

SECTION 6

RECREATION NEEDS
AND DEFICIENCIES



HOLLAND CHARTER TOWNSHIP **COMMUNITY PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN** **SECTION 6**

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 City staff and representatives, and 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 inadequacy of the Township's recreation system. This Plan has used as a guide the 1983 Recreation, Park, and Open Space, Standards and Guidelines and 1995 Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines published by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Typical recreation standards establish a certain number of activity-specific recreational facilities per 1,000 of population (e.g. 1 tennis court per 2,000 persons). Other standards establish a certain number of acres per 1,000 of population 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. The 2018 U.S. Census Bureau population estimate was used for the purposes of this study.

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-exertive activities for limited numbers of users.





Recreation areas must 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. They range in type from mini-playlots and green areas to large regional and national parks.

The categories used for this plan will be as follows:

1. Neighborhood Parks and Schools*
2. Community Parks
3. Natural Resource Areas
4. Trails

RECREATION STANDARDS FOR ACREAGE

1. Neighborhood Parks and Schools

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 apparatus, court areas, landscaping, site furnishings and possibly a shelter. Special areas for bike riding or specific court games may also be provided. Activities for all seasons should also be included.

Service Areas - The area served by neighborhood parks is generally considered to be a one quarter (1/4) mile to one half (1/2) mile radius in size and should be uninterrupted by non-residential roads or other physical barriers.

Neighborhood Park Acreage Standards - Nationally accepted standards for neighborhood parks recommend one of two (1-2) acres per 1,000 of population with five (5) acres as a minimum size and five to ten (5-10) acres optimal. It is recommended that the minimum of two (2) acres per 1,000 population 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 five to seven (5-7) acres.

Existing Recreation Acreage

The Holland Charter Township currently has (5) parks that would fit into the neighborhood park definition.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
Beechwood Park	3.50
Brookwood	1.00
Glerum Elementary	5.00
New Groningen Elementary	12.0
Pine Creek Elementary	8.00

Total **29.5**

Needs and Deficiencies: The table below compares the 2018 Township population to the recreation standard of two (2) acres per 1,000 persons.

<u>2018 Population</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Required</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Available</u>	<u>Deficiency/ Surplus</u>
38,369	76.7	29.5	-47.2

For the 2018 population, there is deficiency of 47.2 acres for neighborhood recreation in accordance with the recreational standards. 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, Quincy and Dunton Parks currently provide for traditional neighborhood uses.





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-wide 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 their average size or traffic volume generated. Facilities should be centrally located, diverse enough to accommodate all age groups for both active and passive experiences and organized so that compatible uses relate to one another. Adequate parking and vehicular circulation is also important, since park users will generally arrive at these parks by vehicle. Lighted use areas significantly increase the recreational value of parks of this type. Typical facilities recommended for community parks include ball fields, open use areas, tennis courts, picnic areas, play apparatus areas, restrooms and shelters. Additional special facilities could include band shells, amphitheaters, swimming and wading pools, community-meeting buildings, skating facilities, bicycle courses and nature study areas.

As with neighborhood parks, it is often beneficial to develop community parks in conjunction with junior or senior high schools where practical because of the athletic fields and courts potentially available for public use. This arrangement assures the maximum level of use as well as the most practical expenditure of development funds.

Service Area - The area served by community-wide parks varies significantly from one municipality to another because of the distribution of population and related factors. However, a community park usually serves two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3-mile distance. 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 size of a community park varies according to the desired uses but is usually between 30 and 50 acres. It is recommended that a range of five (5) to eight (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 recreation facilities. While they can not be considered community parks, they do provide community access to athletic fields.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Existing Site Acreage</u>
H.B. Dunton Park	21.0
Helder Park	167.0
Quincy Park	147.50
West Ottawa Middle School Complex	69.0
Zeeland High School	37.50
Creekside Middle School	10.50
Total	452.50 acres

Needs and Deficiencies: The following table compares the 2018 Township population to the recreation standard of eight (8) acres per 1,000 persons.

<u>2018 Population</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Required</u>	<u>Neighborhood Rec. Acreage Available</u>	<u>Deficiency/ Surplus</u>
38,369	306.96	452.50	145.54 +

Comparing the existing Community park land to current population figures, there is a surplus of land devoted to community recreational use. However, if school properties, which are not always available for public use, were not considered, the Township has 335.5 acres of developed community recreation space, still enough to meet the recommended recreational acreage for the 2018 population values. The three Township Community Parks are well distributed with Quincy serving the northwest of the Township, Dunton the southwest, and Helder 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 Hawthorn Pond Natural Area provides a full complement of community recreation for the Southeast area 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 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, renovated picnic facilities, and water access points. 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/Open Space

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	40.0
Macatawa Marsh	19.0
Total	59.0 acres

Needs and Deficiencies: 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.

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

Description – 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 rights-of-way. 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. While the standards for comparison address the quantity of facilities generally desirable for several 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 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 meet the growing needs of the Township and surrounding community more adequately.

RECREATION FACILITIES SUMMARY

Holland Charter Township takes pride in its park and recreation facilities and demonstrates good stewardship of its natural resources. While substantial improvements have been achieved over the last 10 years, a variety of improvements are recommended to fully utilize the Township's recreational land and improve accessibility for all users.





2021 RECREATION STANDARDS AND DEFICIENCIES

Holland Charter Township

Estimated 2018 Population: 38,369

FACILITY	STANDARD	RECOMMENDED FACILITIES	EXISTING* FACILITIES	FACILITY DEFICIENCIES
Basketball	1:5000	8	38	OK
Tennis/Pickleball	1:2000	20	47	OK
Volleyball	1:5000	8	2	-6
Shuffleboard	1:2000	20	10	-10
Baseball (Little League)	1:5000	8	11	OK
Baseball (Regulation)	1:5000	8	6	-2
Softball	1:5000	8	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	20	17	-3
Boat Launch	Provide as available	--	2	OK
Sledding Area	Provide as available	--	7	OK
Beach	Provide as available	--	1	OK
Bicycle Route	Provide throughout community	--	70 MI	OK
Walking/Cross-Country Trails	1 system per region	1	Twp. Wide System	OK
Play Equipment	1:3000	13	24	OK
Gymnasium	1:5000	8	6	-2
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 2020, total existing facilities indicates both Township and public-school facilities within the Township boundaries

SECTION 7

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES