



CITY OF LOWELL

2018-2022 Recreation Master Plan

Adopted: February 20, 2018

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2018-2022 Lowell Recreation Plan involved significant effort of staff, consultants, and public participation including continuous feedback from Councils and Commissions, stakeholders, and citizens of the community. Without this support, completion of this plan would not have been possible.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

A modern definition of recreation is “refreshment of strength and spirits after work.” Governmental bodies, at all levels, have recognized the importance of recreation to the quality of life and the physical and mental health of their citizens. This recognition has been manifested in the development of National, State and local park systems, public trails, preservation of wild areas, and opening of Government-owned lands to public recreation.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, parks and recreation:

- » Enhance the human potential through the provision of facilities, services, and programs that meet human emotional, social, and physical needs.
- » Articulate environmental values through ecologically responsible management and environmental education programs.
- » Promote individual and community wellness to enhance the quality of life for all citizens.

Recreation planning is an exercise engaged in by local and state governments to anticipate change, promote needed change, and to control or direct recreational development in a way that benefits the entire community. It has the aim of harmonizing the available recreational resources and activities with the social, environmental, aesthetic, cultural, political, and economic requirements of the jurisdiction.

The purpose of the City of Lowell Recreation Plan is to provide a policy and decision-making guide regarding future recreational development within City. Key planning issues are revealed, a clear set of goals and policies are outlined, and specific implementation projects are identified.

The contents of this plan were developed based on guidance from the City of Lowell Parks and Recreation Commission and an inventory of the existing resources in the area. In addition, information was utilized from the Kent County Recreation Plan and the City of Lowell Master Plan.

The plan is intended to be frequently consulted. It will be in effect for five years, through 2022. Under the Department of Natural Resources requirements, the plan will need to be updated at that time.

Chapter 2

PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS



The 2018-2022 Parks and Recreation Plan is an update to the plan adopted in 2008, so a significant amount of original research was not necessary, although much of the information in the 'Community Description' and 'Recreation Inventory' was reviewed and updated as needed.

This plan was reviewed during several public meetings held by the City of Lowell Parks & Recreation Commission and was formally approved at their January 17, 2018 meeting along with a recommendation to the City Council for final adoption of the plan. The work to update the City of Lowell Parks and Recreation Plan concluded with a public hearing held before the City Council on February 20, 2018 at which time the plan was adopted by the City Council.

PUBLIC INPUT

The City of Lowell's Parks & Recreation Commission coordinated the overall planning process. The Parks & Recreation Commission meets every third Tuesday and receives input from the community on a regular basis regarding the existing recreation facilities.

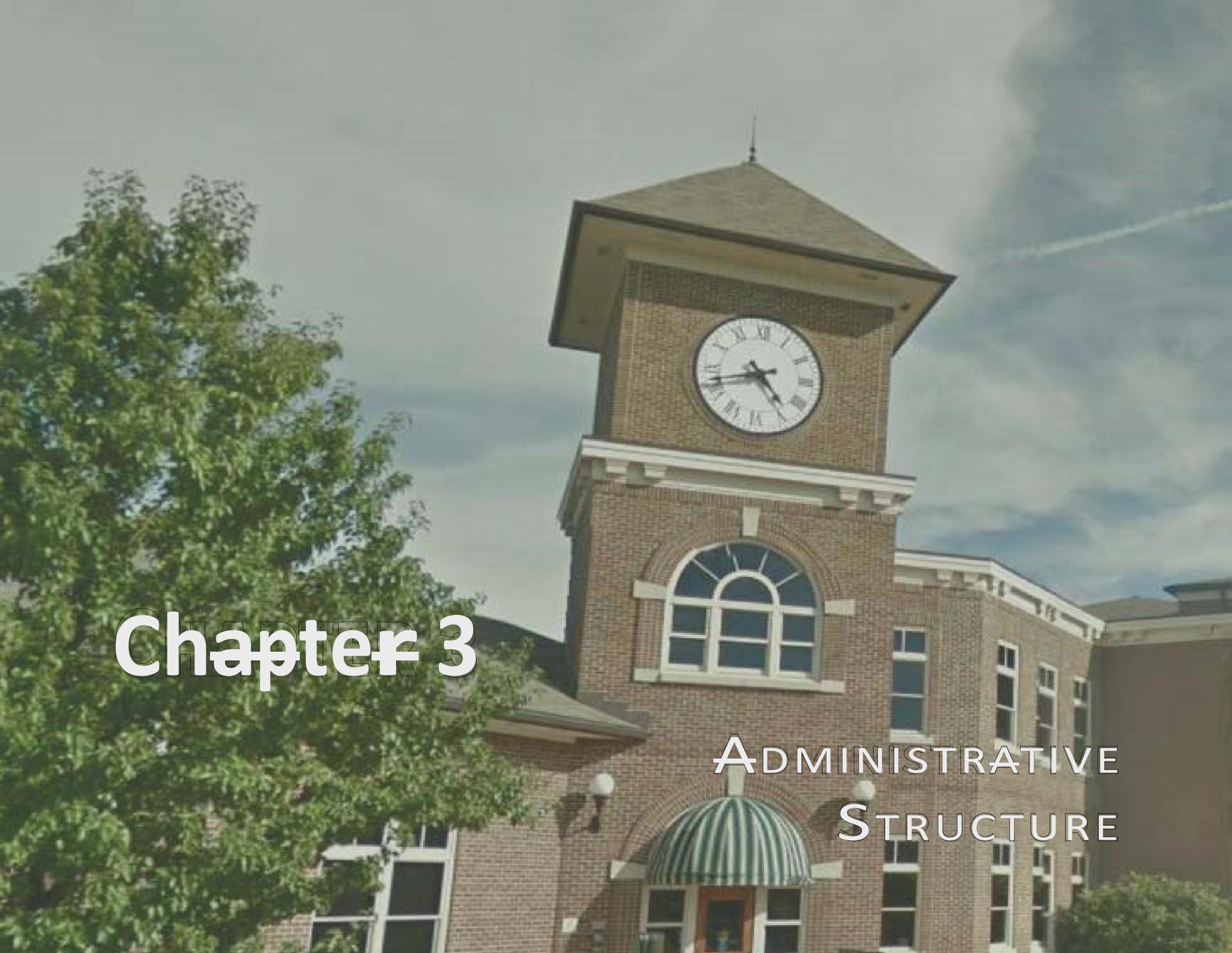
An online community survey was the primary medium used to solicit public input for this Plan, aside from the public hearing. The survey was hosted online using Survey Monkey and contained 21 questions regarding parks and recreation facilities and programming. Approximately 74 residents and 47 non-residents completed the survey, which was available for about six weeks during March and April 2017. To maximize participation, the City kept some printed copies of the survey at City Hall for individuals who did not have internet access.

The results of the survey were compiled into an analysis document and were considered by the Parks and Recreation

Commission as they reviewed the Goals & Objectives and Action Program of this Plan. The survey report is presented in Appendix 1.

MDNR REQUIREMENTS

The Recreation Plan for the City of Lowell was last revised in 2010. This 2018 update addresses the existing and future recreation needs of the community and meets the requirements of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.



Chapter 3

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

In order for the City of Lowell to have a parks and recreation program that operates smoothly, a chain of command needs to exist. The residents elect a City Council, which provides the direction the City will take and represents the City's residents. The City's day-to-day operations are performed by a full team including the City Manager, Clerk, Treasurer, Department of Public Works Director and a full support staff of City employees. Police and fire services are provided through the City of Lowell.

The City has a volunteer Parks and Recreation Commission comprised of four members appointed by the City Council and one City Council member. The Commission is responsible for providing planning and direction of the City's parks and reports directly to the City Council. Day to day operation and maintenance of the City parks lies with the Department of Public Works staff that is also responsible for the City streets, sidewalks, water and sanitary sewer systems, and upkeep of the City cemetery.

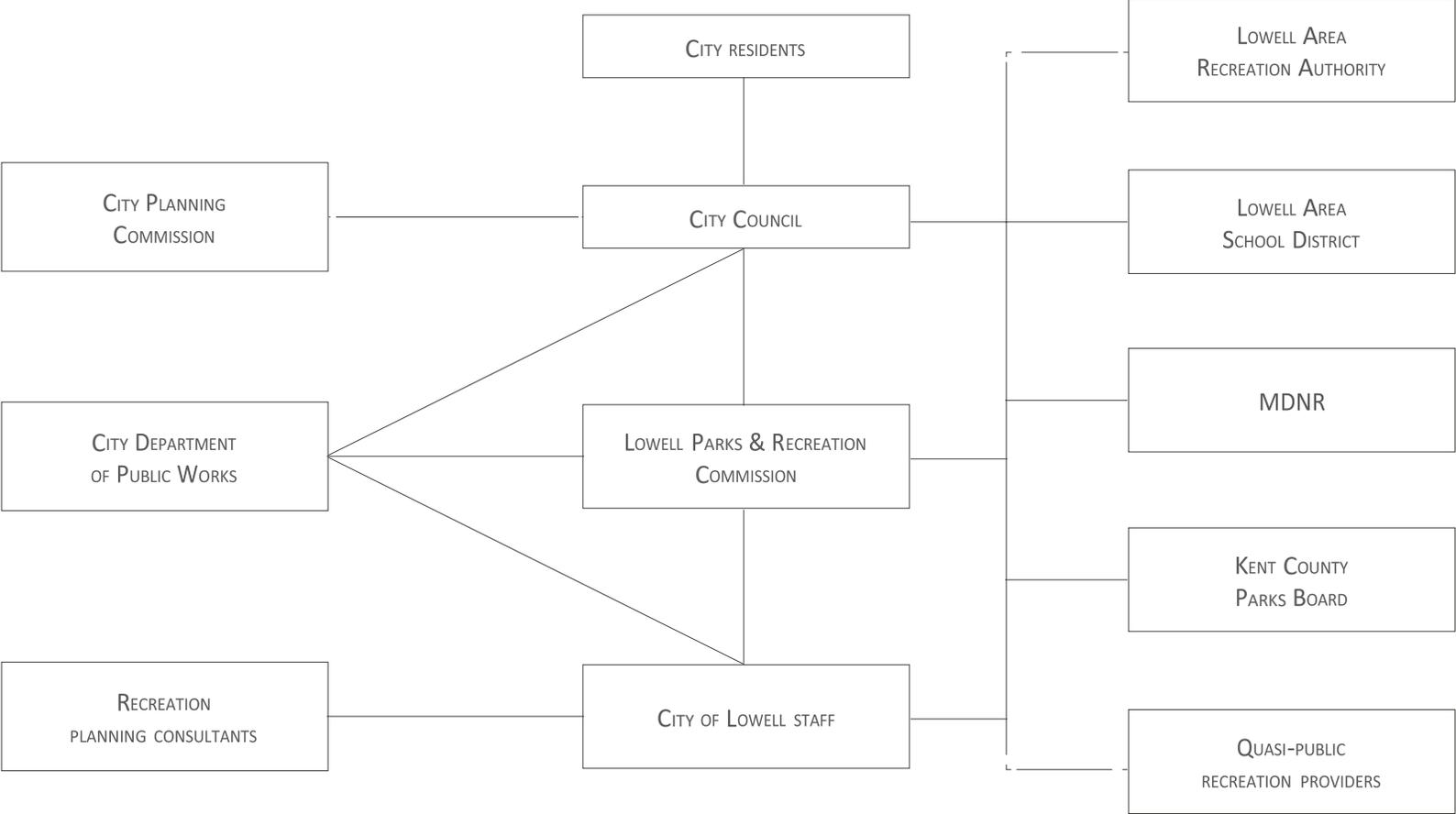
The organization chart on the following page graphically represents the relationship between the various groups involved in recreation.

The City Council receives recommendations from the Parks and Recreation Commission. This Commission works with the City Planning Commission to ensure that the goals of both groups are related and to determine where recreation activities should occur. The Committee also works with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help create meaningful plans and to fund improvements. The Parks and Recreation Commission works closely with City staff, volunteers, and a planning consultant as needed.

For 2017 - 2018, a total of \$162,680 has been budgeted for administrative and operating expenses for the Parks and Recreation Department. In addition, \$4,000 is budgeted from the Lee Fund, a local endowment for parks improvements. The

primary source of this fund is the City's general fund, and some local sports organizations through user fees.

City of Lowell Parks Planning Administrative Structure



Reporting relationship
 ———
 ——— Advisory and regulatory relationship

Collaborative relationship

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Chapter 4

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

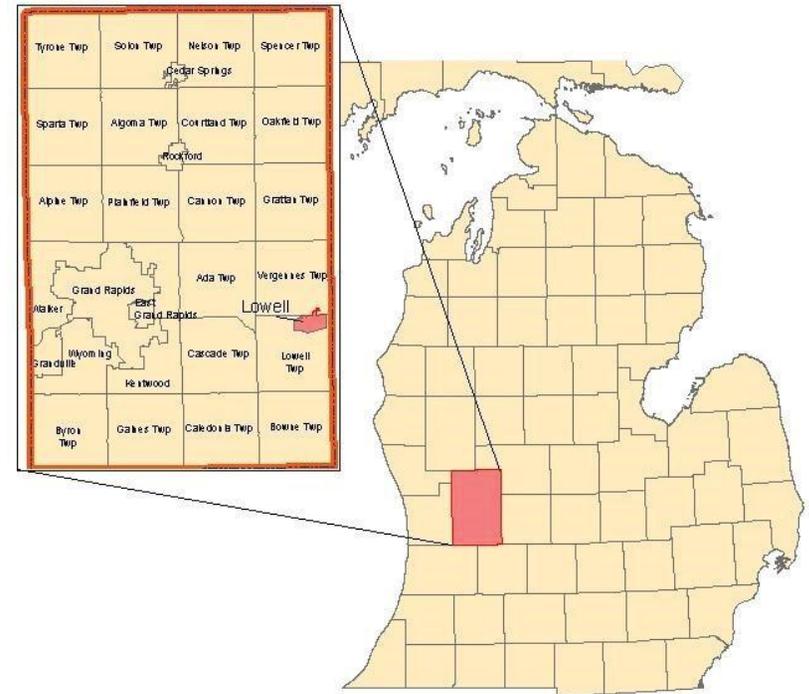
The City of Lowell is located on the eastern end of Kent County about 15 miles east of Grand Rapids. Still considered a rural community by most standards, the City is gradually being drawn closer to the sphere of influence generated by the Grand Rapids metro area. Many residents commute to jobs in the Grand Rapids area, but prefer the slower pace and small town atmosphere offered by Lowell.

Ease of access is a major reason for this close connection to Grand Rapids. The City is bisected by M-21, a State highway linking Grand Rapids and Flint, and is 5 miles north of the 1-96 freeway which crosses the entire State, connecting Muskegon, Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Detroit.

MAP 1. LOCATION OF LOWELL

Map 1.

Location of Lowell



SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

Population

Lowell’s population grew steadily from 1960 to 2000 when it reached a population of just over 4,000 residents. From 2000 to 2010, however, the population of the City declined to 3,783. This slight decrease is similar to what many small cities in the State experienced in the 2000s. The American Community Survey indicates that as of 2015, the estimated population is 3,859, which would indicate a slight rebound from the 2010 population of 3,783. While this is not a startling change, the population trend may indicate that the City is nearly “built out” and additional significant population growth within the existing geographic boundaries of the City is unlikely. Many emerging rural Townships around the City have experienced steady growth over the last several years. In total, the four townships surrounding Lowell have added more than 4,700 residents from 1990 to 2010.

Lowell’s population lives mostly north of M-21, due to the extensive Grand River floodplain and poor soils on the south side of the highway. Newer residential development is found primarily on the edges of the east and west City boundaries.

Population History of Selected Communities: 1960 - 2010

Community	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2010
City of Lowell	2,545	3,068	3,707	3,983	4,013	3,783	-5%
Boston Township	2,310	2,751	3,681	4,313	4,961	5,709	+32.4%
Keene Township	810	947	1,085	1,376	1,660	1,831	+33.1%
Lowell Township	1,567	2,160	3,972	4,774	5,219	5,949	+24.6%
Vergennes Township	945	1,400	1,819	2,492	3,611	4,189	+68.1%
Ionia County	43,132	45,848	51,815	57,024	61,158	63,905	+12.1%
Kent County	363,187	411,044	444,506	500,631	574,335	602,622	+20.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Age

Consistent with national trends, Lowell’s population continues to advance in age. The median age rises with each new census. In 2010, the median age in the City reached 37.1, or 3.5 years older than in 2000 and 12 years older than the median age in 1970. This is slightly higher than the median age across all of Kent County (34.4 years).

Lowell Age Historical Comparison: 1960 - 2010

Age Category	Percent of Total Population					
	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Under 5 years	11	10	9	9	7	7
65 years and over	13	11	14	13	15	15
Median	-	25.7	27.9	31.0	34.6	37.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

A full 40% of the City’s population is between the ages of 25 and 54, and more than half of the City’s population (52%) is between the ages of 20 and 60 years old. Of the remaining population, 28% are 19 years old or younger, and 15% are 65 and older.

Age Breakdown, City of Lowell: 2010

Age Group	Number	% Total
Under 5	266	7.0
5 - 19	810	21.4
20 - 24	235	6.2
25 - 44	952	25.1
45 - 59	783	27.8

60 - 74	374	10.0
75 and over	363	9.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Race

In terms of ethnicity, Lowell is a predominately white community. Of the 3,783 persons living in the City in 2010, 3,696 (94.1%) were white. Of the total population, 114 persons (3%) were of Hispanic origin. The following table depicts the racial composition of the community.

Racial Composition, City of Lowell: 2010

Race	Number	% Total
White	3,561	94.1
Black or African American	48	1.3
American Indian, Eskimo, Aleut	23	.6
Asian	21	.6
Hispanic or Latino	0	0
Other	114	3.0
75 and over	16	.4
TOTAL	3,783	100.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Household Size

As a central city with an aging housing stock and relatively high median age, Lowell’s average household population of 2.50 persons is not surprising. Many surrounding communities that are experiencing new growth, typically with young families, have larger households compared to Lowell. A comparison of the household sizes, along with other housing characteristics, is provided in the following table:

Housing Characteristics, Selected Communities: 2010

Communities	Total Number of Households	Avg. Household Size
Lowell	1,457	2.50
Boston Township	2,176	2.62
Keene Township	619	2.94
Lowell Township	2,179	2.72
Vergennes Township	1,408	2.97
Ionia County	22,144	2.64
Kent County	227,239	2.60

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Income

Like many other socio-economic characteristics reviewed in this document, income reflects Lowell’s “central city” status. The 2010 Census reported the per capita income for Lowell was \$18,869, relatively on par with Ionia County (\$19,386) but less than Kent County’s (\$24,791). A comparison with neighboring communities, Lowell Township (\$25,603) and Vergennes Township (\$26,281) shows that the City of Lowell has room for improvement by attracting some higher income residents to offset the aging population trend.

Despite this, the number of persons with incomes below poverty is relatively low. Only 13.6 % of Lowell’s residents are below poverty level, compared with 15.4 % in Ionia County and 14.3% in Kent County.

Employment

Lowell’s employment characteristics have not changed significantly over the last several years. While the total

labor force has increased proportionate to the population increase of the past decade, the composition of the labor force has changed from 2000 to 2010, and is expected to show further shifts within the market by 2020. The majority of the City’s workers were at one time employed in blue-collar occupations such as manufacturing and wholesale/retail trade. As the United States economy, Michigan in particular, continues to shift from a labor market based in manufacturing and production to a labor market based in service, knowledge, and technology, the local job market will continue to shift in this direction as well. In 2015, 20.7% of employed residents worked in the manufacturing industry, while 25.1% worked in the education and health care sectors and 13.2% worked in professional, administrative, and management sectors.

The number of people employed in Lowell decreased from 2000 to 2010, which was the first time the figure had dropped from the prior decade in the last 40 years, evidence of the recent recessionary period. With a total labor force of 1,926 people, 1,744 are employed. The following table provides a comparison of employment and unemployment figures with previous years.

Employment Status, City of Lowell: 1970 - 2010

Communities	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Labor Force	1,182	1,746	1,939	2,027	1,926
Employed	1,109	1,621	1,865	1,938	1,744
Unemployed	73	125	74	89	182
Unemployment Rate	6.2	7.2	3.8	4.39	9.4
Employment Rate	93.8	92.8	96.2	95.6	90.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

The City of Lowell is an older city, having been incorporated some 150 years ago. However, its character and its functions have changed during that span of time. While the City originated as a trading post at the confluence of the Flat and Grand Rivers, Lowell has grown outward from its original marketplace. The oldest structures in the City are located adjacent to the downtown business district, east and west of the Flat River.

Land Use

Residential

Generally, housing is in good condition throughout the City, although a few homes require attention to bring them closer to an acceptable standard of condition. The homes in Lowell tend to be older than those found in the developing townships of Lowell and Vergennes, as well as Kent County as a whole.

The age of housing is a concern, since over one-quarter of the City's housing was constructed before 1940. These older homes will require higher levels of maintenance. In some instances, the required upkeep may be beyond the means of the owners. As a result, the homes may tend to deteriorate at a faster rate.

The larger homes in the City are generally situated on the east and west ends of town, where larger lots are found. One manufactured home park is located south of M-21 between Valley Vista and Ridgeview. The park is well screened from view along M-21.

Multi-family housing comprises about one-quarter of the City's total housing stock. The largest concentrations are located west of Valley Vista, north of West Main Street; east and west of Center Street, north of Sibley; south of Bowes Street, near the water treatment plant; and north of Hunt Street, east of the railroad tracks. About 40% of these units are located in duplex and four-family buildings.

Commercial

Commercial development is primarily concentrated along Main Street (M-21), creating a linear strip effect through the City. Offices are located in the Main Street commercial corridor, as well. The City's downtown business district, found on both sides of the Flat River, is a node within this strip.

Industrial

Industry is generally located in three areas -- along the railroad right-of-way adjacent to the downtown; in the northwest quadrant of the City on Foreman Road; and at the end of Monroe Street, east of the Flat River. Some of the industrial areas are located in close proximity to residential neighborhoods, which causes some incompatibility due to truck movement, noise, and hours of operation. For the most part, these industries have adapted to their surroundings, but some conflicts continue to exist.

Public/Quasi-Public

These land uses (governmental buildings, churches, schools, parks, etc.) are located throughout the City. Those public uses that are located in the neighborhoods are generally related to the residences around them. Schools, churches, and parks are closely related to the activities of the neighborhoods. As a result, they normally do not present significant land use conflicts.

Other public land uses include the water and wastewater treatment facilities located along the Grand River near the southern City limits. The Department of Public Works and fire station are also located in this

area. Oakwood Cemetery is located at the northern City limits by Washington Street. Lowell Light and Power owns and operates the electrical grid in the City with offices located on North Broadway near downtown.

School properties take up a significant percentage of land area within the City. Some movement of facilities has occurred since a new high school was opened in Vergennes Township. While most of the existing schools and their associated recreational facilities have been maintained or re-purposed, the former Unity High School located on the Flat River has been closed and is available for redevelopment.

Topography

The City of Lowell is located in a geographical area which was greatly influenced by both moranic glacial deposits and outwash plains. Two sites within the City are the direct result of moraines. One site is located on the east side of the Flat River, designated by the steep sloping land near McMahan Park. The second site is the steep sloping land on the western side of the Flat River, outlined by Gee Drive.

These linear hills were formed by deposits of sand and gravel debris at the margins of the glacier, when the rate of ice advance equaled the amount of melting at the periphery. As a result of these ice borders melting, streams carried sediment away from the glacier, resulting in outwash plains and glacial channels, typical of the remaining landscape in Lowell. Here the land is flat to undulating, with soils mostly of sand, silt, and loam.

Soils

Because of Lowell's glacial influence, several different soil types exist. The soils can be divided into five general groups: sand, sandy loam, silt, silt loam, and organic.

Sandy soil covers the bulk of the City of Lowell. Generally, these soils are well drained with rapid permeability and low available moisture and natural fertility. As a result, they are better suited for residential development.

The sandy loam group is similar to the sandy soils. However, this soil type is more suitable for agricultural purposes since it has a higher natural fertility. In addition, the sandy loam frequently contains deposits of gravel.

Silt soil is a group which also covers a large portion of the City's land area. These soils are generally found along the Grand River basin and are very responsive to agricultural uses because of their low permeability.

Silt loam is not a predominant soil type in the Lowell area.

However, some areas do exist, primarily along the Grand River. This soil type is well suited for agricultural uses because of its high natural fertility and available moisture. These soils are also well drained.

Finally, the Lowell area has some muck which is considered an organic soil. Only a very small portion of this soil is found in the City, located northwest of the City's center. This soil is very poorly drained and low in natural fertility.

Water Resources

Two major water features influence the City of Lowell -- the Grand River at the southern border and the Flat River cutting through the heart of Lowell and joining the Grand. These water systems are also a direct result of the last glacial period.

The Flat and Grand Rivers cut through the landscape of Lowell and are confined to the old drainage channels. These rivers function as major channels for the regional watershed. Each of the systems

experiences periodic flooding, consequently development along their banks is regulated.

More than one-half mile wide in some places, the floodplain limits the possibility of new development in many areas. A dam on the Flat River (at the Main Street Bridge) has created an impoundment within the City limits, affording potentially pleasant views to the public along the length of Riverside Drive, while the Riverwalk/Showboat area along the Flat River provides a focal point for downtown Lowell. The Flat River also contains numerous scattered islands within the City limits. Many of these low-lying islands located below Main Street are subject to flooding and remain undeveloped.

The Grand River floodplain is extensive and periodic inundation of flood waters inhibits some recreational use.

Vegetation

The soil characteristics of an area will determine, to a large extent, the tree species found there. Because of the heavy concentration of sandy soils in the area, few prime woodlands exist. Those areas which have grown up are sparsely developed. Most woodlands are hardwoods, containing ash, elm, maple, and willow in the lowland, and beech and oak in the higher areas.

The extent of urban development has also preempted much of the land formally occupied by woodlands. The greatest concentrations of tree stands are currently found along segments of the Flat and Grand Rivers and as isolated pockets throughout the City.

Climate

Lowell is under the climatic influence of Lake Michigan. In spring, the cooling effect of the lake serves to retard the growth of vegetation until the danger of frost is past. The warming effect in the fall holds off frost until most crops have matured.

The average growing season extends 170 days. The annual mean temperature is 48.5 degrees. Mean precipitation is 33 inches of rain and 80 inches of snowfall. Prevailing winds are from the southwest at 10.2 miles per hour.

A wooden sign for Stoney Lakeside Park. The sign is arched at the top and mounted on two wooden posts. It features a circular logo at the top with a tree and a lake. Below the logo, the text "STONEY LAKESIDE PARK" is written in large, white, serif capital letters. Underneath that, "EST. 1991" is written in smaller, white, sans-serif capital letters. The sign is set against a background of a park with trees and a playground.

STONEY
LAKESIDE
PARK

EST. 1991

Chapter 5

RECREATION
INVENTORY

Recreational facilities and programs in the City of Lowell are provided by public, quasi-public, and private entities. Available opportunities consist primarily of City parks, school properties, and private commercial establishments. While the City of Lowell maintains an inventory of City-owned parks and recreation areas, the Lowell Parks and Recreation Commission visited each facility in the City as part of its update process in 2017-2018. Organization websites and other planning documents were utilized for facilities outside of the City and for school-owned and private facilities within the City.

PROGRAMMING

Responsibility for overseeing Lowell’s parks and recreation program is the responsibility of the City Parks and Recreation Commission, with ultimate authority resting with the City Council.



A variety of programs are provided through the combined efforts of the City of Lowell, YMCA, Lowell Area Schools, Lowell Little League, Lowell Youth Football, and Lowell Area Select Soccer Association. City, school, and some privately-owned facilities are utilized for these many programs.

The City represents the center of activity for a large region in Kent County. The local school system, based in Lowell, has students residing in ten townships, as well as the City. Adjacent Vergennes and Lowell Townships do not provide recreational programs for their residents. Consequently, the programs offered by Lowell Public Schools serve a much larger population than just City of Lowell residents. Additionally, the YMCA also offers limited recreation programming in the community.



OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Lowell’s park system is maintained by the City’s Department of Public Works. Seasonal help is added during the summer months specifically for the parks. Grounds maintenance, equipment repair, care of the athletic fields, and similar activities are all performed by the City. Volunteer efforts are provided by quasi-public sports organizations and area churches.

FACILITIES

Recreation Park

This park is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of the Flat River and the Grand River at the south entrance to the City on Hudson Street. Its facilities include the following:

- » Football Field with lights
- » Baseball/Softball Field with lights
- » Two fire rings
- » Camping (rustic)
- » Boat Launch on Grand River



The football field (Burch Field) is currently used primarily by the Lowell Youth Football League, Rugby Club and Lacrosse Club. Prior to 1994, this served as the high school field and includes bleachers, lights and a scoreboard and is located directly adjacent to the Flat River.

The softball field is located at the north end of the park and directly abuts the King Milling facility. It is the only softball facility with lights in the community and used primarily by adult leagues. It includes dugouts and covered bleachers. There is a restroom that serves the football and softball areas as well as a small concession stand.

The City owns two buildings on the site that are currently not being used as recreational facilities. The King Memorial Building was once the location of an outdoor pool and is currently leased to the Kent County Youth Agricultural Association. The Foreman Building is currently used as a storage facility for the City's Department of Public Works.

The City of Lowell leases a large portion of the Recreation Park area to the Kent County Youth Fair which is a major attraction. The fair organization owns several exhibit and livestock buildings on the property which also includes a horse arena. The heaviest use of the fairgrounds occurs in July/August each year when the Kent County Youth fair is held here for a week. In addition to the fair, there are other numerous, yet smaller events that take place at the fair grounds throughout the spring and summer including horse shows, rodeos, and music concerts.

Considering the variety of facilities available at this park, parking facilities are sometimes inadequate. A portion of the areas for parking are paved, but the majority occurs in grassed areas.

Recreation Park contains a substantial amount of open space along the Grand and Flat Rivers. Some of this area is devoted to rally-type, travel-trailer camping during the youth fair and other events. There are no defined camp sites and limited facilities are available for this activity. Much discussion has occurred regarding the development of a modern campground in the park.

However, the park's location in the floodplain may make such a project difficult due to the flooding conditions in the area. There has been recent interest expressed in developing an RV park on the east side of the Flat River that would connect to Recreation Park via a pedestrian bridge. (See Moose/Rogers properties).

Creekside Park

Several improvements over the past 23 years have made this facility a versatile and well used park. Located on the west side of the City on Gee Drive, it is accessible from both Foreman Street and Alden Nash Rd. The park includes new dugouts, three little league baseball fields, a softball field, one large and two small soccer fields, a beach volleyball court, two horseshoe pits, and a community garden. There is adequate parking in two paved lots.



The centerpiece for the park is a large wooden play structure that was built with volunteer labor from throughout the community in 1994. In addition the park features a large picnic shelter, restrooms and a concession stand. A paved and partially lit pathway connects the park to Cherry Creek Elementary and the Valley Vista subdivision.

This park serves as a community-wide facility used for organized soccer, baseball and softball programs, as well as for many other family leisure pursuits.

