The City of DEXTER Michigan

2016 – 2021 Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan

City of Dexter, Michigan
5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Adopted by:
City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission
February 16, 2016

Adopted by:
Dexter City Council
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Prepared by:
City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission
And
Justin Breyer
Assistant to the City Manager

Acknowledgements

The City of Dexter
City Council
Shawn Keough, Mayor
Donna Fisher
Jim Smith
Jim Carson
Zach Michels
Julie Knight
Ray Tell, Pro Tem

The City of Dexter
Parks and Recreation Commission
Becky Murillo, Chairperson
Ellen Han
John Coy
Julie Knight
Toni Henkemeyer
Michael Cavanaugh

City Manager
Courtney Nicholls

Assistant to the City Manager
Justin Breyer

Treasurer/Finance Director
Marie Sherry

Community Development Manager
Michelle Aniol

Public Works Superintendent
Dan Schlaff

Streets Foreman
Kurt Augustine

Special thanks to:
Carlisle-Wortman Associates Inc.
Community leaders, survey respondents, public hearing participants

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Introduction

Why Plan?

The City of Dexter's 2016 – 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan shall serve as the guiding document for the future of Dexter's parks and recreation services. This Plan sets forth the vision, goals, action plan, and projects for the next five (5) year period, and maps the course for the Parks and Recreation Commission's activities.

Communities plan for a number of reasons. First and foremost, the planning process offers communities an opportunity to analyze their services and discover opportunities for improvement. Regular goal-setting and service prioritization can aid municipalities in maintaining or improving the levels of service expected and experienced by the residents of that community.

In addition to serving as a planning document, Michigan municipalities also develop parks and recreation plans in order to be eligible for State grant funding. Plans must be reviewed, updated and adopted at least every five years in accordance with Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) rules which governs several grant programs. One such program is the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), which can provide up to 75% of the development costs of a recreation facility or up to 50% of the costs of acquiring recreation-related property. Applications for these grants are due April 1 and September 1 of each year.

The City of Dexter, Roles and Responsibilities

On November 4, 2014, the residents of Dexter voted to approve a Charter, transitioning the Village of Dexter into the City of Dexter. The change left Dexter's borders relatively intact, but with minor changes made to create more contiguity. The preparation of this document began shortly after the status change, and much of the historical data contained within is held-over from the City's former status as a village.

This 2016 – 2021 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and the accompanying facilities analysis, shall become a component of the City of Dexter Master Plan when the latter is updated in 2017. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan developed in 2009 is a part of Dexter's Master Plan as of the date of adoption. The analysis will address how the demographic, population, and area changes that the City has experienced over the past two decades have impacted and will impact the parks and recreation facility needs within the City of Dexter and the Dexter-area. This Parks and Recreation Master Plan builds upon the 1997 Parks and Recreation Plan prepared by McKenna Associates as well as the updates completed by Village staff in 2003 and 2009. The 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan update relied heavily on the input of the Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, staff, and the public. This update is also designed to address existing and future parks and recreation needs for parks, greenways, and open space development as well as the preservation and enhancement of the City's scenic aesthetic features. The Plan addresses the needs and concerns of local residents as well as the concerns and needs identified by the Parks and Recreation Commission. In addition, the Plan details specific improvements, costs, priorities and years of completion to better represent the long-range vision of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

This City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared by City staff and the City's Parks and Recreation Commission. Pursuant to the City's General Code, the Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for preparing, updating, and maintaining the Parks and Recreation Master Plan; advising and assisting the City Council on matters pertaining to the City's parks specifically regarding contributions, donations, and grants; advise the City Council on the use, development, operation and vision for the parks, as well as report information to the City Council on plan updates and resident input concerning parks and recreation in the City. The Parks and Recreation Commission is also responsible for guiding the existing and future conditions of the City's parks and recreation facilities, with the assistance and the involvement of City administration, including the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and other community organizations. Citizen input, through public meetings, public hearings, and surveys, also contributed to the information and findings presented in this report. Collaboration with neighboring governmental entities, including Webster, Scio, Dexter, Lima Townships, Washtenaw County and Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority is crucial to the implementation of this Plan.

Community Description and Background Information

Background and Population

The City of Dexter is located approximately eight miles northwest of the City of Ann Arbor, in northern central Washtenaw County (Exhibit 1). The City is bordered by the Huron River and Mill Creek, which meander alongside the northerly and westerly limits of the community. While the City is conveniently located between urban and rural areas, the Dexter area is noted for its historic downtown, small town appeal, as well as its picturesque open space, farmlands, and recreational opportunities.

The City of Dexter is a small town characterized by its traditional town center and neighborhoods, and strong school system. The annexation of 346 acres of land over the last twenty (20) years has added more area and population to the City's jurisdiction. The Parks and Recreation Commission and the DDA work together to maintain the City's midwest, small-town, historic feel within the traditional platted downtown.

Within and surrounding the City of Dexter is the Dexter Community School District (DCS). The DCS is 87.5 square miles, has consisted of seven (7) townships since 1991, and serves Dexter City along with parts of Dexter Township, Scio Township, Webster Township, Lima Township, Putnam Township, and Northfield Township. Although the area serviced by the Dexter Community School District has not changed in many years, the surge of residential development in the townships within the Dexter School District has created a significant population and student population increase over the last 2 decades.

Dexter Community School District

The Dexter Community School District campus size has also dramatically increased since 1998. In 1998, two new schools were built: Cornerstone Elementary and Mill Creek Middle School. In 2002, a new high school opened, and due to a substantial increase in middle school age students, the old high school was retrofitted into Creekside Intermediate School for 5th and 6th graders. The Dexter Area School District now has two (2) Kindergarten through second grade Elementary Schools - Bates and Cornerstone; one (1) third and fourth grade Elementary School - Wylie; one (1) fifth and sixth grade Intermediate School - Creekside; one (1) seventh and eighth grade Middle School - Mill Creek; and, Dexter High School for grades nine through twelve.

Statewide student counts have been trending downward in Michigan - from 1,645,742 in the 2007-2008 school year to 1,582,168 in 2011-2012. This trend has been reflected in Dexter to a smaller degree, with student headcounts down by less than 40 students from the 2010-11 (3,647) to the 2011-12 (3,614) school year. Overall population changes in the City of Dexter and the surrounding townships (Exhibit 2, 3, 10) will likely have an impact on future student counts.

EXHIBIT 1
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

EXHIBIT 2
TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY COMMUNITY

Community	1980	1990	2000	2010	July 2015 SEMCOG	% Change 2010 – 2014	% Change 2000-2010
City of Dexter	588	633	1,013	1,590	1,819	11.32%	56.96%
Dexter Township	1,265	1,527	1,863	2,225	2,591	25.26%	19.43%
Lima Township	659	891	1,168	1,197	1,342	9.94%	2.48%
Scio Township	2,147	4,113	6,070	6,405	6,741	3.83%	5.52%
Webster Township	884	1,097	1,774	2,215	2,272	1.81%	24.86%
Washtenaw County	N/A	105,114	125,327	137,193	144,713	4.34%	9.47%
State of Michigan	N/A	3,424,122	3,785,661	3,872,508	N/A	N/A	2.29%

Source: 2015 SEMCOG

EXHIBIT 3
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE BY COMMUNITY

Community	2010	July 2015	2040 Estimate	Current Trend
City of Dexter	2.56	2.70	2.41	↓
Dexter Township	2.71	2.66	2.45	↓
Lima Township	2.76	2.75	2.34	↓
Scio Township	2.57	2.53	2.30	↓
Webster Township	2.86	2.82	2.34	↓
Washtenaw County	2.38	2.36	2.23	↓

Source: 2015 SEMCOG

Physical Characteristics

The City of Dexter is a small town that has actively maintained its traditional and historical character despite the growth pressures evident in the surrounding townships. The following section provides an overview of the community's physical characteristics, such as transportation systems, historic landmarks, and land use development patterns. This section also includes an assessment of natural features, including woodlands, steep slopes, wetlands, scrub shrub, and water resources. These elements provide unique features within the City of Dexter and the City's parks. Finally, this section analyzes the opportunities and/or threats these elements could create for the City's future growth and development.

Access and Transportation

The City center is located along Main Street, which provides east and west access through the community, as shown in Exhibit 4. Baker Road also provides access north and south from I-94. The nearby interstate interchanges also provide convenient access to surrounding communities to the east and west. Dexter is serviced by a regional bus system, the Western Washtenaw Area Value Express (WAVE). The Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA) used to provide service from the City to Ann Arbor; however funding constraints have eliminated AATA's presence in Dexter. WAVE however does provide a connection to the AATA on the west side of the City of Ann Arbor.

Monument Park, with its landmark gazebo, is the heart of the City. Peace Park and Mill Creek Park are open space landmarks that signal entrances into the City center from the east and west, and assist in further defining the community's image. Scenic routes entering the City include Mast Road from the north via a bridge over the Huron River and Main Street from the west via the Main Street Bridge over Mill Creek. The Huron River Watershed surrounds Dexter and provides a significant natural barrier on the north and west sides of town. To the west Mill Creek connects to the Huron River. Creating a greenway corridor from the downtown and Mill Creek Park, south to the Dexter Community School District property (Shield Road) is an important recreation goal for the City. This project has been incorporated into the Mill Creek Park reclamation project as a second phase. The first phase saw removal of the Main Street dam, replacement of the Main Street Bridge, and creation of Mill Creek Park and its boardwalk.

A narrow one-and-one-half lane railroad underpass provides a unique entrance to the City from the west. The historic stone structure provides clear definition of the entrance into the City center. Meanwhile, a scenic vista of Mill Creek is offered to motorists and pedestrians entering or leaving the western end of the City. The City and the Parks and Recreation Commission gave top priority to further enhance and restore Mill Creek in 2008. Because of a community effort to enhance Mill Creek, this area now provides additional passive recreation opportunities, more trail systems and open space. The Creek restoration has also enhanced the ecosystem, provided access to the creek/waterway, provided passive walking trails and nature interpretation, improved the stormwater entering the creek, and established riparian buffers.

Other landmarks in and around the City include the City Fire Hall and Washtenaw County Sheriff's Substation, the Farmer's Market, Dexter District Library, St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Monument Park, the Historical Society Museum, the Dexter Historical Railroad Society, and the historic Gordon Hall with associated conservation easements.

The local grid streets network, shown in Exhibit 4, provides convenient movement, linking the residential neighborhoods with the downtown business district. Alleys also provide secondary access to properties throughout Dexter. Public sidewalks are located along most blocks within the City center. A Safe Routes to School study conducted in 1996 has shown where additional sidewalks are needed. In July 2002, a sidewalk survey was also completed to help determine where safe non-motorized routes were needed. Existing non-motorized paths are shown in Exhibit 5. On an annual basis, funds are set-aside in the capital budget to help with additional sidewalk construction or repair. In FY 2014-15 the City spent over $45,000 repairing and replacing sidewalks. To provide a complete pedestrian system, the City has committed to locating sidewalks along all City streets, where feasible and as funding permits. This system will also facilitate increasing connections between the parks in the City.

EXHIBIT 4
NATIONAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSSIFICATION MAP

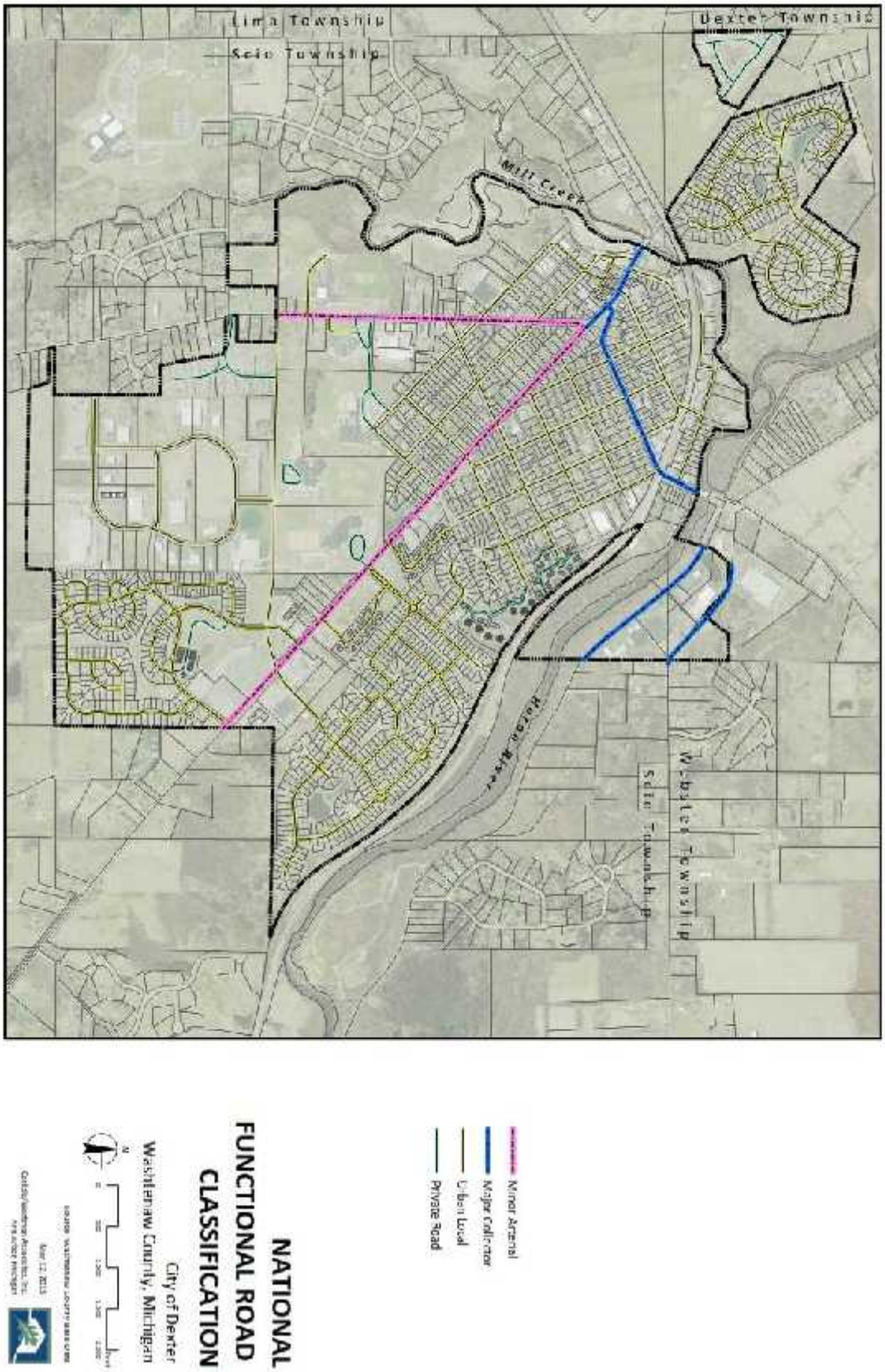
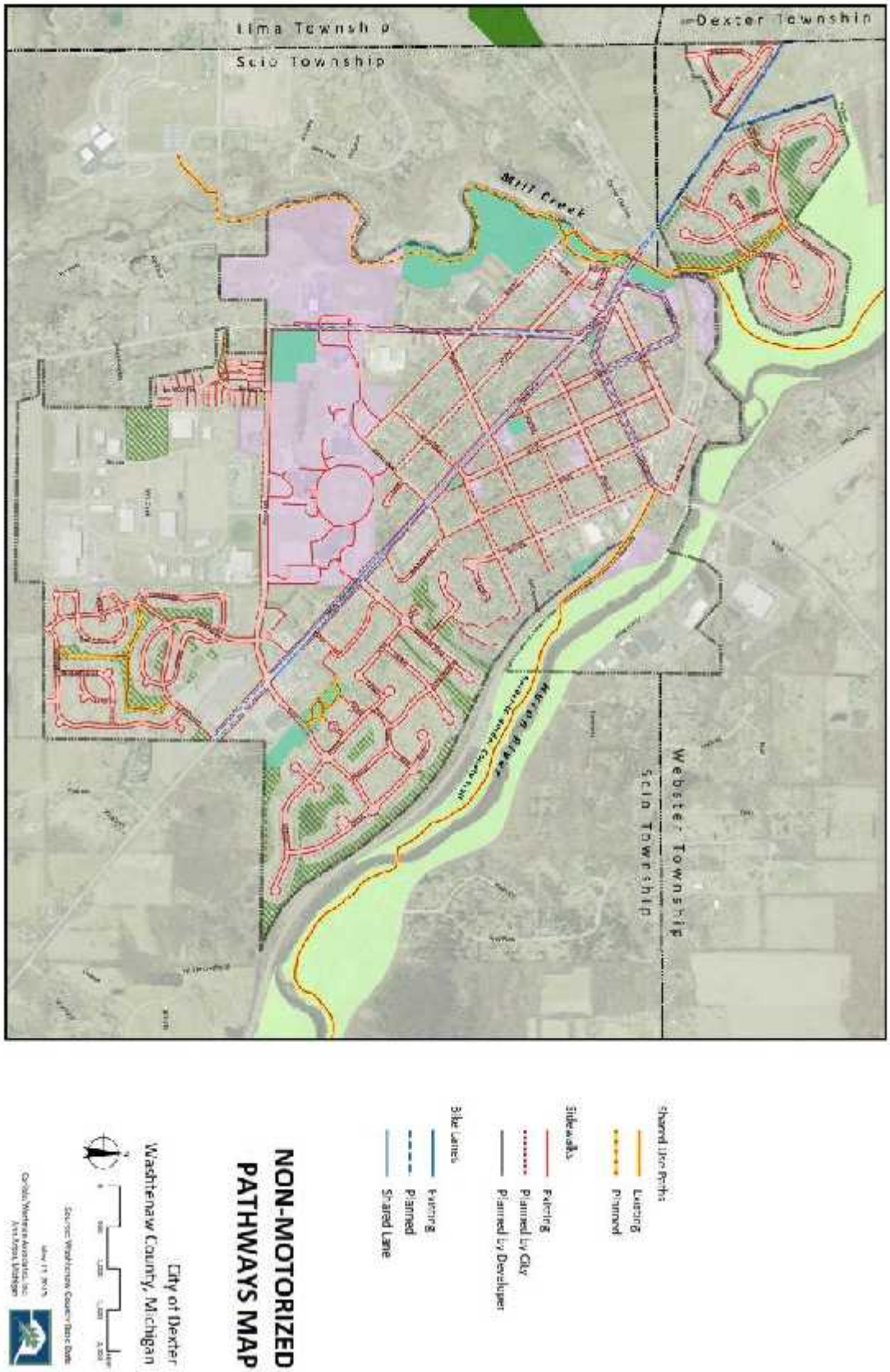


EXHIBIT 5
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION MAP



Land Uses

The City center offers a mix of commercial, residential, and community facilities located where Main Street, Dexter-Ann Arbor Road, Central Street, Broad St., and Baker Road converge. Single-family land use dominates the City's overall acreage. Existing land uses and the percentage of total land uses can be seen in Exhibits 6 and 7 and in the City's Master Plan.

