited by non-aligned work area assignments.



APPENDIX F

NEW ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

[Fewer Layers between Service Providers and Customers; Consolidated Business Segments; Better Two-Way Communications Among Segments; More Opportunities for Leadership Coaching by Eliminating Deputy Director Position and Hiring Superintendent of Recreation Services]

