

ADOPTED · JANUARY 27, 2020

PARKS AND TRAILS PLAN 2020-2024

**TEXAS
TOMORROW**
Preserve and Enhance



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Elected Township Board

John Hinkle – Supervisor
Linda Kerr – Clerk
Trish Roberts – Treasurer
Don Boven – Trustee
Tim Brown – Trustee
Nick Loeks – Trustee
Wendy Mazer – Trustee

Planning Commission

Mike Corfman – Chairperson
Steve Bosch
Kathy Buckham
Bart Davis
Larry Loeks
Jeff Matson
Trish Roberts

Parks and Trails Committee

Julie VanderWiere – Superintendent
James Whittaker – Chairperson
Jennifer Bussies
Greg Dobson
Tricia Keala
Linda Kerr
Larry Loeks
Trish Roberts



CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION	7
Regional Setting.....	8
Demographics	8
Conclusions	13
3. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE	15
Staff Roles and Responsibilities.....	16
Commissions and Advisory Boards	16
Parks and Trails Budget	17
Current Funding Sources	17
Role of Volunteers	18
Relationship with Other Entities	19
Staff Description and Organization Chart	19
4. PARK INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS	21
Mini Parks	22
Neighborhood Parks.....	22
Accessibility	22
Community Parks.....	23
Township Recreational Facilities	24
Regional Parks.....	24
Trails/Linear Parks	24
Natural Resource Areas.....	26
Semi-Public/Private Facilities	31
Accessibility Score	32
Public Parks in Adjacent Communities	37
Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects	37
Planning and Analysis Process.....	38
Comparison to State and National Standards.....	40
Facility Analysis.....	41
Conclusion.....	41
5. EXISTING AND PROPOSED NON-MOTORIZED INFRASTRUCTURE.....	43
6. PUBLIC INPUT.....	49
Survey and Public Input Results—Key Takeaways	50
7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES	53
8. ACTION PLAN	57

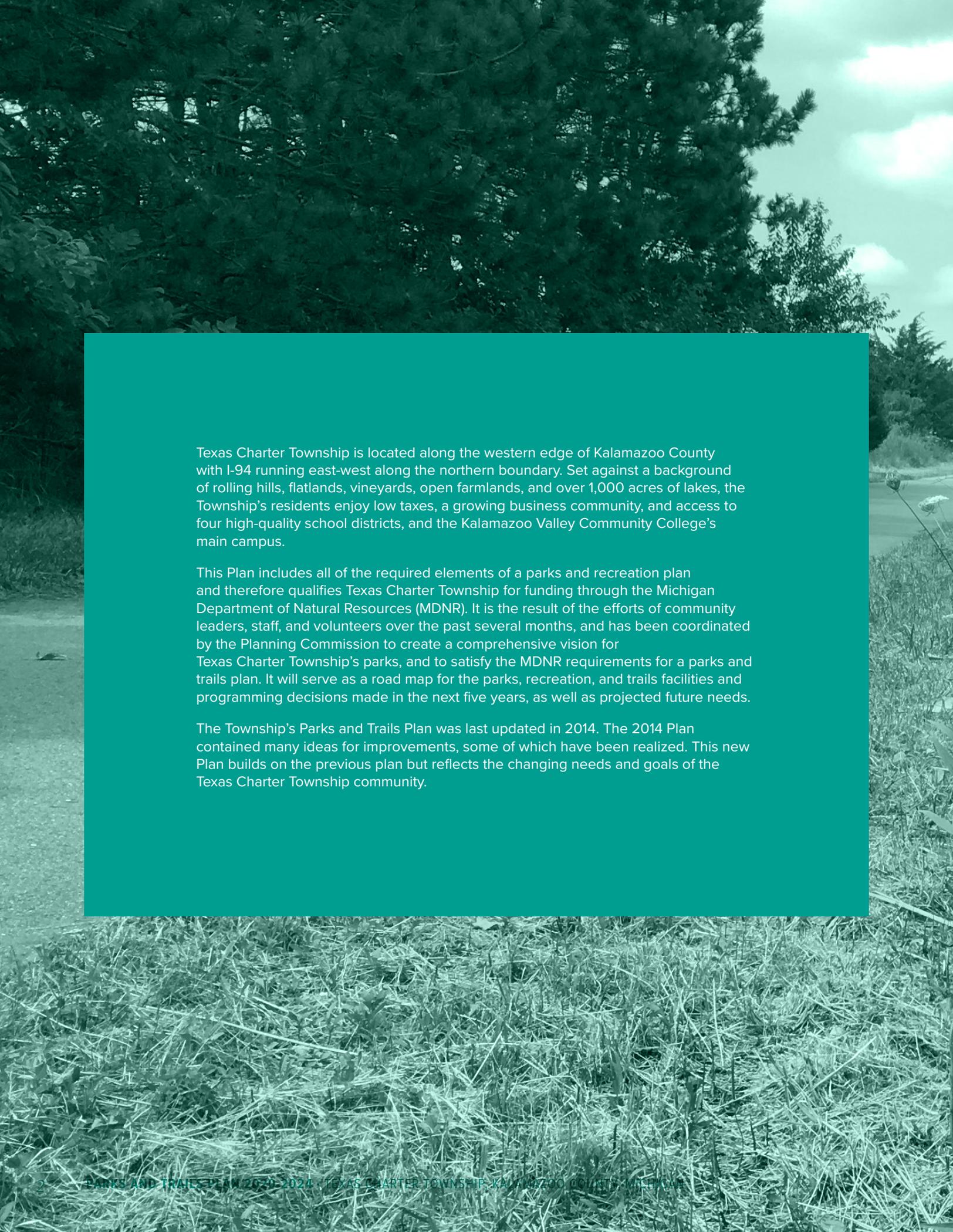
**LIST OF
MAPS**

Map 1. Destination Map	3
Map 2. Regional Context.....	9
Map 3. Parks Inventory.....	27
Map 4. Parks Service Radii.....	29
Map 5. Non-Motorized Network	45



1. **INTRODUCTION**

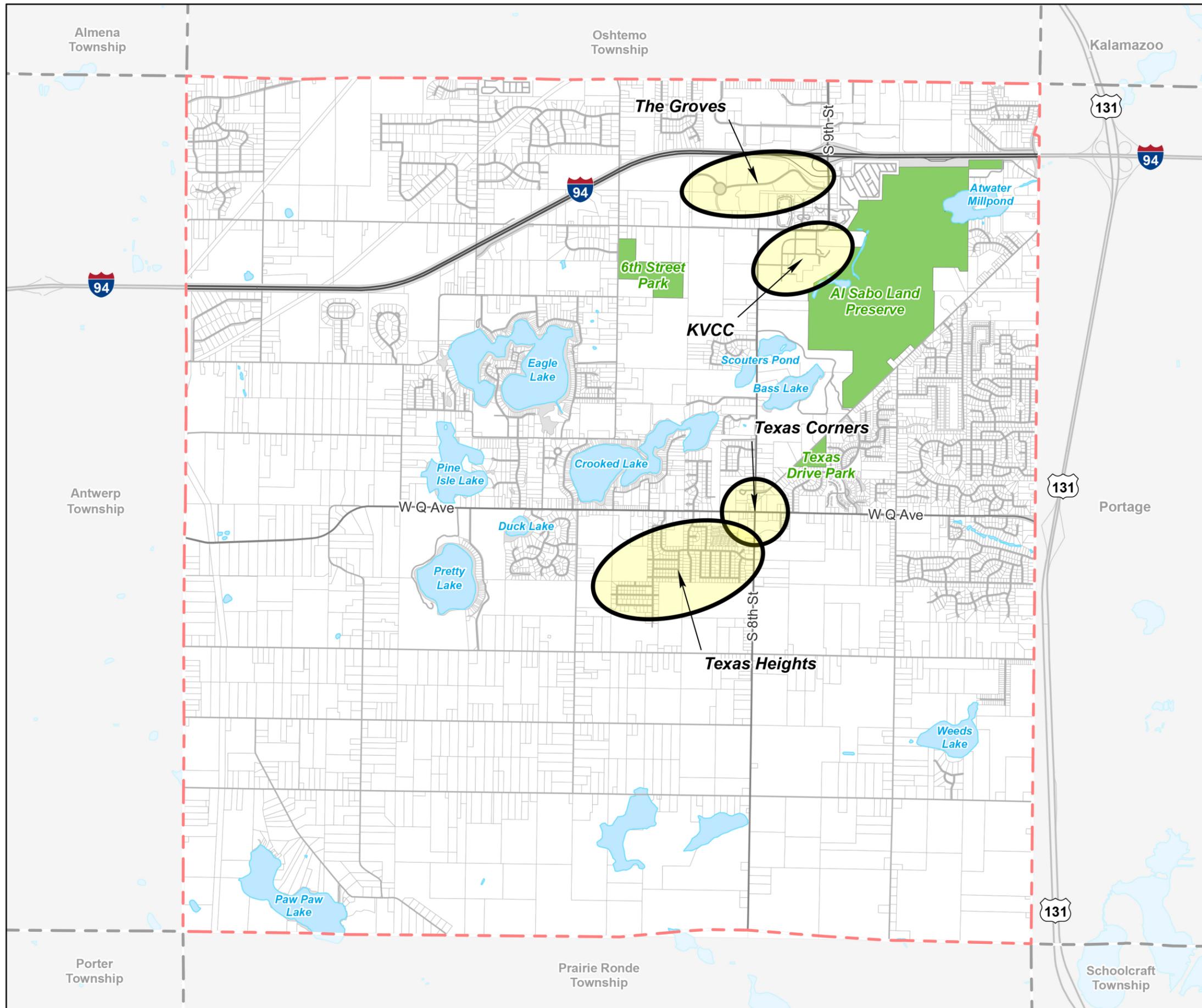
Welcome to the Texas Charter Township Parks and Trails Plan. This Plan reflects a vision for the future of the parks, trails, recreational facilities, and natural areas of Texas Charter Township and is intended to encourage outdoor recreation and natural resources preservation in the community.