Richards Park

Richards Park occupies an entire block in an older residential neighborhood between Elm and Spring Streets off North Hudson. The park is 1.6 acres in size and is mainly a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood facility. Primarily a passive-use park and play lot, Richards Park contains a modern playground, large slide, half basketball court, benches, and walkways. A concrete foundation is flooded in the winter for ice skating and provides a smooth surface for summer roller skating. Some parking is available on the adjacent streets.

Stoney Lakeside Park

Stoney Lakeside Park is located along the Grand River south of Bowes Street. A former gravel pit, the site contains a 27-acre lake that affords opportunities for swimming, fishing, and boating. The City received a \$47,000 grant in 1989 which helped to develop the park, including a beach, picnic area, shelter, restrooms, and parking.

Current facilities include a beach, restrooms, playground, parking lot, picnic tables, picnic pavilions, BBQ grills, and two horseshoe pits. The park is also home to a 31,000 square-foot fenced dog park and a skateboard park.

Upper Bridge Property/Moose and Rogers Properties

The Upper Bridge Property is a 20-acre piece of vacant land owned by the City on the south side of the Grand River, just east of the bridge over the river. There are no current plans for this piece of property; the land was donated to the City for park uses. The Moose and Rogers properties are two parcels that comprise a total of about 33 acres. Located on the east side of the Flat River, both properties are wooded, and lie within the floodplain. These properties, owned by the City, are not formally designated as parks at this time.

McMahon Park

McMahon Park is located east of the river in a residential neighborhood. The Park offers limited amenities but contains benches and a sledding hill in the winter.

Scout Park

The City of Lowell owns 27 acres at the north end of Washington Street next to the Flat River. This primarily wooded property includes an open hill area that has been used for many years for sledding in the winter. The property has also served as a meeting place for local Boy Scout troops who conduct many indoor and outdoor activities there and is the location for the “Boy Scout Cabin” constructed in the 1950’s.

Riverwalk Park/Showboat Area

Over the past 20 years, the City has made multiple improvements to what is now known as the “Riverwalk,” an area on the east side of the Flat River, north of Main Street. This walkway is the home of the Lowell Showboat, a paddle wheel steamer replica that is the City’s centerpiece. For many years, the Showboat was a regional attraction, hosting national acts for one week each summer and attracting hundreds of visitors. While the last Showboat Festival was held almost two decades ago, recent improvements to the Riverwalk area has resulted in increased use of the area once again. A summer concert series has been popular drawing several hundred people each Thursday night. Historic buildings adjacent to the area have been renovated with



new businesses that add to the ambiance of the historic downtown setting. The City and Downtown Development Authority recently redeveloped the northern area of the site with designs and amenities that were envisioned in previous planning documents. These improvements were largely funded by a \$300,000 grant in 2011 from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

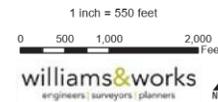
Now considered a City park, the area has a boat launch and an ADA accessible canoe/kayak launch to access the Flat River. Benches and picnic tables adorn the riverfront and lawn area adjacent to the Englehardt Library, which serves as a riverfront festival venue.



1. Recreation Park
2. Creekside Park
3. Stoney Lakeside Park
4. Rogers Property
5. Moose Property
6. Richards Park
7. Lowell Middle School
8. Cherry Creek Elementary School
9. Upper Bridge Park
10. McMahon Park
11. Scout Park
12. Lowell Riverwalk

Legend

- Parks
- Existing Non-motorized Trails
- North Country Trail



City of Lowell
Existing Recreational Facilities

OTHER PUBLIC/QUASI-PUBLIC FACILITIES

Lowell Area Recreation Authority & Lowell Area Trailway

In 2004, the Lowell Area Recreation Authority (LARA) volunteer group was formed to research ways to better the recreation

opportunities for residents in the Lowell Area. A board was established that consists of one elected official from the Lowell Township Board, Vergennes Township Board and the Lowell City Council as well as a citizen appointed from each municipality and one at-large member that is chosen by the LARA Board. This multilateral cooperative effort is intended to give the majority of the concerned entities in the Lowell area an equal voice in the LARA recreation planning efforts.

Through meetings conducted by the Lowell Area Community Fund of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation, it became apparent of the Lowell area public's desire for a non-motorized trailway(s) that would provide connectivity between the City of Lowell, Vergennes Township, and Lowell Township. The LARA, through a grant provided by the Lowell Area Community Fund of the Grand Rapids Foundation, proceeded with development of an areawide trailway master plan. In 2009, the first portion of that plan was realized when grants were received from MDOT and MDNR combined with local fund raising to install the Phase 1 of the Lowell Area Trailway. This 10 ft. wide paved railway is 3.2 miles in length and connects the Fred Meijer River valley Rail Trail on Foreman Street to the Wege/Wittenbach Nature Center on Vergennes Rd.



In 2013, the City of Lowell provided a connection of that portion of the trail on Gee Dr. to Sibley Street via Ridgeview Street. In 2018, the trail will be extended another 2,000 feet on Alden Nash Drive from Gee Drive to Main Street (M-21).

In 2015, the LARA Board developed a Master Plan to connect the Fred Meijer regional rail trail systems from Saranac and Belding that currently terminate on South Jackson Road to the east and Foreman Road on the north. The LARA Board is currently working

cooperatively with the City and regional trail groups on grant applications for this proposed connection.

The City of Lowell is located approximately in the center of a 125 mile regional rail trail system comprised of numerous sections. The entire corridor is abandoned and contiguous with the exception of the approximate 2.5 mile gap through the City of Lowell, where the rail will remain active to serve King Milling, Michigan Wire and other potential industries. The Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail (GRVRT) from Saranac currently ends southeast of Lowell at the intersection of Grand River Dr. and S. Jackson Street. The Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail (FRVRT) picks up on Foreman Street on the northwest side of Lowell, next to Metric Manufacturing. The local Lowell Area Recreation Authority (LARA) trail system connects to the regional trail system at this point as well.

Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails

Located in central Michigan, the Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails are a system of inactive rail corridors being re-purposed as rail-trails and adjacent rivers which offers a great opportunity to develop water trails in conjunction with rail trails. The “pedal and paddle” system provides tremendous recreational opportunities and a variety of experiences for public use and enjoyment. This plan addresses both non-motorized rail-trail and water trail recreation activities and development.

The Fred Meijer Midwest Michigan Rail Trail Network connects Gratiot, Montcalm, Ionia, Kent, Clinton, and Shiawassee counties. The cities of Greenville and Lowell serve as “Trail Hubs” where various segments of rail corridor, local, and national trails will intersect. The overall system is comprised of four primary segments, and when completed, the Network will serve the immediate communities of Owosso, Ovid, St. Johns, Fowler, Pewamo, Muir, Ionia, Saranac, Lowell, Belding Greenville, Stanton, Edmore, and

Alma, as well as the greater Grand Rapids, Lansing, and Saginaw regions.

Grand River Riverfront Park – Lowell Township

Lowell Charter Township currently has one developed recreation area designed to serve the Township’s residents. Grand River Riverfront Park is an 80-acre parcel adjacent to the Grand River purchased in 1997. Located on the south bank of the Grand River essentially opposite the City’s Stoney Lakeside Park, the facility provides a broad range of field sports and natural area amenities for organized and casual use.

The park is handicapped accessible and offers the following facilities:

- » 207 parking spaces
- » 4 restrooms
- » 1 playground
- » 1 play area
- » 6 unlighted soccer fields
- » 1 Lacrosse field
- » Hiking trails
- » 2 Pavilions
- » Storage building
- » Paved walkways
- » Natural areas
- » Canoe/Kayak launch
- » Fishing area/dock
- » Wetland education area
- » Gazebo
- » 4 benches
- » Frontage along the Grand River
- » Concession area
- » Picnic areas
- » Bridge river crossing*

*Project proposed for 2018

Fallasburg Park

This Kent County Park is a 458 acre facility located about 4 miles north of Lowell on the Flat River. Facilities include picnic areas, a large picnic shelter for up to 200 people, softball diamonds, Frisbee golf, and playground equipment. The park is also the site of one of the State’s few remaining covered bridges. Hiking and cross-country ski trails are found throughout the park.

Saranac-Lowell State Game Area

This is an 1,800 acre preserve located northeast of Lowell in Kent and Ionia Counties.

North Country National Scenic Trail

The North Country National Scenic Trail is a premier footpath that stretches for about 4,600 miles linking communities, forests, and prairies across seven northern states. The North Country Trail passes through the City and the Saranac-Lowell State Game Area and offers additional opportunities for hiking on rustic trails. The national headquarters for this trail is located in the City of Lowell, near the geographic center of the trail.



Ionia Recreation Area

The Ionia Recreation Area is the nearest State Park. This park offers fishing, camping, swimming, equestrian, and other recreational opportunities. It is approximately 8 miles east of the City of Lowell.

Senior Neighbors Center

Located on the west side of Hudson Street, across from Recreation Park, this facility is a converted home which serves as the activity center for the Senior Neighbors organization. It can accommodate up to about 40 persons for events. Activities within the center include lectures, arts & crafts programs, daily meals, and other group programs. Large events like dances or special programs such as exercise classes are held elsewhere. The Center also sponsors regular outings and similar activities for the senior population of Lowell and the surrounding communities.

Churches

St. Mary's Church, one block west of Richards Park, and First United Methodist Church, at Avery and Jackson, contain small areas with playground equipment used for church programs and generally available to the neighborhood. Wesleyan Church contains a half basketball court, play equipment, and picnic tables with shelter.

Flat River Banks and Islands below the Main Street Dam

These lands are in public ownership but remain undeveloped. Access limitations, flooding, and extensive poison ivy are some of the challenges that would need to be addressed before assigning a specific recreational activity. Their open space value, however, is an asset to the community. The islands have the potential of providing access between Recreation Park and the Rogers property via future pedestrian or vehicular bridges.

Flat River Banks above Main Street

In April 2010, the West bank of the Flat River between Elm Street and Main Street was studied to determine the options available to stabilize the bank against erosion. While this initially focused on bank stabilization, the City and its Downtown Development Authority are also considering adding recreation amenities to this

location similar to the improvements completed on the east side of the Flat River. Potential improvements to the west bank may include fishing platforms, a riverwalk, or similar public access feature excluding those properties located at 115 West Main Street, 123 West Main Street, and 103 Riverside Drive.

Cooper Wildlife Area

The Cooper Wildlife is located off of Foreman Road just northwest of the city limits and connects to the LARA trail. It was donated to the Lowell Educational Foundation in 2002. This area includes a hardwood forest that is well populated by deer, turkeys and the full range of local wildlife. Although donated for educational purposes, currently the area is somewhat underused due to lack of defined access and programs.

Kent County Bike Routes

Although there are no designated bicycle routes or lanes within the City of Lowell, several Kent County trails are located on roads outside the City limits. A complete bicycle trail runs between the City of Lowell and Fallasburg Park up Lincoln Lake Avenue. There is also a designated 7 ½ mile widened shoulder along Grand River Avenue in Lowell Township from Alden Nash to Buttrick Avenue.

LOWELL AREA SCHOOL RECREATION FACILITIES

Lowell High School

Completed in 1994, this school lies outside the City limits but provides both indoor and outdoor facilities available to Lowell residents for a fee. Classrooms are used for adult education programs and the gymnasium is available for recreational basketball and volleyball. A large football stadium and track, 3 softball fields, and a soccer field are restricted to school use, but have relieved pressures on City facilities previously used by the school athletic program. The facilities also include 8 tennis courts.



Lowell Middle School

This facility, located on Foreman Road, shares its 7.3 acres with Bushnell Elementary School. The site has six outdoor tennis courts, one baseball diamond, one softball diamond, 6 outdoor basketball half-courts and parking facilities. Indoor facilities include a large gymnasium, multipurpose room, auditorium, and, of course, classrooms.

Cherry Creek Elementary School

This large elementary school occupies the former middle school facilities. Outdoor facilities include six halfcourt basketball courts, a softball field, and a high school baseball field. A 1200 seat gym, multi-purpose room, and classrooms are available for community use. Additionally, This property includes approximately 20 acres of protected wetland, and a two acre pond encircled by a foot path. The pond and wetland are



used by the school for nature study and by the local residents for fishing and walking. There is an abundance of wildlife in the area including waterfowl, reptiles and amphibians. This property also connects to the LARA trail.

Unity High School

A former elementary school, this building is located on High Street and currently houses the Unity High School alternative education program. Its outdoor facilities include an open grassy play area, and modern play equipment. Several benches are located around the grounds. A multi-purpose room is located within the building.



Bushnell Elementary School

Located adjacent to the middle school site, the elementary school offers basketball, play equipment, an open play area, and a softball field. Some benches and picnic tables are scattered around the grounds. There is also a multi-purpose room. **Wege/Wittenbach Agri-science and Environmental Center**

The 80-acre Wittenbach Center adjoins the Wege Foundation Natural Area for the study of ecology – 61 acres of woodland managed by the Land Conservancy of West Michigan. Trails link the two, and many programs are conducted in the Wege Natural Area. The Wege Natural Area and Wittenbach trail system is open to the public during daylight hours for foot traffic only.

PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

Roll Away

This is an indoor facility located on East Main Street. It contains eight bowling lanes, a roller skating rink, laser tag, and adjacent outdoor miniature golf course open to the public.

Riverbend Campground

A primitive campground, this facility is located about three miles east of the City limits on the Blue Water Highway. This facility is located within the Grand River floodplain

Valley Vista Mobile Home Park

A broad array of recreational opportunities is provided to residents of this residential development. These include shuffleboard courts, tennis courts, basketball court, play equipment, sauna, swimming pool, and clubhouse.

Deer Run Golf Course

This public course is located about five miles south of Lowell on Cascade Road. It offers 18 holes, a clubhouse, and banquet facilities.

Arrowhead Golf Course

Located five miles north of the City on Alden Nash, this course offers 18 holes and a clubhouse.

RECREATION PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

A summer concert series has been popular drawing several hundred people each Thursday night to the downtown Riverwalk area, home of the historic Showboat. This unique feature is discussed in more detail on page 25.



Lowell's school district provides an adult education program in its facilities. It also makes the facilities available to the public on a fee basis for a variety of leisure recreation activities.

The Senior Neighbors is another active organization responsible for programming events for the senior population of the area. A variety of leisure and support programs are available through this effort.

Programming is provided by several different organizations in Lowell. Lowell Area Schools is the organization primarily responsible for programming. Working in cooperation with the City and the YMCA, LAS schedules league play and organized team use of the many fields, except Burch Field, and schedules activities at the school facilities for youth basketball, open use of the gyms, adult leagues, gymnastics, and similar programs.

WATERWAYS INVENTORY

As a City that sits at the confluence of two rivers, Lowell has a variety of waterway access points within its boundaries.

Unimproved Water Access Locations

These locations are designated access points for carry-down boats, canoes, and kayaks launching without significant infrastructure. Recreation Park and Stoney Lakeside Park contain this type of facility.

Improved Water Access Locations

These locations are designated water access points for carrydown boats, canoes, and kayaks launching with supporting infrastructure. The Lowell Riverwalk contains this type of facility, including an ADA accessible canoe/kayak launch.

Unimproved Boating Access Site

These locations are designated boat launch locations for trailered boats without a formal launch ramp. Recreation Park and Stoney Lakeside park each contain a boat launch site with concrete launch pad; however, no additional facilities are present.

Boating Access Site

These locations are designated boat launch locations with a ramp and supporting infrastructure. The Lowell Riverwalk contains this type of facility, including an adjacent ADA accessible pier for loading and unloading.