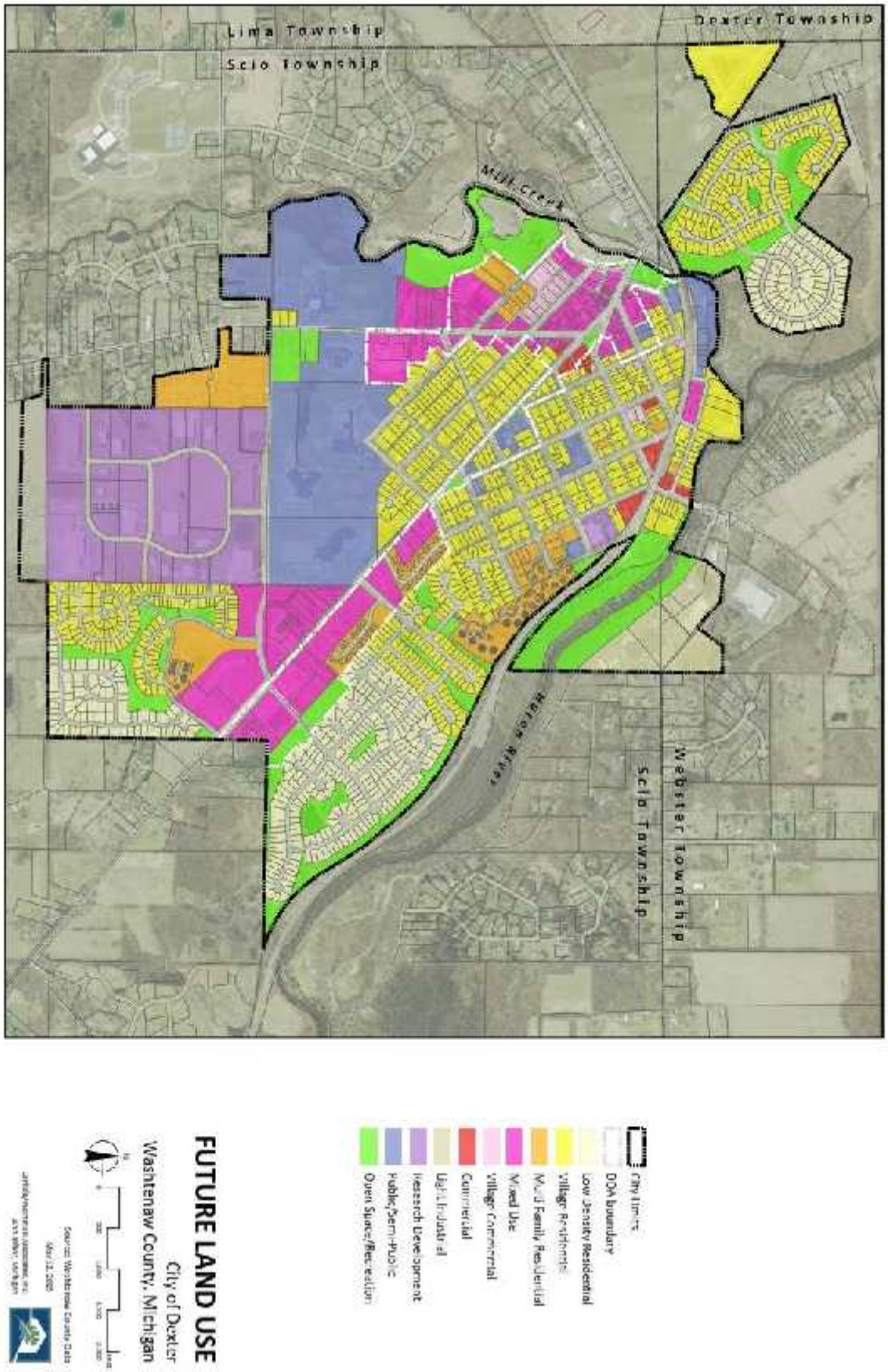
EXHIBIT 6
EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGE 2012

Category	Acreage 2012	Percentage of Total 2012
Vacant	68.13	6.7%
Single-Family Residential	316.58	31.4%
Multiple-Family Residential	53.77	5.3%
Commercial	55.79	5.5%
Office	14.32	1.4%
Institutional	136.40	13.6%
Industrial Research & Dev.	125.58	12.5%
Public/Semi-Public	164.22	16.3%
Open Space/Recreation	0.88	0.1%
Transportation (Right-of-Ways)	71.06	7.1%
Total Acreage	**1115.50**	**100%**

2015 SEMCOG – Based on a field survey conducted in January 2008.

The City takes pride in its heritage and the downtown's historic buildings. Storefronts in the Central Business District have not been significantly altered; some have been restored or rehabilitated. Streetscape improvements have been made that further enhance the character of the traditional, historic downtown and residential areas within Dexter.

EXHIBIT 7
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Natural Features

Dexter is enclosed by rural agricultural townships in southeast Michigan. Many significant natural resources exist within the City of Dexter; however, the City's most significant natural resources such as Mill Creek and the Huron River are shared with the surrounding townships. It will be important for Dexter to maintain existing natural features as development continues to occur within the City limits and within the surrounding townships.

The City of Dexter's topography is similar to that found across the State of Michigan (specifically Southeast Michigan) - fairly level with some low rolling hills. Two (2) bodies of water, the Mill Creek and the Huron River, surround the City, creating elevation changes in the adjacent areas. The following natural features map, Exhibit 8, shows the bodies of water and the steep slopes leading to the water bodies that surround the City. Some areas of the City, outside of the river and creek banks, have been altered by gravel excavation processes. These areas are not in their original state and have steep slopes. The City does have small areas with elevation changes, but none of them are major slopes that span large areas.

Woodlands and wetlands also lay just outside of the City's boundaries. Due to the lack of heavily wooded lots, the City encourages the preservation of mature trees during site development or re-development in order to help maintain a healthy urban forest. Saving existing natural features and protecting habitats should be a priority.

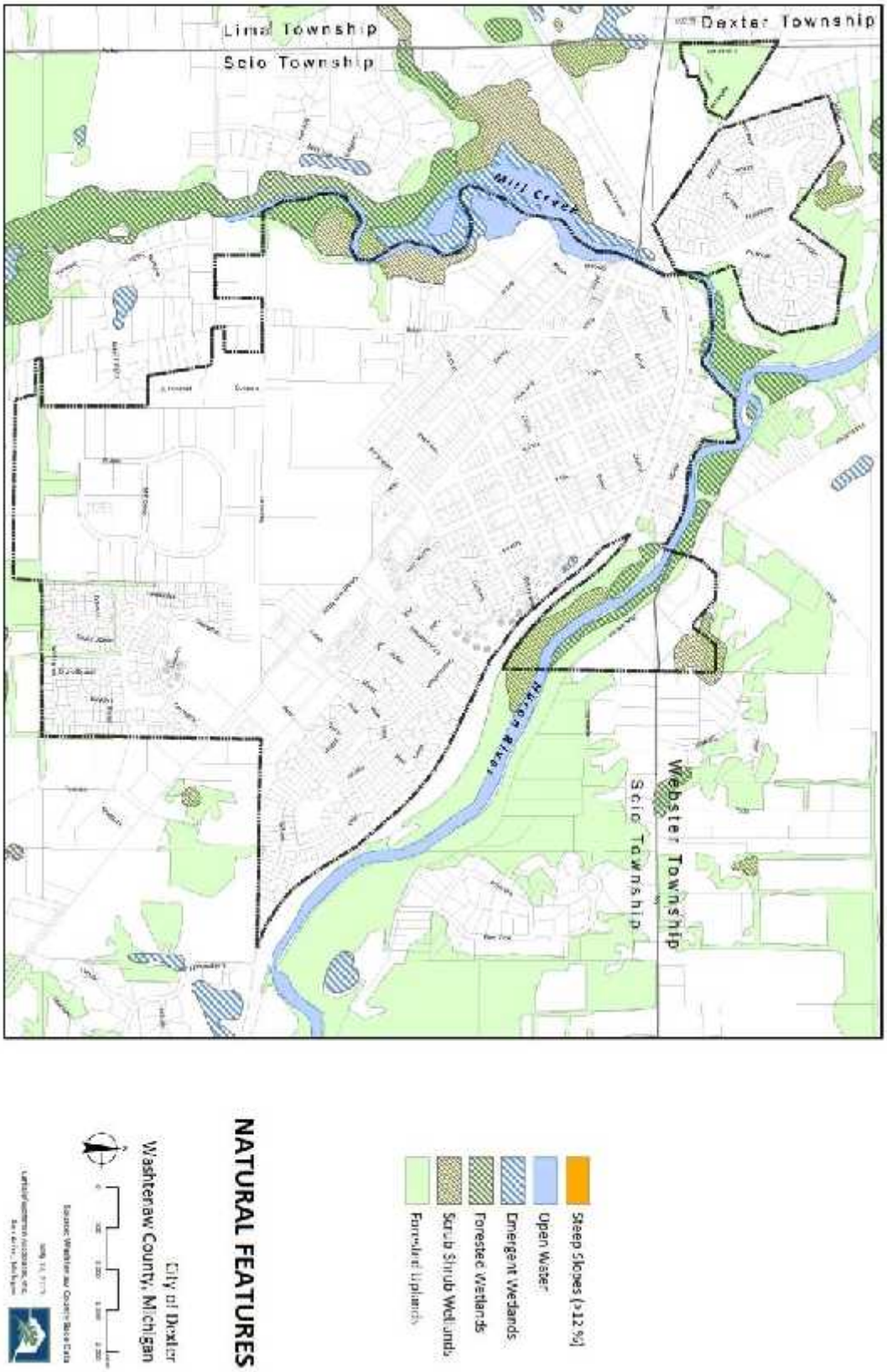
Dexter is located in the Middle Huron River watershed and rests alongside the Huron River and Mill Creek, as can also be seen in Exhibit 8. Mill Creek is located on the westerly boundary of the City, and the Huron River along the northern boundary. The western border of the City along Mill Creek provides the most diverse landscape. When entering the City from the south, Mill Creek changes from an open water creek and forested wetlands to a more meandering creek with shrubbery. The removal of the Mill Creek dam significantly altered the natural features in this area. On the north side of town along the Huron River, the landscape is primarily open water and forested wetlands. As the Huron River runs east it becomes a more open channel with less shrubbery and forested wetlands.

Mill Creek provides City residents with considerable access to natural resources. In 1932, Henry Ford dammed the Creek for hydropower, to service a timber mill. The Mill, however was never activated. After Mill Creek was dammed, the tributary began to back up into the floodplain, which resulted in significant surface water on the westerly boundary of the City. In 2008, the dam was removed simultaneous to the replacement of the Main Street Bridge. The removal of the dam drained Mill Pond, and created significant changes in the wildlife and habitat of the area. The area, returned to its natural habitat, allowed for the restoration of fish passage and protection of the watershed habitat in the redevelopment area.

In conjunction with this project, the City created a Mill Creek Park Planning Team, which was made up of a collaboration of Parks and Recreation Commissioners, Council Trustees, Planning Commissioners, Downtown Development Authority Representatives and staff. The committee applied for, and received MNRTF grant money to help complete this project. The Park that was created as a result of this effort provided a passive recreation area with a small entertainment/amphitheater area, habitat and ecology highlights with information kiosks, a boardwalk that links to Washtenaw County's Border-to-Border Trail, a riparian buffer improvement, and regional storm water and wetland features.

Another goal of the City, in regards to natural features, is also to provide wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities for City residents and ensure that today's resources continue to be preserved for future generations.

EXHIBIT 8
NATURAL FEATURES MAP


Dexter Township
Webster Township
Scio Township
Lima Township
Scio Township
Mill Creek
Mill Creek
Mill Creek

Topography

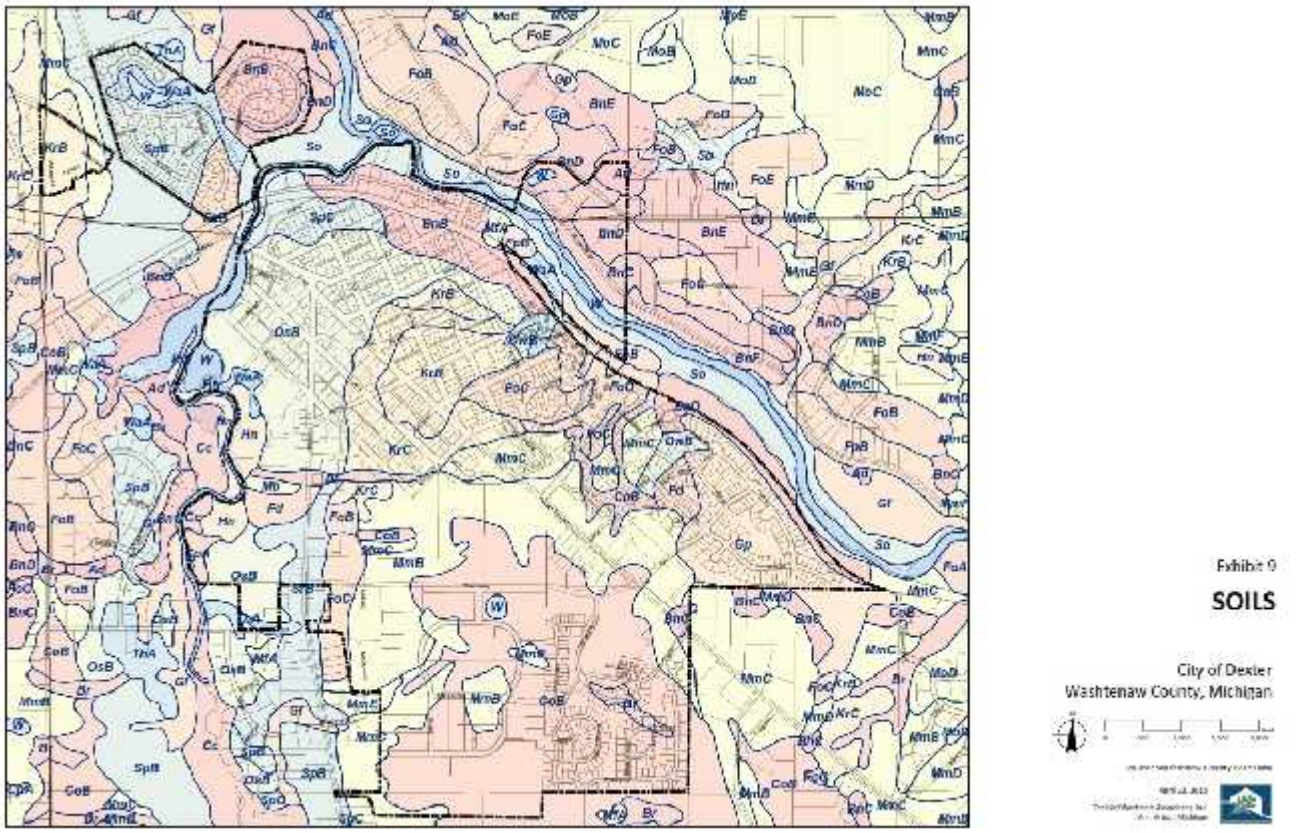
The City of Dexter varies in elevation from 830 feet above sea level along the Huron River to 940 feet in the southeastern portion of the City along Main Street. The Huron River flows through Webster Township in a southerly direction and leaves the Township near the northern boundary of the City. The Huron River, along with its tributary, Mill Creek, is the most dominant topographical feature in the community. Most of the City is located south of the Huron River, sloping upward from the northwest to the southeast. The highest point is the site of the old water tower, which is now Peace Park. Most of the City is developed or in process of developing, however, some natural vegetation remains along Mill Creek and the Huron River.

To the southeast of the City center, gently sloping hills offer scenic overlooks and vistas, further enhancing the image of Dexter as a small, rural community. The scenic areas also contain wooded, low, wet areas that often present limitations for development. However, this undeveloped area has already experienced the growth pressures faced by surrounding communities. Residential development in surrounding communities tends to be characterized by larger lots, wider curvilinear streets, common open space areas, and uniform housing sizes and designs.

Soils

Major soil types in the area are Conover Loam (CoB), Oshtemo Loamy Sands (OsB), Kidder Sandy Loam (KrB and KrC), Boyer Loamy Sands (BnB), and Miami Loam (MmB) shown in Exhibit 9. All soils types present, except Miami Loam, contain sand and have either slight or moderate limitations for urban development. Poorly drained soils may make installation of sewer lines difficult, which can hinder construction.

EXHIBIT 9
SOILS MAP



Water

Water features are undoubtedly one of the most significant and important physical resources in the region. The City of Dexter is located within the Middle Huron River watershed area and benefits from the presence of the Huron River and Mill Creek, which meander along its the northern and western boundaries. These bodies of water assist in defining the unique character of the community. Major woodland areas line the Huron River and Mill Creek, further defining the City's edge. These water bodies are a scenic and aesthetic resource of the City of Dexter that provides visual relief, open space areas, wildlife habitat, and opportunities for recreation. With the removal of the Main Street Dam, Mill Pond has drained and the area has been restored back to its natural state. The wetland area was replaced with a natural stream and smaller wetland area. The railroad parallels these water bodies forming a man-made boundary along the City's northern and western limits. Together, the natural resources and railroad encircle the northern and western edges of the Village providing the benefits of scenic beauty and natural open space areas, which enhance the City's character.

Drainage

The City of Dexter is located within the Huron River Basin, which is a major drainage basin in Washtenaw County. The community is also located at the mouth of the Mill Creek sub-basin. The Honey Creek sub-basin drains most of Scio Township. The western half of the City is situated in the Mill Creek sub-basin, while the eastern half is situated in various creekshed basins.

Fish and Wildlife

Generally wildlife stays outside of the borders of the City, due to its urbanized character as well as the natural water barriers that Mill Creek and the Huron River provide. Recently, the local chapter of Trout Unlimited has begun restocking Mill Creek with fish. Beginning in 2014, Trout Unlimited has conducted studies that have shown that the stocking is having a positive effect on the fish population.

Climate

Dexter has a humid continental climate that may be considered typical of the upper Midwest/Great Lakes States region of the United States. Prevailing southwesterly winds are frequent along with rapid weather changes, and extreme seasonal temperature variations. The City has a reasonably uniform annual distribution of precipitation, and four distinct seasons characterize the climate. The Great Lakes are a powerful climatic influence throughout the State of Michigan and moderate land temperatures are attained by cooling in summer and warming in winter. Spring can be delayed and fall extended approximately one month due to the moderating effect of the Great Lakes.

Environmental Protection

The City of Dexter has been settled for over 100 years and has consequently experienced the removal of many natural features that were once found in the area. Although Dexter has been urbanized, areas with significant natural features still exist in close proximity to the City, including the 17-acre Smith Woods Preserve. Smith Woods Preserve was donated to the Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation Program in 2008 by the City of Dexter. Smith Woods is adjacent to the Miller Preserve which was purchased by the County in 2007. Together, the Miller Preserve and Smith Woods Preserve account for 28-acres to be preserved as part of the County's Natural Area Preservation Program and provides many opportunities to utilize and access nearby natural resources. This area also has great potential for becoming a link to the Washtenaw County regional greenway system and "The Loop" regional pathway due to its location adjacent to the Huron River and other abundant natural resources and recreation opportunities available.

Key Findings of Physical Characteristics

The purpose of reviewing existing physical characteristics is to identify key findings that will guide parks and recreation decision-making and planning for the City of Dexter.

- The City has an active downtown, which is easily accessible to the stable historic neighborhoods through streets, sidewalks, and scenic open space areas.
- The City of Dexter, Dexter School District, and the Huron-Clinton Metroparks are the major providers of public recreation in the Dexter area.
- The City of Dexter is centrally located amongst the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Parks within Washtenaw County. Connection to these regional facilities provides City residents and visitors with optional access to the facilities and provide the City with economic development opportunities within the downtown.
- Although the City has provided parking access and other amenities to surrounding regional park facilities, the popularity of these facilities (particularly in the summertime) causes traffic and parking congestion.
- Webster and Scio Townships have a millage for the purpose of purchasing land to provide open space. However, the townships surrounding Dexter all own minimal, if any active parkland.
- The topography creates broad rolling hills and scenic views that require protection from future development and expansion of the City to the north and west.
- Water features provide an additional level of recreation for the City. Resources should be used to enhance the public access to these water resources.
- The Huron River Water Trail is an exceptional water resource, and is only one of 18 nationally designated River Water Trails.
- Water-based access to the Huron River is highly desirable moving forward.
- The City must actively pursue the preservation of existing natural features when reviewing development plans for projects within the City's boundaries.
- Mill Creek Park and the recently completed Washtenaw County Border-to-Border Trail have been wonderful additions to the community, and provide both active and passive recreation.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Collection and analysis of the data describing the City's population, housing and economic attributes is an important component of the parks and recreation planning process. The evaluation and comparison of available data allows the identification of trends in population, housing and employment compositions of the City. The trends provide valuable insights to define potential future conditions based upon the historical trends and the characteristics of surrounding communities and the region. The data has been used to support and guide the Parks and Recreation Commission in the preparation of recommendations for the City Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

Three primary sources of data were used in the compilation of this information. While the 2010 U.S. Census data is the primary source, information was also obtained from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments ("SEMCOG"), and Washtenaw County.

Trends and Projections

Exhibits 10 and 11 describe the population changes from 1970 to 2015 for the Village/City of Dexter. These exhibits also show the population estimate for 2040. Between 1970 and 1990 there was a 14 percent decrease in population, which was most dramatic between 1970 and 1980. Since 1990, the population size has increased 216% due to the annexation of land and the influx of residential development. Between 2010 and 2015, growth slowed but the population still grew over 17%. As can also be seen in the table below, increases are being experienced in all of surrounding areas, which ultimately impacts the Dexter Community School District.

While the City is the second smallest municipality in a five-community area and was the second smallest municipality in 1970, the City has experienced the same large increase in the level of growth as surrounding townships. Population projections estimate that the City will have a population of 4,885 persons by the year 2040, a 0.5% decrease from 2015. The data generally demonstrates that the Dexter area is recognized as an attractive residential location, but that without an increase in size that the City's population will stagnate over the next two decades.

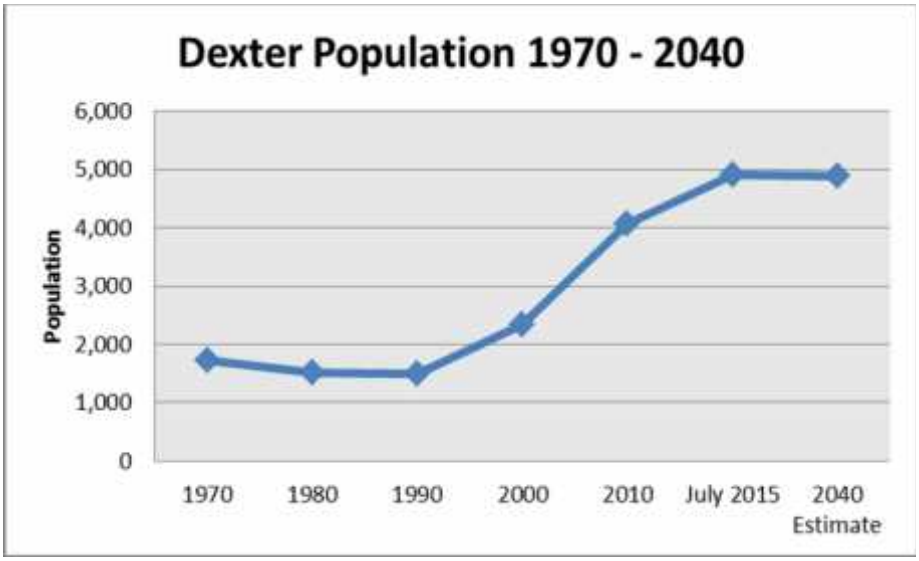
According to SEMCOG, the region lost jobs from 2001 through 2010. SEMCOG forecasts moderate growth in the long-term, and forecasts a three percent population growth and an eleven percent job growth from 2015-2040. Overall the population and employment rates in the area will continue to grow, however not as quickly as through the 1990s. According the U.S. Census data and SEMCOG's population estimates, more than 38,961 people now reside in the Dexter vicinity compared to 20,851 in 1990 and 30,767 in 2000.

EXHIBIT 10
POPULATION CHANGE 1970 – 2040

Community	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	July 2015 Estimate	2040 Estimate	% Change 2000 - 2010	% Change 2010 - 2015
City of Dexter	1,729	1,524	1,497	2,338	4,067	4,911	4,885	73.95%	17.18%
Dexter Township	2,238	3,872	4,407	5,248	6,042	6,905	6,855	15.13%	12.50%
Lima Township	1,281	2,124	2,132	2,224	3,307	3,690	4,304	48.70%	10.37%
Scio Township	5,476	6,505	9,580	15,759	16,470	17,050	20,442	4.51%	3.40%
Webster Township	1,981	2,760	3,235	5,198	6,328	6,405	5,918	21.74%	1.20%
Washtenaw County	234,103	264,748	282,937	322,895	344,791	359,454	386,235	6.78%	4.07%
State of Michigan	8,875,083	9,262,078	9,295,297	9,938,444	9,883,640	9,922,576	N/A	-0.55%	0.39%

Source: 2015 SEMCOG

EXHIBIT 11
POPULATION CHANGE PER DECADE



Source: 2015 SEMCOG

Changes in population size are often related to other changes in the household or resident attributes in the community. Exhibit 12 indicates the average household size recorded for the Dexter vicinity in 1980, 1990, 2000, 2015, and the 2040 estimate. With an average household size of 2.70 persons estimated in July 2015, the City of Dexter has a middle of the road household size of the five jurisdictions compared. In 2000 the Village of Dexter's average household size (2.31) was low when compared to the surrounding townships and Washtenaw County.

Average household size continues to decline throughout the nation and the documented local trends are consistent with the national variations. Several primary causes have been noted for reductions in household sizes. Many families are choosing to have fewer children or are getting married and starting families at a later age. There are also higher incidences of single parent and single member households due to increased divorce rates or other factors of personal choice. In addition, the population is aging and older households are less likely to include children living at home. The City's average household size is increasing. The City was the only jurisdiction that had an increase in average household size since the 2000 Census. This could be a result of younger families moving into Dexter and starting families or expanding family sizes.

Housing

The housing stock within the City of Dexter has changed dramatically since the 1990 U.S. Census. As shown in Exhibit 13 in 1990, the City had 676 total housing units, a 10.3% increase from the 1980 U.S. Census. By 2000, the City's housing units had increased by 63.6%, almost doubling from 676 units in 1990 to 1,093 units in 2000. The number of housing units is still increasing in the City; however there was an increase of only 611 housing units between 2000 and 2010, and 171 housing units (7.8%) from 2010-2015.

The significant housing unit increase was primarily due to the annexation of 330 acres of land into the City in the 1990's. Prior to the annexations, the City of Dexter had been built-out with little or no room for growth. With the annexation of the land and people's interest in locating within the City, the population surged, resulting in a substantial increase in housing units. Between 2000 - 2012 residential development slowed significantly due to the weak economy from 2008 - 2012, however the City of Dexter continues to attract residents.

If new development occurs, the Parks and Recreation Commission will encourage developers to provide private parks, which could help the demand on public facilities.

EXHIBIT 12
AVERAGE PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD

Community	1980	1990	2000	2010	July 2015	2040 Estimate	% Change 2000 - 2010	% Change 2010 - 2015
Dexter	2.60	2.36	2.31	2.56	2.70	2.41	10.82%	5.80%
Dexter Township	3.08	2.87	2.80	2.71	2.66	2.45	-3.21%	-1.88%
Lima Township	3.24	2.90	2.76	2.76	2.75	2.34	0.00%	-0.36%
Scio Township	2.00	2.69	2.59	2.57	2.53	2.30	-0.77%	-1.58%
Webster Township	3.14	2.95	2.93	2.86	2.82	2.34	-2.39%	-1.41%
Washtenaw County	N/A	2.49	2.41	2.38	2.36	2.23	-1.24%	-0.84%
State of Michigan	N/A	2.65	2.56	2.49	N/A	N/A	-2.73%	N/A

Source: 2010 U.S. Census/SEMCOG

EXHIBIT 13
TOTAL HOUSING UNITS BY COMMUNITY

Community	1990	2000	2010	July 2015	% Change 2000 - 2010	% Change 2010 - 2015
Dexter	676	1,093	1,704	1,875	55.90%	9.12%
Dexter Township	1,850	2,168	2,612	2,699	20.48%	3.22%
Lima Township	802	923	1,250	1,361	35.43%	8.16%
Scio Township	3,590	5,215	6,694	6,850	28.36%	2.28%
Webster Township	1,173	1,859	2,332	2,371	25.44%	1.64%
Washtenaw County	111,256	131,069	147,573	150,388	12.59%	1.87%

Source: 2010 U.S. Census/SEMCOG

Age Structure

Exhibit 14 illustrates the distribution of the populations of each community by age groups. The information in the table indicates that the City of Dexter's population is younger than the five townships. The median age of the townships is early-40s, compared with a median age of 36.2 years in the City. Of particular interest is the fact that 32.8 percent of Dexter's population is less than 20 years old while this population group accounts for 26.7 percent to 29.4 percent in the other communities.

The age structure of the City indicates that many youths and young adults are living in Dexter, which has specific implications related to the types of park and recreation facilities needed. A younger population implies that more active recreation such as biking and hiking trails as well as ball fields are necessary to accommodate the residents. It also implies that the School's facilities are more in demand, or will be more in demand, due to the desire of young residents to have more programmed activities, that required the schools facilities, through the Community Education and Recreation Program administered by the Dexter Community School District. 25.1% of the City's population is between the ages of 20-40, which also implies that many of the residents are at childbearing years and a population increase should be anticipated. 55% of the City residents are also women. In addition, the percentage of residents 60 years and older is lower than the County and surrounding townships. This trend needs to be reviewed in relation to park and recreation facility accessibility.

EXHIBIT 14
PERCENT OF POPULATION BY AGE GROUP AND MEDIAN AGE

Age Group	City of Dexter	Dexter Township	Lima Township	Scio Township	Webster Township	Washtenaw County
0-4	8.7% (354)	5.3% (322)	6.4% (211)	5.5% (906)	4.5% (287)	5.9% (19,138)
5-9	9.6% (390)	6.6% (401)	7.3% (241)	7.3% (1,195)	7.5% (475)	5.8% (20,009)
10-19	14.5% (589)	14.8% (894)	14.0% (462)	14.6% (2,402)	17.4% (1102)	14.7% (50,645)
20-29	8.5% (344)	6.3% (383)	7.9% (260)	8.9% (1,466)	4.9% (308)	19.6% (67,528)
30-39	16.6% (674)	10.0% (605)	12.1% (401)	11.2% (1,848)	8.4% (534)	12.7% (43,640)
40-49	18.9% (768)	17.5% (1,059)	15.6% (515)	16.5% (2,724)	18.8% (1191)	13.4% (46,081)
50-59	10.4% (424)	19.0% (1,149)	17.6% (582)	17.7% (2,918)	19.6% (1238)	13.1% (45,092)
60-69	6.8% (275)	12.4% (751)	12% (397)	11.7% (1,930)	11.8% (744)	8.6% (29,503)
70-79	3.3% (135)	5.0% (301)	5.4% (177)	4.2% (690)	3.7% (237)	3.9% (13,543)
80+	2.8% (114)	2.2% (135)	2.4% (79)	2.4% (391)	2.2% (140)	2.8% (9,612)
Median Age	36.2	43.8	41.5	41.6	43.8	33.3
TOTAL POPULATION	**4,067**	**6,042**	**3,307**	**16,470**	**6,328**	**344,791**
Gender	**Population**	**%**				
Male	1,853	45.00%				
Female	2,266	55.00%				

Source: 2010 U.S. Census

Education

Calculations from SEMCOG indicate that in 2010, the percentage of adults 25 and over that received a high school diploma was approximately 93.2% of which 54% went on to obtain a higher education degree.

Racial and Ethnic Composition

According to the 2010 Census the City of Dexter has a relatively homogeneous population with 95.9% being white. The remainder of the population is a combination of American Indian, Asian, African American, and others. This is important to address in assessing the availability of cultural centers and identifying the different recreation and cultural interests of the residents.

Employment

Exhibit 15 illustrates the occupations of the City of Dexter residents. Over 20% of Dexter's employed residents hold high-ranking office jobs such as executive, administrative, managerial and professional specialty occupations. Additionally, another 33% of the population is involved in educational, health and social services jobs. Manufacturing production-related work including precision production, assembly, and inspection accounts for another 9% of the City's workforce. Various services, labor and other jobs account for the remaining employment.

Exhibit 15 indicates that the City of Dexter has seen a significant increase in the amount of management and professional related occupations. The number of City residents employed has also risen, as expected, with the population. Exhibit 14 also shows that the occupations of Dexter's residents appear to be following the same trends as all industries.

According to SEMCOG, there have been significant increases in the following industries: Wholesale Trade, Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities; Knowledge-based Services; Professional, Retail Trade, and the Arts. Dexter's median household income as reported by the 2010 U.S. Census was $61,779 per year. Washtenaw County's median household income for the same period was $59,055. However, both the City and County median incomes were higher than the State's median household income of $48,411. Households in Washtenaw County communities tend to possess substantially higher incomes as compared to other communities in Michigan. Exhibit 16 provides detailed household income data for the City.

Persons with Disabilities

Approximately 118 or 5.0% of the City's population aged 21 to 64 years old has some type of mobility or self-care limitation. The City of Dexter has also seen the percentage of seniors with disabilities decrease from 49% in 2000 to 31.9% in 2010.

Although persons with disabilities make up only a small portion of the City's population, other citizens face some form of temporary disability during their lifetime: seniors, young children, pregnant women, individuals with broken bones, the blind, and individuals using crutches. The City shall make every effort to provide persons with accessibility limitations and disabilities with the opportunity to enjoy all recreation facilities provided by the City of Dexter.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, Title II, prohibits discrimination, both intentional and unintentional, against individuals with disabilities in all programs, activities and services provided by public entities. It applies to all state and local governments, their departments and agencies and any other agencies or special purpose districts of state or local governments. Public Act 1 of 1966, as amended, also requires that

all public facilities, including improved areas used for recreation, meet the barrier free design requirement contained in the State construction code.

Public recreation providers must eliminate any eligibility requirements for participation in programs, activities and services that screen out, or tend to screen out, persons with disabilities; unless they can establish that the requirements are necessary for the provision of the service, program or activity due to legitimate safety requirements. Furthermore, individuals with disabilities may not be excluded from services, programs and activities because existing buildings or park facilities are inaccessible. The Parks and Recreation Commission understands the issues and has prioritized making the City's facilities ADA accessible.

EXHIBIT 15
CITY OF DEXTER BASED EMPLOYMENT

OCCUPATION	1990	2000	2010	% TOTAL 2010
Management, professional, and related occupations	256	586	1170	60.50%
Service Occupations	119	222	187	9.70%
Sales and Office occupations	181	348	362	18.70%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	10	5	N/A	N/A
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	108	118	104	5.40%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	140	121	111	5.70%
INDUSTRY				
Agriculture, forestry and hunting, and mining	17	0	1	0%
Construction	66	90	56	3%
Manufacturing	199	241	178	9%
Whole sale Trade	27	55	52	3%
Retail Trade	122	139	231	12%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	38	19	19	1%
Information	N/A	46	41	2%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	42	58	129	7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	124	141	383	20%
Educational, health and social services	162	448	642	33%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	30	70	114	6%
Other services (except public administration)	N/A	52	50	3%
Public Administration	13	41	38	2%
TOTAL Employed civilian population	814	1,400	1,934	1,934

Source: 2010 Census

EXHIBIT 16
DEXTER HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Income Category	Households	Percent
Less $10,000	30	0.00%
$10,000 - $14,999	74	4.65%
$15,000 - $24,999	165	10.38%
$25,000 - $34,999	152	9.56%
$35,000 - $49,999	177	11.13%
$50,000 - $74,999	265	16.67%
$75,000 - $99,999	289	18.18%
$100,000 - $149,999	316	19.87%
$150,000 - $199,999	110	6.92%
$200,000 or more	42	2.64%
Total Households	**1,590**	**100.00%**
Median Household Income	**$61,779**	

Source: 2010 Census

Alternatives municipalities may consider to comply with ADA include: alteration of existing facilities, acquisition or construction of new facilities, relocation of a service or program to an accessible facility, or provision of services at accessible sites.

The implications of the ADA for Dexter are significant. Within parks, parking, sidewalks, picnic tables, play equipment, playground surfaces, and other recreation facilities must be examined to determine if their design creates barriers that prevent use by all segments of the population.

In essence, the ADA and MDNR policies mandate that communities work toward developing "inclusive recreation programs." Inclusive recreation programs identify residents' interests and needs, and then address these interests and needs with facilities and programs that are not only barrier-free, but also are adaptable so that everyone can have a pleasant recreation experience. The City will make all efforts to provide barrier free access in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Access Guidelines (ADAAG).

Key Findings

Analysis of socio-economic characteristics of the City provides insight to the needs of its residents.

- The dramatic population increase defines a clear need for structured park planning in the next 20 years.
- 100% population increase over the past 15 years indicates that the City must prepare for continued population growth and the populations need for more recreational opportunities.
- The City must cooperate with community organizations, the Dexter Community Schools, adjacent jurisdictions, and the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority to eliminate the duplication of services, while ensuring that appropriate parks and recreation opportunities are available to all Dexter area residents.
- A large percentage of the population remains in family forming years. A younger population implies that more active recreation is appropriate, such as hiking and biking trails.
- Employment trends show residents are working "9 to 5" jobs. This implies usage of parks on weekends and weekday nights.
- There has been an increasing focus on wellness among Dexter residents, and to promote an active lifestyle, non-motorized access is important.
- It is desirable that any future land development within the City of Dexter includes mini-parks or playgrounds.

- Diverse facilities, programming and arts and culture opportunities should be considered in order to improve access to recreation.
- Dexter recreation providers should remain cognizant of intercultural diversity and be open to new opportunities should they arise.
- Programs must be examined, too, to be certain they provide recreation and leisure opportunities to all residents, regardless of their social, economic, or physical status.
- Programs and activities for young adults should be increased.
- Accessibility, including hiking trails, boating access and educational opportunities, to valuable water resources surrounding the City must be created and improved.
- The City should continue to evaluate accessibility and provide solutions for parks with accessibility limitations.

Administrative Structure

The City of Dexter

Responsibility for City owned Parks and Recreation facilities begins with the Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission. Public Act 156 of 1917 gave the community the authority to create a Commission to advise and make recommendations to the City Council regarding parks and recreational facilities in the community. Specifically, the Commission is tasked with acquisition, development, maintenance guidance, management, and planning of the parks. Maintenance and operation is done by the City's Department of Public Works. Parks and Recreation Commission activities involve conducting research on parks and recreation facilities, needs, etc. and providing recommendations to the City Council on their findings. The Parks and Recreation Commission consists of seven members, appointed by the City Council for three-year terms. One Parks and Recreation Commission member is an Ex-Officio from the City Council. Regular meetings of the Parks and Recreation Commission are held once a month, with the occasional subcommittee meeting, all of which are open to the public. Under the advisement of the Parks and Recreation Commission, the City Council delegates day-to-day management of parks to the City Manager, the City's Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Assistant to the City Manager.

The Department of Public Works is responsible for the day-to-day maintenance of outdoor parks and recreation facilities. Because the City does not have indoor facilities or programming, the Community Education and Recreation Department of the Dexter Community Schools plays a large role in providing recreation opportunities and meeting recreation needs. The City's parks and recreation maintenance, operations and capital improvements are financed by the general fund. Other funding for parks and recreation comes from private donations, in-kind services, fund raising and various grants, when awarded. The City has not typically bonded for parks and recreation improvements

The Assistant to the City Manager is the Parks and Recreation Commission liaison between the City's Department of Public Works, the City Manager and the City Council. As the liaison, the Assistant to the City Manager works extensively with the Parks and Recreation Commission on evaluating and implementing long-term goals, funding, donations and subcommittees as well as provides information on available funding opportunities, current trends in parks and recreation, capital improvement planning and by providing information and research as needed or as requested.

The methods and manner in which the Parks and Recreation Commission carries out its business was established by City ordinance. The Parks and Recreation Commission may also establish subcommittees to conduct research on specific projects and report their findings back to the Commission. After further evaluation and consensus on the findings, the Parks and Recreation Commission Chairperson and liaison present reports to the City Council for consideration. On an annual basis, the Parks and Recreation Commission also re-evaluates parks and recreation priorities, projects and capital improvements in order to make recommendations to the City Council for upcoming year budget considerations.

General Maintenance

Though City owned parks adequately serve the existing population, park maintenance is an important component to providing desirable recreation opportunities for residents. Although parking improvements along Alpine Street were completed in conjunction with the previous Parks and Recreation master Plan, access to parking at Mill Creek Park North is still not sufficient.

Dog leavings have been a concern along the newly developed Mill Creek Park path and Border-to-Border Trail. Installation of doggie bag dispensers has been a priority, but continued education is important. Installation of bag dispensers may encourage owners to pick up after their pet as well as decrease the risk of pollution and disease transmission.

Visual Connections

Similar lighting and signage that is consistent with traditional design in the downtown area should distinguish all public parks. The City hopes to continue to implement uniform signage. The City has also installed information kiosks throughout the City. The kiosks are in place to provide visual connections throughout the City's walking destinations and to display maps and other park, City, and community information.

Communication and Collaboration

The City's governing bodies need to ensure quality communication with one other to ensure awareness of each commission's goals and objectives. This Plan can be utilized to "spread the word" to the City administrators and elected officials, as well as its residents about the importance of parks and recreation in the City of Dexter and the Dexter vicinity. This type of implementation will facilitate more change and an increased knowledge of the important issues the City faces, as addressed in this plan.

The Parks and Recreation Commission needs to engage the public for the park planning process in order for residents to feel a sense of ownership in the parks. The Parks and Recreation Commission should also keep the public posted on potential projects to encourage more public input and participation. The City currently works with local papers and media on a regular basis to involve the public. The City's website calendar keeps interested residents informed of public meetings and special events and all Parks and Recreation Commission meeting agendas and minutes are posted online. The City will also continue to include the surrounding entities in recreation planning and implementation.

The Parks and Recreation Commission and the DDA will continue to collaborate on projects that impact both groups in an effort to accomplish the goals and vision of each entity. The Parks and Recreation Commission will continue to update the DDA, the City Council and other community organizations interested in helping achieve a vision for the City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Facilities.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Parks and Recreation Commission also works closely with the Dexter Community School District to further develop and enhance recreational facilities in the area. The Parks and Recreation Commission is working to improve this relationship in an attempt to develop an efficient and diverse set of recreational opportunities within the City.

The City of Dexter and the Dexter Community School District provide recreation activities and facilities services within the City of Dexter. The City owns and maintains seven (7) park sites that primarily provide passive recreational activities throughout the City. The School District owns and maintains a large campus for the three

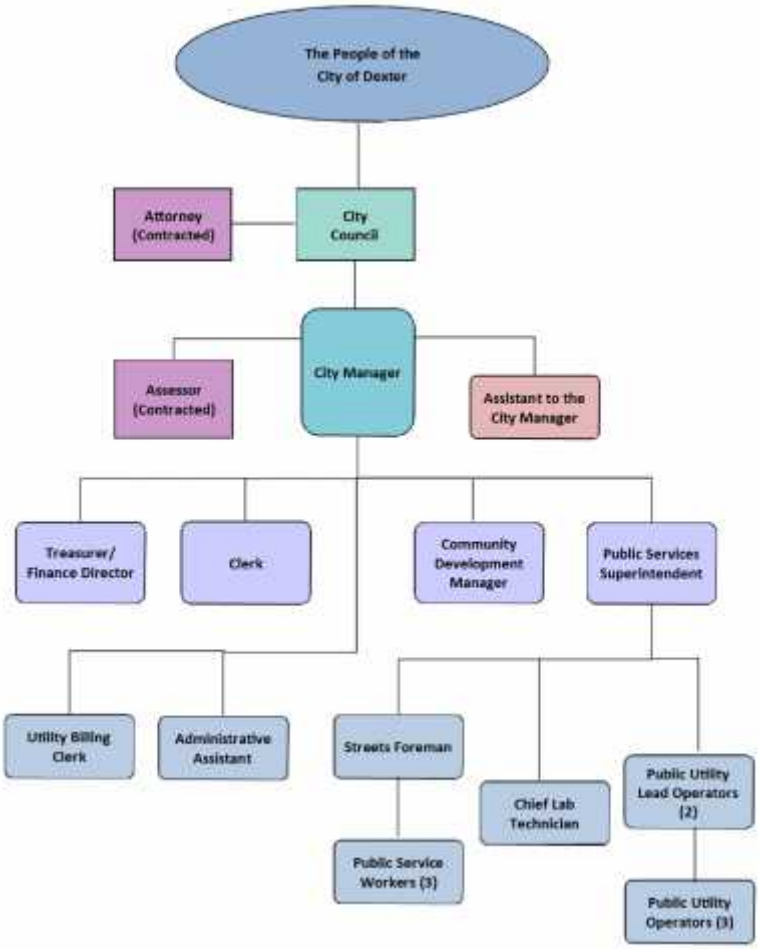
elementary schools, the two middle schools, and the new high school located outside of the City limits. School District recreation facilities are located at each of the schools and are primarily active recreation opportunities.

The Dexter Community School District also operates a Community Education program that provides a selection of educational, cultural and recreational activities for District residents. The School Board delegates day-to-day management to the School Superintendent. The principals of each school along with the Director of the Community Education Program are under the authority of the Superintendent. The School's facilities are maintained by their Building and Grounds Department.

There is a significant amount of cooperation that occurs between the City and School District -- the City Manager and School Superintendent communicate regularly, the Community Education program may use City parks for School District activities, and Dexter residents take advantage of District facilities when available. Although the school's facilities are generally accessible to the public, facility availability is often limited due to high demand.

A majority of the active recreation facilities available to City of Dexter residents are provided by the Dexter Community School District. Scheduling conflicts and sporting events can limit the availability of these facilities to residents, and residents are dependent on the Dexter Community School District for classes and activities. The City strives to not duplicate the schools facilities, but a close working relationship should ensure that both entities' recreation goals are met, and that the needs of the City residents and district residents are fulfilled.

EXHIBIT 17
CITY OF DEXTER ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Funding

In Michigan, there are a variety of funding options for municipal parks and recreation activities. Although the City of Dexter provides its parks and recreation activities primarily through the City's General Fund, below is an overview of the types of options that are available to communities.

General Fund

The General Fund is the basic operating fund of the City and the traditional source of operating funds for parks and recreation. General Fund revenues are derived from property taxes, state-shared revenues, federal grants, license and permit fees, charges for services, interest on investments, and court fines or forfeitures. If recreation program user fees were to be implemented by the City, they would be channeled through the General Fund.

Park activities including acquisition, planning, development, and maintenance are funded by the City's General Fund. As shown in Exhibit 18, the FY 2015-2016 City budget for parks and recreation facilities was $120,200.

The Parks and Recreation budget is allocated for maintenance of existing parkland, monthly operational costs of work performed by the DPW, landscaping costs, professional services, capital improvements, Parks and Recreation Commission compensation. The DPW staff consists of four employees who all spend time on the maintenance and operations of the parks along with several seasonal employees. Volunteers help with parks and recreation facilities on a project-by-project basis. Also, volunteers help with general park clean-up and occasional equipment maintenance, such as painting or refinishing benches and picnic tables.

The Dexter Community School District budget for recreational facilities and programming is allocated between community education programs, the community pool, league sports, and summer recreational programs. The City's relationship with the schools is to supplement, but not duplicate many of the activities and facilities provided by the schools. Community sports clubs and non-profits also provide youth recreation services with separate budgets.

The Parks and Recreation Commission is concerned that Dexter's population growth is putting a strain on the availability of school facilities that are provided for active recreation activities, such as baseball and soccer fields. As the population in the Dexter area continues to grow, the residents of the City will be limited in the amount of time that they will be able to use the school facilities, and therefore shift the demand for recreation back on the City and its minimal facilities. As Exhibit 10 shows, the population in the townships surrounding the City increased by more than 17,000 from 1990 to 2014. The Parks and Recreation Commission will continue to look at the available facilities and the user needs to determine how the City can more adequately provide facilities needed by the City residents.

EXHIBIT 18
CITY OF DEXTER PARKS AND RECREATION BUDGET

GL NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	2011-12 BUDGET	2012-13 BUDGET	2013-14 BUDGET	2014-15 BUDGET	2015-16 BUDGET
Fund 101 - GENERAL FUND						
APPROPRIATIONS						
Dept. 751-PARKS & RECREATION						
101-751-703.000	SALARIES - NON UNION	2,600	5,000	1,700	3,000	1,800
101-751-703.001	SALARIES - PART TIME			10,700	11,000	12,000
101-751-704.000	SALARIES - UNION	14,000	19,000	18,600	22,000	17,000
101-751-705.000	SALARIES - OVERTIME			500	500	200
101-751-709.000	SALARIES - PARK COMMISSIONERS	1,500	1,500	1,500	1,000	1,000
101-751-720.000	SOCIAL SECURITY & MEDICARE	1,000	1,700	2,000	2,900	2,500
101-751-721.000	HEALTH & DENTAL INSURANCE	3,000	3,000	3,100	3,400	3,500
101-751-722.000	LIFE & DISABILITY INSURANCE	100	100	100	100	100
101-751-723.000	DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN	1,100	1,700	2,200		
101-751-723.003	DEFINED CONTRIBUTION PLAN				100	100
101-751-731.000	LANDSCAPE SUPPLIES	3,500	7,000	8,000	4,000	4,000
101-751-732.000	ICE RINK SUPPLIES	2,000	3,800	4,700	4,000	3,000
101-751-740.000	OPERATING SUPPLIES	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
101-751-802.000	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	2,000		17,300	30,000	6,000
101-751-803.000	CONTRACTED SERVICES		7,200		5,000	6,500
101-751-901.000	PRINTING & PUBLISHING	5,000	24,500	3,000	1,000	1,000
101-751-937.000	EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE & REPAIR	3,000	3,500	6,000	6,000	5,000
101-751-941.000	EQUIPMENT RENTALS	1,500	2,000	5,000	7,500	13,000
101-751-944.000	PORTABLE TOILET RENTAL	2,600	2,600	2,200	3,700	5,000
101-751-955.000	MISCELLANEOUS	2,000	1,700	1,700	2,000	2,000
101-751-958.000	MEMBERSHIPS & DUES				200	500
101-751-970.000	CONTRACTED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS			5,000	5,000	30,000
101-751-977.000	EQUIPMENT	17,500	5,500	7,000	7,000	5,000
Totals for Dept. 751-PARKS & RECREATION		63,400	90,800	101,300	120,400	120,200

In general, there are several existing and potential funding sources available to the City for parks and recreation facility improvements. In addition to the City providing resources to parks from the General Fund, there are other sources of funding available for parks and recreation; these include a dedicated millage, user fees, bonds, grants, donations foundations, contractual agreements and conveyances. Following is a brief description of these funding sources:

Potential Alternative Funding Sources

User Fees

Fees can be charged to the users of specific recreation facilities or for enrollment in recreation programs. User fees can provide substantial support for park facilities. Other communities in southeast Michigan have established user fees for swimming pools, tennis courts, wave pools, use of lighted athletic fields, and use of indoor facilities. User fees are a promising source of funding in the municipality if used selectively for specific facilities and services. In 2007 the Parks and Recreation Commission established a parks use permit and user fee for the use of City parks by non-City residents for events.

Grants

Grants are an allotment of funds provided by an organization for a particular purpose. Grants are offered by various organizations and often require matching funds. The greatest provider of grant resources for communities looking to enhance recreation offerings is the State of Michigan's Natural Resources Trust Fund.

- **Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants** - Following is a summary of the three viable recreation grant programs available through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources ("MDNR"). The *Recreation Passport Grant* Program funds renovation and improvements to existing parks, along with the development of new parks. The minimum grant request is $7,500 and the maximum request is $45,000 with a 25% match. *Land and Water Conservation Fund* ("L&WCF") eligible projects include community recreation and trail way improvements. These are grants of $30,000 - $100,000 to local units of government for development of facilities such as ball fields, tennis courts, playgrounds, trails picnic areas; support facilities; and renovation of existing facilities and retro-fitting of existing facilities to make them accessible to persons with disabilities. Funds are provided through Federal appropriations. The local grant match basis is up to 50%. Current funding priorities are trails, community recreation, green technology, coordination and communication and universal access. *Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund* ("MNRTF") eligible projects include acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of the land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, including additions to existing parks, forest lands or wildlife areas. Development of public outdoor recreation facilities is eligible (such as picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ball fields, tennis courts, and trails). Funds are provided through sale of oil and mineral leases on State land. Local contributions must be at least 25% of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum amount for acquisition projects. The minimum allowable grant for development is $15,000 and the maximum is $300,000. Funding priorities for 2014 are trails (including water trails), wildlife/ecological corridors and winter deeryard (acquisition only) and projects within an urban area.

- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** - TAP is a competitive grant program that funds projects such as non-motorized paths, streetscapes, and the historic preservation of transportation facilities, which enhance Michigan's multi-modal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability, and improving residents' quality of life.

Dedicated Millage

A property tax millage could be used to finance specific parks and recreation projects, such as parkland acquisition or operation of recreation facilities. The dedicated millage has gained favor in many communities because voters are increasingly wary of approving millage increases for non-specified purposes. Approval by referendum is required before a millage can be assessed. A millage is subject to periodic renewal by a vote of the people.

Recreation Millage

A district millage through the school could be used to finance the operation costs associated with community education and recreation. This broad area millage could then be used to purchase land and build a facility that is for community use that would not be restricted by school sports and activities.

Bonds

A number of bond programs can be used to finance construction of parks and recreation facilities.

General Obligation Bonds are issued for specific community projects such as park land acquisition, and may not be used for other purposes. These bonds are usually paid off with property tax revenues.

Revenue Bonds are for construction of public projects that will generate revenue. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project. Projects such as water main rehabilitation are paid for by water utility revenues.

Special Assessment Bonds are issued to pay for projects that benefit a particular segment of the population. For example, recreation improvements that benefit a defined subdivision or neighborhood could be financed using special assessment bonds, in which case only the residents who receive the benefit would be assessed.

Creation of a Regional Recreation Authority

The City Council may wish to pursue an agreement with surrounding cities, townships and villages to create a broader funding base. Creation of a regional authority could assist in this goal. The City's neighbor, Scio Township, has acquired land for the development of a regional greenway connection in the area and has adopted a Greenway Plan. The City of Dexter and Scio Township are exploring coordinated planning for the implementation of both communities' recreational goals. Eliminating the duplication of services between the City of Dexter, Webster Twp., Lima Twp., Dexter Twp., and Scio Twp., could substantially improve the recreation opportunities available for all residents in the service area.

Donations

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations, and individuals will often contribute financially and in-kind to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment or facilities.

Foundations

A foundation is a special non-profit legal entity that is established as a mechanism through which land, cash, and securities can be donated. The assets are disbursed by the foundation Board of Directors according to a predetermined plan. Funding for recreation facilities through foundations is very limited.

- **The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan Greenways Initiative** was created to help the seven counties with in southeast Michigan, including Washtenaw County, acquire and construct greenway paths and linkages throughout the region.
- **The Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative** was created to facilitate the development of non-motorized recreational pathways, linking them to a growing network of Michigan trails.
- **The Legacy Land Conservancy** is an organization dedicated to conserving locally important land, especially with lands located near the Huron River.

Lease or Contractual Agreements

The City may increase the availability of recreation facilities to its residents by leasing sites and facilities from other recreation providers. For example, the City could agree to help maintain school recreation facilities in exchange for guaranteed availability of the facility to the public. The City could also contract with private entrepreneurs to provide services at City-owned park facilities, such as recreation programming, food service, or facility maintenance. Privatization of services can increase recreation opportunities available to residents, while minimizing City administrative costs.

Public Use Conveyances

Administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, this program provides State lands, acquired through delinquent taxes, for local government units for public use. Acceptable uses of land acquired under this program include development of local parks.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory

Parks Classification System

The City of Dexter manages more than 12 acres of parkland, including 6 parks. Parks range in size from .2 acres to 6.15 acres, and contain a variety of amenities. The following Summary of Municipal Recreation Resources table and Parks and Recreation Facilities Map summarize the system of Parks and Recreation facilities in Dexter.

For recreation planning purposes, it is useful to categorize parks based on their use potential, these standards are derived from the National Recreation and Park Association (NPRA). For the purposes of this plan, parks are classified as follows:

Mini Park

General Description – Mini parks serve the immediate sub-neighborhood depending on their use. These serve a variety of purposes such as tot lots, block parks, play lots, or even a public garden. They are small, usually about the size of the average residential building lot. If equipped for the use of small children, parks should not be situated so that children are required to cross heavily traveled streets to get to them.
Service Area – Less than ¼ mile distance in residential setting.
Size Criteria – Between 2500 square feet and one acre in size.

Neighborhood Park

General Description - The neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Tables, benches, lawn area, play equipment and play fields are generally the basic facilities. Non-league ball diamonds, skating facilities, and sledding areas may also be included.
Service Area – ¼ to ½ - mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers.
Size Criteria – Small neighborhood parks should be between 1 and 5 acres in size, while large neighborhood parks should be 5 to 10 acres in size.

Community Park

General Description - Varied environmental conditions exist in community parks, which may be designed to provide areas for intense, active recreational opportunities such as sanctioned football, swimming or baseball meets or games. They may also serve only passive recreational uses. Community parks may include areas of significant natural features, land suitable for intense recreational development, and parks used for community-wide events. Where both are included, sufficient acreage must be made available to protect the fragile areas often associated with natural features from over or inappropriate use.
Service Area – Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and a 1 to 2 mile radius.
Size Criteria – As needed to accommodate desired uses. Approximately 30 to 50 acres.

Special Purpose Park

General Description - Special purpose parks cover a broad range of parks and recreation facilities, which may be oriented toward single-purpose use, such as historic preservation or downtown open space. The historical, cultural, environmentally sensitive or other unique resources of the City of Dexter are included in this category as well as plazas, squares, parkways, etc. in commercial areas.
Service Area – Variable; dependent on specific use. No applicable standard.
Size Criteria – Variable

Urban Green Space

General Description – Generally lands set aside for preserving drainage corridors, wetlands or other significant community natural resource areas.
Service Area – Variable
Size Criteria - Variable

Source: National Parks and Recreation Association Classification Standards

City of Dexter Parks and Recreational Components

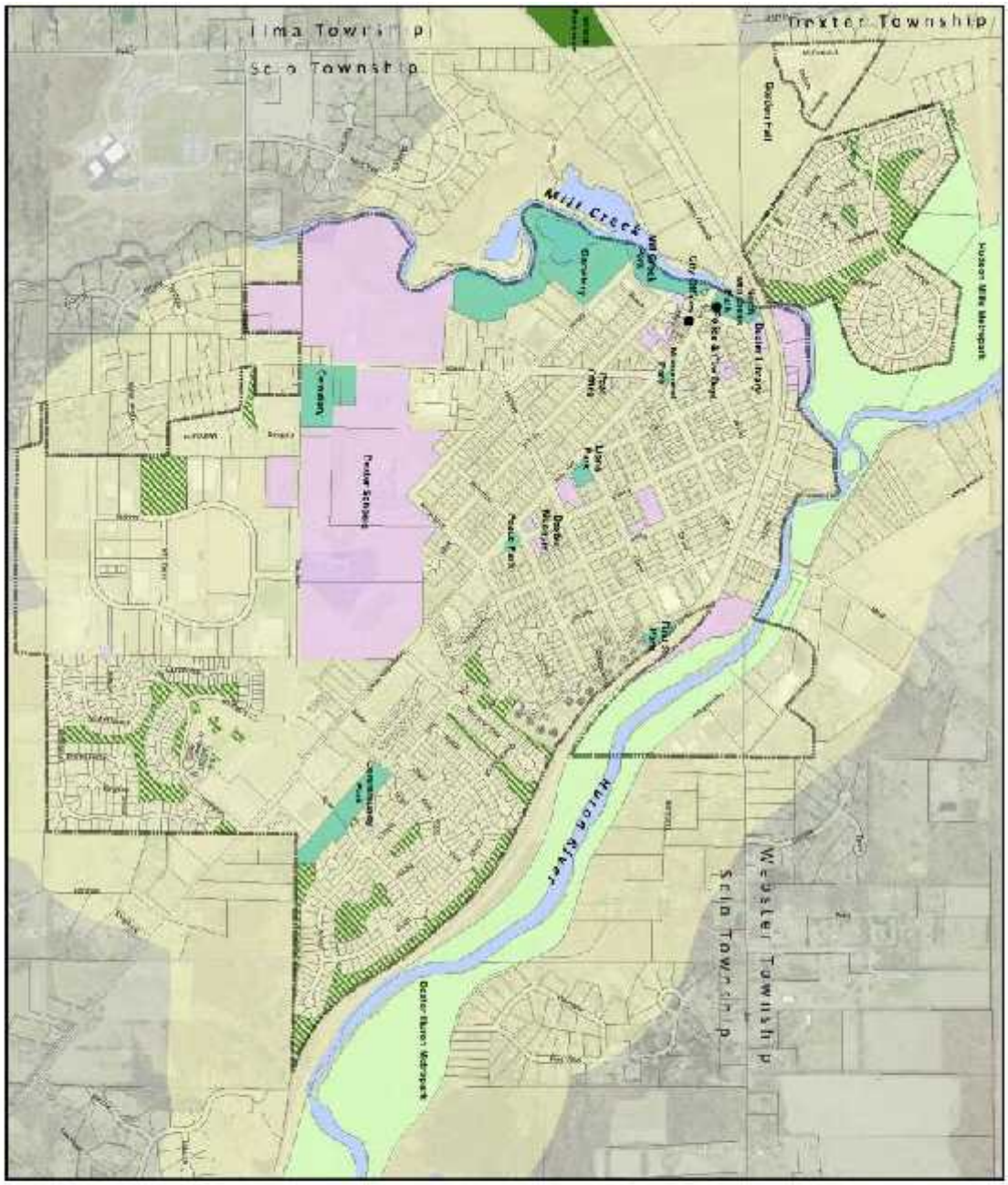
Analysis of the City of Dexter's recreational needs requires evaluation of its present parks and recreational facilities on both the local and regional levels. To provide adequate information for this analysis, this inventory provides information regarding parklands and the availability of facilities/activities, whether or not these are located in parklands. Inventory, analysis, and planning must take place within a defined geographic area; this is called the service area. Recreational opportunities may be active or passive. Active recreation often refers to games and athletic activities that are planned or require registration. All other recreational activity is passive.

The City of Dexter has grown in population and in the recreational needs. The City has increased its parkland since the 2009 Park and Recreation Facilities Master Plan update due to the development of Mill Creek Park. The City (Village at the time) lost a net of 16 acres of park land between the 2003 and 2009 Master Plan updates due to the donation of the Robert and Nancy Smith Woods to the Washtenaw County Natural Areas Preservation Program. In 2005 and 2006, the City created two new parks – Lion's and First Street - from property that it owned. The combined property of Lion's Park and First Street Park is slightly more than one acre.

The City of Dexter's Parks and Recreation Facilities now consists of six (6) parks - Community Park, First Street Park, Lion's Park, Mill Creek Park, Monument Park, and Peace Park. In total, the Mill Creek Park area is the largest at approximately 6.15 acres. Monument Park, Mill Creek Park, Lions Park and Peace Park are close to the City's downtown district and are frequented by many City and non-City residents. With the exception of Mill Creek Park and Community Park, all of the parks are passive, open space parks. Monument Park, Community Park, and Lion's Park have signature City gazebos. Mill Creek and Community Park have play structures, swings, grills, picnic tables and benches. Community Park is an active park with an asphalt path, play structures, a gazebo, basketball court, grills, picnic tables, swings, spring toys and benches. First Street Park has been developed as a horseshoe-throwing park.

Local recreation areas serve residents of a specific community. They may also be publicly or privately held, and may be designed to provide for a single recreational activity or multiple recreational activities. For the purpose of the City of Dexter's Plan, Exhibit 19 defines the local service area, size, and level of service standard per 1,000 population according to park type. It also shows the location of these local facilities. The following pages detail the amenities found in each park.