Texas Charter Township is located along the western edge of Kalamazoo County with I-94 running east-west along the northern boundary. Set against a background of rolling hills, flatlands, vineyards, open farmlands, and over 1,000 acres of lakes, the Township's residents enjoy low taxes, a growing business community, and access to four high-quality school districts, and the Kalamazoo Valley Community College's main campus.

This Plan includes all of the required elements of a parks and recreation plan and therefore qualifies Texas Charter Township for funding through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). It is the result of the efforts of community leaders, staff, and volunteers over the past several months, and has been coordinated by the Planning Commission to create a comprehensive vision for Texas Charter Township's parks, and to satisfy the MDNR requirements for a parks and trails plan. It will serve as a road map for the parks, recreation, and trails facilities and programming decisions made in the next five years, as well as projected future needs.

The Township's Parks and Trails Plan was last updated in 2014. The 2014 Plan contained many ideas for improvements, some of which have been realized. This new Plan builds on the previous plan but reflects the changing needs and goals of the Texas Charter Township community.



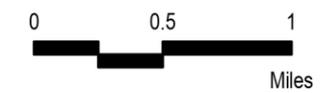
Destination Map

Texas Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, MI

January 23, 2020

Legend

-  Texas Township Boundary
-  Other Municipal Boundaries
-  Township Parcels
-  Township Thoroughfares
-  Other Township Roads
-  Lakes and Rivers
-  Key Places



SOURCES
 Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
 Data Source: Texas Charter Township 2020. McKenna 2020.

Intentionally left blank (back of map)







2. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The following pages contain an analysis of the demographic, geographic, and economic factors that play into the demand for parks and trails in Texas Charter Township. Key indicators include a growing population, increasing number of children, and high median income.



Regional Setting

Texas Charter Township is one of the communities that make up the core of the Kalamazoo metropolitan region. It is bounded on the east by Portage, the region’s second largest city and a major employment node, and on the north by Oshtemo Township, a growing suburban community. To the west is the Village of Mattawan, a historic small town that has become more economically connected to Kalamazoo in recent decades, and to the south is Prairie Ronde Township, a rural community.

Texas Charter Township’s parks serve not only residents of the Township, but also these surrounding communities. Along with local and county parks in surrounding areas, Texas’ parks make up a robust regional system of green spaces, recreational amenities, and non-motorized trails.

Demographics

The review of trends in population growth is helpful in developing an understanding of the Township’s recreational needs. Also, understanding other demographic indicators such as age, education, income, and employment trends can assist in determining the type of recreational facilities which may be needed or desired and will allow facilities and programs to keep pace with demand.

The following sections correspond to the demographic data gathered from the U.S. Census. The most recent data comes from the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates. The ACS is conducted every year and samples a percentage of the community on topics such as population, economics, housing, etc. The 5-year estimates for a given population are considered a reliable source as they represent 60 months of collected data for all geographic areas. However, in some specific cases, the data may contain inaccuracies due to sampling.

Population

Changes in the number of people residing in a community are an important indicator for community planning. Growing communities have different needs than do communities with stable or declining populations. The table below shows the relative population of Texas Charter Township and comparison communities, while the chart at the bottom of the page compares the population trends.

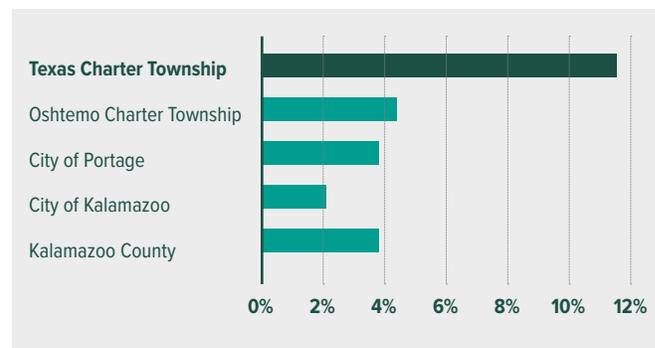
The Township and the surrounding communities all saw a population increase between the sample years 2010-2017. The table and chart below note the total population change of each community during the sample years.

To put this rate of growth into perspective, it is important to compare growth comparisons with other adjacent communities. This is useful in attempting to forecast areas of future growth in the area as well as future demands on the Township’s park system. The following chart illustrates population growth comparisons with adjacent communities.

Table 1. Population, 2010-2017

	2010	2017
Texas Charter Township	14,697	16,391
Oshtemo Charter Township	21,705	22,658
City of Portage	46,292	48,072
City of Kalamazoo	74,262	75,833
Kalamazoo County	247,246	259,830

Figure 1. Population Change, 2010-2017



Regional Context

Texas Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, MI

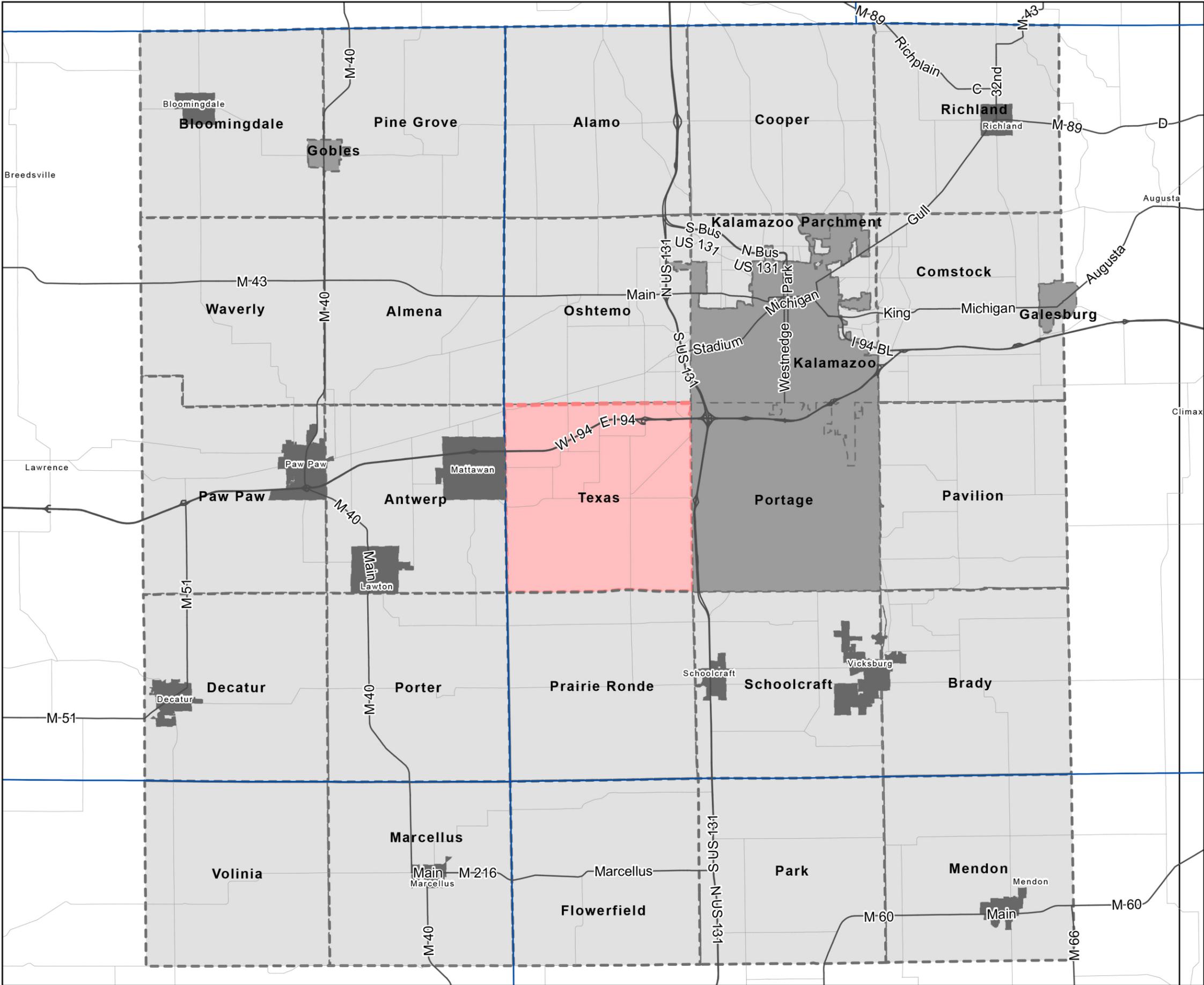
January 23, 2020

LEGEND

-  Texas Charter Township
-  Surrounding Townships
-  Surrounding Cities
-  Surrounding Villages
-  County Line
-  State Thoroughfares
-  Other Regional Roads



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: Texas Charter Township 2019. McKenna 2020.