A photograph of a tennis net on a court. The net is white with a black mesh and is supported by a white metal frame. The court surface is a mix of reddish-brown clay and grey concrete. The text 'CHAPTER 6' is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

CHAPTER 6

NEEDS ANALYSIS

The City of Lowell’s parks and recreation program is the result of a combined effort of many organizations throughout the community. While the City owns the parks and provides maintenance of the facilities, they are generally not responsible for the day to day programming of activities. The City staff works with the YMCA, Little League, Xtreme Softball, Lowell Area Select Soccer Organization and Lowell Youth Football for the scheduling of City parks for various uses. The Lowell School District serves other specific recreational needs of the community. Even the community-at-large has been active in improving recreation opportunities.

Like many areas, Lowell’s parks are oriented toward the active needs of the community. Sports fields are found in several locations, along with picnic facilities, and play areas. Within a short drive of the Lowell City limits are extensive State and County facilities, which offer a full range of passive opportunities.

The following pages provide an evaluation of needs from several perspectives which in turn provide the framework for the Action Program (Chapter 8).

CITY OF LOWELL RECREATIONAL NEEDS

Population Segments

The variety of age groups and interests in the City needs to be considered relative to the opportunities available. Current facilities are geared primarily towards active recreational pursuits -- play areas, athletic fields, a swimming beach, and similar activities. While some picnic facilities are available, there is a need for more of these along with other passive facilities such as walkways, trails, sitting areas, and fishing areas. Senior citizen needs, in particular, appear to be overlooked by the existing facilities.

Finally, there appears to be strong interest within the community for a Community Center and recreational facility with indoor activities. This may include a swimming pool, indoor recreational facilities, senior center, gathering space and other similar facilities.

Standards

One method of evaluating need is to compare the City’s facilities with those of other communities using some standardized measure. This approach was used as a first step to identify any “glaring” recreational deficiencies that may exist in the City of Lowell. The following table illustrates the results of this comparison.

Recreation Standards¹ and Current Facilities

Recreation Opportunity	Standard	Need	Existing	Difference
Total Park Acreage	10 ac. /1 ,000	40 ac.	167 ac.	+ 127 ac.

¹ MDNR, 1986. Building Michigan’s Recreation Future, Appendix B, pages 100-101; and

Roger E. Lancaster, Ed. 1983, Recreation. Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, Alexandria, Virginia; National Recreation and Park Association. Pages 60-61.

Basketball Courts (out)*	1/5,000	1	1/2	-1/2
Tennis Courts (outdoor)*	1/4,000	1	0	-1
Playground *	1/3,000	1	4	+3
Baseball Fields *	1/5,000	1	1	0
Softball Fields *	1/5,000	1	4	+3
Football Field *	1/20,000	0	1	+1
Track*	1/20,000	0	0	0
Soccer Fields*	1/20,000	0	2	+2
Golf Course	1/50,000	0	0	0
Bike Path (miles)	1/40,000	0	3.2 mi	0
Picnic Tables	1/200	20	27	+7
Natural Area	1/50,000	0	3	+3
Ice Skating (outdoor)	1/20,000	0	1	+1
Swimming Beach	1/25,000	0	1	+1
Volleyball	1/5,000	1	1	0
Water Frontage (feet)	1/1	4,000	+6,400	2,400

* Does not include facilities on school grounds

This comparison indicates, for the most part, the quantity of facilities is adequate. Total park acreage and water frontage; in particular, are well in excess of the suggested standard. Other facilities such as play areas, softball fields, and picnic tables are comfortably above the standard. Only two facilities appear to be deficient in terms of this measurement -- basketball courts and tennis courts. However, the deficiency is negligible and is offset by facilities available at the schools which were not included in the calculation. In addition, a review of the existing facilities suggests that they are not used sufficiently now to warrant the addition of any more.

Geographic Distribution

Even though the total amount of land may be adequate, the distribution of the parks must be considered. The recreation opportunities should be distributed throughout the community to provide convenient access to all residents.

The existing facilities map (page 27) shows the location of City parks and school facilities. While a cursory look at the map suggests that parks and/or schools are well distributed throughout the

community, not all the facilities provide equal opportunities.

The City is divided by the Flat River which runs from north to south through the community. Recreational facilities in the community are situated as follows:

*Geographical Distribution of
Recreational Facilities within the City of Lowell*

West of Flat River	East of Flat River
» Creekside Park	» McMahan Park
» Recreation Park	» Scout Park
» Stoney Lakeside Park	» Moose & Rogers Properties
» Richards Park	» Roll Away Roller Rink & Bowling Alley
» Bushnell Elementary School	» Unity High School
» Cherry Creek Elementary School	» Nazarene Church Playground
» St. Mary's Church	» Showboat/Riverwalk
» YMCA	» United Methodist Church

Lowell's most fully developed and heavily used parks are Creekside, Recreation, and Stoney Lakeside Parks which are all located on the west side of the river. School facilities, like the major parks, tend to be more dominant on the west side than the east side of the river. One

school is located in the City's northeast quadrant, and includes a modern playground for younger children.

The most significant recreation opportunities therefore, are found on the west side of the Flat River. Lowell is not that large of a community that residents are precluded from enjoying any of the parks due to a lengthy drive from their homes. However, in terms of convenience and ready access, the residents east of the Flat River do not enjoy the same proximity to recreational opportunities as the rest of the community.

LOWELL AREA RECREATIONAL NEEDS

Looking at recreation needs and facilities from an area-wide perspective provides insight when planning for new or expanded facilities. In addition to considering the needs of the City of Lowell, the combined recreational needs of neighboring communities and their existing or planned facilities should also be contemplated. A comprehensive and inclusive approach may help to enhance services for the entire community.

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT

Federal and State laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of physical ability in connection with recreational facilities owned by the City. Developed park facilities must comply with barrier-free design standards. Public facilities in Lowell have been critiqued to understand the need for improvements relating to barrier-free accessibility. In addition, as park development is considered in the future, barrier-

free accessibility is a significant priority item to help ensure that recreation can be enjoyed by all residents and visitors of the City. The community is devoted to this effort.

The following is a summary of an adapted scoring system generally in accordance with DNR Standards:

- Level 1. None of the facilities in the park meet accessibility guidelines. Little pavement is provided and access routes to the facilities are not easily accessible.
- Level 2. Some of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines, but many of the facilities or the access routes to them are not easily accessible.
- Level 3. Most of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines. Parking areas and walkways are paved; and while most facilities are

generally accessible, some barriers may exist for certain people because of age, ability, or situation.

- Level 4. All of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines. The park is accessible and the routes to facilities within the park are accessible, but some play or other equipment may not be designed for everyone.
- Level 5. Universal design guidelines were used to design the entire park.

The following tables summarize the accessibility of parks and recreation facilities in the City of Lowell.

Public Facilities Accessibility Assessment

Facility	Ownership	Accessibility Level / Summary
Recreation Park	City of Lowell	Level 2 / There are currently limited accessible facilities present. Gravel parking lots persist throughout. Some areas of the park are paved providing access to the buildings used for the Kent County Youth Fair.
Creekside Park	City of Lowell	Level 3 / All parking areas are paved and contain accessible parking spaces. The restrooms, some pavilions, some baseball diamond seating, and some of the playground are accessible and can be accessed with a paved walkway. The soccer fields, soccer field pavilion, and horseshoe area are not accessible.
Richards Park	City of Lowell	Level 2 / The park has paved walkways throughout and provides some access to benches. The playground, skating area, basketball court, and picnic tables are not accessible and require crossing grass or mulched areas. Further, the playground contains mulch under the equipment, as opposed to a soft uniform rubber surface.

Stoney Lakeside Park	City of Lowell	Level 3 / The west entrance to the park provides an accessible paved parking area, pavilion, restrooms, grills, and skate park. While the dog park and playground can be accessed by paved walkways, they are not accessible facilities and consist of mulch or natural surfaces. The east entrance area of the park is unpaved and does not provide universal design access to the pavilion or boat launch. Neither access point provides universal design access to the beach area.
Upper Bridge Park	City of Lowell	N/A / Not improved.
Rogers Property	City of Lowell	N/A / Not improved.
Moose Property	City of Lowell	N/A / Not improved.
McMahon Park	City of Lowell	Level 1 / There are currently no accessible facilities present. No off-street parking is available and the park is largely grass.
Scout Park	City of Lowell	Level 1 / There are currently no accessible facilities present. Parking area is gravel and the primary building is accessed by a set of steep stairs.
Lowell Riverwalk	City of Lowell	Level 5 / The facilities within the Riverwalk and the Riverwalk itself have clearly been designed to meet universal design guidelines. Picnic tables, piers, fishing areas, and sitting areas are all universally accessible. Accessible parking is also located nearby.



Chapter 7

GOALS &
OBJECTIVES

In consideration of the recreation needs and deficiencies presented above, the Recreation Commission and the City Council have developed specific goals and objectives. These goals and objectives are intended to be the official policy of the City of Lowell on recreation matters. Goals and objectives help to provide direction in order to identify appropriate projects and programs.

The goals are intended to describe a desirable end state or the condition of recreation in the City of Lowell over the life of this plan, but some goals will remain relevant beyond this timeframe. The goal statements are intentionally general but are felt to be attainable through concerted efforts. The objective statements tend to be more specific and may be regarded as milestones in the journey to achieve the larger goal.

Goal 1

The City of Lowell parks and recreation system will contain accessible, well-maintained and plentiful parklands that are responsive to present and future needs of City residents.

Objectives:

- A. Develop an on-going planning process with a built-in procedure for receiving public input and evaluation of recreation opportunities.
- B. Update the recreation plan as needed and entirely review the plan every five years.
- C. Enhance recreation opportunities for persons of all ages.
- D. Ensure that existing park facilities are preserved and well-maintained through adequate and appropriate maintenance, and remain suitable for future improvements.

Goal 2: The City of Lowell will foster positive relationships with adjoining municipalities and organizations to coordinate facilities and programming to best serve the needs of its residents.

Objectives:

- A. Provide facilities that complement those of Kent County, neighboring Townships, Lowell Area YMCA and other groups.
- B. Cooperate with and contribute to community wide/regional recreation projects.
- C. Seek active participation in the planning of recreation facilities and/or opportunities that affect City of Lowell residents.
- D. Work with little league, soccer and other youth organizations to support their needs are being met by parks in and around the City.

Goal 3: The City of Lowell will continue to seek opportunities for new recreational uses of existing City park properties.

Objectives:

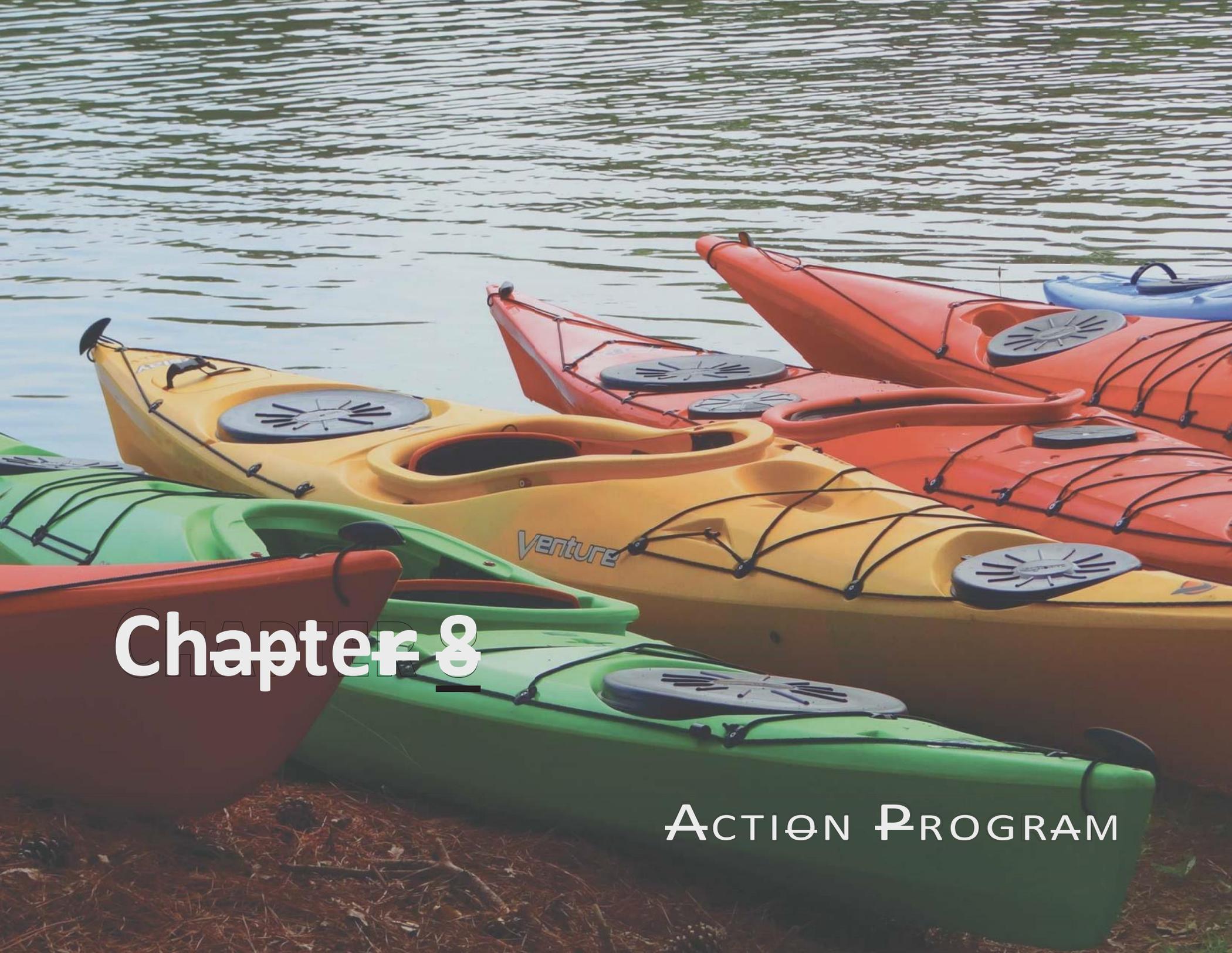
- A. Provide encouragement and guidance for development of potential RV camping park.
- B. Seek public input for potential uses of Moose and Rogers properties and the Upper Bridge Property.
- C. Seek to develop the riverwalk and downtown area in accordance with the City's adopted Downtown Placemaking Plan.

Goal 4: The City of Lowell will connect the city to safe, well-maintained non-motorized trails both within the City and beyond.

Objectives:

- A. Foster cooperative relationships with the North Country Trail Association, the Lowell Area Recreation Authority (LARA), the Fred Meijer regional trail group, and others to provide nonmotorized trails and pathways in the City and connect them to larger regional trail networks.
- B. Work with LARA to expand the existing trail system to connect key destinations in the City.
- C. Work with property owners to develop a workable plan to provide for maintenance and snow removal from designated non-motorized trails in the City.

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A row of colorful kayaks (yellow, orange, green) is parked on a body of water. The kayakers are arranged in a line, with the yellow kayak in the foreground, followed by an orange one, and a green one in the background. The water is calm with gentle ripples. The kayakers have black straps and circular hatch covers. The word "venture" is visible on the side of the yellow kayak.

Chapter 8

ACTION PROGRAM

Improvements	Priority	Cost
Rehabilitate aging kingdom	A	\$30,000
Add paved walking trail loop around the park	B	\$50 per foot
Add park, City, and destination signage	A	\$5,000
Resurface bridge and add rails	C	\$10,000
Add storage building to restroom/concession building	C	\$50,000
Structural and electrical improvements to pavilions	B	\$10,000
Add parking spaces	B	variable
Add second restroom facility	C	\$200,000
Add two additional baseball fields	C	\$40,000
Add additional picnic tables	B	\$200 each
Expand sprinkler system to the North/SE fields	B	\$15,000 per field
Plant trees around the perimeter of the park	B	variable
Improve ADA accessibility, including installing an ADA fountain and improving accessibility in gardens	A	variable
Re-align and Re-skirt West Field	B	variable
Construct raised beds at community garden	B	\$300 each
Construct dugouts for ball fields	C	\$5,000 each
Add lights to athletic fields	B	\$15,000/light
Add tennis/pickleball courts	C	\$50,000 each

Seal/resurface main parking lot	C	\$15,000/\$65,000
Replace backstop screens on fields	C	\$10,000
Crackfill and seal pathway	B	\$3,300
Crackfill and seal soccer parking lot	B	\$9,000

CREEKSIDE PARK

Lowell residents have, for many years, enjoyed a wide range of recreation opportunities provided by the City. The Parks & Recreation Commission is committed to maintaining a high quality program for the community and is continually striving to improve the facilities and programs available.

This recent area wide effort to review recreation opportunities for the Lowell communities has been of great benefit in formulating the Action Program. For a community of its size, the Lowell area contains substantial park land and some uncommon recreational assets. The Action Program focuses on refinements to the City’s existing parks and recreation system based on the needs and interests of its residents.

IMPROVEMENTS BY PARK

The following tables identify a wish list of improvements by park, their priority, and estimated cost, if available.

Priorities are established using the following scale:

- A: High importance, most achievable (1-3 years)
- B: Moderate importance, achievable during the life of the Plan (2-5 years)
- C: Lowest importance, achievable long term (5+ years)

COST ESTIMATES AND SOURCE

The following tables also contain cost estimates. Actual costs for improvements can vary significantly based on the nature of the proposed improvements and many other factors. In all cases, the potential source of the funds will include the City’s general fund as well as potential grants from the DNR including Trust Fund grants, Passport grants, LWCF grants, and other grant programs.

STONEY LAKESIDE PARK

RICHARDS PARK

Improvements	Priority	Cost
Add playground equipment	A	\$50,000
Add walking trail around the playground connecting to sidewalk and restrooms, improve connectivity	B	\$50 / foot
Add a pavilion on west side of park	B	\$100,000
Construct deck off of new pavilion over lake	C	\$10,000
Construct/improve lake boat dock	B	\$10,000
Improve Grand River entrance	C	variable
Create canal to connect river to lake	C	variable
Connect trail to Township park	A	\$50 / foot
Construct floating dock	B	\$5,000
Add walking trail behind Water Treatment Plant	B	\$50/foot
Add wildflower garden	C	variable
Add signage guiding users between Creekside and Stoney Lakeside parks	A	variable
Add picnic tables	A	\$200 each
Pave east side parking lot	C	\$25,000
Add park lighting	B	\$15,000 each
Add grills to picnic area	B	\$200 each
Construct additional picnic shelter	B	\$25,000
Improve ADA accessibility, including fountain, foot wash, and beach ramp	A	variable
Construct dock on Grand River	B	variable

Improvements	Priority	Cost
Add sprinkler system/irrigation	A	\$15,000
Improve landscaping and flowers	A	variable
Add park, City and destination signage	A	\$5,000
Add splash pad	B	\$75,000
Add restrooms/storage building	A	\$200,000
Add climbing wall	C	\$40/sq ft
Add climbable structure for children	B	\$50,000
Connect park to LARA trailway	B	variable
Add new picnic shelter	B	\$25,000
Improve ADA accessibility, including accessible fountain and accessible path to playscape and fountain	A	variable
Repair ice rink	A	variable
Add pavilion in center of park	A	\$25,000

RIVERWALK

Improvements	Priority	Cost
New showboat	A	variable
Splash pad	C	\$75,000
Public restrooms	A	\$200,000

Skate park improvements	C	variable
Life rings in place of boat	A	\$500
Add basketball court	B	\$25,000
Resurface 2/3 of parking lot	C	\$35,000
Resurface path to restroom	A	\$50/foot
Add gazebo to dog park	C	\$5,000

Extend Riverwalk south of Main St	B	variable
Add gazebo south of Main St	B	\$5,000
Connect Riverwalk to LARA and North Country Trail systems	A	variable
Fence or screen porta potty	A	\$500
Improve signage	A	\$5,000
Rehabilitate riverwalk	B	variable

RECREATION PARK

SCOUT PARK

Improvements	Priority	Cost
Add basketball courts	B	\$25,000 each
Establish RV Park	C	
Add park, City, and destination signage	A	\$5,000
Add trail wayfinding signage	B	\$5,000
Swap ballfield property	B	variable
Improve roadway landscaping	C	variable
Change name of park	C	minimal
Establish connection to island and Rogers Property by adding trail and bridge over the Flat River	B	\$1M
Establish a trailhead	A	\$50,000
Improve boat launch	B	variable
Improve ADA accessibility	B	variable
Continue to pave parking lot (Foreman Building by Football Field)	B	\$50,000
Add Grand River Water Trail, including water trail signage/milemarkers	B	\$30,000
Add restrooms for water trail	C	\$200,000
Add camping for water trail	B	\$50,000
Establish farmer's/flea market	B	\$50,000
Improve access to Flat River	B	variable

Improvements	Priority	Cost
Improve boat and canoe launch	B	variable
Add amphitheater with natural seating	C	\$150,000
Add park, City, and destination signage	A	\$5,000
Add gazebo	C	\$5,000
Add mountain biking and cross-country ski trails	B	variable
Add climbing wall and rope course	C	\$40/sq ft
Add picnic area and trash receptacles	B	\$2,000
Improve river access	C	variable
Develop master plan for the property	B	\$5,000
Improve entrance to park	B	variable
Improve ADA accessibility	A	variable
Add parking lot	B	\$50,000

ADDITIONAL RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS

The following is a list of identified improvements which belong to a City property, an unimproved park, a park that is not yet developed, non-motorized trail, or an improvement location has not been identified.

- Develop Upper Bridge Park with a dock/boat launch
- Work with LARA on grant applications for regional trail connections. Budget approximately \$5,000.
- Community swimming pool
- Community center
- New multi-purpose (field-turf) field with spectator area (1,500-2,000 seats) for football, soccer, lacrosse, etc.
- Stabilize West River bank and add recreational amenities



Chapter 9

APPENDICES

PLAN ADOPTION

This 2018-2022 City of Lowell Parks and Recreation Plan was recommend for approval by the Parks Commission on January 17, 2018 and adopted by the Lowell City Council on February 20, 2018.

Appendices included with this Plan are as follows:

1. Community Survey Results
2. Lowell Recreation Grant History
3. BF89-119 Post Completion Certification Checklist
4. TF11-066 Post Completion Certification Checklist
5. Public Notice Advertising 30-Day Review Period
6. Parks & Recreation Commission Resolution Recommending Approval to City Council
7. Minutes from Parks & Recreation Commission Adoption Meeting
8. Public Notice Advertising City Council Public Hearing
9. City Council Approval Resolution
10. Minutes from City Council Adoption Meeting
11. Forwarding Letters
12. 2018-2022 Recreation Plan Certification Checklist

MEMORANDUM

To: City of Lowell Parks and Recreation Commission

Date: April 18, 2017

Andy Moore, AICP

From:

Nathan R. Mehmed

RE: City of

Lowell Recreation Plan Survey – Summary Report

The purpose of this memorandum is to review the community survey results for the online and paper survey that was available to City of Lowell area residents and business owners between March 24th and April 16th. The tabulated results of the survey are included in this memo.

The City chose to primarily utilize an online-based community survey available via a weblink which was posted on the City's website. Paper copies were also available at the Lowell Community Expo and at City Hall. In addition to gathering community feedback, the survey also satisfies the MDNR requirement that one method of public input be utilized outside (of a public hearing) to gather input on the draft Parks & Recreation Plan.

Overall, a total of 121 responses were received. 112 of those were from participants completing the survey online, while nine individuals completed printed copies of the survey and turned them in at City Hall.

This input will help to form the policy foundations of the updated City of Lowell Recreation Plan and inform the discussion amongst the Commission as we review and update the "Goals and Objectives" and "Action Program" portion of the Plan, so consider the existing goals and objectives of the Recreation Plan and other policy implications as you review the survey results.

The following are general themes we gleaned from the survey results:

1. Parks and Recreation Benefits
 - a. Respondents overwhelmingly agree that parks and recreation are important for quality of life.
 - b. Almost 90% of respondents indicated that parks and recreation are beneficial because they provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors.
 - c. Nearly 80% of respondents indicated that parks and recreation are beneficial because they improve health and wellness.
2. Overall Satisfaction

- a. Nearly 80% of respondents were “satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with current parks and recreation offerings in the City.

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3. Parks and Recreation Improvement

- a. There was strong support among respondents for expanding the trail/pathway system and connections
- b. There was strong support among respondents for maintaining/improving existing parks and facilities
- c. About half 50% of respondents indicated that they would like to see a pool and more bike lanes/routes.

4. Most Frequented Parks and Recreation Facilities in Lowell

- a. Riverwalk Park
- b. Creekside Park
- c. Stoney Lakeside Park

5. Other Popular Regional Parks and Recreation Facilities

- a. North Country National Scenic Trail
- b. Fallasburg Park

Analysis.

Overall, participants support parks and recreation offerings as they currently exist. Respondents who specified that they lived in the City of Lowell were more likely to indicate that they believed parks, trails, and open space were “very important” to overall quality of life than non-City respondents. The majority were satisfied with the existing service provided by the City with the exception of a few additions and on-going maintenance/improvements. Respondents living outside of the City were more likely to be “somewhat satisfied” than respondents living in the City.

The bulk of respondents were between the age of 35 and 64 (65.3%) and homeowners in the City of Lowell (45.5%). Additionally, respondents on the west side of the Flat River were a bit younger than respondents on the east side of the Flat River. Respondents were equally split between the east and west side of the Flat River (30.6% and 30.6%) as well as nearly 40% located outside of the City. Respondents indicated that adults and seniors are the most underserved demographics in the City; however, this may be due to the respondent demographic itself being composed largely of that age group.

When analyzing desired expansion of facilities, respondents more often indicated a need for a pool, bike lanes, and an expanded trail network. Residents on the west side of the Flat River indicated more favorably that an expanded boardwalk, riverwalk, or greenway was desired. This may indicate a desire for a boardwalk expansion which hugs the western banks of the Flat

River. Respondents on the east side of the Flat River indicated a strong desire for trail/park wayfinding signs when compared to the west side and respondents outside of the City.

Survey Results.

1. What is your age?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
55-64	26.4%	32
35-44	21.5%	26
45-54	17.4%	21
25-34	16.5%	20
65+	15.7%	19
19-24	2.5%	3
18 or under	0.0%	0

2. I am currently:		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
A homeowner in the City of Lowell	45.5%	55
Residing in Lowell Township	21.5%	26
Residing in Vergennes Township	12.4%	15
A renter in the City of Lowell	10.7%	13
Residing in another community	6.6%	8
A business owner in the City of Lowell	2.5%	3
Living with family or friends in the City of Lowell	0.8%	1
If you are not a resident of the City of Lowell, please specify which community you live in.		12

- x Whispering Hills
- x Cascade x
 Lowell township
- x Lowell Township
- x Boston Township



- x Keene township
- x Grand Rapids
- x Byron Center currently, but building in Lowell x Vergennes Township x Lowell address, Boston Township x Lowell address, Ionia County x Riverside Woods – Lowell

3. If you reside in the City of Lowell, which area do you live in?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I do not reside in the City of Lowell	38.8%	47
East of the Flat River	30.6%	37
West of the Flat River	30.6%	37

4. Who in your household is the most active user of parks?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Our whole family	59.7%	71
Myself	30.3%	36
Children	4.2%	5
No one in my family	3.4%	4
Another adult in the household	2.5%	3

5. How important are parks, trails, and open space to YOUR quality of life?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very important	64.2%	77
Important	21.7%	26
Somewhat important	7.5%	9
Not very important	4.2%	5
Not at all important	2.5%	3
No opinion	0.0%	0

6. How important are parks, trails, and open space to the OVERALL quality of life in the City of Lowell?

7. How often do you visit the following parks and open space areas in the City? (please refer to the map below if needed):

Answer Options	Frequently (1 or more times per week)	Often (2-3 times per month)	Sometimes (A few times per year)	Rarely (less than once per year)	Never	Response Count
Recreation Park	7	21	36	21	23	107
Creekside Park	7	30	31	24	18	109
Stoney Lakeside Park/Dog Park/Skateboard Park	14	19	48	18	14	113
McMahon Park	2	4	6	23	67	102
Richards Park	11	10	26	22	41	109
Riverwalk Park	33	30	26	8	13	110
Scout Park	17	12	17	22	43	110
Upper Bridge/Moose/Rogers	5	3	15	24	59	106
Other (Please list any other natural or recreation areas you visit)						33

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very important	66.7%	80
Important	22.5%	27
Somewhat important	6.7%	8
Not very important	3.3%	4
No opinion	0.8%	1
Not at all important	0.0%	0

- x Wittenbach/Wege Center x
- Oakwood Cemetery x
- Grand River/Riverfront
- Park x FALLASBURG PARK
- x Lowell Middle and Cherry Creek Elem x Fallsburg, Riverfront, x North Country Trail x North Country Trail x North country trail x North Country Trail x we just moved to Lowell so havent had a chance to visit all of these yet. Looking for parks with bike and walking trails
- x North Country Trail
- x Fallsburg, Ionia State Park, North Country Trail, Peace Park
- x Lowell state game area x walking trails x

Wittenbach and North Country Trail x North Country
Trail x Fallsburg Park x Nature Trail between Alden
Nash and 36th St.
x Fallsburg. Wittenbach center.
x Fallsburg Park and the local miles of North Country Trail
x North Country Trail - 1 - 3 times per week x Wittenbach
center x North Country National Scenic Trail
x Fallsburg Park x I use the LARA & North
Country Trail systems weekly.
x Grand River Riverside Park x Bike trails x Fallsburg x The
North Country Trail x Fallsburg Park x North country trail,
Fallsburg park, lowell township grand river park south x pond behind
Cherry Creek Elementary

City of Lowell
 April 18, 2017
 Page 7

8. If you do not currently use parks in the City of Lowell, what is the reason?
 Please pick your TOP choice.

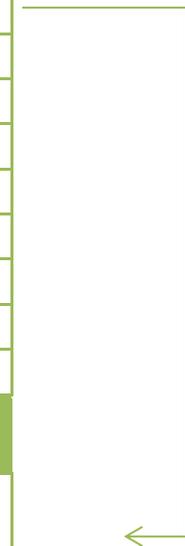
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None of the above	39.7%	23
Other (please specify)	13.8%	8
I do not know where they are	12.1%	7
I use parks in other townships/villages/cities	10.3%	6
I do not know what's available	10.3%	6
I'm not interested/no time	8.6%	5
Lack of facilities	1.7%	1
Poorly maintained	1.7%	1
Too far away, not conveniently located	1.7%	1
I do not have transportation	0.0%	0

x

9. If you do not currently participate in recreation or sports programs offered in the City of Lowell, what is the reason? Please pick your TOP choice.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I'm not aware of programs	28.6%	24
None of the above	21.4%	18
I'm not interested/no time	20.2%	17
Other (please specify)	15.5%	13
Lack of programs	3.6%	3
Too Expensive	3.6%	3
Poor quality of programs	2.4%	2
I do not know where they are	2.4%	2
Held at inconvenient times	2.4%	2
Held at inconvenient locations	0.0%	0
I do not have transportation	0.0%	0
Classes or programs are full	0.0%	0

a



N/A x
 Would
 LOVE
 pool

ANYWHERE for a sports team and community exercise park is? x They are not along the North Country Trail. x with & don't take the time.