EXHIBIT 19
KEY LOCATIONS & NEIGHBORHOODS PARK SERVICE AREA



Community Park

Location: Ryan Drive off of Dexter Ann Arbor Road
Area: 5 Acres
Designation: Neighborhood Park
Amenities: Pavilion, picnic tables, walking trail, basketball court, fun hoops, grills, play equipment, swings, benches, Porta-Johns.

The Dexter Community Park is located on Ryan Drive and is open to the public. In the past few years, a walking path, gazebo, benches, basketball court and other improvements have been made to this park.

First Street Park

Location: 2nd Street near Edison Street
Area: .94 acres
Designation: Mini-Park
Amenities: Horseshoe tossing, porta johns, picnic tables and grills.

The First Street Park is located at the end of Edison Street along the railroad tracks. The park is equipped with horseshoe pits, picnic tables and a porta potty during the summer months. The building of a storage shed and porta potty screen are currently planned for 2016.

Lion's Park

Location: Ann Arbor Street and Edison Street
Area: .25 acres
Designation: Mini-Park
Amenities: Small gazebo, benches, landscaping, sidewalks.

Lion's Park is located along Ann Arbor and Edison Streets. At the end of 2015, the Park consists of a gazebo donated by the Dexter Lions Club, several park benches, and sidewalks. The City plans to develop a playground at this Park, with installation of a play structure to take place in the spring of 2016.

Mill Creek Park

Location: Alpine Street and Jeffords St. at Main St.
Area: 6.15 acres
Designation: Community Park
Amenities: Playground Equipment, Walking Path, Picnic Areas, Scenic Viewing Areas, 2 Porta-Johns.

Mill Creek Park is divided into northern and southern sections, bifurcated by Main St. Access is available between the areas via a walkway under the Main St. Bridge. Mill Creek Park on the north side of main Street (formerly Warrior Creek Park) is a 2.15 acre park located behind the fire station and next to the Mill Creek, which flows northeast into the Huron River. In 2012, on the north side of the Main Street bridge, a pedestrian bridge was constructed. The 1/4mile pedestrian path leads visitors across the Mill Creek and through wetland habitat before exiting into the West Ridge of Dexter neighborhood. An additional 5 miles of trail was constructed along the Huron River, connecting the City to the Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authorities (HCMA) Hudson Mills Park. A wooden stairway was added to provide access from the park up the steep hillside to connect to the Dexter District Library and the Farmer's Market.

Mill Creek Park, on the south side of Main Street, is approximately an additional 4 acres of the park developed in the former Mill Pond Dam impoundment. The City received a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant and a Waterways Infrastructure Grant in 2009 to develop non-motorized boat launches, a trail network, natural features and fishing docks to reconnect people with the Mill Creek. Park development started in 2011 and the grand opening was held on August 11, 2012.

Monument Park

Location: 8558 Ann Arbor Street
Area: .3 acres
Designation: Mini-Park
Amenities: Gazebo, drinking fountain, benches, picnic tables, special events, sidewalks.

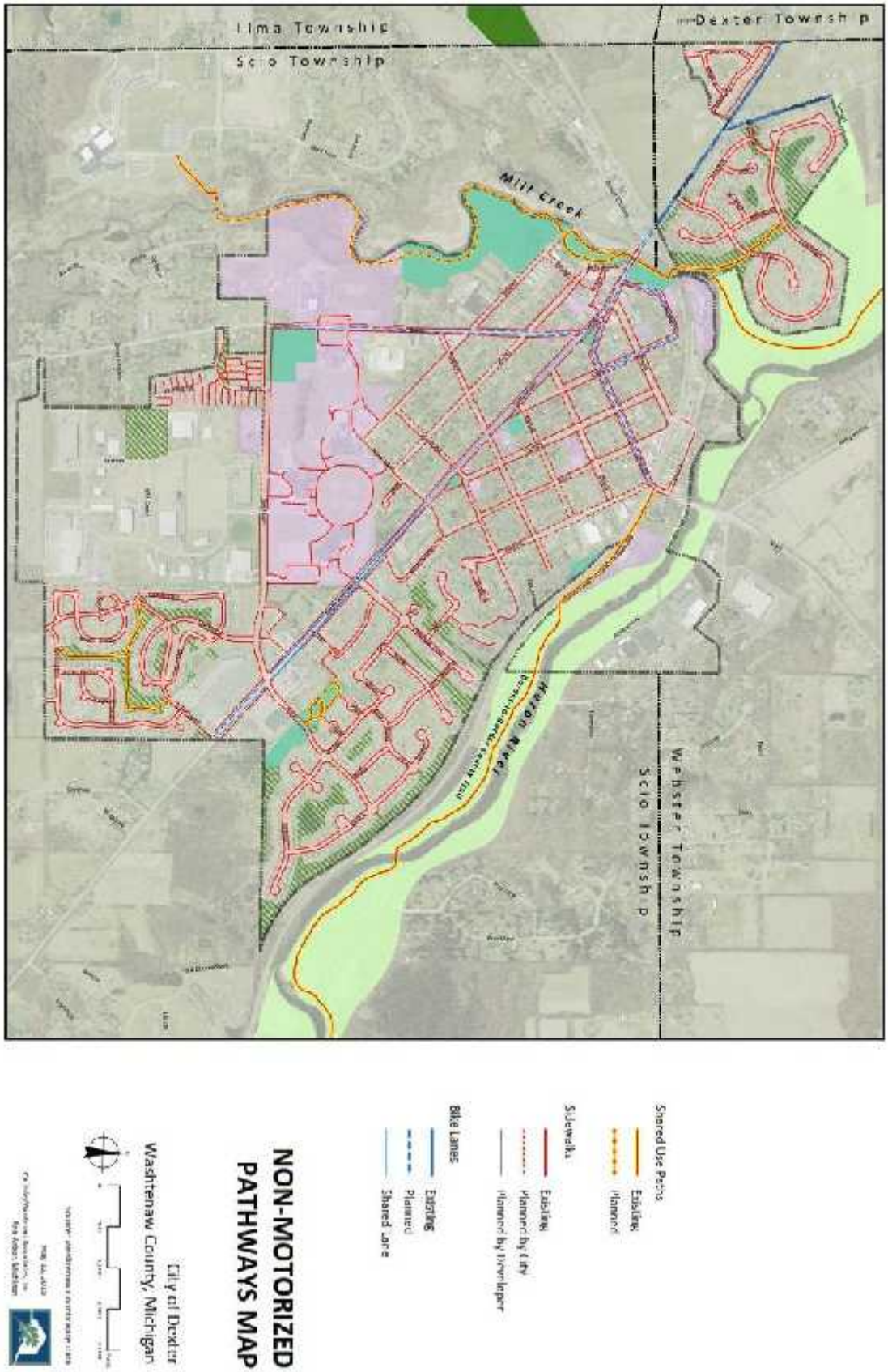
Monument Park is the City's .3-acre town center, where community celebrations such as Dexter Daze, the Paint Dexter Plein Air Festival, Apple Daze are held. It has a gazebo for concerts and other cultural events, providing a community gathering place in the downtown district. In the winter, there is also an outdoor ice rink located within the park.

Peace Park

Location: Ann Arbor Street and Inverness Street
Area: .2 acres
Designation: Mini-Park
Amenities: benches, picnic tables, perimeter sidewalk and peaceful landscape design.

Peace Park is a .2-acre mini-park at the corner of Ann Arbor and Inverness Streets and is east of downtown. It has picnic tables and benches for residents to enjoy. The mission of Peace Park is to encourage residents to relax and reflect on the cultural and social diversity of the City.

EXHIBIT 20
NON-MOTORIZED PATHWAYS MAP



Dexter School District Facilities

The School District is the major source of active recreation programs and facilities. Aside from the yearly team sports that they provide for the students, the schools provide a Community Education Department that facilitates a wide variety of activities for City and School District residents of all ages. For example, they offer basic sports programs, aerobics, arts and crafts courses, martial arts classes, swim lessons, and many other activities. These are all operated with user fees.

Dexter also has many community organizations. These clubs include (but are not limited to) the Lions Club, Kiwanis Club, American Business Women's Association, Boy Scouts, Dexter Chamber of Commerce, Merchants Association, Dexter Rotary Club, Senior Citizens Group, Dexter Community Band, Dexter Community Orchestra, Dexter Area Historical Society, Faith in Action, and the Domestic Violence Support Group. Annual events that take place in the City include Dexter Daze, Paint Dexter Plein Air Festival, and Apple Days. Additional events throughout the summer months include the Summer Series events, which provide various types of entertainment in the downtown parks. The Community Education and Recreation Department also hosts many events each year, including craft fairs, auctions, Dexter Wrestling Club, Dexter Little League Baseball, and parties for community groups.

The Dexter Community School District has built three (3) new schools over the last fifteen years; a middle school, an elementary school and a new high school, and the former high school was retrofitted to an intermediate school for 5th and 6th graders. Additional parks and recreation facilities were provided at each new school and old facilities were retrofitted as necessary.

EXHIBIT 21
Dexter School District Recreational Facilities

School	Location	Site Size (Acres)	Type	Outdoor Facilities
Cornerstone Elementary School	7480 Dan Hoey Rd.	5 Acres	Public School/ Neighborhood Park	Playground Equipment, Walking path
Wylie Elementary School	3060 Kensington St.	10 Acres	Public School/ Neighborhood Park	Playground Equipment, Walking Trail, 1 baseball, 1 softball, Indoor Community Pool
Creekside Intermediate School	2615 Baker Rd.	25 Acres	Public School/ Neighborhood Park	Playground equipment, 3 football/soccer, 2 softball, 1 baseball field
Mill Creek Middle School	7305 Dexter Ann Arbor Rd.	5 Acres	Public School/ Neighborhood Park	6 tennis courts, 2 soccer fields, 2 softball fields
Dexter High School	2200 North Parker Rd.	30 Acres	Public School/ Neighborhood Park	10 tennis courts, 3 soccer fields, 3 basketball courts, 2 baseball and 1 softball field, Indoor Pool

Source: January 2015 Inventory, City Staff.

Other Local Recreational Facilities

Churches

The City of Dexter hosts 3 churches, many of which provide indoor or outdoor recreational opportunities to Dexter families. In many instances, local churches also host, or coordinate with other organizations to host, or sponsor local events.

Cemeteries

Cemeteries provide passive open space and historical and cultural educational opportunities. The City of Dexter has three cemeteries:

- St. Joseph Cemetery (Parish located at 6805 Mast Rd.)
- Forest Lawn Cemetery (8095 Grand St.)
- St. Andrews Cemetery (Parish located at 7610 Ann Arbor St.)

Gateways and Corridors

Gateways and corridors provide passive recreation opportunities. Developments along corridors reflect various needs, desires, and aspects of the community. There are three primary corridors within the City of Dexter: Downtown, Baker Road, and Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd.

- Downtown – Dexter has a picturesque traditional downtown that was originally built in the 1800s. The historic area includes Main Street, and portions of Alpine, Broad, Central, Forest, and Grand. The three story architecture and surrounding buildings house both residential units and various commercial businesses.
- Baker Road – The Baker Road corridor runs from Main Street to Dan Hoey. It is directly accessible from I-94. This corridor is currently undergoing a transformation that started in 2010 with the building of the Dexter Pharmacy building. In 2012, the Dexter Wellness Center replaced an obsolete industrial building. The corridor also features many businesses in typical commercial buildings and former houses that have been modified into commercial structures.
- Dexter-Ann Arbor Road – The Dexter Ann Arbor Road corridor extends from Kensington to the City limits, just past Dan Hoey Rd. This corridor has also seen several large scale projects including the newly reconstructed LaFontaine Chevrolet, the Busch's shopping center, and the Country Market shopping center.

Non-Public Recreational Facilities

Private recreation developments are important because they can supplement passive and active recreation opportunities provided by public facilities. These include for-profit and not-for-profit facilities and clubs and can address a wide range of interests. For a list of these facilities, see Exhibit 23.

Due to a recent trend in Michigan, many residential developments have come before the City with proposals to develop neighborhoods and incorporate their own private open space/park area (see Exhibit 22). This type of development is called cluster or open space development and is possible by clustering homes on to smaller lots. The remaining property is preserved as common land for the residents of the neighborhood. More opportunity for this method of development was created by the annexations to the City in the 1990s. The City will encourage this type of park and open space development in the future.

EXHIBIT 22
PRIVATE PARK CLASSIFICATION STANDARDS

Private Parks/ Open Space	Park Type	Recommended Size	Actual Size	Outdoor Facilities
West Ridge of Dexter	Neighborhood Park	2-10 acres	2 acres	Benches, play structure, swings, picnic tables, asphalt walking pathway
Huron Farms	Mini-Park	0.05 – 1 acre	1.5 acres	Benches, play structure, swings
Dexter Crossing	Neighborhood Park	2-10 acres	7 acres	Benches, picnic tables, play structure, asphalt walking path
Walkabout Creek	Mini-Park	0.05 – 1 acre	0.15	Playground

Source: January 2015 Inventory, City Staff.

EXHIBIT 23
DEXTER NON-PUBLIC RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Dexter Private Facilities		
Facility	**Type**	**Street**
CrossFit Dexter	CrossFit Studio	3219 Broad St.
Dancer's Edge	Dance Studio	3115 Broad St.
Michigan Academy of Dance & Music	Dance Studio	7035 Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd.
Studio 3 Performing Arts Center	Dance Studio	7200 Dan Hoey Rd.
Curves	Gym	7200 Dan Hoey Rd.
Dexter Wellness Center	Gym	2810 Baker Rd.
Snap Fitness	Gym	7007 Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd.
B C Yu Martial Arts Center	Martial Arts	5204 Jackson Rd.
Choi Kwang Do	Martial Arts	7200 Dan Hoey Rd.
Master Lockman's Black Belt Academy	Martial Arts	8110 Main St.
Dexter Crossing	Private Park	Neighborhood
Huron Farms	Private Park	Neighborhood
Orchard River Hills	Private Park	Neighborhood
West Ridge of Dexter	Private Park	Neighborhood
Encore Musical Theater	Theater/Theatre	3126 Broad St.

Source: January 2015 Inventory, City Staff.

Regional Parks and Recreational Opportunities

There are a number of public agencies in the region that provide recreational opportunities to residents. Regional recreation areas generally serve residents from the various communities in the regional service area. They may be publicly or privately held and may be designed to provide for a single recreational activity or multiple activities. A list of regional recreational opportunities is found in Exhibit 24. The location of regional facilities located in Washtenaw County is shown in Exhibit 26.

Regional parks are auto oriented; that is, at a minimum, adequate parking for park facility users must be provided. They offer a variety of recreational activities providing access to active and/or passive pursuits such as: court games, field sports, picnic facilities, play equipment, shelter and restroom facilities. Ideally, significant, local natural resources will be included, and thereby these resources will obtain some protection within these parks.

Within the City of Dexter boundaries, there are no regional parks, but two are accessible via non-motorized pathways. As mentioned previously, residents are served by the various regional parks in the Washtenaw County area, which can all be accessed via roadways surrounding the City and waterways in Mill Creek Park.

Washtenaw County Parks

The role of Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation (WCPAR) within the City of Dexter is to be an active liaison to local governments and to assist local units in providing facilities and opportunities that they would not otherwise be able to provide alone. The WCPAR's mission is: "To enhance the quality of life in the County by promoting a healthy lifestyle, efficiently providing high quality facilities and programs reflective of current and anticipated recreational needs of County residents and visitors – with particular emphasis on preserving fragile lands, water quality, wildlife habitat, creating pedestrian and greenway connections, and providing high quality services to those of all backgrounds." The WCPARC currently owns and maintains 40 parks (15 parks and 25 preserves) with over 5,000 acres of parkland, including a 160-acre park at Independence Lake just 5 miles north of the City and the Robert and Nancy Smith Woods Preserve donated by the Village of Dexter. Washtenaw County Parks developed areas for field games, gardening, skiing, nature interpretation, picnicking, swimming, hiking and biking.

Metroparks

The Southeast Michigan region is serviced by the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA). The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a regional special park district encompassing Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Livingston Counties. It was sanctioned by the Michigan State Legislature in Act No. 147 of the Public Acts of 1939, and was approved in 1940 by the residents of the five counties. The Authority controls approximately 24,000 acres of land within five (5) counties. Washtenaw County has three of these regional parks totaling 1,800 acres, all within 7 miles of the City limits. Hudson-Mills Metropark, the largest of the three (1,595 acres) provides multiple recreation, learning, and group facilities and activities. Dexter-Huron Metropark (120 acres) also provides many recreation and family recreation opportunities. Delhi Metropark (53 acres), also along the Huron River, provides play areas, picnicking, non-motorized boat and canoe rental. All of the HCMA parks within Washtenaw County are along the Huron River Corridor and are a part of the Border to Border trail initiative being led by Washtenaw County Parks.

HCMA is the largest provider of parkland surrounding the City of Dexter. HMCA, Washtenaw County Parks, and the City of Dexter have actively developed the segment of the Border-to-Border Trail that runs through Dexter and northward towards Hudson-Mills Metropark. The City and the schools are also working together to extend this system along Mill Creek south of the City from Mill Creek Park to the school's future nature corridor and outdoor lab (Shield Road). Exhibit 25 is an inventory of Metro Park facilities.

EXHIBIT 24
INVENTORY OF REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES

Regional Public Facilities	
1. Portage Lake Public Access	6. Pinckney Recreation Area
2. Whitmore Lake Public Access	7. Chelsea State Game Area
3. Ann Arbor City Recreation System	8. Waterloo Recreation Area
4. Ann Arbor Public Schools Community Education and Recreation	9. Metroparks
5. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation	a. Delhi Parks
a. Albert Miller Preserve	b. Dexter Huron Park
b. Robert & Nancy Smith Preserve	c. Hudson Mills Park
c. Burns-Stokes Preserve	10. University of Michigan
d. Brauer Preserve	a. Libraries
e. Devine Preserve	b. Museums
f. Osbourne Mill Park	c. Theaters
g. Independence Lake Park	d. Sports Facilities

Source: January 2015 Inventory, City Staff

EXHIBIT 25
INVENTORY OF HURON-CLINTON METROPOLITAN PARKS

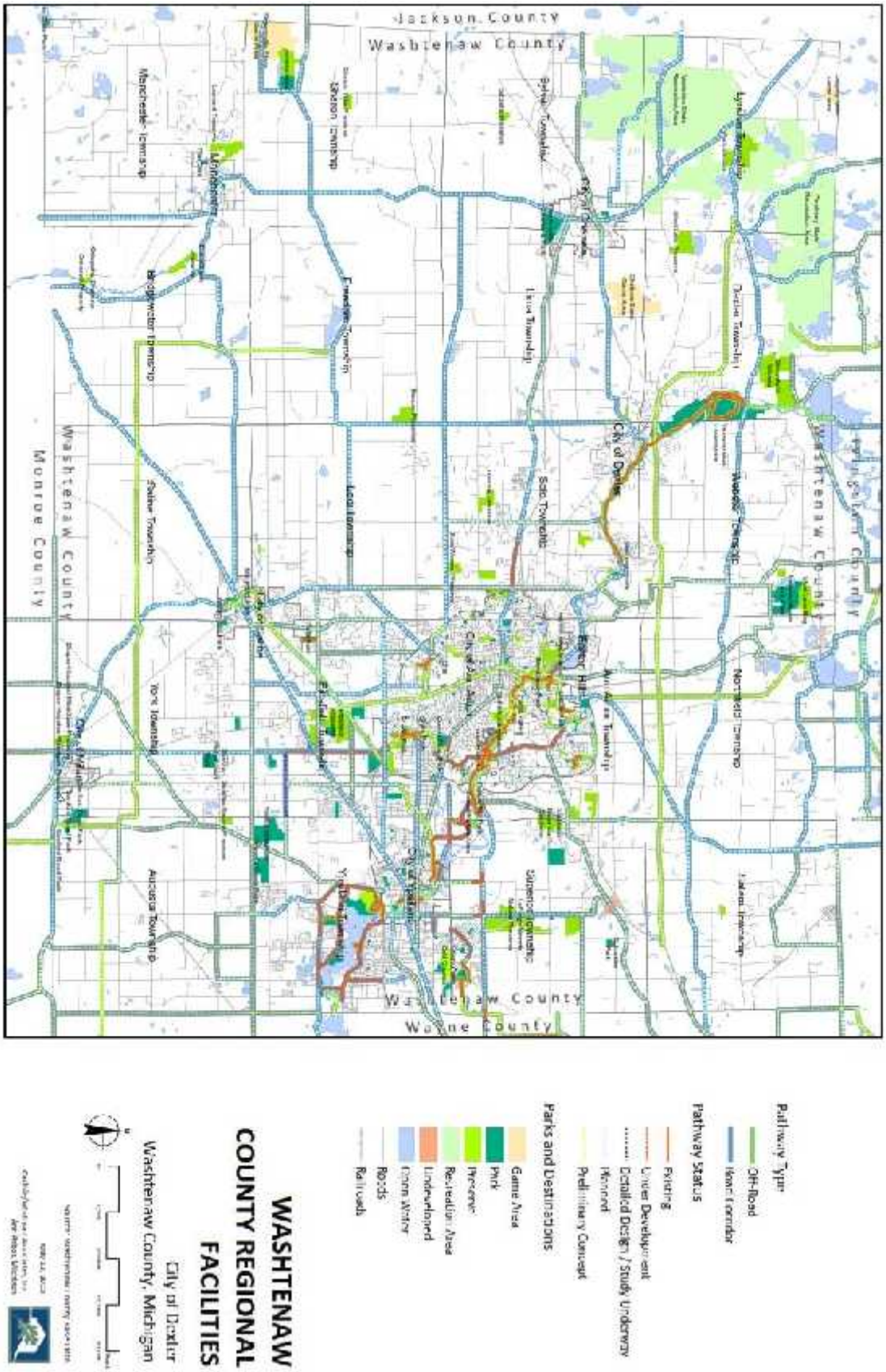
Metro Park Facilities Activities	Hudson Mills	Dexter-Huron	Delhi
Size	**1,595 Acres**	**120 Acres**	**53 Acres**
Picnicking	*	*	*
Drinking Water/Toilets	*	*	*
Rental Shelters	*	*	*
Play Areas-Adventure Play	*	*	*
Bathhouse-Food Service	*		
Boat or Canoe Rental			*
Canoeing	*	*	*
Group Rental Facility	*		
Outdoor Entertainment Program	*		
Geocaching	*	*	*
Fishing	*	*	*
Golf	*		
Court Games	*		
Hike-Bike Trail	*		
Hiking and Fitness Trail	*	*	*
Nature-Discovery Trails	*		
Cross-Country Skiing	*	*	*
Cross-Country Ski Rental-Food	*		
Scenic Views	*	*	*
Interpretive Programs	*		