Intentionally left blank (back of map)

Households

This section analyzes the number of households in Texas Charter Township and surrounding comparison communities. Changes in the number of households in a community are an indication of changing demand for recreational activities.

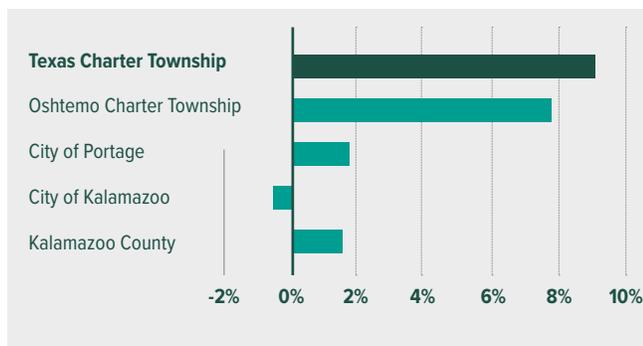
According to the table and chart below, the number of households in each of the communities experienced an increase during the sample years, with the exception of the City of Kalamazoo, which saw a decrease in the number of households at -.50%.

The average household size in the Township has dropped from 3.05 people in 2010 to 2.88 people in 2016 (the most recent data available). While dropping household sizes are a nationwide trend, this data conflicts with the data showing the number of households has grown at a slower rate (8.8%) than the population (11.5%). Generally, the population growing faster than the number of households indicates more children being born and increasing household size. It is possible that the conflict is due to sampling error in the American Community Survey—the results of the 2020 Census headcount may give a clearer picture.

Table 2. Number of Households, 2010-2017

	2010	2017
Texas Charter Township	5,231	5,692
Oshtemo Charter Township	9,708	10,441
City of Portage	19,199	19,552
City of Kalamazoo	29,141	28,996
Kalamazoo County	100,610	102,362

Figure 2. Percentage of Households, 2010-2017



Disabilities

The 2010 census data for individuals with disabilities is not available. However, the 2000 census indicated that 9.1% of Texas Charter Township residents have a disability, compared to 16.5% for the County and 19.3% for the United States.

Age

The age of a community’s population has very real implications for recreation planning, whether it is a need for children’s recreation to serve the population under 18, or a need for amenities more attractive to retirees. To determine the overall age of a community both the median age of the population as well as the population by age group are provided.

The table below compares the median age of Texas Charter Township with nearby communities. While Texas’ median age is higher than its neighbors, it and Portage are the only communities where the median age is decreasing. A dropping median age tends to indicate young families moving to the community, and more children being born.

Table 3. Median Age, 2010-2017

	2010	2017
Texas Charter Township	39.4	39.1
Oshtemo Charter Township	32.0	36.1
City of Portage	38.1	37.9
City of Kalamazoo	26.2	26.2
Kalamazoo County	34.1	34.1

2. Community Description

Population by Age Group

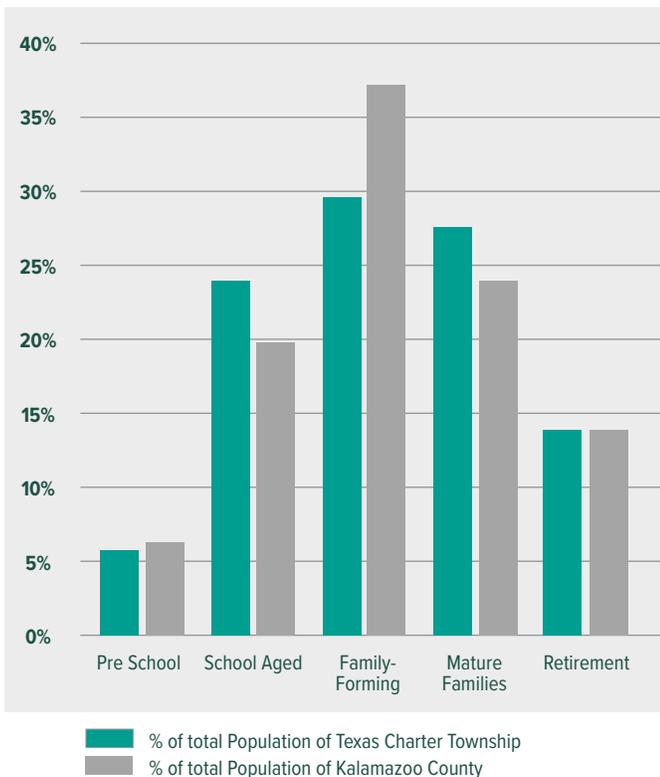
Age structure (analyzing which proportions of a municipality’s population are in which stages of life) gives an insight into the age makeup of a community. To compare age structure, the population is divided into the following groupings:

- » Under 5 (Pre School)
- » 5 to 19 (School Aged)
- » 20 to 44 (Family-Forming)
- » 45 to 64 (Mature Families)
- » Over 65 (Retirement)

The chart below compares the age structure of Texas Charter Township with that of Kalamazoo County in year 2017. Persons in the Family-Forming age group are the most numerous in both the Township and the County. This age group is likely to mean more children and a growing population and therefore, a need for additional recreation facilities to accommodate the number of children and families.

The difference between population growth (11.5%) and household growth (8.8%) also support this conclusion.

Figure 3. Population by Age Group, 2010-2017



Income

Median income is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount.

Each of the selected sample communities experienced an increase in median household income between 2010 and 2017.

According to the table below, the City of Kalamazoo experienced the largest increase in median household income between the years 2010 and 2017 with a percentage change of 25.13%, with a close second being Texas Charter Township with an increase median income percentage change at 23.95%. The smallest percentage change of median household income during the sample years was the City of Portage, where the change was at 7.73%. As a whole, the percentage change of median household income in Kalamazoo County increased by 15.96%.

The table below describes the change in median income in Texas Charter Township and the surrounding comparison communities between years 2010 and 2017.

Texas Charter Township’s high income level may reduce eligibility for grant funding over the life of the plan, but may make a local park millage a possibility.

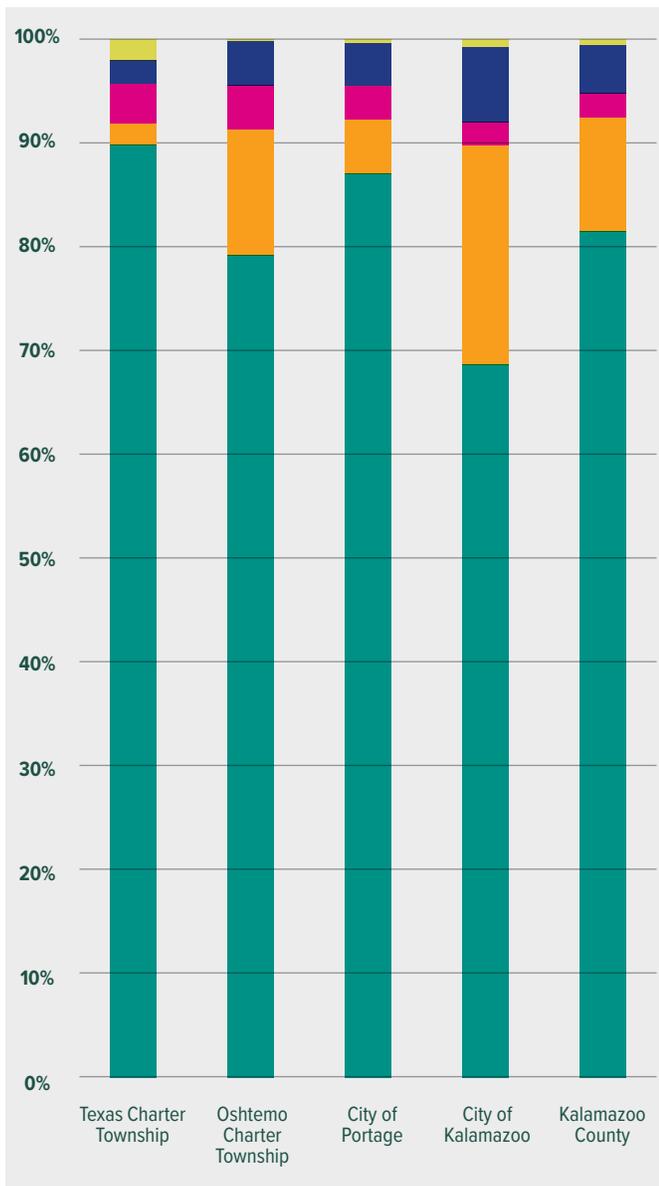
Table 4. Change in Median Household Income, 2010-2017

	2010	2017
Texas Charter Township	\$88,250	\$109,385
Oshtemo Charter Township	\$37,080	\$43,829
City of Portage	\$55,936	\$60,260
City of Kalamazoo	\$29,919	\$37,438
Kalamazoo County	\$44,794	\$51,945

Race

In terms of ethnicity, Texas Charter Township is a majority Caucasian community with 91% of the population being white. The figure below depicts a breakdown of the racial makeup of Texas Charter Township and the surrounding sample communities.