I don't know what Recreation
 No grandchildren to enjoy

x weather

x The stench of the biodigester prevent(ed/s) us from enjoying the the outdoor amenities that Lowell has to offer

x Finish the Trails

x N/A



- x my kids are in college and work and go to school x I prefer hiking x
 Kids still pretty young x Children participate in programs in
 another city/township x participate as aspectator x Bad feet/knees,
 swimming is best choice which isn't an option in Lowell x Seniors x
 Age
- x Up until not too long ago we didn't want to take advantage of programs offered because
 the stench of the biodigester made it not enjoyable x Old
- x would love to walk the Fredrick Meijer Trails x
 physical limitations

Please select up to FIVE (5).

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors	88.1%	104
Improve health and wellness	77.1%	91
Protect the natural environment and wildlife	68.6%	81
Connect to a regional trail network	48.3%	57
Enhance community image and sense of place	42.4%	50
Connect people together, building stronger families neighborhoods	35.6%	42 and
Help seniors and disabled people remain active	25.4%	30
Promote parks and recreation programming and	23.7%	28 activities
Improve property values	16.9%	20
Provide cultural opportunities	8.5%	10
Other (please specify)	0.8%	1

- x Paved paths for walking and biking

11. How important are the following in improving parks and recreation offerings in the City of Lowell? Please rank in order, with ONE (1) being the most important and SEVEN (7) being the least important.

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Rating Average	Response Count
Maintaining existing parks and facilities	35	27	18	8	6	3	1	2.35	98
Improving existing parks and facilities	17	41	22	4	4	4	1	2.49	93
Expanding the trail/pathway system	37	10	17	14	14	8	5	3.02	105
Increasing accessibility for all ages and abilities	38	18	23	20	18	8	4	3.89	98
Developing new parks and facilities	6	6	10	18	18	22	18	4.78	98
Increasing programming in parks (classes, activities, outdoor education)	5	5	3	9	23	19	15	5.03	103
Acquiring land for future parks	5	2	8	11	12	21	34	5.39	93

12. Are there any locations in the City of Lowell that would benefit from an expanded pathway or trail system? If so, where?

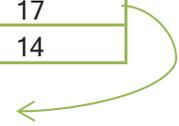
- x North end cemetery through Atwood Brass - connect to North Country Trail and Scout Park
- x East of River - up to Boy Scout Camp - outside of Riverwalk there is nothing in reality
- x Living off of Alden Nash, south of Grand River could really benefit from a way to get into town safely. Perhaps build a path from the township office or even further south to get bikes and walkers into town.
- x "Island Park! This was a beautiful city park a hundred years ago. I would love to see a trail to it and a small picnic area.
- x Recreation Park needs more trails and maybe a Disc Golf Course.
- x South of Lowell on the East side of Alden Nash, perhaps the old railroad system going from Grand River, past 28th & 36th all the way to Hastings and or Middleville
- x South of grand River connecting to town
- x Connect the Lowell trail to the Ada trail system for bikers/walkers/runners
- x The North Country National Scenic Trail connections should be made to close the gaps, improve the management of the trail and provide better trail head parking and amenities at the Boy Scout cabin and at the parking lot by the dam. Contact the North Country Trail Association for more information and see our online map. <http://arcg.is/2oZKWUI>
- x Lowell would most benefit from completing the Meijer rail trails east to Saranac and north toward Greenville and ensuring a scenic and attractive route through the city for the trail to follow.

- x "Anywhere along the river. It would be nice to have a boardwalk on the west side of the river for walking or events as the sunset would not be in your eyes.
- x Also would extend walking areas in the downtown area, walking on both sides of river. "
- x North of the high school towards Vergennes (possibly connect to Ada trail?); on Alden Nash (North)- instead of having it go through school, keep trail going straight and continue trail on Vergennes; Foreman - connect trail on Gee and Alden Nash (possibly continue to Cumberland)
- x Connecting the Creekside Park with the trail to Saranac x
a longer river walk trail.
- x Balls if the trail system was better more people would bike to icecream x
alden nash--Gee Drive to Fulton St.
- x Downtown businesses and residential property values x A walking path is urgently needed along Vergennes running from the High School to the county line. Currently there is not even a decent right of way for anyone to walk there and many students walk there. It is extremely dangerous. x Moose property for the North Country Trail development. x N/A
- x A highly visible "trail-head" at Veterans Park that had info on all the trails and offerings that Lowell has for visitors.
- x Creating a trail system connecting each of the parks in Lowell. Connecting existing trail systems in and around Lowell to create a recreation hub in Lowell.
- x Hudson St. between Fallasburg Park and downtown. x
Increased walkability of N. Hudson/Lincoln Lake area.
- x Pedestrian bridge across the Grand River x I can tell you that promoting old, new, implementing this, that and/or whatever the case maybe but it isn't going to do any good when a biodigester is doing everything but promoting people to enjoy the outdoors. I don't know anyone that will want to be outside having to put up with odor and/or wondering what exactly they're breathing in...
regardless how nice the parks/trails/programs are. What's the sense in pouring money into the parks/trails when you can't even be outside to enjoy them?
- x Connecting existing trails through and around the City of Lowell would be beneficial to the entire community. Eventual connectivity with surrounding communities will be necessary for shared commerce and upholding property values, as well as for drawing younger families to Lowell. Trails are beneficial for all ages.
- x Fairgrounds x Riverwalk along the northern
most location. x Downtown
- x Grand river rail trail completion on riverside drive to satanic x
The sidewalks in town need to be expanded to handle the hikers.
- x the fairgrounds to the Fedrick Meijer Trail
- x The Ionia Pathway that uses the rail/trail system could be expanded to the west, towards Ada. I would also like to see the island in the Flat River developed into parkland. This could be a real gem in our downtown. x We need to connect to the Meijer trail x
Extending the rail trail from Saranac would be nice x The old rail bed on Riverside

Dr. leading into the city would be good to convert into a path. Many bikers on that road, many people who would be interested in walking from that area into town, but don't feel safe walking on the road.

- x Yes! Create a loop around the flat river from the river walk up to the riverbend b&b and then back down riverside drive. Connect downtown to the grand river and from there to the Lowell township parks. We are not making our riverfronts accessible. We need paths from downtown out along the rivers.
- x "Need to be able to cross the Grand River safely.
- x Would love to be able to cross the Flat on the north side." x All of them x The downtown area

13. What type(s) of "parks" are most needed in the City of Lowell? Please check any that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
An expanded boardwalk/riverwalk/greenway	53.0%	61
Natural areas	45.2%	52
Large multi-use parks that serve the whole community	31.3%	36
An indoor sports complex	23.5%	27
Small neighborhood parks	20.0%	23
Public Campground	20.0%	23
Other (please specify)	14.8%	17
No additional parks or natural areas are needed	12.2%	14



- x Indoor pool x community swimming pool is not a luxury - teach children to swim - I grew up with the "Y" pool!
- x I feel that there is not enough appeal to the young families with little children, which I see as the future of the city
- x Tennis courts and volleyball for public use. mountain bike trails x Disc Golf Course x Expand the trail system x Replace showboat area to include alcohol area & view of stage for all.
- x trails x Put an rustic RV park at the scout cabin x Indoor, basketball and tennis x Development / improvement of the west bank of the Flat River x Indoor sports complex with a pool x Lowell has 3 water areas that have immense potential and aren't being utilized like they could be.
- x Paved pathways
- x you are the only community w/no paved trail to the Meijer trail x A pool facility and a splash pad in one of the parks x indoor public pool

14. What parks and recreation additions (amenities, facilities, and services) are you most interested in? Please check your top FIVE (5) choices.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Pool (indoor OR outdoor)	50.0%	57
Bike lanes/routes	48.2%	55
Outdoor water recreation facilities (splash pad, fountains)	38.6%	44
Additional non-motorized trails and paths	36.8%	42
Trail head with bathroom facilities	33.3%	38
Expanded bathroom facilities	31.6%	36
Trail/park wayfinding signs	30.7%	35
Amphitheater	26.3%	30
New children's play equipment	21.1%	24
ADA accessible kayak/canoe launch on the Grand River	17.5%	20
Community garden	16.7%	19
Fishing facilities	16.7%	19
Additional picnic pavilions	14.9%	17
Wireless internet service (Wi-Fi)	14.9%	17
Basketball courts	12.3%	14
Rustic Campground	12.3%	14
RV Park	11.4%	13
Inclusive and universally accessible playground (barrier free)	11.4%	13
Outdoor recreation programming	11.4%	13
Disc golf course	10.5%	12
Public art installations	8.8%	10
Other (please specify)	7.9%	9
Tennis courts	5.3%	6
Pickleball courts	5.3%	6



- x Parks are great but keep the parks without all the modernization!
- x The property currently for sale with old school buildings should not be sold but (or purchased if necessary), and incorporated into an enlarged riverwalk park - will enhance Lowell's unique location on 2 rivers and increase property values/prosperity for businesses.
- x Sorry for extra checks but those are important to me x More fun for the little children (under 5) that seems to be where there has been little focus

x Mountain bike x No
parking signs on the grass. x
Stoney Lakeside park is sad.

- x Sensory Park (<https://www.playlsi.com/en/commercial-playgroundequipment/freestanding-playground-equipment/sensory-play>)
- x Indoor dog park

15. Is there a specific location you would like to see any of the facilities, amenities, or services you selected in Question 14? If so, please indicate in writing below; including the SPECIFIC AMENITY or FACILITY as well as the SPECIFIC LOCATION.

- x See previous question other response.
- x Additional paths: scout park across river to Vergennes Township. Signs: throughout City and on roads. Fishing: Flat River and Grand River. Amphitheater: Riverwalk and showboat
- x We need a GOOD boat launch at the fair grounds and one above the upper bridge. One with a dock like in Ada.
- x POOL - central location for all. Would love to see an indoor/outdoor facility for the whole community.
- x Stoney Lakeside could use a playground that appeals to a greater age range, especially young children. Restroom with baby changing stations and facilities and equipment that are kept sanitary and considered safe for children to use. I would love to see some benches along the lakeside beach for those that cannot sit or lie on the beach (myself included) to enjoy the space with our children/grandchildren.
- x creek side x River walk x Disc Golf at Recreation Park x Just in and around Lowell, not beyond Cascade Rd or Fallasburg park area x Scout cabin- trailhead with restrooms. Water park- Richards park x The North Country National Scenic Trail needs better trail head parking and amenities at the Boy Scout cabin and at the parking lot by the dam.
- x A more permanent amphitheater needs to be added to Riverside to replace showboat. x A splash pad would be a great addition anywhere near downtown or the River walk.
- x Need to utilize our proximity to the Grand River and Flat River for additional fishing opportunities. Also need to better utilize North Country Trail for non-motorized opportunities.
- x Amphitheater area still downtown, along waterway, with Alcohol/Food areas with full view of stage for all, preferably not looking directly into sun.
- x Boy Scout area, Moose property or the upper bridge area...important that the RV area be close to the rivers x Stoney Creek needs a new playground for kids!
It would depend on what paths were paved first for me to say where a trail head would be.

x

x Stoney Lakeside Park. I own a condo that faces the boat launch road. People are always parking and driving on the grass behind me.

x Mountain biking trails near Wittenbach center/ high school x
No

x Stoney Lakeside, the area near the Showboat and the boat launch area near the fairgrounds, are all in severe need of upgrading. They could be major recreation areas, but sadly they are not used as much as they could be. I think upgrading our water areas is much more important than trying to keep that old showboat alive and kicking. Let's move on already.

x Moose property south of Main St along the river! Our frequent hikers along the NCT need camping options. Many of our long distance hikers prefer to camp out versus spend money on hotel lodging. Currently there isn't any camping allowed along the trail in the entire Lowell area, including Fallasburg Park.

x Pickleball court behind Walgreens x A trail-head with bathrooms and info at the parking lot east of the river, south of the parking lot at Veterans Park.

x Rustic camping (tree house type facility) in flood plain of undeveloped park areas along the rivers. An recreation building serving as a hub for parks, rec, trails, sports, etc. information somewhere along M21 (around McDonald's?). A building to potentially include meeting rooms for rent, climbing wall, pool, and other offerings.

x Amphitheater to replace Showboat.

x "Creekside--outdoor water feature/pool/community garden

x Richards Park--new children's play equipment " x By
Walgreens

x The biodigester site would be a great location to start with. Put up a barrier to block Purforms factory. The area already has Richards park to the east and then the schools would literally adjoin to the north. Why not expand on an area that is already a natural playground and learning environment for children to begin with and then couple that with all the more reason to be there (i.e. splash pad, sensory park for the special needs (e.g. autism), ADA park, etc.).

x Fairgrounds

x An INDOOR POOL on the soon-to-be OLD FAIRGROUNDS or at a LOCAL SCHOOL BUILDING x Southeast Lowell area x Community pool activity center would be dream for the city. Right on Mail St in the big empty lot between Rite Aid and the church to the east.

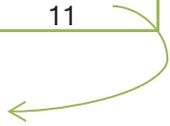
x Restrooms by the dog park/skateboard park. Trail signs for LARA and North Country. x I would love a pool in the place of the old high school on Washington Street.

- x the proposed trail head at Division and Gr River, and a year round Amphitheater at the Showboat, the trails finished at the fairgrounds, with a better kayak launch, and bathrooms all around
- x As I said above, the island in the Flat River would make a lovely picnic area downtown, and could be part of a trail system.
- x "Splash pad-Any park that has the space x Pool-any park that has the available space " x Mainly I'd love to see more natural area's for people to take walks and explore.
- x Scout park x "Close to downtown x East side- Keisers area & James Street x "amphitheater on the river x walkway on both sides of north flat with pedestrian bridge across river at far north end (by Atwood)" x Richards Park, Creekside, Stoney Lake...

16. Which groups are underserved by current recreation services and amenities? Please check any that apply.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Adults (25- 64)	42.7%	32
Seniors (65+)	41.3%	31
People with disabilities	30.7%	23
Young adults (19-24)	28.0%	21
Adolescents (10-18)	24.0%	18
Preschoolers and toddlers (Under 5)	17.3%	13
Elementary school aged children (5-9)	14.7%	11
Other (please specify)	6.7%	5

- x People who like to fish. 
- x not sure
- x People who skateboard and would like to experiment with other locations x I don't think any are underserved.

17. The City of Lowell does not currently provide recreation programming (camps, sport leagues, outdoor education). Formalized recreation programs are provided by outside groups such as the YMCA, Little League, etc. Do you feel the City of Lowell should be directly involved with providing programming for its recreational facilities?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Somewhat involved	32.7%	37
No opinion/I do not participate	26.5%	30
Not involved	21.2%	24
Yes, involved	19.5%	22
Comments:		11



- x The library doesn't function well as a dual purpose library/community center - it's one big room! We need a separate community center for children/adolescents which provides a safe haven for them to socialize.
- x Maintenance and use of public parks should be readily available and used x I think the City can help point to and promote these programs and encourage others.
- x The city should facilitate the activity but let the experts such as YMCA provide the staff and programming.
- x I believe these two programs should work together in expanding opportunities for the whole community.
- x Summer programs at the parks for children x Perhaps not involved in running the programs but involved in knowledge of how to help promote them. This is where a recreation center would be nice.
- x Yes! This would be great.
- x I am using the least expensive means to accomplish better health through exercise by walking. Much of my expense comes through the special walking shoes that I require and the pain meds that I take from suffering from osteoarthritis
- x YMCA is too expensive for non-members x Offer more programming like GR or kentwood! Area is growing quickly with new families. Partner with lowell YMCA- studio is small and packed.