* Available
Source: Huron-Clinton Metropark Website 2015

EXHIBIT 26
INVENTORY OF WASHTENAW COUTNY PARKS AND FACILITIES

Name	Classification	Acreage	Facilities
Cavanaugh Lake County Park	Neighborhood Park	59	Picnic areas, picnic shelters, play areas, restrooms, benches, grills
Gosline Preserve	Natural Resources Area	40	NONE
Independence Lake County Park	Large Urban Park	426	Picnic pavilions, meeting rooms, group center, rowboats, boat launch, prairies, fishing pier, plays cape, swimming beach, water park, trails, interpretive signage, restrooms, volleyball, observation tower, cross-country ski trails, programming, disc golf course, fishing pier, climbing rocks, Blue Heron Bay water area
Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center	Sports Complex	N/A	Elevated track, cardiovascular training area, strength training area, gymnasium for badminton, basketball, volleyball, pool, locker rooms, health programming
Nelson Meade County Farm Park	Large Urban Park	127	Walking, nature, and exercise trails, picnic pavilions, grills, restrooms, drinking fountain, playgrounds, dog waste station, interpretive signage, gardens, programming
Osborne Mills Preserve	Natural Resources Area	39	Trails
Park Lyndon	Natural Resources Area	340	Hiking trails, significant ecological communities and geological features, picnic pavilions, toilets, programming
Park Northfield	Community Park	12	Picnic areas, picnic shelters, play areas, restrooms, informational playfield area, nature trail
Parker Mill County Park	Large Urban Park	62	Trails with interpretive signage, information pavilion, native plant demonstration garden, drinking fountain, restrooms, fishing areas, grist mill, cider mill, log cabin, green roof pavilion
Pierce Lake Golf Course and Park	Special Use, Passive Recreation	232	Golf course, golf center with snack bar, beverage service and pro-shop, picnic/rental pavilions, nature trails with observation decks
Rolling Hills County Park	Large Urban Park	363	Water park with concessions, picnic/rental pavilions, picnic tables, grills, walking/biking/rollerblade/nature trails, mountain bike trail, disc golf, fishing pier, sledding, cross-country skiing, lodge, rental great room, sand volleyball, playground, ball diamond, horseshoe pits, restrooms and bathhouse, programming
Sharon Mills County Park	Large Urban Park	170	Museum, hydroelectric generator, picnic pavilion with grill, terrace/pergola, canoe launch, biking/hiking trails, mountain bike trail, restrooms, meeting room, rental dining area, catered events, pedestrian bridge
Staebler Farm County Park	Large Urban Park	98	Farm buildings and artifacts
Superior Center County Park	Mini Park	1	Picnic area
Swift Run Dog Park	Special Use, Passive Recreation	13	Off-leash area for free dog play; separate areas for large and small dogs; information kiosk, dog waste station, bench seating

EXHIBIT 27
REGIONAL FACILITIES LOCATION MAP



Regional Trail Systems

The City of Dexter is proud to work and excited to work with our regional partners to offer the following collaborative trail systems:

- Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) – This Trail represents an ongoing collaboration of communities and organizations to construct a shared-use path that will link the open spaces of the Huron River Greenway. With its County Greenways initiative, the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission has made a serious commitment to expand hike and bike trails throughout the County. Over 23 miles of paved, shared-use paths exist as a part of the B2B today, with more to come. In January 2015, the B2B was incorporated into the State of Michigan's Iron Belle Trail.

  The Dexter segment of the Border-to-Border Trail links Dexter-Huron Metro Park through Downtown Dexter to Mill Creek Park to Hudson Mills Metro Park.

- "The Loop" – The Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative has begun planning, development, and fundraising for a 44-mile continuous "loop" trail system connecting Dexter, Chelsea, Stockbridge, and Pinckney to the State's Iron Belle Trail System. The proposed system would connect to Dexter via the Border-to-Border Trail that runs north towards Hudson-Mills Metropark, and west via the Dexter-Chelsea Rd. corridor.

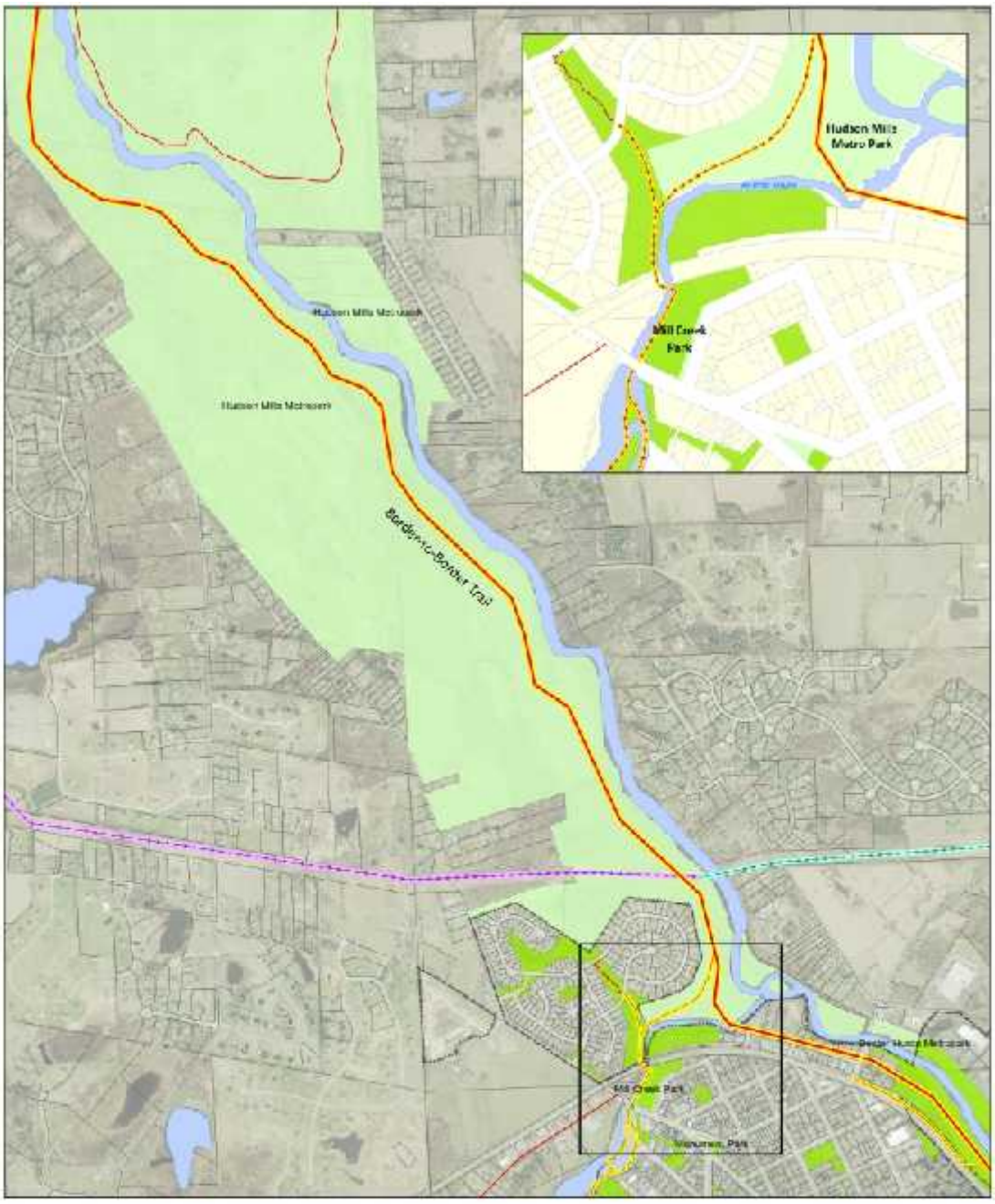
- Washtenaw County Trails – In addition to the Border-to-Border Trail and the proposed "Loop," Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation also provides trails at many of their parks and preserves. These trails include: County Farm Park fitness trail (1.4 miles); Meri Lou Murray Recreation Building (12 laps per mile); Parker Mill paved multi-use trail (1 mile one way); and trails at North & South Park Lyndon, Osborne Mill, and Rolling Hills.

- Iron Belle Trail – The goal of the Iron Belle Trail is to allow travelers the opportunity to hike or bicycle on a continuous trail from Belle Isle in Michigan's Lower Peninsula to Ironwood in the Northern Peninsula. The 1,273-mile hiking route uses existing multi-use trails that have been developed by local units of government, counties, and the State. The Border-to-Border Trail has been incorporated into this statewide trail, which runs through the City of Dexter.

- In January 2015, the Huron River received the distinction of being named a National Water Trail; one of only 18 in the United States. The Huron River Water Trail provides paddlers, boaters, and tubers a 104-mile trail with which to connect with nature, history, and the communities that abut the River.

  Along the Huron River Water Trail, five communities have been designated as "Trail Towns" for their close-knit relationship with the River. These communities are: Dexter, Milford, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Flat Rock. These communities have worked and will continue to work with the Huron River Watershed Council to promote River preservation and water-based recreation.

EXHIBIT 28
TRAIL CONNECTIONS



TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Parks and Destinations
- City of Dexter Facilities
- City of Dexter Parks & Cemetery
- Huron Clinton Metroparks
- Open Water

Pathways
- Border-to-Border (B2B) Trail
- B2B Connection
- Existing Shared Use Paths
- ITC - Dexter Township (Proposed)
- ITC - Webster to Salem (Proposed)

City of Dexter
Washtenaw County, Michigan

N

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Source: Washtenaw County River Data

May 13, 2015
Carlisle/Wortman Associates, Inc.
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Land Conservancy

Washtenaw County is serviced by several major land conservancies. The goal of land conservancies is to protect natural landscapes, conserve and manage wildlife habitat, and to protect water and air quality throughout a given area for an indefinite period of time. The major conservancies in Washtenaw County are:

- Legacy Land Conservancy
- Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy
- The Nature Conservancy
- Raisin Valley Land Trust
- Huron River Watershed Council
- Ecology Center
- The River Raisin Watershed Council

State Parks and Recreational Components

The State of Michigan is the largest provider of recreational lands with approximately 15,800 acres within Washtenaw County, primarily located northwest and northeast of the City in the Pinckney and Waterloo Recreation Areas. The State of Michigan's role in parks and recreation is more specialized than that of local or regional government. Washtenaw County's largest provider of parks and recreation facilities is the State with 15,800 acres of land containing a variety of activities, many of which are near the City of Dexter. The State's strongest asset is their ability to acquire and develop property for unique parks that other entities may not be able do. The State's goal is to acquire property near urban areas to preserve open spaces and undisturbed areas.

Status Report for Grant-Assisted Parks

In 2008 the Village of Dexter and the Washtenaw County Road Commission worked together to remove the Main Street Bridge Dam, a project that was completed in 2009. On December 2, 2009 the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund awarded the Village of Dexter $450,000 in grant funding for the development of Mill Creek Park. This work included the development of a seating area, stormwater treatment wetlands, three (3) stormwater features, boardwalk/asphalt pathways, lawn areas, observation areas, and streambank stabilization measures. The Mill Creek Park project was completed in 2012 and was a huge success. Being connected to the Washtenaw County Border-to-Border Trail, the area now experiences increased pedestrian and bicycle traffic, fisherman, and open-air painters. It is also home to several events, including the Border-to-Border 10K and Yoga in the Park. The effect that the Park has had on the community is priceless. The area is meticulously maintained by (now) City of Dexter staff.

More detailed information, pictures, and maps regarding Mill Creek Park may be found under the City of Dexter Parks and Recreational Components subsection, Exhibit 19 (page 33), and Appendix Attachment 26 (Post-Completion Self-Certification Report).

Handicap Accessibility

City of Dexter Parks

Community Park

Community Park is located on both sides of Ryan Drive just off of Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd. The Park is serviced by on-street parking along one side of Ryan Dr. There are a total of 10 spaces, none of which are dedicated handicapped parking, and all except one space abuts grass. The crosswalk taking travelers from one side of Ryan Dr. to the other is ADA compliant with truncated domes.

The path leading from the road through the north end of the park is asphalt and was reconstructed in the summer of 2015. This path circles the park and connects the two play structures, the gazebo, the soccer field, and the park's swing set. All of these structures are set back several feet from the path, and are not accessible by wheelchair due to the playground timbers. The surface material for the play structures and swing set area is woodchips.

First Street Park

Visitors to First Street Park must travel through an unpaved parking lot designated for several Dexter businesses in order to get to an unpaved parking lot for the Park. The gravel parking lot provides a limited number of spaces. If those spaces are filled, visitors are likely to park near the adjoining DTE substation or in the businesses parking lot area. There are no paved walkways or barrier-free surfaces leading to the barbeque area or the horseshoe pits. The Park also does not provide any permanent seating or tables.

Lion's Park

Lion's Park is located at the corner of Ann Arbor St. and Edison St. The park is serviced by the 50 parking spaces in the Dexter Senior Center's paved parking lot (which is disconnected from the park), 18 on-street parking spots along both sides of Ann Arbor St., and 3 on-street parking spots on one side of Edison St. The parking lot was designed to be handicap accessible for the adjacent Senior Center and school administration buildings, but not the Park. In addition, there are no handicap spaces amongst the on-street parking as they abut grassy areas.

The park is enclosed by a triangle of concrete sidewalks, the grading of which is ADA compliant. The three sidewalks connect to three ADA compliant crosswalks, which have truncated domes. There are several benches located just off the sidewalks, which provide an opportunity for visitors to rest.

Mill Creek Park

Mill Creek Park is divided into northern and southern sections, bifurcated by Main St. Access is available from north to south via a concrete barrier-free walkway under the Main St. Bridge. Mill Creek Park North features a play structure, several picnic tables, barbeque grills, and a kayak launch into Mill Creek. The parking lot adjacent to this section of the park has half of its parking spaces paved, while the other half is gravel. There are a total of 22 spaces at Mill Creek Park North, one of which is barrier free. The north side of the Park has barrier-free surfacing under one set of picnic tables. The surface under the play structure is woodchips. Mill Creek Park is currently being serviced by several port-o-potties, one of which is barrier-free and remains in the Park all-year-long.

Mill Creek Park South features a boardwalk along Mill Creek, a small fishing pier, an amphitheater, and three platform landmark features. Mill Creek Park South can be accessed via ADA compliant crosswalks from the opposite side of Jeffords St. Along Jeffords St. and Alpine St. there are up to 64 public parking spaces. Five of these spaces are designated as handicap spaces, however these spaces are primarily located adjacent to businesses several hundred feet away from the Park. All pathways in Mill Creek Park North and South are barrier free.

Monument Park

Monument Park features a gazebo, a water fountain, concrete benches, standard benches, and a brick paver walkway through the Park. While there is no parking specifically designated for the park, there is parking available along Central St., including one barrier free parking spot, and in the Downtown Development Authority's lot on the opposite side of Main St., which contains 4 public barrier free parking spots. In addition, the walkways through and around the park are barrier-free, and the crosswalks are ADA compliant.

Peace Park

Peace Park is located on Ann Arbor St. and contains very few amenities. There are 21 on-street parking spaces on Ann Arbor St., none of which are handicap parking spaces. There are several benches, which provide visitors an opportunity to rest. All pathways around and through the park are barrier-free. The crosswalks connecting to the Park are ADA compliant.

The Planning Process

Summary of the Planning Process

The City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission along with the Commission's City staff liaison, the Assistant to the City Manager, had the primary responsibility for compiling the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The process of developing this document involved a great deal of research, analysis, and coordinating data collection from a variety of sources.

Staff began the process by reviewing the previous 5-Year Master Plan, which was used as a template for the current Plan. Due to extensive work and investment in Dexter's parks between 2009 and 2012, much of the information was no longer relevant and the Plan required significant updates. Staff conducted a review of existing physical conditions of parks within the City of Dexter. This review included visiting each site, taking photographs, and logging amenities.

Staff then consulted reliable sources of data (the United States Census, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, Huron River Watershed Council, State of Michigan student data) to perform an analysis of City demographics, population, and social and economic data. This information was used to evaluate recreation needs and opportunities compared to National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) standards. The NRPA standards may be found on page 31, under Parks and Recreation Facilities Inventory.

The City also communicated regularly with representatives from the Dexter Community School District and Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation in order to gather data. Staff reviewed Washtenaw County's 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan and performed an analysis of State-wide and County-wide trends.

With this information, the Parks and Recreation Commission met to review the Introduction, Community Description, Administrative Structure, and Facilities Inventory sections of the Master Plan. The Commission also performed a preliminary review of the Goals and Objectives section of the Plan. With these processes underway, the Parks and Recreation Commission sought public input.

Public Input

Description of the Public Input Process

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires that parks and recreation planning processes incorporate public input using at least two means. The City of Dexter utilized both traditional and technological methods to gather public opinion, comments, and feedback on the City's parks and recreation services and facilities.

The City used a number of sources to advertise the public input opportunities and spread awareness of the process:

- City Council Reports – Information regarding the public survey was included in a City Council report from staff for their September 14, 2015 meeting. Information regarding the Input Session was included in a staff report to Council for their November 23, 2015 meeting.

- Hard Copy Survey Distribution - Paper copies of surveys were distributed to the Dexter Senior Center and the Cedars of Dexter.
- Kiosks - Flyers for the survey and public input session were posted in six kiosks throughout the City.
- City's Website – The City posted two news articles about the public survey on September 25, 2015 and October 12, 2015 to the City's website www.dextermi.gov
- E-mail Updates – The City sent e-mail updates to its over 700 subscribers about the survey. These occurred on September 22, 2015 and October 9, 2015. A post about the Public Input session was included in the e-mail update of December 2, 2015.
- Facebook Posts – The City posted blurbs on its Facebook page regarding the public survey on October 12, 2015 and September 22, 2015. A blurb was posted on November 20, 2015 regarding the Public Input Session.
- We Love Dexter News Website - The online local news website We Love Dexter posted an article regarding the survey on September 25, 2015 and an article about the Input Session on November 18, 2015.
- Sun Times News - The Sun Times newspaper ran an article about the survey on September 22, 2015.

City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Survey

One of the first steps of the five-year planning process was to gather input on parks and recreation issues that were important to the community. To ascertain these important issues, the City of Dexter developed a survey using a free online software program called Survey Monkey. There were a total of 182 survey takers and the survey generated 365 textual responses. The survey was made available on August 24, 2015 and closed on December 1, 2015. Paper copies of the survey were distributed to the Dexter Senior Center and The Cedars of Dexter senior living community. Hard copies of the survey that were returned to City staff were input by hand. Once the survey closed to the public, the Survey Monkey software allowed staff to generate response results and draft conclusions.

Public Input Session – December 3, 2015

The City hosted a Public Input Session for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan on Thursday, December 3, 2015. During the meeting, City staff presented a project introduction and preliminary survey findings to a crowd of approximately 20 stakeholders. Those in attendance were asked to participate in two exercises designed to gather opinions on parks and recreation services as well as the City's parks and recreation goals.

First, the stakeholders were asked to participate in an issue identification exercise. Citizens were presented with four posters, labelled:

1. Smaller Projects
2. Other Small Projects
3. Ideas to promote Less Used Parks
4. Other Comments

Each of the poster topics was accompanied by a list of some of the major issues and concerns that were identified from the survey. All citizens were then given the opportunity to take markers and to write down any issues that they believed were missing from these lists. When the group finished their issue additions, each citizen was given a set of six stickers and asked to affix their stickers on the boards next to the issues that they believed were the most critical for the plan to address (Attachment 16).