Figure 4. Racial Composition



Conclusions

The analysis of the demographic statistics for the Texas Charter Township leads to the following conclusions:

- » In the past decade, the Texas Charter Township has experienced an increase in its population, the number of households, and the number of housing units. The growing population will increase the demand for recreational amenities and facilities.
- » There are indications in the data that the number of young families and children in the Township is increasing. The population is growing faster than the number of households, the proportion of residents in the “family forming” age years (20-44) is higher than the County as a whole, and the median age is dropping. Park and trail facilities aimed at families may see higher demand in the Township in the coming years.
- » With growing numbers of children and families on the horizon, as well as the aging Baby Boomer generation, Texas Charter Township strives for improved and expanded parks, trails, and recreational facilities to cater to families, young adults, and seniors.





3. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The main governing body of the Township is the Texas Charter Township Board of Trustees, an elected body that is comprised of the Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer, and four at-large Trustees. All Board Members serve for four years and the terms are not staggered.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The Township Superintendent is appointed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Township departments; annual budget; oversight of public improvements; personnel administration; and, the enforcement of Township ordinances, regulations and policies. Since the Township currently does not have an organized parks and recreation department, the Township Superintendent coordinates maintenance and operations while the Township Board makes decisions regarding park budgeting, land acquisition, facilities and program development.

Commissions and Advisory Boards

As development and the demand for public services has increased, the Township has established additional governmental boards and committees to better meet the varied needs of the Township. Committees directly related to parks and recreation include the Parks and Trails Committee and the Farmers' Market Committee.

The Parks and Trails Committee is made up of two Planning Commission members, one Township Board member, two members at large, and the superintendent. There are also two alternates. Annually, the Committee reviews the long-term build out plan for each park and trail, and proposes improvements to the Township Board. Development plans are created annually, and a budget is prepared out of the General Fund. There is no direct millage for park development and maintenance, and the Parks and Trails Committee is not authorized to spend funds or request bonds for the acquisition of land or construction of facilities. The Parks and Trails Committee serves in an advisory capacity to the Township Board and must receive approval for the implementation of recreation improvements in Township parks. The objective of the Committee is to oversee and facilitate operations, upgrades, and expansion to the Township park system that is consistent with the 5-Year Parks and Trails Plan.

The Township's developed parkland is maintained by the Township maintenance staff. This staff member is responsible for the parks and trails and other municipal facilities. Responsibilities are fairly miscellaneous and include refuse collection, painting, cleaning, etc. The maintenance staff person also inspects equipment and trails for maintenance concerns. Lawn maintenance is provided by a private firm that the Township contracts for this purpose.

The Texas Charter Township Farmers' Market Committee is responsible for leadership, management, and administration of all matters related to the operation of the Farmers' Market. The committee is a 10-member board that reports to the Township Board and is responsible for scheduling times and dates of the market, setting rules and guidelines for vendors, developing themed events, and setting budgets and fees. The Farmers' Market Committee is made up of members of the community, including representatives from the Board, Planning Commission, DDA, and Parks and Trails Committee, as well as residents and vendors.

Parks and Trails Budget

Texas Charter Township parks and activities are funded with general fund dollars; there are no separate millages. Additionally, there are no sources of income for parks and recreation except for reservation payments associated with Texas Drive Park, private donations, and grants. The Township Board oversees budgeting and allocates the appropriate funding amount based on projected needs.

Current Funding Sources

The Township budget anticipates \$3,000 in reservations for 2020, and \$150,000 in a MDNR Land & Water grant. The Township Board has budgeted \$470,750 total expenditures to complete Phase I of the 6th Street Park. Reimbursement funds from a previous MDNR grant have been transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund for that purpose.

The Township has received two grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) for the development of non-motorized trails. The Township received a grant in 2011 for a Pocket Park and trailhead, and then received a second grant in 2012 for Phase II of the Texas Drive Trail project (that project was also partially funding by an MDOT TAP grant). Additional revenue comes from the Texas Charter Township General Fund, other MDNR grants (such as MNRTF), donations, and park rental fees.

The Friends of Texas Township Parks and Trails funds have been established at the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. One fund is an endowment for long-term maintenance, and the other is for new construction and capital improvements. Donations to the fund are made through the Community Foundation.

2019 BUDGET EXPENDITURES



Role of Volunteers

Volunteers often assist with the planning and organization of community-wide events and festivals held within the parks. In addition, maintenance and upgrades to the facilities are sometimes completed or implemented by volunteers in order to reduce costs.



PARK EXPENDITURES – HISTORICAL TRENDS



The Parks Budget consists of expenditures related to the operations of the Townships' parks. Expenditures in this budget include:

- » Tools and Supplies
- » Engineering
- » Legal Fees
- » Planning Fees
- » Utilities
- » Grounds
- » Maintenance

The Parks Budget FY2020 shows an overall increase from the FY2019 adopted budget. This increase is primarily for maintenance costs of 6th Street Park Phase I, new pickleball courts, and storage building improvements. All of these amenities are planned to be completed in 2020.

The Township is also using the \$150,000 Land and Water Grant received from MDNR to fund the construction of 6th Street Park during the 2019 and 2020 budget years.

Relationship with Other Entities

Texas Charter Township partners on various projects and programs with a number of regional entities, including the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County, the Portage and Mattawan Public School Districts, the Texas Corners Downtown Development Authority, and various private recreational organizations. Specifically, the Township works with the City of Kalamazoo, which owns the Al Sabo Preserve, to ensure maintenance of the Township trail that runs through Al Sabo.

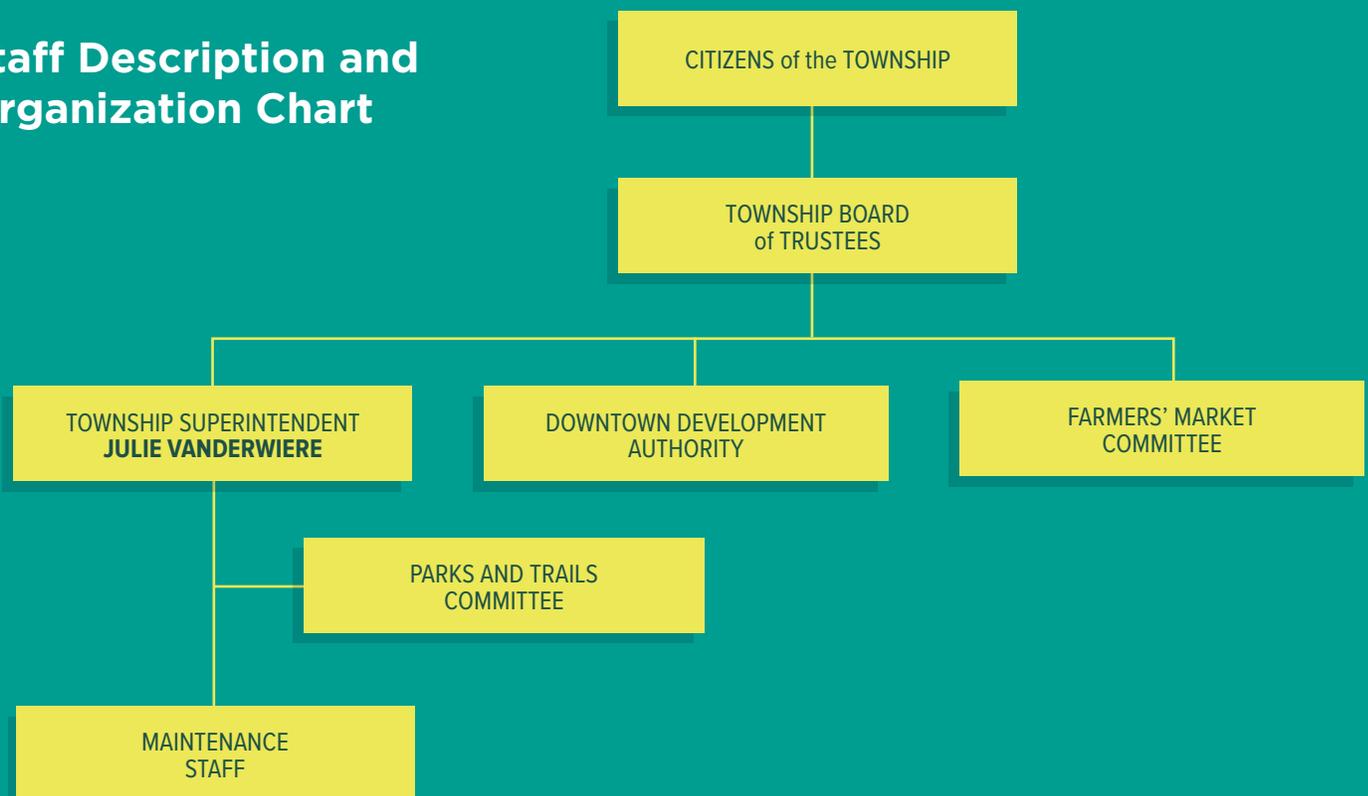
The Township does not provide recreational programming for the existing park facilities. A number of private recreational organizations provide youth-oriented, programmed activities at Texas Drive Park. These groups pay the Township a fee for use of the facility. The following organizations use Texas Drive Park for their programmed activities:

- » Rebels 10U Fast Pitch
- » West Michigan Wild 9U Baseball
- » West Michigan Wild 10U Baseball
- » HBF Maroons Baseball
- » Hurricane Fastpitch Softball
- » Mattawan Lacrosse
- » Kingdom Soccer Club
- » Dan Bulley Soccer School
- » Soccer Shots
- » Kalamazoo Bicycle Club

These organizations are somewhat regional and may also have programmed events at other locations.

The demand for use of the fields at Texas Drive Park is exceptionally high during non-winter months and the fields are typically reserved a year in advance. The park is fully utilized on summer evenings and weekends because of activities scheduled by the entities noted above. Sports fields are constantly in use and not available to the public during peak times.

Staff Description and Organization Chart







4. PARK INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

This Chapter describes the parks and recreation facilities available to the community, including the Township-owned properties, other park and forest lands, and private facilities. The parks were inventoried using local records and knowledge, as well as in-person site visits.



4. Recreation Inventory



Joyce I. Neubauer Farmers' Market Pavilion / Pocket Park

Accessibility

Each recreation area within Texas Charter Township has been evaluated on how well it serves people with disabilities. Parks and other facilities are rated on a 1-5 scale, according to the following criteria:

- 1 = None of the facilities/park areas meet ADA accessibility guidelines
- 2 = Some of the facilities/park areas meet ADA accessibility guidelines
- 3 = Most of the facilities/park areas meet ADA accessibility guidelines
- 4 = The entire park meets ADA accessibility guidelines
- 5 = The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

In order to determine whether the existing facilities are sufficient and in what ways they could be improved, the Township has used a comparison to the MDNR's recognized standards for classifying types of parkland based on size and function. Public facilities in Texas Charter Township can be identified by the following classifications: Mini Park, Community Park, Regional Park, Linear Park, Special Use, and Natural Resource Area. A more detailed description of the various public, quasi-public, and private recreation facilities follows:

Mini Parks

Mini Parks are specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. The service area of a mini park is less than ¼ mile radius and the park size is typically 1 acre or less. **There is currently one site that fits this description.**

JOYCE I. NEUBAUER FARMERS' MARKET PAVILION / POCKET PARK

is a 1.2-acre park adjacent to the Township Hall and located in the heart of the Texas Corners downtown area. This park is home to the Joyce I. Neubauer Farmers' Market Pavilion and has become a valued gathering space for community interaction. The Farmers' Market space includes a large open-air covered structure that is used for vendors to display their goods. The park also includes playground equipment, site furnishings, paved walkable paths, and landscaping. This site also includes a restroom building and drinking fountains. **Accessibility Score: 2**

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks typically serve a residential area of ¼ to ½ mile distance. A size of 5-10 acres is considered optimal for this type of park. The focus is typically on informal, active and passive recreational activities. **There are no neighborhood parks in Texas Charter Township.**

Community Parks

Community Parks typically contain a wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents from several neighborhoods. Community parks may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes and swimming pools. These parks usually contain other facilities not commonly found in neighborhood parks, such as nature areas, picnic pavilions, lighted ball fields, and concession facilities. Typically ranging between 30-50-acres in size, community parks serve a 1 to 2-mile radius and should be serviced by arterial or connector streets and be easily accessible from throughout their service area by interconnecting trails. **Currently there are two Township parks classified within this category, as follows:**

TEXAS DRIVE PARK is a 16.3-acre park located on the south side of Texas Drive and includes a playground; picnic areas; a picnic shelter; basketball court; soccer, football, and baseball fields; a paved ¾-mile path that encircles the park; restroom facilities; and paved parking. As the only park in the Township with recreation fields (Phase I of 6th Street Park is just under construction as of this writing), this facility serves a broad population that extends beyond the Township and is often overcrowded. The park’s sports fields are reserved at least one year in advance by various sports teams and private clubs. Although the park is well-utilized and contributes to quality of life overall, some facilities are generally not available to the public because of the extent of this programming. This park is popular and full, and its true service area likely extends beyond the ideal 3-mile radius to include the entire 36-square mile community. **Accessibility Score: 2**

When 6th Street Park is finished, some of the sports facilities at Texas Drive Park will be relocated, allowing for new amenities to take their place.

6TH STREET PARK is a 65-acre vacant parcel of land located at 6321 South 6th Street. The Township formed a steering committee of residents, Board members, and Parks and Trails Committee members to create conceptual plans for the construction of a brand-new park. The Township Board approved the conceptual designs in 2016, and Phase I of the project is currently under construction. Two multi-purpose fields, including soccer, rugby, football and lacrosse; a portion of the 8 feet wide, 1.5-mile loop trail; eight pickleball courts; and a parking lot with 144 spaces are included in Phase I. **Accessibility Score: n/a**



Connector Trail



Texas Drive Park



Future site of 6th Street Park



Trails/Linear Parks

(See Chapter 5)

PHASE I TEXAS TOWNSHIP TRAILWAY is a hard-surfaced eight-foot wide non-motorized multipurpose trail that starts at the Pocket Park in Texas Corners, traverses east and north to Texas Drive Park and continues along Texas Drive until it terminates at the entrance drive of the Al Sabo Land Preserve parking lot. The total length of the trail is approximately 1.1 miles.

PHASE II TEXAS TOWNSHIP TRAILWAY is a hard-surfaced eight-foot wide non-motorized multipurpose trail that was constructed in 2016. The trail is approximately three miles and starts at the termination of the Phase I Non-motorized Trail, at the entry drive to Al Sabo Land Preserve parking lot, traverses through the Preserve, crosses through a Consumers Energy property to 12th street and heads north on 12th Street and connects to the round-about. There is also an eight-foot side path that connects the trail along Texas Drive that travels south to the Rudgate Subdivision, and a second eight-foot side path along 12th Street that travels south and connects to the 12th Street Elementary School site. The trail provides a safe non-motorized connection from downtown Texas Corners to the City of Portage trail system, thus connecting the Township to a regional trail system.

Regional Parks

Regional Parks are typically located on sites with unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitats, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail use. Many also include active play areas. Regional parks serve a large area, usually with a 3 to 5-mile radius. **There are no regional parks in Texas Charter Township.**

Township Recreational Facilities

Table 1. Publicly Owned and/or Operated Recreation Facilities within Texas Charter Township

AMENITY	QUANTITY	LOCATION(S)
Football /Soccer Field	3	Texas Drive Park
Boat Launch	2	Paw Paw Lake, Eagle Lake
Pavilions	2	Texas Drive Park, Joyce I. Neubauer Farmers' Market Pavilion
Picnic Facilities	2	Texas Drive Park, Joyce I. Neubauer Farmers' Market Pavilion
Playground Equipment	2	Texas Drive Park, Pocket Park
Basketball Court	1	Texas Drive Park
Non-Motorized Trailway	1	From Texas Township Park to Milham / 12th Street
Baseball/Softball Fields	1	Texas Drive Park

Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks are areas for specialized or single purpose recreational activities. The specialized recreational activities may include boat launches, swimming beaches, plazas or squares, historic sites, stadiums, urban greenspaces, and nature centers. There are no generally accepted standards for the size or service areas of these parks. Location and size criteria are variable and depend on the specific use of the site.

EAGLE LAKE PUBLIC ACCESS is a popular 224-acre water body that has attracted considerable residential development. The MDNR owns and maintains a 9.2-acre public access adjacent to the lake (although, it is temporarily closed due to flooding). The public access site includes a hard-surfaced boat ramp, a public toilet, and 14 parking spaces.