18. How would you rate your overall level of satisfaction with the current recreational and parks offerings in the City of Lowell?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Somewhat satisfied	40.4%	46
Satisfied	38.6%	44
Unsatisfied	14.0%	16
Highly satisfied	5.3%	6
No opinion/I do not use them	1.8%	2
Highly unsatisfied	0.0%	0

19. Please share any comments, questions, or concerns below:

- x You're doing beautifully and just continue with what you have
- x I've expressed my opinions on previous pages - green is the future. Lowell has North Country Trail Headquarters and should build on it. The Scout Park and North Country Trail by the Scout Cabin is unique terrain because of glacial action - uniquely hilly with great vistas and is an asset.
- x Think how to use rivers better, canoe/kayak/fishing. Public indoor/outdoor swimming pool for future consideration maybe at fairground.
- x I had no idea that some of the parks existed. Sounds like a boat ramp above or at the upper bridge should not be a problem to have.
- x I have grown children with children of their own that I encourage to enjoy all of Lowell's outdoor space and I would like to know that it is a priority for the city to keep the community engaging and fun for them.
- x The best ones are outside the city x The last time I was at creek side there were broken bolt protruding from the ends of boards - it was July and the metal slide was so hot children were getting burned going down it - the playground in general was in terrible condition and I will not take my grandchildren back there until it is improved. I feel it is stupid to build more parks when we cannot maintain the ones we have.
- x In my opinion, Lowell's recreational development should focus on developing its opportunities for paved bike and walking trails through town. Another huge addition for the town would be a public pool facility, as nothing currently exists for swimming opportunities other than Stoney Lake to my knowledge. x We are new to Lowell and I would love to see a splash pad x Why not buy/renovate the school that's for sale, then you could hook into the existing board walk system. Then you could include water activities, docking area, paddle boat rentals, etc. Create indoor rental facilities, rooms to have classes,

education, facilities, possible rent to vendors for food. Seems like there is more than enough space to include almost anything people are looking for while keeping it in the downtown area and enhancing town image. if you included spaces that could be rented by schools, vendors, people you could recoup some money toward maintaining the facilities. Redesign the area for the existing art fairs, farmers market, etc.

x Again, I am new to the area so have not had a chance to check out all parks yet. Other areas in GR had much better bike and walk trails

x Parks and green space are VITAL to the growth and desirability of a community. If Lowell is to attract new residents, these spaces must be developed and maintained.

x We love to go to the parks in the Lowell area. Thank you for doing a great job.

x Having a trail system connect to the city of Lowell would be fantastic! x

Love living in Lowell, hope we can pave some paths and get a new

Showboat!

x There needs to be significant cleanup by lake along the boat launch road. Instead of using the parking areas, people park and drive on the grass along this part of the Park. I see it from my condo and do not like it. x Lowell needs an indoor community center for swimming, tennis, basketball etc.

mountain biking would attract riders from other communities

x They should have music everyone should enjoy in stead of a select few x Lowell would be improved by being an official NCTA Trail Town.LARA and NCTA are working together to do this. City of Lowell would be an awesome partner in this endeavor.

x Once vacated by Fair woul be a natural for a RV park. Especially for those Lowell snowbirds to maintain a presence in Lowell

x "I would like the City of Lowell to focus more strongly on our streets and sidewalks that have fallen into disrepair and are beginning to look like a patchwork quilt. Many streets are used as sidewalks because they lack a sidewalk or the sidewalks and streets used for such purposes are beginning to lack an even surface, especially for parades (as I'm in the military Color Guard). The last time our streets received a major overhaul was in the years of 1972 and 1973. It is time that we attend to those streets and sidewalks in order to improve our overall health and well-being. I do enjoy the changes that were made to bring about the present-day River Walk and the dismantling and restructuring the upper river portion of the River Walk. It has become a splendid place to walk and take in great views of the many sunsets and the great wildlife that settle on the Flat River.

x In conclusion, I'm very pleased with this survey and congratulate whomever was involved in its creation and dissemination. Bravo!!!"

x Did not know about half the facilities available. more information needs to be shared about facilities and what is available at each. Programming at each would be a great way to get the community involved in what is already available

- x There are frequent sightings of Bald Eagles along the Flat River within the city limits. I think this is an opportunity and privilege for city residents. Explore how this might be expanded and not missed. Involve the DNR for sure. Education should come first. Thanks !
- x I drive to Saranac 6X a week to walk there trails
- x The City should jump at the chance to bring the Fred Meijer Trail through the downtown area. It would bring people to the area, provide recreation, and encourage a sense of pride in our little town. To miss this opportunity would be a shame.
- x A pool would be wonderful or a sports complex that the community members could join at a fair cost. The Y membership cost is high and there is no pool unless you go to Ionia with limited hours or to the Mary Free bed. It would be great to have a small gym / pool here in Lowell.
- x We have a lot of potential to make Lowell a nice place for people to come/and residents to walk along our riverfronts and connect into the trails in our area but we currently do not have the infrastructure to make use of the rivers to their potential.
- x As someone who has limited mobility it would be nice to see natural trails with benches placed every so often along trails and to see some wheelchair friendly nature trails.
- x Need public pool.
- x Would love to connect with trail system in Ada



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PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT
POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT

This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended;
the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 78 Stat. 897 (1964); and Part 715, of PA 451 of 1994, as amended.

GRANT TYPE: [] MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND [] CLEAN MICHIGAN INITIATIVE
(Please select one) [] LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND [] RECREATION PASSPORT [X] BOND FUND

GRANTEE: City of Lowell - Kent County

PROJECT NUMBER: BF89-119 PROJECT TYPE: Park development / improvements

PROJECT TITLE: Bowes Road/Lake Park Improvements

PROJECT SCOPE: Develop park including beach development, picnic area, shelter, etc

TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)

Table with 3 columns: Name of Agency (Grantee), Contact Person, Title, Address, Telephone, City, State, ZIP, Email. Row 1: City of Lowell, Rich LaBombard, DPW Director, 217 South Hudson Street, (616) 897-8457, Lowell, Mi 49331, rlabombard@ci.lowell.mi.us

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided? If yes, please describe change(s). [] Yes [X] No

Has any portion of the project site been converted to a use other than outdoor recreation? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. (This would include cell towers and any non-recreation buildings.) [] Yes [X] No

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain. [] Yes [X] No

SITE QUALITY

Is there a park entry sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area? If yes, please provide a photograph of the sign. If no, please explain. [X] Yes [] No

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain. [X] Yes [] No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. [] Yes [X] No

POST COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT - CONT'D

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. Yes No
Mowing on a weekly basis or as needed, beach grooming on a bi-monthly basis, restroom
cleaning on a daily basis or as needed

GENERAL

Is a Program Recognition plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, please provide a photograph. (Not required for Bond Fund Grants) Yes No N/A

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. Yes No

Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. Yes No

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?
Park is open dawn to dusk year-round, beach open May 15 - Sept 15, restroom hours posted.

COMMENTS (ATTACH SEPARATE SHEET IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)

POST COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT - CONT'D

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.

<u>Michael Burns</u> Please print	<u></u> Grantee Authorized Signature	<u>1/22/18</u> Date
_____ Please print	_____ Witness Signature	_____ Date

Send completed report to: POST COMPLETION GRANT INSPECTION REPORTS
GRANTS MANAGEMENT
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PO BOX 30425
LANSING MI 48909-7925



PUBLIC OUTDOOR RECREATION GRANT
POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT

This information required under authority of Part 19, PA 451 of 1994, as amended;
the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, 78 Stat. 897 (1964); and Part 715, of PA 451 of 1994, as amended.

GRANT TYPE: [X] MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND [] CLEAN MICHIGAN INITIATIVE
(Please select one) [] LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND [] RECREATION PASSPORT [] BOND FUND

GRANTEE: City of Lowell

PROJECT NUMBER: TF11-066 PROJECT TYPE: Amphitheater Park extension

PROJECT TITLE: Flat River Amphitheater Park Extension

PROJECT SCOPE: replace concrete, canoe/kayak launch, boat dock, walkways, fishing area

TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCY (GRANTEE)

Table with 3 columns: Name of Agency (Grantee), Contact Person, Title, Address, Telephone, City, State, ZIP, Email. Row 1: City of Lowell, Rich LaBombard, DPW Director, 217 South Hudson Street, (616) 897-8457, Lowell, MI 49331, rlabombard@ci.lowell.mi.us

SITE DEVELOPMENT

Any change(s) in the facility type, site layout, or recreation activities provided? If yes, please describe change(s). [] Yes [X] No

Has any portion of the project site been converted to a use other than outdoor recreation? If yes, please describe what portion and describe use. (This would include cell towers and any non-recreation buildings.) [] Yes [X] No

Are any of the facilities obsolete? If yes, please explain. [] Yes [X] No

SITE QUALITY

Is there a park entry sign which identifies the property or facility as a public recreation area? If yes, please provide a photograph of the sign. If no, please explain. [X] Yes [] No
See attached

Are the facilities and the site being properly maintained? If no, please explain. [X] Yes [] No

Is vandalism a problem at this site? If yes, explain the measures being taken to prevent or minimize vandalism. [] Yes [X] No

POST COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT - CONT'D

Is maintenance scheduled on a regular basis? If yes, give schedule. If no, please explain. Yes No
Mowing performed on a weekly basis, weeding as needed, snow plowing as needed to keep
the sidewalk accessible, kayak launch routinely installed in spring and removed in fall.

GENERAL

Is a Program Recognition plaque permanently displayed at the site? If yes, please provide a photograph. (Not required for Bond Fund Grants) Yes No N/A

Is any segment of the general public restricted from using the site or facilities? (i.e. resident only, league only, boaters only, etc.) If yes, please explain. Yes No

Is a fee charged for use of the site or facilities? If yes, please provide fee structure. Yes No

What are the hours and seasons for availability of the site?
Dawn to dusk, year-round

COMMENTS (ATTACH SEPARATE SHEET IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)

Large empty rectangular box for providing comments.

POST COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION REPORT - CONT'D

CERTIFICATION

I do hereby certify that I am duly elected, appointed and/or authorized by the Grantee named above and that the information and answers provided herein are true and accurate to the best of my personal knowledge, information and belief.

MICHAEL BURNS
Please print


Grantee Authorized Signature

1/22/18
Date

Please print

Witness Signature

Date

Send completed report to:

**POST COMPLETION GRANT INSPECTION REPORTS
GRANTS MANAGEMENT
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PO BOX 30425
LANSING MI 48909-7925**



Revenue derived from oil, gas and mineral production from state-owned lands provided funding for this public recreation site.

Funding is made possible through a grant provided to the citizens of the State of Michigan by the:

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

**CITY OF LOWELL PARKS AND
RECREATION MASTER PLAN
NOTICE OF 30-DAY PUBLIC REVIEW**

**TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY
OWNERS OF THE CITY OF LOWELL, KENT
COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER
INTERESTED PERSONS:**

The City of Lowell has completed the process of updating its Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan and will publish the draft Plan for public review. The Recreation Plan will be available at the following locations until the Lowell City Council holds a public hearing on the Plan:

Lowell City Hall, 301 East Main Street
Englehardt Public Library, 200 N. Monroe
Street

The Parks and Recreation Plan is intended to help guide improvements to recreation facilities in the community. The process to develop the Plan included a community input element. Now that a draft of the Plan has been completed, the City is offering a public comment review period to give residents an opportunity to review and comment on the Plan prior to adoption.

To provide comments on the draft Plan, please send an email to lwisniewski@ci.lowell.mi.us or call (616) 897-8457 with any questions or suggestions. Thank you, and we appreciate your input.



Affidavit of Publication

STATE OF MICHIGAN

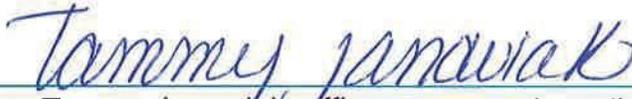
IN THE MATTER OF

City of Lowell, Parks and Recreation Master Plan Notice of 30-Day Public Review

State of Michigan)
County of Kent)

I, Tammy Janowiak, being first duly sworn, says that I am the office manager, of the Lowell Ledger, a paper published in the English language for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character and legal news, which is a duly qualified newspaper and that annexed hereto is a copy of a certain order, taken from said newspaper, in which this order was published.

January 10, 2018



Tammy Janowiak, office manager, Lowell Ledger

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this

10th Day of January, 2018



Queta Reynolds

Notary Public, State of Michigan

County of Ionia

My Commission Expires May 24, 2020

Acting in the county of Kent

**CITY OF LOWELL
KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

Resolution No. 01-18

At a regular meeting of the Lowell Recreation Commission held at the Lowell City Hall on January 17, 2018 at 6:00 PM, the following resolution was offered by Commissioner Mierendorf and supported by Commissioner Pomper:

A RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND ADOPTION OF A NEW FIVE-YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN TO THE LOWELL CITY COUNCIL

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell Recreation Commission has engaged the process to develop a new Five-Year Recreation Plan, which describes pertinent features, recreation facilities, policies and desired implementation to improve recreational offerings in the community during the period between 2018 through 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell conducted a survey of its residents prior to the development of the Plan, enabling citizens and stakeholders to express opinions and needs, ask questions, offer advice, and discuss all aspects of parks and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell has prepared the Five-Year Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and to meet the recreation needs of residents as expressed during the public input session; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Lowell City Parks and Recreation Commission hereby approves the Five-Year Recreation Plan as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents and visitors of the community, and respectfully recommends adoption of the Five-Year Recreation Plan to the Lowell City Council.

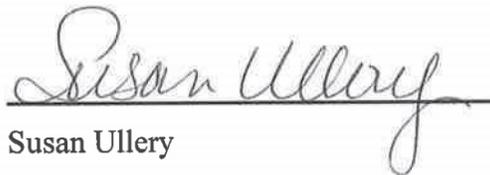
Yeas: Canfield, Mierendorf, Pomper, Beachum

Nays: None

Absent: None

CERTIFICATION

I, Susan Ullery, Lowell City Clerk, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of the resolution adopted by the Lowell Parks Commission meeting held on January 17, 2018 at 6:00 PM.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Susan Ullery", is written over a horizontal line.

Susan Ullery
City Clerk

**LOWELL PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2018, 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL**

1. CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Perry Beachum and roll was called.

Members Present: Perry Beachum, Greg Canfield, Paula Mierendorf and Susan Pomper

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Andy Moore, Allison Carpenter, Robert Rogers, Bobby Hughes, Mike Burns and Luanne Wisniewski

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED BY MIERENDORF and seconded by POMPER to approve the agenda as presented.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

IT WAS MOVED BY MIERENDORF and seconded by CANFIELD to approve the minutes for November 21, 2017 as written.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

4. REVIEW FINANCIAL REPORT

By consensus the commissioners approved the financial report.

5. CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Roger announced Love Week will be June 25 – June 29, 2018. Roger will be meeting with LaBombard to schedule any projects the City would like to see accomplished this year.

Allison Carpenter with Lowell Lacrosse would like the procedure required to make a few improvements at Burch Field. Beachum asked her to bring a list of improvements Lacrosse would like to see accomplished this year.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

a. **Master Plan Recommendation for Council**

To move forward with the 2018-2022 Recreation Master Plan, the resolution must be approved by the Parks & Recreation Commissioners and then presented to City Council for the plan to be adopted.

It was moved by MIERENDORF and seconded by POMPER to approve the 2018-2022 Recreation Master Plan Resolution, recommending adoption to City Council.

YES: Chair Beachum, Board Members; Canfield, Mierendorf and Pomper

NO: 0

ABSENT: 0

MOTION CARRIED

b. **Kent County Youth Fair Contract**

Burns informed the commissioners that KCYF contract is being reviewed by the City, some changes are being made and then the contract will be sent back to KCYF for their approval.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. **Sidewalks-all parks**

Burns recommended to the City Council and Council approved on January 16th to use the 2016 LCTV Sidewalk Replacement Program Grant to improve the ADA accessibility and improve sidewalks in the City Parks.