During the second exercise, those in attendance were asked to provide written comments on the draft set of goals as discussed by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Staff received eight (8) sets of comments on the goals.

Public Hearing - February 16, 2016

The 30-Day Public Review Period began on Friday January 15, 2016 and concluded on Monday, February 15, 2016. Copies of the draft plan were made available at the City offices (8123 Main St., 2nd Floor, Dexter), the Dexter District Library (3255 Alpine St., Dexter), and on the City's website at dextermi.gov. Feedback was incorporated into the Plan as appropriate throughout the 30-Day period. The feedback that was provided during the 30-day public comment period is included in the appendix.

With the conclusion of the 30-Day Public Review Period, the Parks and Recreation Commission held a public hearing at their February 16, 2016 meeting. Three members of the public attended the public hearing. All expressed appreciation for the planning process. No changes to the document were recommended.

Summary of Findings

1. There is overwhelming support for trails and pathways.

In response to question 4, "please review the following list of parks and recreation activities commonly offered by municipalities like ours. Which do you feel are the most important to provide to the Dexter community?" survey takers responded that "Trails and Pathways" was the most important. Out of 182 survey takers, 147 people rated "Trails and Pathways" in their top three highest priorities, with 68 people selecting it as their first priority, 54 as the second most important, and 25 as the third most important. Meanwhile, 131 people rated "maintain existing parks and pathways" as one of their top three priorities.

In addition, in response to question 6, "the following is a short list of ideas that have been discussed (with no action taken) by the City of Dexter's Parks and Recreation Commission. Please indicate how important you feel these projects/improvements would be to the City of Dexter's parks and recreation system," 88.5% (154 people) rated "expanding Mill Creek Park trail" as at least somewhat important, excluding those with no opinion. 51.7% of survey takers (90 people) rated this project as "very important."

Trails and pathways also received the most (16) text comments to question 7, "what are some parks and/or recreation items that may not be listed that you would like to see addressed?"

In addition, during the public meeting exercises on December 3, 2015, 10 people out of 17 showed support for trails under the "Other Comments" poster. On the "smaller projects" poster, "Solar Lighting Along B2B Trail" received support from 6 people.

2. The community is interested in more/better playground offerings.

On question 4, "please review the following list of parks and recreation activities commonly offered by municipalities like ours. Which do you feel are the most important to provide to the Dexter community?" "playgrounds and playground structures" ranked third behind trails and pathways, and maintaining parks and pathways. 106 people rated "playgrounds and playground structures" as one of their top three priorities; 28 people selected it as their first priority, 41 as their second, and 37 as their third.

In addition, in response to question 6, “the following is a short list of ideas that have been discussed (with no action taken) by the City of Dexter’s Parks and recreation Commission. Please indicate how important you feel these projects/improvements would be to the City of Dexter’s parks and recreation system,” 74% (147 people) rated “improving the play structure in Mill Creek Park North” as at least somewhat important, excluding those with no opinion. 31% of survey takers (49 people) rated this project as “very important.”

The demand for playground structures in Dexter is understandable as the City of Dexter is the hub of the Dexter Community School District, which services over 3,500 students from the surrounding area. In addition, according to the US Census, the average age of the Dexter population is mid-30s. This age bracket is the time period that one could reasonably expect people to have school-age (and playground-age) children.

The City is currently working on a project to install a play structure at Lion’s Park in the spring of 2016. Once this project is complete, this may help reduce the demand for new play structures in Dexter.

3. Though Dexter-area residents are generally satisfied with the quality of Dexter parks, the community recognizes that maintenance of existing assets is important.

Of the survey takers that expressed an opinion on question 2, “please rate your satisfaction with the following City of Dexter parks,” 95.5% stated that they were at least “somewhat satisfied” with Mill Creek Park South, with over 70% stating that they were “very satisfied.” Mill Creek Park North, Monument Park and Community Park all received similarly high ratings at 60% and above being “very satisfied” and over 90% being at least “somewhat satisfied.” The lowest rated park was First Street Park with only 20% responding “very satisfied” and 72% responding at least “somewhat satisfied.”

Based on the responses to question three, “please check all the reasons that prevent you or other members of your household from using City parks,” Dexter-area residents do not feel that Dexter parks suffer from many of the common problems faced by public parks. The following issues received a very small percentage of responses: poor lighting (3.3%), poor maintenance (2.75%), and I do not feel safe (1.1%).

Additionally, very few text responses to questions that prompted respondents to discuss other issues related to maintenance or quality of existing parks. Instead, most of the responses related to additional projects that would enhance the existing quality of parks.

On question 4, “please review the following list of parks and recreation activities commonly offered by municipalities like ours. Which do you feel are the most important to provide to the Dexter community?” “maintain existing parks and pathways” ranked second behind trails and pathways. 131 people rated “playgrounds and playground structures” as one of their top three priorities; 49 people selected it as their first priority, 41 as their second, and 41 as their third. In addition, survey responded with 22 text comments related to general maintenance items they would like to see addressed.

4. First Street Park, Lion's Park, Peace Park, and Community Park are underused.

When prompted with the question "how many times have you visited the following Dexter parks in the last year?" Mill Creek Park North, Mill Creek Park South, and Monument Park all received a strong number of "daily," "weekly," and "monthly" visitors. Meanwhile, the following parks all received a high number of "never" responses: First Street Park (82.68%), Lion's Park (56.11%), Peace Park (51.12%), and Community Park (44.13%). The 82.68% rate of people that indicated that they "never" visit First Street Park is drastically different when compared to Mill Creek Park North and Monument Park, both which received less than 4% of people indicating that they never visit those parks. In fact, the number of people that visit the least frequently used parks at least monthly was: First Street Park (3.36% or 6 people), Lion's Park (14.45% or 26 people), Peace Park (16.89% or 30 people), and Community Park (26.82% or 48 people).

There are a few reasons why people may not be visiting First Street, Lion's, and Peace Parks. These include not knowing the locations of these parks, the parks being located outside of downtown, and there being few amenities at these parks.

For responses to question three, 66.5% (121 people) of respondents indicated that there was nothing preventing them from using Dexter parks, but the second highest response was "I do not know the locations of the City's parks" with 18.68% (34 people). With regard to question 2, "please rate your satisfaction with the following City of Dexter parks," the parks with the highest number of "no opinion" responses and the lowest satisfaction rating were: First Street Park (25 total respondents with an opinion), Lion's Park (56 respondents), Peace Park (74 respondents) – and Community Park to a lesser degree (98 respondents). This compares to 172 respondents with an opinion for Mill Creek Park North.

5. While it may not be as high of a priority as other items, water-based recreation has been recognized as an issue that needs to be addressed.

This issue of water recreation access has been derived from a number of sources – Huron River Watershed Council (now that Dexter has been recognized as a Trail Town), and issues arising from the illegal Mast Rd. Bridge access point. In terms of priority, on question 4, "Mill Creek/Huron River Access" ranked fifth, with 58 people selecting this option as one of their top three priorities. However, in response to question 6, 71% of respondents with an opinion (105 people) indicated that "improving the Huron River access point at the Mast Rd. Bridge" was at least "somewhat important." 33% of respondents (50 people) indicated that this project was "very important." Similarly, 68.7% of respondents with an opinion (108 people) indicated that "removing debris from Mill Creek to provide easier access to the Huron River" was at least somewhat important – 25.5% (40 people) thought that this project was "very important."

In addition, based on responses to question 5, "the City is currently assessing the need to provide better access to Mill Creek/Huron River for water-based recreation activities. Please check all of the following choice that apply to you," there appears to be interest in launching a kayak, canoe, or inter-tube in Dexter. 50% of respondents (91 people) stated that "I would kayak, canoe, or inter-tube if free access was more convenient." Another 33.52% (61 people) responded "I would kayak, canoe, or inter-tube of parking was more convenient. In fact, only 24.18% of respondents (44 people) indicated that they had no interest in going in the water.

6. Feedback from the Public Input Session reflects textual comments made in the Public Survey regarding support for restroom facilities and parks-based public events.

Two important items were reflected in the public input session exercises: public restrooms and parks-related public events. During the input exercises, comments related to public restrooms received a high degree of support on the "Other Comments" board based on the votes that were cast (via stickers). The call for public restrooms (non-port-o-potty) received a total of 11 votes (out of a possible 17). At the same time, though there was no question specifically referring to restrooms, public bathroom facilities received several text responses on the public survey on questions 3, 5, and 7. The locations recommended by these comments were around Mill Creek Park and Monument Park.

Based on feedback from the survey and public input exercises, there appears to be support for additional parks-related organized public events. On question 4 of the survey, "organized public events and festivals" ranked fourth behind playgrounds playground structures. 106 people (58.24%) ranked this item within their top three priorities, with 28 respondents (15.38%) ranking it as their first priority. In addition, during the public input exercise, when prompted to provide "ideas to promote less used parks," several comments called for "park specific activities," and "have annual Dexter Park Day." These comments received a great deal of support at the input session.

7. There is not significant demand for organized activities or educational activities.

With regard to question 4, respondents indicated that organized activities and educational activities were the least important priorities when compared to the other options presented. Only 14% of respondents (27 people) indicated that "organized activities" fell amongst their top three priorities – only 3 people (1.65%) indicated that it was their first priority. Similarly, only 18 people (9.89%) of people indicated that "educational activities" was one of their top three priorities. There were also very few text comments calling for organized or educational activities from survey takers.

8. The demographics of survey respondents are representative of the Dexter-area population.

The demographics of those taking the survey were generally representative of Dexter-area residents. According to questions 8 of the survey, 70% of respondents were Dexter City residents, 28% of respondents were Dexter-area resident, and 2% of respondents were non-area residents. According to responses to question 9, the highest rate of responses was among those living in the Dexter-area between 4-10 years (26%) and 11-20 years (25.5%). According to question 10, the age brackets with the most responses were 30-39 (36%), and 40-49 (27%). 2010 Census figures indicate that these are the two largest age brackets in the City of Dexter. Highest rate of responses among those with two children (33.5%), zero children (32.5%), and one child (19.23%) living in the household. These statistics are close to US Census figures.

Goals and Objectives

1. GOAL: (Space/Facilities) Meet present and future community needs for parks, greenways, trails, and recreation.

A. Objective: Plan and develop a system of parks, greenways, open space, and recreation facilities that meets National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for individual park types.
   i. *Strategy: Identify desirable parcels within or adjacent to the City and evaluate for park system inclusion.*
   ii. *Strategy: Seek to provide required space or facilities through the development of partnerships, or the purchase of easements or property.*
   iii. *Strategy: Consider the location of existing parks and facilities when choosing new sites in order to provide a balanced distribution.*
   iv. *Strategy: Encourage the development of parks and facilities in areas which are pathway accessible and will serve a large number of City residents or a priority targeted group.*
   v. *Strategy: Provide parks and recreation facilities that are consistent with NPRA standards and guidelines and that coincide with the needs of the City.*
   vi. *Strategy: Develop parks and recreation assets with safe, universally accessible pathway linkages as a priority consideration.*

B. Objective: Encourage the preservation and maintenance of green space and the development of new parks and/or recreation assets when opportunities arise.
   i. *Strategy: Encourage park projects that honor and preserve local history and historic architecture.*
   ii. *Strategy: Promote the integration of our goals with the City Planning Commission and their development review process to ensure that projects meet increased parks and recreation needs.*
   iii. *Strategy: Use the development review process to encourage the clustering of dwellings facilitating more space for parks, recreation, pathways, open space, or linear parks.*
   iv. *Strategy: Encourage large developments to dedicate a minimum of 30% of their project as green open space, exclusive of stormwater detention/retention ponds and paved surfaces.*
   v. *Strategy: Encourage small developments to provide green open space for small mini-parks.*
   vi. *Strategy: Encourage developers to preserve green open space and mature trees in their projects, to protect significant ecosystems, and to use greenways and linear parks to buffer their projects, to provide for the safe movement of wildlife, and to connect to the linear parks or greenways of adjacent jurisdictions.*
   vii. *Strategy: Encourage developers to provide pathways connecting their project with the City's system of pathways and the pathways of adjacent parks, trail systems, or jurisdictions.*
   viii. *Strategy: Encourage developers to meet the recreation demands created by their project through the construction of new neighborhood parks and active recreation facilities.*

C. Objective: With the completion of Mill Creek Park Phase 1, plan and develop a linear park and pathway system through the Mill Creek Drainage basin.
   i. *Strategy: Engage City Council to appoint the Parks and Recreation Commission to coordinate the team to develop and implement the Plan for Mill Creek Park Phase 2.*
   ii. *Strategy: Coordinate linear park and pathway connections with regional and local jurisdictions including other adjacent Washtenaw County Parks and Preserves, and with the master plans of neighboring townships.*
   iii. *Strategy: Select a consultant to help develop detailed plans for the Parks development.*
   iv. *Strategy: Secure approval and funding from City Council to engage the services of preferred consultant.*

v. *Strategy: Apply for funding from both City and non-City sources to help execute the Mill Creek Park Phase 2 Plan and park development.*
vi. *Strategy: Collaborate with the Dexter Community Schools to establish access points connecting the High School and Intermediate Schools.*
vii. *Strategy: Execute the park development plan in phases as funding allows.*
viii. *Strategy: Encourage adjacent jurisdictions to collaborate when appropriate.*

2. GOAL: (Recreation) Encourage healthy lifestyles for City residents through recreation.

A. Objective: Offer City residents a balance of active and passive recreation opportunities.
i. *Strategy: Develop and promote active and passive recreation activities and local events that are affordable and provide good value to citizens of all ages.*
ii. *Strategy: Make pathway and passive recreation development first priority in order to achieve the highest utilization and return on investment.*
iii. *Strategy: Develop active recreation facilities secondarily but as required to meet specific high priority needs.*
iv. *Strategy: Collaborate with the Dexter Community Schools and other public and private interests in the planning and delivery of recreation opportunities while eliminating duplication.*
v. *Strategy: Evaluate the feasibility of developing passive facilities in support of birding, photography, and environmental education.*
vi. *Strategy: Evaluate the feasibility of developing active facilities in support of a skateboarding/inline skating, dog park, outdoor rock climbing, and paddle sports.*

B. Objective: Offer City residents multiple opportunities to walk, run, bike, or skate without leaving their community.
i. *Strategy: Identify, promote, and help develop longer outings via additional pathway and water trail linkages to adjacent parks, trail systems, greenways, and waterways owned and operated by other jurisdictions.*
ii. *Strategy: Begin the planning process for Mill Creek Park Phase 2.*

C. Objective: Offer City residents opportunities to experience the City's natural water features.
i. Strategy: Enhance the Mill Creek water trail from Shield Road to the Huron River.
ii. Strategy: Collaborate with the Huron River Watershed Council to increase access to Mill Creek and the Huron River by adding a universal access point.
iii. Strategy: Work with the Huron River Watershed Council to promote the City's designation as a Trail Town.
iv. Strategy: Coordinate river clean-up days to provide paddlers with safe passage through the City's waterways.

3. GOAL: (Accessibility) Strive to make sure all City parks and recreation sites accessible.

A. Objective: Design and develop a system of all-season, non-motorized pathways, trails, sidewalks, and bike paths linking City neighborhoods with both City and adjacent non-City parks, greenways, pathways, recreation venues, schools, and commercial retail areas.
i. *Strategy: Expand existing pathway systems within the boundaries of the City, including bicycle lanes, trails, and other non-motorized pathways.*
ii. *Strategy: Communicate location and accessibility of walking trails and non-motorized paths.*
iii. *Strategy: Segregate bicycle and pedestrian traffic from motorized traffic where appropriate and feasible.*
iv. *Strategy: Coordinate parks and trail planning with the State of Michigan, Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation, and Metroparks trail initiatives.*

v. *Strategy: Proactively invite other City and/or regional groups involved in planning to enhance linkages to City parks and recreation for a broader regional system.*

B. Objective: Strive to make sure all parks and recreation assets are barrier-free and universally accessible.
   i. *Strategy: Review all plans for new parks and recreation facilities, for compliance with current ADA standards.*
   ii. *Strategy: Develop and implement strategies to make existing parks and recreation facilities compliant with current ADA standards.*
   iii. *Strategy: Explore securing funding assistance for ADA-related improvements.*

4. GOAL: (Environment) Make nature and healthy ecosystems an important characteristic of our City.

A. Objective: In designated City natural areas, enhance and preserve healthy ecosystems for native plants, fish, and wildlife.
   i. Strategy: Develop and implement a comprehensive management plan, including environmental framework, to enhance and sustain the above.
   ii. *Strategy: Minimize the impact of invasive species where practical. Provide a supportive habitat for desirable species.*
   iii. *Strategy: Perform maintenance as required within natural areas and waterways to enhance the environment for native species. Periodically repopulate desirable native species where and when appropriate.*
   iv. *Strategy: Encourage the City to maintain best practice stormwater solutions to increase water quality.*
   v. *Strategy: Promote and maintain riparian buffers to reduce erosion and lower water temperatures.*
   vi. *Strategy: Promote and maintain sufficient ability for fish to move upstream.*
   vii. *Strategy: Educate community about habitat, plants, wildlife, fishery, and their value.*
   viii. *Strategy: Educate community about potential for pet damage to habitat, plant life, wildlife, fishery, and water quality.*
   ix. *Strategy: Develop and promote identification and education programs in our natural areas using citizen volunteers, teachers, or partnering with non-City organizations.*
   x. *Strategy: Promote the use of our natural areas by residents in an effort to increase their sense of ownership and support.*

B. Objective: Provide natural enhancements to City urban areas and parks.
   i. *Strategy: Integrate the use of native plants with non-native perennials and annuals.*
   ii. *Strategy: Use bio-retention islands, bio-swales, rain gardens, and other innovative water retention strategies when appropriate.*
   iii. *Strategy: Add and maintain features or structures that invite and support wildlife, e.g., hummingbird gardens, birdhouses, bat houses, etc.*
   iv. *Strategy: Consider integrating large boulders, water features, or other natural-style hardscape.*

C. Objective: Advocate for the enhancement and preservation of natural features within and surrounding our City.
   i. *Strategy: Promote the preservation of scenic vistas, natural land buffers, greenways, and waterways.*
   ii. *Strategy: Promote the preservation and enhancement of important wildlife habitat and migration routes, including aquatic, in and through the City.*
   iii. *Strategy: Promote increased public access to adjacent waterways, greenways, and public lands.*

5. GOAL: (Management) Use sound planning, financial, and operational management practices.

A. Objective: Deliver superior service to citizens and others seeking help.
   i. *Strategy: Commit to serving residents with warmth, courtesy, and respect in all matters.*
   ii. *Strategy: Communicate with residents regularly to enhance timeliness of information, transparency of process, and support for parks and recreation in our City.*
   iii. *Strategy: Make ease of use and affordability priorities when developing recreation programs.*

B. Objective: Deliver on our stated goals and objectives.
   i. *Strategy: Annually review the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Goals and Objectives, and the Budget.*
   ii. *Strategy: Annually maintain and implement project priorities as listed in the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).*
   iii. *Strategy: Take action on opportunities to implement projects that would meet stated Goals and Objectives.*

C. Objective: Ensure that our parks and recreation assets remain available for enjoyment, now and in the future.
   i. *Strategy: Develop a parks and recreation master plan and update it at a minimum of every 5 years.*
   ii. *Strategy: Annually secure adequate funding for operations and maintenance.*
   iii. *Strategy: Establish and promote a restricted parks and recreation endowment fund.*
   iv. *Strategy: Leverage outside funding, partnerships, and other assets whenever possible.*
   v. *Strategy: Consider opportunities for the development of parks and recreation revenues from user fees, rentals, and/or other direct services when appropriate and desirable, e.g., gazebo rentals, facility and equipment rentals, concessions, etc.*
   vi. *Strategy: Annually develop and submit a budget and capital improvement plan.*
   vii. *Strategy: Develop community support as required.*

D. Objective: Foster smart and efficient management practices.
   i. *Strategy: Ensure appropriate staff and volunteers are educated in relevant current best practices and changing trends of the parks and recreation profession.*
   ii. *Strategy: Ensure that appropriate staff and volunteers are provided the resources and support of City government to be successful.*
   iii. *Strategy: Develop and implement appropriate asset maintenance schedules, reflective of the investment and projected long-term value of the asset.*
   iv. *Strategy: Participate in City and regional planning groups that would impact City parks and recreation.*
   v. *Strategy: Partner with other public and private entities where duplication could be eliminated or to help provide new programs and facilities for City residents.*

E. Objective: Identify and utilize available City and non-City funding resources to meet our goals.
   i. *Strategy: Identify and apply to funding sources that may serve as alternatives or supplements to City funds.*
   ii. *Strategy: Consider park, facility, hardscape, or equipment sponsorships as a part of any funding campaign.*
   iii. *Strategy: Develop and promote efforts to fund a City Parks and Recreation Endowment, e.g., Dexter Parks & Recreation Guide to Giving, raffle-style giveaway, or other fundraising device.*