PAW PAW LAKE BOATING ACCESS situated in the southwestern corner of the Township, is surrounded by low-density residential uses, woodlands, and open fields. The MDNR owns and maintains a public access site on the 162-acre water body. The 1.7-acre site includes a hard-surfaced boat ramp and 9 parking spaces.

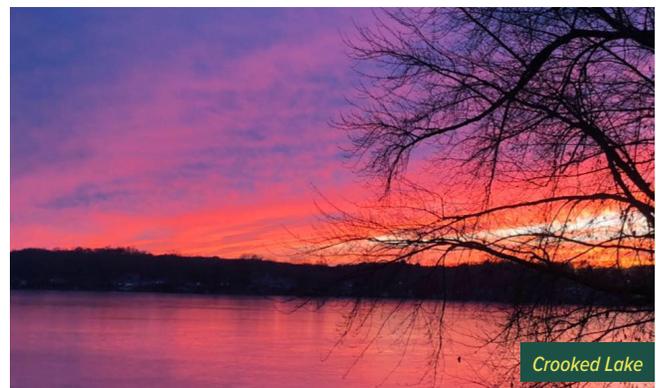
CROOKED LAKE MDNR PROPERTY is 1.8-acres along the north side of Crooked Lake owned by the MDNR. Crooked Lake is a 150-acre water body located near the center of the Township that has experienced substantial residential development, although several large wooded parcels continue to exist adjacent to or near the lake. This partially wooded MDNR property is undeveloped and it appears access is only provided via a secluded easement that is owned by an adjacent property owner. This land might be considered Special Use and is publicly owned but access is limited and there is no identifying signage. Also, it contains no facilities and is therefore not included in any analysis.



Eagle Lake Public Access

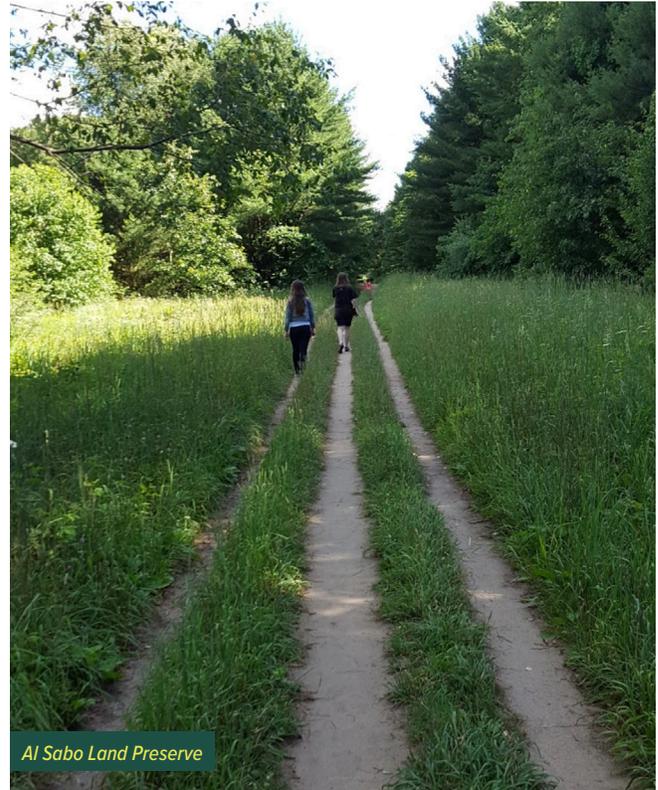
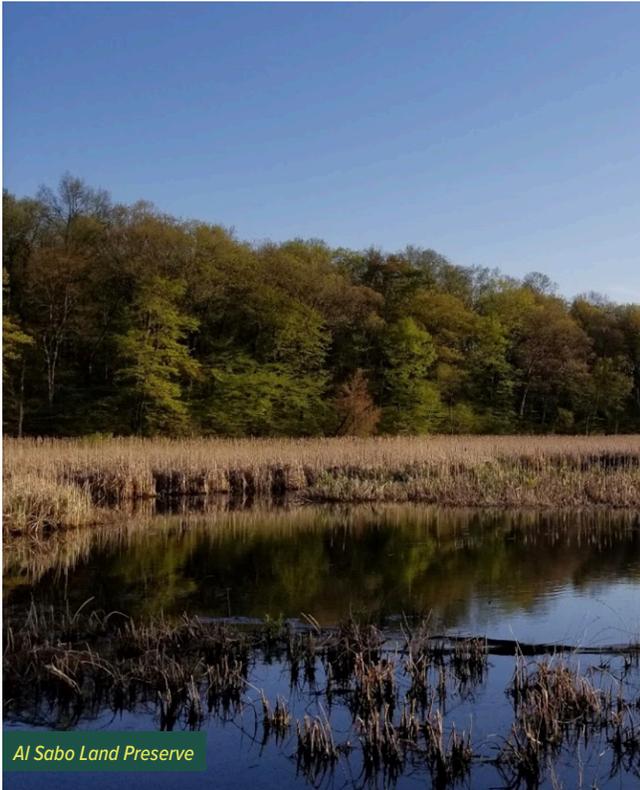


Paw Paw Lake Boating Access



Crooked Lake

4. Recreation Inventory



Natural Resource Areas

Natural Resource Areas are lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, landscapes, and open space. 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.

AL SABO LAND PRESERVE, located alongside of Texas Drive, is owned by the City of Kalamazoo and is intended for conservation of water resources used in conjunction with the City's municipal water system. The 741-acre site, located entirely in Texas Charter Township, was established in the early 1970's in order to protect the groundwater supply of the Atwater wellfield. It doubles as a recreation resource; attracting non-motorized users from the region, with hiking trails, mountain bike trails (restricted to approximately seven of the 25 miles of trails), and observation decks. In addition, the Atwater Mill Pond, wetland areas, and Portage Creek are also included within the Preserve's boundaries.

K-12 School Facilities

Public school facilities, including playgrounds and sports fields and courts, can add tremendous recreational value to a community. It is notable that no local school district-owned buildings, parks, sports facilities or recreational areas exist in Texas Charter Township. The Township is encompassed within four public school districts; but none of these districts have built facilities in the Township. The districts include Kalamazoo, Portage, Mattawan, and Schoolcraft.

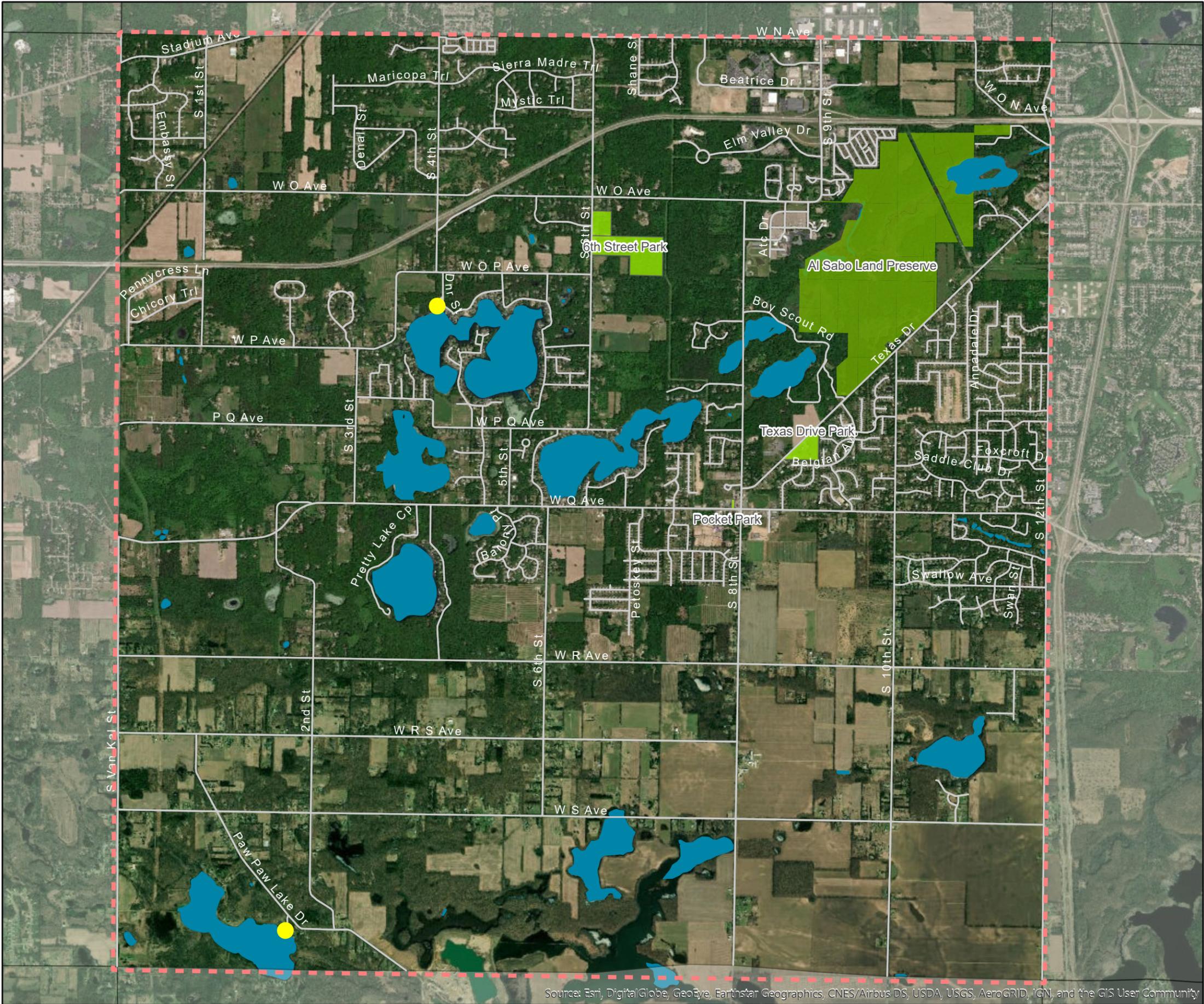
Parks Inventory

Texas Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, MI

January 24, 2020

LEGEND

-  Township Parks
-  Al Sabo Land Preserve
-  Lake Access Point



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: County or Local Community Source. McKenna 2018.



