



6 Recreation

Needs and Deficiencies



This section of the plan identifies recreation deficiencies determined through a variety of means. Study methods include comparison to recreational standards for acreage and facilities; geographic distribution of existing facilities; direct input from Township staff and representatives; public input and participation. While each of these methods has its limitations, using a combination of methods will yield a more accurate assessment of recreational needs and deficiencies. The following is a brief description of each of the methods used.

Recreation Standards

While only a guide, recreation standards provide a benchmark for evaluating the relative adequacy or plan Space, Standards and Guidelines and 1995 Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).



Beginning in 2008, the American Park and Recreation Society (APRS) branch of NRPA sought a means of updating the facility and area standards that had become guidelines in the 1980's. Park and Recreation Operating Ratio and Geographic Information System (PRORAGIS) is becoming a replacement for the NRPA standards that have guided land acquisition and development for the past 45 years. PRORAGIS is the first searchable online national park and recreation database. NRPA will rely on agencies to input their information into the database that will allow Park and Recreation Departments



PRORAGIS is a new online database used by NRPA to compare agencies of similar size. The database will cover topics such as staffing, budgeting, programming, maintenance and planning.

throughout the United States to compare information with similar sized municipalities. NRPA has separated the database by Small Agency and Large Agency. Small Agency's are defined as those with a population of less than 35,000, staff with 25 or fewer full time employees and a budget of less than \$4 Million. Large Agency's are defined as those with a population of greater than 35,000, staff with over 25 full time employees and a budget of greater than \$4 Million. The database will cover topics that include: Department Governance, Staffing, Budgeting, Programming, Maintenance, and Planning. It is expected that all agencies will submit GIS data for their profile to be considered complete. The PRORAGIS database is fairly new and as it grows, NRPA will compile the information and make it available to the various agencies. Until the database is significantly established, the 1983 and 1995 guidelines for the needs and deficiencies will be referred to in this section of the plan.

Typical recreation standards establish a certain number of activity-specific recreational facilities per 1,000 people (e.g. 1 tennis court per 2,000 persons). Other standards establish a certain number of acres per 1,000 people for different types of park facilities, such as neighborhood, community and regional parks. These standards are adapted to reflect the Township's character and compared with the Township's existing and projected population. This plan will combine both approaches to ascertain deficiencies in recreational facilities and acreage.



It is also recognized that, while helpful as a guide, comparison to national standards may not accurately determine deficiencies of Holland Charter Township based on the unique needs of the area. This plan also therefore places a large emphasis on the input of area residents, Township Recreation, and Township staff and representatives.



There are two basic types of recreational experiences: "active" and "passive." "Active" recreation requires space and facilities capable of accommodating exertive activities. Such facilities include: sports fields, play apparatus areas, open areas, special facilities, such as pools and court areas, and areas for organized activities. On the other hand, "passive" recreation requires little more than space and furniture for quiet, non-active activities for limited numbers of users. Recreation areas should provide for both types of use and preferably include a variety of opportunities for each to respond adequately to a wide range of interests and age groups.



Parks are generally classified by purpose and area per population served. The categories used for this plan will be as follows:

1. Neighborhood Parks
2. Community Parks
3. Natural Resource Areas
4. Trails and Bike Paths

Recreation Standards for Acreage

1. Neighborhood Parks

Description - Neighborhood Parks serve individual neighborhood populations as determined by the distance that can easily be traveled by local users for relatively short periods of recreation. Facilities provided in these parks are generally active in nature and include multipurpose open play areas for pick-up games, play equipment, court areas, landscaping, site furnishings, and possibly a picnic shelter. Special areas for skateboarding, bike riding or specific court games may also be provided. Activities for all seasons should also be included.





Service Area - The area served by neighborhood parks is generally considered to be a maximum of one half (½) mile radius in size to serve a population up to 5,000. This may, in reality, vary slightly depending on ease or difficulty of access and character of the facility, but should be adhered to for planning purposes.



Neighborhood Park Acreage Standards - Nationally-accepted standards for neighborhood parks recommend 1-2 acres per 1,000 of population, with 10-15 acres as a workable minimum size. It is recommended that the minimum of one and a half (1-1/2) acres per 1,000 population projected ten (10) years hence be used as a guide for site selection. It is also recommended that neighborhood facilities be combined with elementary schools. In such cases, the minimum site size should be seven (7) acres. Including neighborhood facilities within the scope of community parks should also be considered in certain situations.

Existing Neighborhood Recreation Acreage

Holland Charter Township currently has two (2) park sites and several schools that could be considered for neighborhood park status.



<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Beechwood Park	3.5
Brookwood Park	1.0
Glerum Elementary	5.0
New Groningen Elementary	12.0
Pine Creek Elementary	<u>8.0</u>
Total	29.5



Needs and Deficiencies

The table below compares the existing Township population to the recreation standard of one and a half (1-1/2) acres per 1,000 persons.

<u>Est. 2010 Population</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Required</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Available</u>
35,636	53.45	29.5

Deficiency/
Surplus
-23.95



The above table indicates that the Township is currently significantly deficient in neighborhood recreation areas and this deficiency increases as the population grows. However, these deficiencies need to be considered jointly with the facilities provided by Community Parks, which can have a joint purpose, also serving the neighborhood. The National Recreation and Park Association recommends a total close-to-home space (Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks and Community Parks) of 6.25 to 10.5 acres per 1000 population. Helder and Dunton Parks currently provide for traditional neighborhood uses, but Quincy Park caters almost exclusively to team sports activities.



The development of neighborhood park uses at Quincy Park provides for residents in the northwest of the Township. The Township has recently developed Hawthorn Pond Natural Area, a 40 acre parcel which addresses recreation deficiencies in the southeast area. Although this natural area was developed for passive recreation uses, active recreation in this region of the Township is supported by the City of Zeeland's Huizenga Park.



2. Community Parks



Description - Community parks provide a range of facilities and areas capable of supporting organized community participation programs that would not be appropriate in neighborhood parks because of size or traffic generated. Facilities should be centrally located, easily accessible, and diverse enough to accommodate all age groups for both active and passive experiences, and organized so compatible uses relate to one another by both type and intensity of use. Adequate parking and vehicular circulation is also an important consideration, since park users will generally arrive at these parks by vehicle. Lighted use areas significantly increase the recreational value of parks of this type and should be provided on athletic fields, court areas and special gathering areas whenever possible. Typical facilities recommended for community parks include ball fields, open use areas, tennis courts, horseshoe and shuffleboard courts, picnic areas, play equipment areas, restrooms, shelters and landscaping. Additional special facilities could include band shells, amphitheaters, swimming and wading pools, community meeting buildings, special interest exhibits, skating facilities, skate board courses, bicycle courses and nature study areas.



As with neighborhood parks, it is often desirable to combine community parks with school facilities. This arrangement assures the maximum level of use as well as the most practical expenditure of development monies.



Service Area - The area served by community parks varies significantly from one municipality to another because of the distribution of population and related factors. However, a recognized average service radius is approximately one to two miles, serving several



neighborhoods. This distance will be considerably greater for many years in the Holland area because of the agricultural character and attendant scattered development.



Community Park Acreage Standards - The recommended size for community parks is over 25 acres, with a minimum size of 15 acres. It is recommended that 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population be used as a standard basis for development.

Existing Community Recreation Acreage - Holland Charter Township has three (3) parks that function as community parks. Several school sites in the Township provide community recreational facilities. While they can not be considered community parks, they do provide community athletic fields.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Recreational Site Acreage</u>
H. B. Dunton Park	21.0
Helder Park	167.0
Quincy Park	140.0
West Ottawa Middle School Complex	69.0
Zeeland High School	37.5
Creekside Middle School	<u>10.5</u>
	Total
	445.0



Needs and Deficiencies

Using a standard of five (5) acres per 1,000 population, community park needs can be developed for current and future years.



Est. 2010 <u>Population</u>	Community Rec. <u>Acreage Required</u>	Community Rec. <u>Acreage Available</u>
35,636	178.18	445.0

Deficiency/
Surplus
+266.82



Comparing the existing Community park land to current population figures, there is a sufficient amount of land devoted to community recreational use. However, if the school properties, which are not available for public use at all times, were not considered, the Township has 328 acres of developed community recreation space.

The three Township Community Parks are well distributed with Quincy serving the northwest of the Township, Dunton the southwest, and Quincy the northeast area. The southeastern portion of the Township is planned to accommodate future residential growth and is isolated from access to the other community parks in the Township. Currently the City of Zeeland's Huizenga Park provides some recreational facilities, but these serve primarily the Zeeland population.



Helder Park is in an area of substantial residential growth. The newly developed Hawthorn Pond Natural Area provides a full complement of community recreation for the east side of the Township.

Quincy Park serves not only the west side of Holland Charter Township, but also is used by residents from Park Township to the west and Port Sheldon Township to the northwest. A substantial amount of undeveloped land will allow for further expansion of much needed ball fields and other facilities. It is proposed that an indoor



recreation facility, as well as winter activities, could be located on the site in the future.



Dunton Park serves the southwest community, as well as residents from across the area drawn to its wide range of facilities on Lake Macatawa. Improvements and new facilities were recently completed including a new playground and renovated picnic facilities. Additional amenities in the beach/ boat launch area are desirable and the Township's long term goal is to purchase a residential property, which is bounded on three sides by the Park. Dunton Park, in contrast to Helder and Quincy, favors more passive recreation activities rather than the organized sports of the other parks.

3. Natural Resource Areas

Natural resource areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space and visual/aesthetic buffering. These sites are typically unsuitable for development but offer natural resource potential and can support recreational activities at a level that preserves the integrity of the natural resource. The location and size of these parks are largely governed by availability.



Existing Natural Resource Area Acreage

Holland Township currently has two properties that fit into this category, both of which are adjacent to the Macatawa River and are part of the Macatawa Greenway Network.



<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Hawthorn Pond	
Natural Area	40
Mcacatawa Marsh	<u>19</u>
	Total
	59

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There are no recognized acreage standards for natural resource areas. It is important to identify and protect natural resources under the control of the Township. It is also important to provide improved access and facilities, while maintaining integrity as a wildlife habitat.

A desire for increased access to the river for fishing, walking and canoeing has been identified.

These sites focus on the Macatawa River, the primary natural resource in the Township. A desire for increased access to the river for fishing, walking and canoeing has been identified. This is to be balanced with the need to protect this valuable resource and its surrounding wetlands. Hawthorn Pond Natural Area has a 5 acre manmade lake. This is the only recreation area in the Township’s ownership in this southeast area.



The Township plans to continue to support the Macatawa Greenway’s initiative to preserve unique natural features and properties within the Greater Lake Macatawa watershed for nature conservation, recreation activities and trails. This will be achieved through both land acquisition and development programs in cooperation with neighboring municipalities.

Holland Township has very few significant water bodies or watercourses within its limits. The exception is Lake Macatawa and the Macatawa River along the southern boundaries. Dunton Park is heavily used because of its



location on Lake Macatawa and its facilities. Where possible, the Township should seek to expand the amount of park land on the lake, as well as the Macatawa River.



4. Trails

There are a number of different types of trails that can provide both transportation and recreation opportunities. Trails may be located within parks, on an independent right-of-way, or within the road right-of-way. Connector Trails are defined as “multi-purpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the Community” (J.D. Mertes and J.R. Hall, Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, 1995). These trails are generally located within the road right-of-way and can be divided into two types. Type I has separate paths for different user types, such as pedestrians and bicyclists. Type II has mixed uses and is suited to lighter use patterns.



Existing Facilities

The Township has a well developed system of type II connector trails located within or alongside road right-of-ways. This system connects to neighboring municipalities. On-going improvements and additions are planned to complete this system. The Township has limited trails located within parks, including the boardwalk system at Dunton Park and a trail at Helder.



Needs and Deficiencies

There have been no deficiencies determined for this category and needs vary depending on the community. Trail development, both within parks and linking parks together, is a high priority. Although the Township's sidewalk plan is well developed, trails within parks are lacking and there are few loop trails of any distance suitable for multi-use such as rollerblading and cross-country skiing. The development of an off-road recreational and non-motorized transportation route along the Macatawa River corridor is also a well established goal of the Holland area community.



Recreation Standards for Activities / Facilities

A comparison of activity-specific recreational facilities within the Township with recreation standards indicates that the Township contains many of the recreational facilities desirable for the current and future population, but deficiencies are evident in some areas.

Holland Charter Township contains many of the recreational facilities desirable for current and future population.

While the standards for comparison address the quantity of facilities generally desirable for a particular number of persons, they do not address quality or location concerns. Consequently, a community that has the appropriate numbers of facilities may not have facilities of a useful or desirable quality, or may not have facilities located where they would be most accessible by residents. Also, not all of the facilities are available to the public or for use by the Township Recreation Program.

Holland Charter Township has limited public indoor recreation facilities. The West Ottawa Schools, Zeeland Schools and City of Holland building facilities





accommodate these functions at present, but to a limited degree. Private recreation facilities also supplement the indoor recreation needs. However, a community center is needed to more adequately meet the growing needs of the Township and surrounding community.



2014 RECREATION STANDARDS AND DEFICIENCIES
ESTIMATED 2010 POPULATION: 35,636

FACILITY	STANDARD	FACILITIES NEEDED	*EXISTING	DEFICIENCY
Basketball	1:5000	7	38	OK
Tennis	1:2000	18	47	OK
Volleyball	1:5000	7	2	-5
Shuffleboard	1:2000	18	10	-8
Baseball (Little League)	1:5000	7	11	OK
Baseball (Regulation)	1:5000	7	6	-1
Softball	1:5000	7	25	OK
Soccer (Outdoor)	1:10,000	4	45	OK
Football	1:20,000	2	7	OK
Running Track	1:20,000	2	2	OK
Picnic Shelters/ pavilions	1:2000	18	15	-3
Boat Launch	Provide as available	--	2	OK
Sledding Area	Provide as available	--	--	N/A
Beach	Provide as available	--	1	OK
Bicycle Route	Provide throughout community	--	68 MI	OK
Walking/Cross-Country Trails	1 system per region	1	--	-1
Play Equipment	1:3000	12	23	OK
Gymnasium	1:5000	7	6	-1
Ice Rink (outdoor)	1:20,000	2	0	-2
Swimming Pool (Indoor)	1:20,000	2	1	-1
Auditorium	1:20,000	2	2	OK
Community Center	1:20,000	2	0	-2

* as of 2014, total existing facilities indicates both Township and public school facilities within the Township boundaries