8. **PARKS UPDATE**

a. **Recreation Park**

No comments were received or discussed on this matter.

b. **Stoney Lakeside Park**

Stoney Lakeside Teeter Totter will be replaced with three benches. Roger would like to purchase a toddler picnic table with the left over money from the playground.

c. **Creekside Park**

No comments were received or discussed on this matter.

d. **Richards Park**

No comments were received or discussed on this matter.

e. Upper Bridge, Moose/Rogers, Scout Park

No comments were received or discussed on this item.

f. Riverwalk Park

Burns went to Hudsonville last week with Liz Baker and Rich LaBombard to visit their Farmer's Market, Terra Square. They learned how the Terra Square operated, which could potential help us with ideas to bring in funds for the Showboat expenses.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

Beachum updated the commissioners on LARA Trails. Beachum mentioned there was some safety concerns regarding bicycles sharing the streets with vehicle traffic. The route through Valley Vista was reevaluated and Bowes Road is being considered as an alternative route.

THE MEETING WAS ADJORNED BY BEACHUM AT 6:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Luanne Wisniewski

**LOWELL
CITY COUNCIL
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CITY OF LOWELL, KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

A public hearing concerning adoption of a Five Year Recreation Plan of the City of Lowell will be held on **Tuesday, February 20, 2018** during the regular City Council meeting commencing at 7:00 PM at Lowell City Hall at 301 East Main Street.

The draft plan is available and may be examined by the general public at City Hall, 301 East Main Street, Lowell, Michigan, during regular business hours, and at the public hearing. A copy is also available at the Englehardt Library, 200 North Monroe Street, Lowell, Michigan during regular business hours. All interested persons are invited to submit their comments in person or in writing at or before the public hearing.

The City of Lowell will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed material being considered at the hearing, to individuals with disabilities upon seven (7) days' notice to the City Clerk. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City Clerk at the address or telephone number listed below.



Sue Ullery, Lowell City Clerk
301 East Main Street
Lowell, MI 49331

Affidavit of Publication
STATE OF MICHIGAN

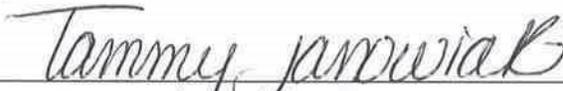
IN THE MATTER OF

City of Lowell, Notice of Public Hearing Concerning Adoption of a Five Year Recreational Plan

State of Michigan)
County of Kent)

I, Tammy Janowiak, being first duly sworn, says that I am the office manager, of the Lowell Ledger, a paper published in the English language for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character and legal news, which is a duly qualified newspaper and that annexed hereto is a copy of a certain order, taken from said newspaper, in which this order was published.

February 7, 2018



Tammy Janowiak, office manager, Lowell Ledger

Sworn to and subscribed before me on this

7th Day of February, 2018



Queta Reynolds

Notary Public, State of Michigan
County of Ionia

My Commission Expires May 24, 2020
Acting in the county of Kent

**CITY OF LOWELL
KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

Resolution No. 06-18

At a regular meeting of the Lowell City Council held at the Lowell City Hall on the February 20, 2018, at 7:00 PM, the following resolution was offered by Councilmember SALZWEDEL and supported by Councilmember CHAMBERS.

**A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT A NEW FIVE-YEAR PARKS AND
RECREATION PLAN**

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell Recreation Commission has engaged the process to develop a new Five-Year Recreation Plan, which describes pertinent features, recreation facilities, policies and desired implementation to improve recreational offerings in the community during the period between 2018 through 2022; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell conducted a survey of its residents prior to the development of the Plan, enabling citizens and stakeholders to express opinions and needs, ask questions, offer advice, and discuss all aspects of parks and recreation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell has prepared the Five-Year Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and to meet the recreation needs of residents as expressed during the public input session; and

WHEREAS, a notice was published indicating that the Plan was published in two locations and offered for a period of at least 30 days for public comment and review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell Parks and Recreation Commission has, by resolution, respectfully recommended approval of the draft Recreation Plan to the Lowell City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Lowell City Council held a public hearing on the Five-Year Recreation Plan on today's date.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Lowell City Council hereby adopts the Five-Year Recreation Plan as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents and visitors of the community.

Yes: Councilmembers Phillips, Chambers, Canfield, Mayor DeVore and Councilmember Salzwedel

No: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

CERTIFICATION

I, Susan Ullery, Lowell City Clerk, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of the resolution adopted by the Lowell City Council Regular Meeting held on February 20, 2018 at 7:00 PM.



Susan Ullery
City Clerk

**PROCEEDINGS OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018, 7:00 P.M.**

1. **CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; ROLL CALL.**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Councilmember Mike DeVore and City Clerk Susan Ullery called roll.

Present: Councilmembers Greg Canfield, Marty Chambers, Jeff Phillips, Jim Salzwedel, and Mayor DeVore.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Michael Burns, DPW Director Rich LaBombard, Lowell Light & Power General Manager Steve Donkersloot, City Clerk Susan Ullery, and Police Chief Steve Bukala.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA.**

x Approval of the Agenda. x Approve and place on file the February 5, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting. x Approve and place on file the regular minutes of the February 5, 2018 City Council meeting.

x Authorize payment of invoices in the amount of \$195,600.30.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by PHILLIPS to approve the consent agenda as written.

YES: Councilmember Canfield, Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Phillips, and Councilmember Chambers.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

Mike Larkin of 301 W. Main commented on the South Broadway project and asked when work was going to be done on North Broadway. Larkin also commented on the South Broadway project and asked why they are going to close the road. Department of Public Works Director Rich LaBombard explained they were not going to abandon South Broadway.

Wastewater Plant Superintendent Mark Mundt stated he is retiring from his current position at the end of March and introduced Brian VanderMeulen as being the new superintendent of the plant and Cody Chambers who will replace Brian in his position. Mundt explained Chambers is the son of Marty and Laurie Chambers, is a Lowell resident, just lives out of town and is a life-long resident. Mundt stated they are happy to have Chambers aboard and he comes with wastewater licenses, water licenses, and industrial licenses and it is nice to be able to mine a nugget of gold right in our own community that's going to work out really well.

Jim Pfaller of 810 Bowes Road spoke in reference to City Attorney Dick Wendt retiring and challenged the City Council to seek proposals from Municipal law firms.

Pfaller also spoke in reference to the proposed proposal of the LARA Trail going down Bowes Road. Pfaller explained he has a couple of concerns and he has no intention of signing an easement. Pfaller stated that it is impacting everyone on the south side of Bowes Road and it is because of the telephone poles on Bowes Road and everyone will have to sign an easement because of where the telephone poles are and the distance you have to stay away from the telephone poles. Pfaller stated the LARA Trail should have a meeting with everyone on Bowes Road and not just a couple of the residents.

Mark Mundt of 800 Bowes Road spoke in reference to the LARA Trail going down Bowes Road. Mundt stated that he and his wife's initial reaction was that they do not want the trail going down Bowes Road. Mundt stated they have 30 year old Red Bud trees and he would challenge anyone on the Council to find a more beautiful section of street in this town when the spring time comes. Mundt stated they are good citizens by keeping their place up and they are not interested in a 10-foot anything in front of their house, let alone blacktop. Mundt stated he did not want to give up any of his property.

Perry Beachum of 924 Riverside spoke in reference to putting public money into what essentially will become a private road. Beachum stated that even if the City keeps the Right of Way, but if it is closed except for parades and things like that, it would still be considered a private road. Beachum also stated that the Lowell wrestling team will be playing the quarter finals on Friday and they are going for five state

championships in a row and if they win, they would play the semifinals on Saturday at noon. Beachum encouraged residents to support the team.

4. OLD BUSINESS.

a. Ordinances 18-01 and 18-02 – Zoning Ordinance Test Amendments—Tabled from previous meeting.

City Manager Mike Burns explained that at the February 5, 2018 meeting, the City Council reviewed the attached zoning ordinance amendments providing updates to Chapter 22—Administration and Enforcement and draft language to regulate short-term rentals as a special land use in the City. Both amendments were recommended for approval by the Planning Commission on their January 8, 2018 meeting.

Andy Moore of Williams and Works then explained the Ordinance in greater detail and answered any questions and concerns from the City Council.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by CANFIELD to approve Ordinance 18-01 Zoning Ordinance amendments –Administration and Enforcement.

YES: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Chambers, and Councilmember Canfield.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by PHILLIPS to approve Ordinance 18-02 Zoning and Ordinance language to regulate short-term rentals as a special land use in the City.

YES: Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Canfield, and Mayor DeVore.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

b. Public Hearing Resolution 06-18 – Parks and Recreation – 5-Year Plan.

City Manager Mike Burns explain that he Parks and Recreation Commission have been engaged in updating the Recreation Master Plan over the past year, they have sought public input on the plan, and

have provided a draft copy for the public to review and comments. The Parks and Recreation Commission have made a recommendation to the City Council in support of the updated plan as well and now, the final step in the process to update the City's five-year Recreation Master Plan is to hold a public hearing followed by adoption of the plan.

The Public Hearing was then opened and Andy Moore of Williams and Works gave a brief description of the Recreation Master Plan.

There were no comments from the public and the Public Hearing was then closed.

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve Resolution 06-18 and adopt the Recreation Master Plan for the period of 2018 through 2022.

YES: Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Canfield, Mayor DeVore, and Councilmember Salzwedel.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

c. Revenue Generating Options for Infrastructure.

City Manager Mike Burns advised he gave a presentation at the last City Council Committee of the Whole meeting about certain options for generating revenue for infrastructure. Burns advised he wanted follow-up discussion to see what the Council's thoughts were about the presentation and if they wanted to start researching these in greater detail.

Councilmember Canfield stated that he was unable to attend the meeting presentation. Canfield stated that there are a lot of good things going on in Lowell right now as to development. Canfield stated the City's tax base is increasing, not as fast as we would like it, but it is increasing. Canfield then spoke about not being in favor of a City Income Tax right away and stated the City Manager is doing a good job with the budget. Canfield stated the City could maintain what we're doing and not make drastic decisions that would be harder on our constituents.

City Manager Mike Burns stated that we are seeing some incremental increases. Burns also stated that the revenues of the new businesses Canfield mentioned went to the DDA. Burns stated it is going to take a long time to get the revenue for this infrastructure.

There was further discussion of the Council on revenue generating options for infrastructure.

It was the consensus of the Council for City Manager Burns to have a more formalized study done and then come back to the Council.

Mayor DeVore stated that a formal study would help explain to the public what needs to be done to generate revenue for infrastructure.

5. **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. Regulator Station Easement for Consumer's Energy.

Lowell Light and Power General Manager Steve Donkersloot explained a regulatory station is the most cost-effective way, among numerous different options that have been explored for the past 6+ years, for Lowell Light and Power to have the natural gas supply to run both combustion turbines 24/7/365a long-term goal and strategic objective of the Board.

Donkersloot explained the easement has been reviewed and approved by the Light and Power Board, staff, and the City Attorney.

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by PHILLIPS to approve the easement with Consumer's Energy for a natural gas regulator station.

YES: Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Canfield, Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, and Councilmember Phillips.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

b. Temporary Working Agreement for Consumer's Energy.

General Manager Steve Donkersloot explained this is an agreement to work with Consumer's Energy and have them install the natural gas regulator station.

IT WAS MOVED BY CANFIELD and seconded by SALZWEDEL to approve the Temporary Working Agreement with Consumer's Energy to install a natural gas regulator station.

YES: Councilmember Canfield, Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Phillips, and Councilmember Chambers.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

c. LARA Trail.

City Manager Mike Burns explained that the Lowell Area Recreation Authority (LARA) board is currently finishing up final plans to submit to MDOT and DNR for grant funding for their trail. They just recently chose to utilize Bowes Road rather than through the Valley Vista subdivision as this was much easier for them and more palatable for the grant funding. The City Council also supported this decision.

What they would like to do is rather than run the entire portion of the trail straight on Bowes Road, they felt utilization of the trail through the park would enhance their funding capabilities for the grant. The plan would be to jog the trail toward the back of the park; towards the beach and back out to Bowes Road.

Unfortunately, time is of the essence as final concept must be submitted with DNR grants that are due in early March. This was presented to him the week of February 5, 2018 and while he would prefer a recommendation from the Park Board, they will not meet until mid-March. Waiting to do so would impact the grant deadlines. I would argue that designing the trail to go through the park is positive and enhances the park.

Understand that the layout of how the trail going through the park is not etched in stone, LARA would consider modifications to the trail if requested by the Board and Council, which we can do at a later date; however, LARA would like to add this concept to the grant application.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by CANFIELD to accept the request of the LARA board and allow for the trail to go through Stoney Lakeside Park.

YES: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Phillips, Councilmember Chambers, and Councilmember Canfield.

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

6. **BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS.**

Councilmember Phillips advised the Historic District Commission approved the new signs at MI Hometown Furnishings and they extended the work deadline to March 1, 2018.

Councilmember Salzwedel advised he attended the Lowell Light and Power meeting on behalf of Councilmember Chambers and stated that their staff has come up with a gift basket for all new customers and Salzwedel would like to see other departments do something similar.

Salzwedel advised he has a LCTV meeting next week to discuss the grant applications and he was looking forward to that meeting.

Councilmember Canfield advised he attended the LARA meeting and this was already discussed during the meeting, so there was nothing new to add.

Councilmember Chambers thanked Councilmember Salzwedel for covering the Light and Power meeting on his behalf. Chambers stated that the Planning Commission has been keeping Andy Moore busy amending sections.

Mayor DeVore stated that he was sick and didn't attend the Fire Authority meeting.

Mayor DeVore stated that next Vision meeting will be held on March 20, 2018 at the superintendent's building.

7. **MONTHLY REPORTS.**

There were no comments.

8. **MANAGER'S REPORT.**

City Manager Mike Burns reported on the following:

x LEAD's intention to liquidate the assets at the Biodigester site. x
Flood watch and projected flooding. x Government's budget. x
Welcomed Cody Chambers. x Lew Bender will be here on March
7, 2018. x Budget session on Saturday, April 28 at 10:00 a.m.
x Dan Burden will be here to conduct a walkability study on May 15, 2018.

9. **APPOINTMENTS.**

None.

10. **COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Councilmember Phillips thanked all staff and departments for their hard work. Phillips thanked Mark Mundt and congratulated him on his retirement. Phillips also thanked Brian VanderMeulen and Cody Chambers and congratulated Cody and welcomed him to the City.

Councilmember Salzwedel stated he would say everything that Councilmember Phillips had said.

Councilmember Canfield stated that we are really spoiled by what we have here with the DPW and the police department, but Lowell Light and Power had responded to an accident where a pole had been hit and broken off, they replaced the pole without anyone losing power.

Councilmember Chambers congratulated Cody Chambers. Chambers stated that he has lived in this community for a long time and he is passionate about a lot of things that happen in the City. Chambers stated they have their business here, they own properties here and he and his wife go out of their way, so when Mark asked Cody if he would like to come and work for them and Cody accepted, it makes him proud that Cody wants to be part of the community and help the community grow.

Chambers also congratulated Brian VanderMeulen on his promotion.

Mayor DeVore stated he, Marty and Laurie will be in Frankenmuth this weekend.

11. **ADJOURNMENT.**

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by CHAMBERS to adjourn at 7:59 p.m.

YES: 4. NO: NONE. ABSENT: 1(Phillips). MOTION CARRIED.

DATE:

APPROVED:

Mike DeVore, Mayor

Susan Ullery, City Clerk