Intentionally left blank (back of map)

Parks Service Radii

Texas Charter Township, Kalamazoo County, MI

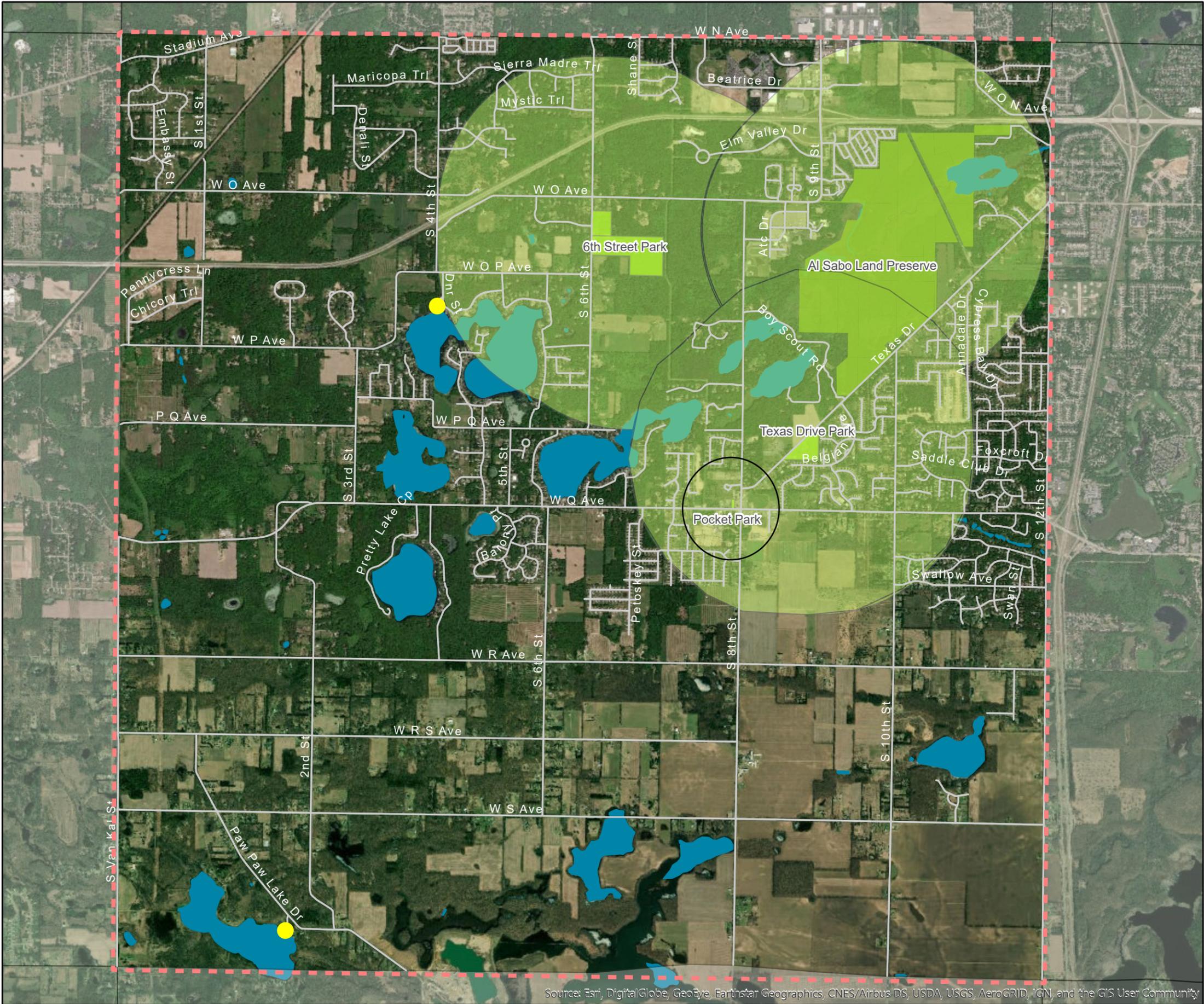
January 24, 2020

LEGEND

- Township Parks
- Al Sabo Land Preserve
- 1 Mile Service Radius
- 1/4 Mile Service Radius
- Lake Access Point



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: County or Local Community Source. McKenna 2018.



Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Intentionally left blank (back of map)



Pretty Lake Camp

Semi-Public/Private Facilities

While the following facilities are not open to the general public, they all help fulfill recreation needs for various groups of people.

PRETTY LAKE VACATION CAMP is a privately-owned 250-acre facility. Pretty Lake is ensconced on three sides within the Camp's boundaries. The facility offers a retreat center, cabins, trails, a beach, camping, and education. It appears that, in many instances, children's programming at the Camp is provided free of charge for the region's youth; with the Camp offering particular emphasis on services to at-risk children.

ROTA-KIWAN RESERVATION is adjacent to the Al Sabo Land Preserve and includes Bass Lake and Scouters Pond. The 212-acre property includes camping, trails, dining, education, and swimming. This reservation was recently closed, and its future use is currently unknown.

KALAMAZOO VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE's main campus is located in Texas Charter Township and is Kalamazoo County's public community college. Although the college is public, access to recreational facilities is primarily intended for students and limited public access is possible usually through prior arrangement with the college; and fees may be charged. Therefore, Kalamazoo Valley Community College's facilities are being classified as semi-public. The campus includes an auditorium, basketball, track, indoor gym, tennis courts, baseball diamonds, soccer field, and indoor pool.

WINGS WEST is a privately owned establishment comprised of ice rinks and a personal training facility that offers camps and clinics.

PRIVATE LAKE ACCESS is the only access available on the following lakes: Pretty Lake, Weeds Lake, Pine Island Lake, Bass Lake, Duck Lake, and Mud Lake. This private access is offered by way of private residential frontage and private facilities, including Pretty Lake Camp and the Rota-Kiwan Reservation.

RESIDENTIAL COMMON AREAS can enhance the aesthetics of a neighborhood and generally provide for gathering or recreation possibilities intended only for residents of the particular development. Sometimes, these areas are comprised of drainage facilities, woodlands, or preserved open space and developed park amenities are not provided. Nonetheless, several residential communities in the Township offer recreational amenities. The Barrington Shores subdivision includes a 7-acre private park intended only for residents. It includes a sledding hill, swimming pool with adjacent pool house, basketball court, tennis court, and a small playground. A trail is also provided in a separate natural feature preservation area. Additionally, the Applegate Farms subdivision offers a swimming pool and a trail for its residents. Other common areas may also exist in residential developments throughout the Township.

Accessibility Score



Texas Drive Park

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES: Paved parking is provided, however based on the number of parking spaces there are not enough barrier free spaces. There is not a barrier free path from the parking area to the park trail or other park facilities. The existing playground equipment does not have barrier free access. Paved walking paths are provided through out the park, however there is not paved path to the playground, basketball courts or restroom facility. Bleachers, benches and picnic areas are not accessible.

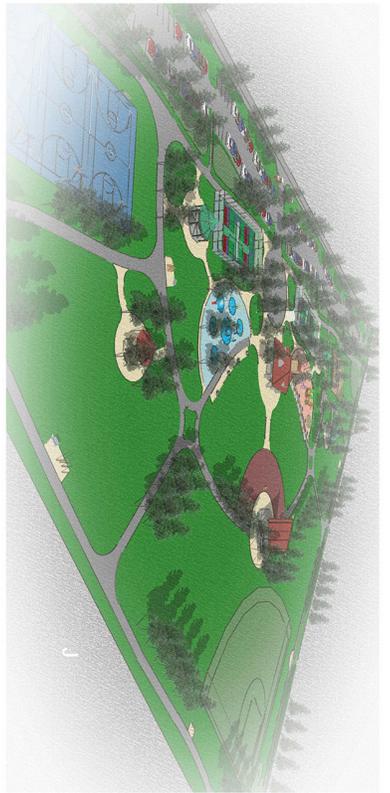
RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: Restripe parking to provide barrier free parking spaces. Provide barrier free connections from the parking lot to the paved trail. Provide barrier free access to the basketball court, playground, gaga pit, restrooms and bleachers. Provide barrier free benches and picnic tables. Provide new accessible playground equipment with barrier-free structure and accessible routes.