6. GOAL: (Community) Foster a community-wide sense of pride in and support for our parks and recreation program.

A. Objective: Promote parks and recreation activities throughout the Dexter area.
   i. *Strategy: Communicate with the City Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, City Council, and local civic organizations about the importance of parks and recreation initiatives in the community.*
   ii. *Strategy: Work with public and private agencies through joint sponsorship of programs, projects, and events.*
   iii. *Strategy: Produce an integrated set of print and PDF brochures, and mailings promoting our parks and recreation assets and programs.*
   iv. *Strategy: Promote our parks and programs through wayfinding and activity promotion signage and advertising.*
   v. *Strategy: Provide periodic updates on projects through a combination of communication channels, e.g., City newsletter, website, brochures, news media.*

B. Objective: Provide and promote opportunities for individual citizens and community groups to influence the mission, priorities, management, and operations of the parks and recreation program.
   i. *Strategy: Regularly survey residents to measure program and service quality, user satisfaction, and to collect citizen input.*
   ii. *Strategy: Regularly invite residents to attend and participate in Parks and Recreation meetings.*
   iii. *Strategy: Invite citizens to volunteer in support of Parks and Recreation objectives and projects.*
   iv. *Strategy: Regularly review citizen feedback, incorporating desired ideas.*

C. Objective: Develop and maintain parks and recreation assets that incorporate a high degree of aesthetic appeal.
   i. *Strategy: Engage the services of appropriate design professionals when developing or upgrading parks and recreation assets.*
   ii. *Strategy: Develop and implement design standards for all park and recreation assets.*
   iii. *Strategy: Periodically review existing assets for appearance and invest as necessary to elevate to desired standard.*
   iv. *Strategy: Utilize or compliment other design standards used in the City by other departments and organizations.*

D. Objective: Develop and maintain park and recreation assets and recreation programs that meet current industry safety standards and, where standards do not exist, develop and maintain assets and programs with careful consideration for user or participant safety.
   i. *Strategy: Engage the services of appropriate safety or risk assessment professionals when developing or upgrading parks and recreation assets.*
   ii. *Strategy: To assure safety of users, require that current industry standards be identified and met when developing any design or bid specification.*
   iii. *Strategy: Work with local law enforcement personnel to develop appropriate design safeguards and post-implementation strategies.*
   iv. *Strategy: Where identifiable, clearly indicate potential risks to participants or users and any limits to participation or use, e.g., signage.*
   v. *Strategy: Follow recommendations of the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority (MMRMA).*

Action Plan

The following Action Plan items are provided in no particular order:

1. Implement the Mill Creek Park Master Plan to construct Mill Creek Park Trail Phase 2.
Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 - A,C. 2 - A,B,C. 3 - A. 4 - B,C. 6 - C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, Development Consultant

Project Description

The City of Dexter began construction of Mill Creek Park in 2009 based on the Mill Creek Park Master Plan. The creation of the park was completed in conjunction with the removal of the Mill Pond Dam and allowing the water to once again flow freely. Mill Creek Park, located along Mill Creek, north and south of Dexter's Main Street Bridge, features a handicap accessible pathway from Jeffords St., stairs from Alpine Street at the Dexter Farmers Market and Library, a quarter-mile of boardwalk, a playground, canoe and kayak put-ins, benches, picnic tables, and a pathway connection to the Border-to-Border Trail. Construction of the first phase of Mill Creek Park was completed in 2012. The Park is now a hub of activity with a variety of options for active and passive recreation.

The City is now ready to undertake phase 2 of the Mill Creek Park project. The existing Mill Creek Park Master Plan includes a boardwalk/asphalt pathway connecting the existing Mill Creek Park boardwalk south along Mill Creek to the Dexter Schools and Shield Rd. It also includes a trail head at Grand Street, which has been included in the City of Dexter's Capital Improvements Plan, a habitat enhancement zone, wetland enhancement, a landmark platform, and interpretive signage. The City may be interested in purchasing property along Mill Creek to enhance the area and Mill Creek Park.

The Trail would provide a number of health and wellness benefits to Dexter-area residents, including providing additional opportunities for passive recreation – walking, running, biking, and roller blading. It would also provide a connector to the Dexter Schools' campus allowing for an additional safe travel option for students from the schools to downtown. Additionally, the trail would serve as an arterial connector to Washtenaw County's Border-to-Border and Michigan's Iron-Belle Trail.

Tentative Process

I. Secure approval and funding from City Council to engage the services of preferred consultant.
II. Engage consultant to update Mill Creek Park Master Plan and perform design and engineering.
III. Contact regional planning organizations – Washtenaw County, Huron River Watershed Council, Dexter Community Schools, and others - to begin project collaboration and gather letters of support.
IV. Apply for funding from both City and non-City sources to help execute the Mill Creek Park Phase 2 Plan.
V. Execute the Park Development Plan in phases as funding allows.

2. Identify continuous funding sources for long-term maintenance and capital improvements. Ensure performance of long-term maintenance of parks and recreation assets.

Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – A,B. 3 – B. 4 – B,C. 5 – A,B,C,D,E. 6 – B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, Development Consultant

Project Description

Based on the public input provided through the public survey and public input session, Dexter residents recognize the importance of maintaining the City's parks and recreation assets. While the City has been allocating the costs of on-going maintenance from the general fund, the City may wish to consider funding alternatives for long-term maintenance. Funding alternatives may include the development of an endowment fund or a dedicated parks and recreation millage.

Based on the feedback provided by the public survey and public input session, Dexter-area residents believe that the City is doing a good job with regards to maintenance, but there are areas in which residents expressed concern. These areas of concern include:

- Ensuring that the Border-to-Border Trail segment that falls within the City of Dexter is well-maintained.
- Ensuring that Mill Creek Park is well-maintained, including the stairway to the Dexter Farmers Market.
- Developing and maintaining the Border-to-Border Trail between Central St. and Dexter-Huron Metropark with high quality aesthetics (i.e. near the railroad tracks and the Department of Public Works).
- Ensuring that waste containers and pet waste containers are available in key locations.
- Ensuring that all parks are handicap accessible.
- Ensuring that the City continues to provide "green space."

Tentative Process

I. Planning for long-term maintenance
   a. Parks and Recreation Committee will discuss maintenance issues at each meeting as they are recognized.
   b. Parks and Recreation Commission will give consideration to parks and recreation commission assets during the annual Capital Improvements Plan discussion.
   c. Address costly high-priority maintenance items in the Capital Improvements Plan for long-term planning.
   d. Incorporate Capital Improvements Plan items into the City's annual budget as need arises and funds allow.

II. Funding long-term maintenance
   a. Parks and Recreation Commission directs City staff to investigate potential for endowment fund.
   b. City staff collects information and data related to endowment fund.
   c. City staff presents information to Parks and Recreation Commission.
   d. Parks and Recreation Commission gives consideration to issue and makes a recommendation to City Council.
   e. City Council gives consideration to creation of an endowment fund.
   f. As need arises, Parks and Recreation Commission directs City staff to investigate possibilities for dedicated millage for parks and recreation.
   g. City staff collects information and data related to dedicated millages.
   h. City staff presents information to Parks and Recreation Commission.
   i. Parks and Recreation Commission gives consideration to issue and makes a recommendation to City Council.
   j. City Council gives consideration to creation of a dedicated millage.

3. Provide support for the Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative.
Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 - B. 2 - A,B. 3 - A. 4 - C. 5 – A,B,D,E. 6 – A,B.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative Staff

Project Description

From its website, "the Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative is a non-profit volunteer organization partnering with the Legacy Land Conservancy and the Chelsea Area Wellness Foundation to develop and expand non-motorized pathways that connect into Michigan's growing trail network." Their mission is to "facilitate the development of non-motorized recreational pathways, linking them to a growing network of Michigan trails. We will do this by creating awareness, raising funds, and coordinating efforts of individuals, civic groups, local businesses, and government entities."

The Huron-Waterloo Pathways initiative is currently working on several Trail Development Zones in order to create "The Loop" Regional Trail System, which would connect the communities of Dexter, Chelsea, Stockbridge, and Pinckney. When completed, "The Loop" will be approximately 44 miles of contiguous trails and would connect to the County's Border-to-Border Trail and the Michigan's Iron-Belle Trail.

The City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission believes that this trail network would greatly benefit the region – it would be a major tourist attraction, provide opportunities for passive recreation, health, trails. In turn, the City would like to support the Huron-Waterloo Pathway Initiative's projects and plans.

Tentative Process

I. Keep abreast of progress being made by the Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative in developing "The Loop" by inviting the group's leadership to make presentations and provide regular updates to the City's Parks and Recreation Commission.
II. Provide letters of support to potential funding sources, government agencies, and other organizations.
III. Assist in gathering community support – coordinate presentations to the public, City Council, and other local civic organizations.
IV. Assist the Huron-Waterloo Pathways Initiative with planning as requested.

4. Improve or replace the Mill Creek Park Play Structure.
Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – A. 2 – A. 3 – B. 5 – A,C. 6 – B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council

Project Description

The Mill Creek Park play structure was installed in 2004. While the construction of the Lions Park playground in 2016 will likely lessen the demand on the Mill Creek Park play structure (especially from older children), the community has also expressed interest in improving the Mill Creek Park structure. At present, the structure is small even for younger children, and it is not able to handle the demand from the large number of users. In the next five years, the Parks and Recreation Commission would like to give consideration to improving or replacing the existing structure.

Tentative Process

I. Receive cost estimate for equipment, surface materials, grading, and installation.
II. Secure approval and funding from City Council.
III. Seek funding from non-City sources.
IV. Post Request for Proposals (RFP) for Playground Equipment.
V. Receive responses to RFP.
VI. Evaluate responses to RFP and select a vendor.
VII. Purchase Equipment.
VIII. Coordinate Installation.

5. Develop and Implement Solutions to Address the Mast Rd. Bridge Huron River Access Point.
Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – A,B. 2 – A,C. 3 – A,B. 4 – A,C. 5 – A,B,C,D. 6 – A,B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City of Dexter, Webster Twp, Washtenaw County Sheriff, Washtenaw County Dept. of Transportation, Washtenaw Parks and Recreation, Huron River Watershed Council

Project Description

In Webster Township near Mast Rd. and Huron River Dr., adjacent to the border with the City of Dexter, the Mast Rd. Bridge spans the Huron River. Adjacent to the Mast Rd. Bridge, there is a strip of land that extends from Huron River Dr. down to the Huron River, where for a number of years visitors have used to access the River. There are a number of reasons why this spot has attracted visitors. It is a good location (from the paddlers' point of view) because it is approximately a 3 hour paddle trip to Delhi Metropark (what many consider to be a good amount of time for a trip), and there is easy access to a nearby convenience store.

This access point has not been sanctioned by any governmental agency or entity because of a number of safety issues associated with the location. The issues associated with this location include:

- Visitors must navigate a steep and unpaved slope in order to access the River. Travelling down the slope can be hazardous.
- A lack of safe parking areas. Currently, visitors park along the shoulder of Huron River Dr., which creates a traffic hazard. There is very little room to park between the steep bank leading down to the River and the white road line. This lack of space causes people to park over the white line and open their doors into the road where they could be hit. In addition, according to traffic count data collected in the summer of 2015, an average of 2,000 cars per day travel down Huron River Dr. near the access point every day.

In order to address the issues associated with this illegal River access point, the City has meet with Webster Township, Washtenaw County Parks, Washtenaw County Sheriff, HRWC, the Metroparks to begin collecting data and determining a process to develop a solution.

Tentative Process

I. Coordinate meetings with relevant agencies – Dexter City Council, Dexter residents, Dexter businesses, Washtenaw County Sheriff, Washtenaw County Dept. of Transportation, Washtenaw Parks and Recreation, Huron River Watershed Council, Webster Twp.
II. Seek funding to conduct a planning study.
III. Conduct planning study.
IV. Discuss results of planning study towards developing a solution.
V. Seek funding for solution from City and non-City sources.
VI. Implement solution.

6. Coordinate with the Huron River Watershed Council to continuously improve Mill Creek and the Huron River.

Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – B. 2 – C. 3 – A,B. 4 – A,B,C. 5 – D,E. 6 – A,B,C.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council, Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority

Project Description

From their website, the Huron River Watershed Council "is a nonprofit coalition of Huron Valley residents, businesses, and local governments. The Council bridges political boundaries by building partnerships between and among communities, community leaders, residents, and commercial enterprises." The HRWC's goal is to "protect and restore the river for healthy and vibrant communities."

In January 2015, the Huron River received the distinction of being named a National Water Trail; one of only 18 in the United States. The Huron River Water Trail provides paddlers, boaters, and tubers a 104-mile trail with which to connect with nature, history, and the communities that abut the River. Along the Huron River Water Trail, five communities have been designated as "Trail Towns" for their close-knit relationship with the River. These communities are: Dexter, Milford, Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Flat Rock. These communities have worked and will continue to work with the Huron River Watershed Council to promote River preservation and water-based recreation.

It is the City's goal to participate in the Huron River Watershed Council's efforts to protect and restore the Huron River and its Mill Creek tributary. In order to support these efforts, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends:

1) That the Dexter City Council give consideration to adopting the Huron River Watershed's Trail Towns Blue Print Strategic Plan, which will be created for the City of Dexter by HRWC.
2) That the Trail Towns Blue Print be included as an addendum to the City of Dexter's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and that the City of Dexter give consideration to implementing the recommendations provided in HRWC's Trail Towns Blue Print.
3) That the City of Dexter promote and participate in an annual Mill Creek Clean-Up Day in conjunction with the HRWC and Ann Arbor Trout Unlimited.

Tentative Process

I. The Huron River Watershed Council meets with City of Dexter staff to determine the recommendations to be included in the Trail Towns Blue Print
II. Huron River Watershed Council submits the Trail Towns Blue Print to City of Dexter staff.
III. City of Dexter staff provides the Trail Towns Blue Print to the City Council, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and Downtown Development Authority for feedback.
IV. The Trail Towns Blue Print is revised based on feedback from City of Dexter boards and commissions.
V. The Parks and Recreation Commission gives consideration to the Trail Towns Blue Print and recommends adoption to City Council.
VI. City Council gives consideration to the Trail Towns Blue Print and adopts the Plan.

7. Provide support to City Council and the Facilities Committee in redeveloping the City's 8140 Main St. site to include public restrooms that will service park users.
Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – A. 3 – A,B. 5 – A,B,E. 6 – A,B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, City Council, Facilities Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, Downtown Development Authority

Project Description

Currently, the restrooms provided to Mill Creek Park and Monument Park users are port-o-potties. There has been a great deal of support in developing public restrooms that service these parks. One opportunity that has been presented lies in the redevelopment of 8140 Main St., which is the current site of the Dexter Area Fire Department. The Dexter City Council has appointed a committee to study the development or redevelopment of facilities that would better support the Dexter Area Fire Department, the City of Dexter offices, and the Washtenaw County Sheriff's substation. The 8140 Main St. site is situated directly adjacent to Mill Creek Park and would provide a convenient location to offer public restrooms to park users.

Tentative Process

I. Facilities Committee continues its deliberation regarding facility location and design for the Dexter Area Fire Department, City Offices, and Sheriff's Substation.
II. The Parks and Recreation Commission will provide any information or support for the project as requested by City Council or the Facilities Committee.
III. Facilities Committee provides a report regarding options to the Dexter City Council. City Council gives consideration to facility needs based on the Facilities Committee report.
IV. City Council decides a course of action.
V. The City of Dexter seeks funding sources for the development or redevelopment projects.
VI. Facilities project is implemented.

8. Complete on-going park enhancement projects.

Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – A,B. 2 – A,B. 5 – B,C,D,E. 6 – A,B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council

Project Description

The City of Dexter has a number of parks and recreation projects currently on-going. These include the installation of a playground structure at Lions Park, which is currently scheduled for the spring of 2016, and improving the look and feel of First Street Park. The City of Dexter has committed funds to these two projects for the 2015-2016 fiscal year, and has received contributions from civic organizations to ensure the completion of these projects. The City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission is dedicated to completing these projects.

Tentative Process

I. Lions Park Play Structure
   a. Coordinate Community Build Day in spring 2016
      i. Promote event
      ii. Gather volunteers
      iii. Transport equipment
      iv. Installation through Community Build
      v. Ensure any follow-up punch-list items are completed.
   b. Surface materials
      i. Purchase surface materials
      ii. Set installation date and follow-through
   c. Path from parking lot to playground
      i. Coordinate memorandum of understanding with School District
      ii. Secure funding for project
      iii. Coordinate installation of path
   d. Plant trees along fence line
II. First Street Park Improvements
   a. Coordinate with Dexter Ringers to develop solutions for Park improvements
      i. Meet with the Dexter Ringers at a Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to discuss on-going Park issues.
      ii. Develop solutions that are agreeable to the City and community groups.
      iii. Implement solutions.

9. Enhancement and Awareness Projects

Meets Goals and Objectives: 1 – B. 2 – A,B. 3 – A,B. 5 – C. 6 – A,B,C,D.
Responsible parties: City Management, Parks and Recreation Commission, City Council

Project Description

The City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission received a great deal of high quality feedback during the public input process for the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This feedback has led to the conceptualization of a number of small projects that the City of Dexter should consider implementing between 2016 and 2021. These projects include:

- Install solar lighting along the Border-to-Border Trail - The "West Ridge Connector" from Mill Creek Park to the West Ridge subdivision can become very dark for Border-to-Border Trail users. With the amount of activity that takes place in downtown Dexter in the evenings, the installation of lighting along this path would greatly enhance nighttime walkability.
- Host Dexter Parks Day – One issue that became apparent during the public input process was the lack of use of First Street Park, Lions Park, Peace Park, and Community Park. In order to address this issue, participants at the public input session recommended hosting an annual event that incorporates all City of Dexter parks. This event could occur in July, when there are few City events taking place.
- Promote City of Dexter Parks – In order to address the lack of use/awareness issue, the City of Dexter should consider regularly promoting the locations of City parks in the quarterly newsletter, social media, e-mail update, media outlets, and in the City's kiosks.

Tentative Process

I. Solar Lighting Project
   a. Incorporate Solar Lighting Project in the Capital Improvements Plan.
   b. Further develop concept for Solar Lighting, including detailed specifications, locations, budget, and timeframe.
   c. Seek funding for project and incorporate funding for project in the City's Budget.
   d. Develop an Invitation to Bid/Request for Proposal for the project.
   e. Purchase the solar lights
   f. Coordinate installation.

II. Host Dexter Parks Day
   a. Parks and Recreation Commission to discuss details relating to the event – date, activities, promotion.
   b. Parks and Recreation Commission to recommend a date for the event to City Council along with a proposed budget to provide activities.
   c. City Council approves the event along with the annual Budget.
   d. City staff and Parks and Recreation Commission promotes the event using the City's quarterly newsletter, social media, e-mail update, media outreach, and kiosk postings.

III. Promotion of City Parks
   a. City staff develops language for advertisements relating to location of City Parks.
   b. City staff incorporates this language into its media outreach - quarterly newsletter, social media, e-mail update, media outreach, and kiosk postings.
   c. City staff makes park location maps available online.

Appendix

Attachment 1..... City Manager's Report to City Council – September 14, 2015
Attachment 2..... Parks and Recreation Survey Press Release – September 21, 2015
Attachment 3.....City of Dexter E-mail Update – September 22, 2015
Attachment 4..... We Love Dexter News Article – September 25, 2015
Attachment 5..... City of Dexter Website Article – September 25, 2015
Attachment 6..... City o Dexter Website Article – October 12, 2015
Attachment 7.....City of Dexter E-mail Update – November 20, 2015
Attachment 8.....Parks and Recreation Master Plan Survey with Responses – December 1, 2015
Attachment 9.....Public Input Session Kiosk Flyer – November 20, 2015
Attachment 10..... We Love Dexter News Article – November 18, 2015
Attachment 11..... City Manager's Report to City Council – November 23, 2015
Attachment 12.....City of Dexter E-mail Update – December 2, 2015
Attachment 13..... Public Input Session Agenda – December 3, 2015
Attachment 14.....Public Input Session Powerpoint Presentation – December 3, 2015
Attachment 15..... Public Input Session Comments – December 3, 2015
Attachment 16.....Public Input Session Comment Boards – December 3, 2015
Attachment 17..... City Manager's Report to City Council – December 14, 2015
Attachment 18.1.....Sun Times Notice of 30-Day Public Comment Period – January 6, 2016
Attachment 18.2..... Sun Times Notice of Public Hearing – January 27, 2016
Attachment 19..... City of Dexter Website Article – January 18, 2016
Attachment 20.....City of Dexter E-Mail Update – February 4, 2016
Attachment 21.....City of Dexter E-Mail Update – February 12, 2016
Attachment 22.....City of Dexter Website Article – February 16, 2016
Attachment 23.....City of Dexter Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes – February 16, 2016
Attachment 24..... Dexter City Council Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2016
Attachment 25.....Dexter City Council Resolution of Adoption – February 22, 2016
Attachment 26.....Post-Completion Self-Certification Report – February 25, 2016