Joyce I. Neubauer Farmers' Market Pavilion / Pocket Park

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES: This site has been designed to meet accessibility guidelines. All areas of the site are accessible.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: The playground surfacing should be maintained to meet accessibility.



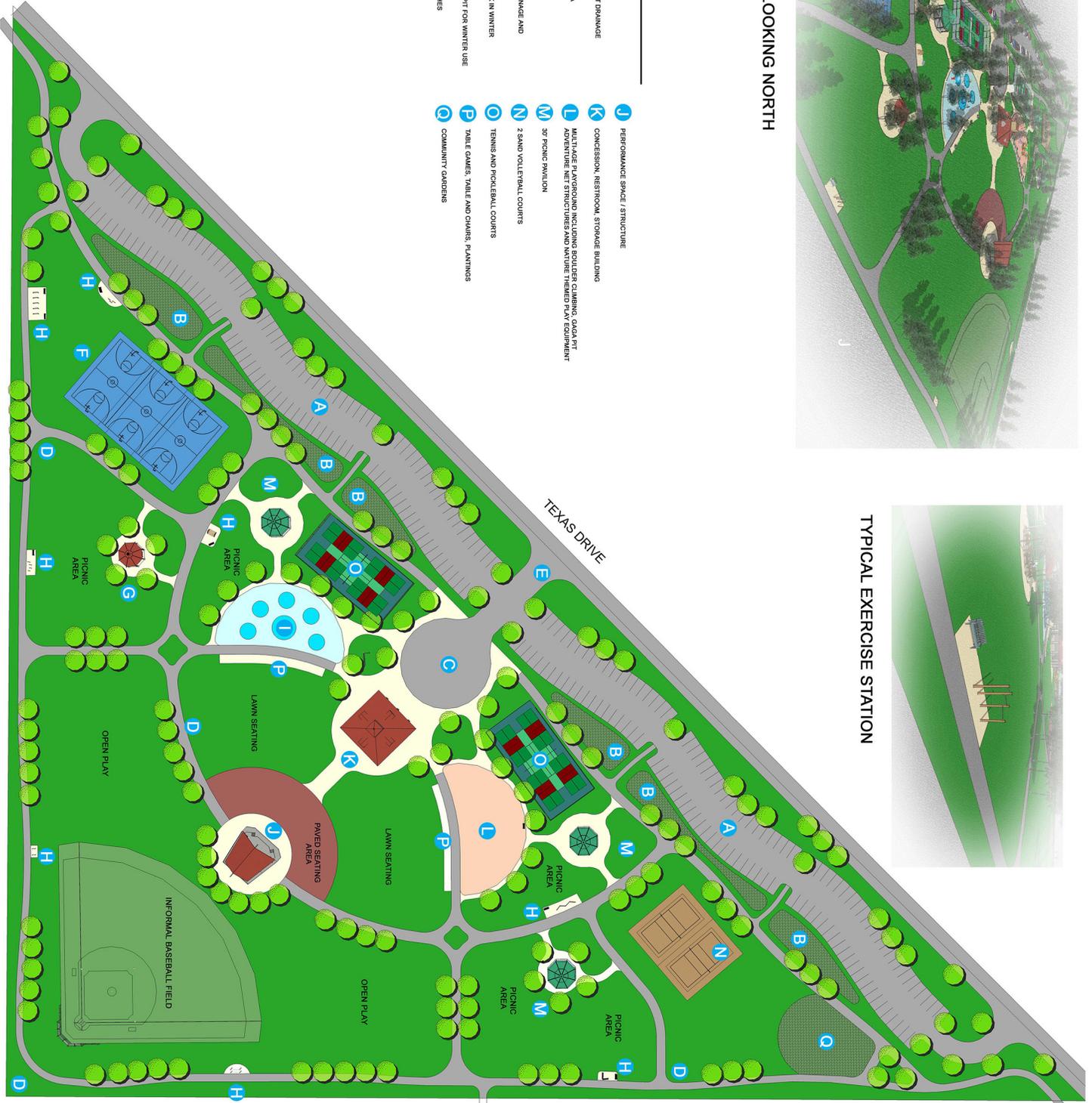
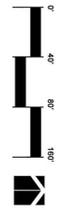
BIRDS EYE VIEW LOOKING NORTH



TYPICAL EXERCISE STATION

LEGEND

- A** PARKING LOT FOR 238 SPACES
- B** RAIN GARDEN FOR PARKING LOT DRAINAGE
- C** TURF/AROUND / DROP-OFF AREA
- D** 10' PAVED TRAIL
- E** 24" BENTONITE FEATURE WITH STORAGE AND LANDSCAPING
- F** BASKETBALL COURTS / ICE RINK IN WINTER
- G** 24' PICNIC PAVILION WITH FIRE PIT FOR WINTER USE
- H** EXERCISE STATION WITH BENCHES
- I** SPLASH PAD - 8,400 S.F.
- J** PERFORMANCE SPACE / STRUCTURE
- K** CONCESSION, RESTROOM, STORAGE BUILDING
- L** MULTILAYER PLAYGROUND INCLUDING SOULIDER CLIMBING, GAGA PIT, ADVENTURE NET STRUCTURES AND NATURE THEMED PLAY EQUIPMENT
- M** 37' PICNIC PAVILION
- N** 2 SAND VOLLEYBALL COURTS
- O** TENNIS AND PICKLEBALL COURTS
- P** TABLE GAMES, TABLE AND CHAIRS, PLANTINGS
- Q** COMMUNITY GARDENS



TEXAS DRIVE PARK

Texas Township, Michigan
DECEMBER 2015

SCHEMATIC MASTER PLAN



4. Recreation Inventory



ACCESSIBILITY SCORE:

4

Texas Township Trailway (non-motorized trail)

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES: The trail has been designed to meet accessibility guidelines.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: None.



ACCESSIBILITY SCORE:

n/a

6th Street Park (under construction)

DESCRIPTION OF FACILITIES: Phase I is under construction.

RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS: Accessibility considerations will be planned in the design.



Regional Facilities

Kalamazoo County Parks owns and maintains seven parks. These include:

- » Cold Brook County Park
- » Kalamazoo County Expo Center & Fairground
- » Kalamazoo River Valley Trail
- » Markin Glen County Park
- » Prairie View County Park
- » River Oaks County Park
- » Scotts Mill County Park

Of these seven parks, only Prairie View County Park is within reasonable proximity to Texas Charter Township. Prairie View County Park is a 210-acre Regional Park located near the border of the City of Portage and Schoolcraft Township; approximately 4 or 5 miles from Texas Charter Township's boundary. Swimming, picnic shelters, playgrounds, softball, volleyball, soccer, a hiking trail, and sledding are offered.

In addition, the following MDNR facilities are in proximity to Texas Charter Township:

KAL-HAVEN TRAIL STATE PARK is a 34-mile crushed limestone path connecting the Cities of South Haven and Kalamazoo for walking, bicycling or cross-country skiing. Some areas adjacent to the trail are also available for equestrian use. The trail meanders through wooded areas, past farmlands and over rivers and streams. Trail highlights include a camelback bridge and covered bridge.

KALAMAZOO RIVER VALLEY TRAIL is a paved asphalt trail that is 12-feet wide and is designed to generally follow the course of the Kalamazoo River. The trail is planned to connect Battle Creek's 30-mile linear park in the east to the 35-mile Kal-Haven Trail State Park in the west and the 40-mile Portage Creek Bicentennial Trail to the south creating a total trail network of approximately 130 miles. The Kalamazoo River Valley Trail connects to the Kal-Haven Trail near the 10th Street trail head, which is located 6 miles north of the Texas Charter Township border.

GOURDNECK STATE GAME AREA is located in Portage in four separate segments. Portions of the Gourdneck State Game Area are adjacent to Texas Charter Township and other portions are about two miles away. The State Game Area is comprised of approximately four square miles of natural area intended for hunting, fishing, nature interpretation, and wildlife viewing.

WOLF LAKE FISH HATCHERY is located just 8 miles northwest of the Township. This facility produces a wide range of fish species for inland and Great Lakes waters utilizing both indoor and outdoor rearing facilities. The visitor center provides opportunities to learn about a variety of fish species, their life cycles and habitat, and how the DNR works to protect and conserve Michigan's lakes, rivers and streams.

VAN BUREN STATE PARK offers approximately 400 acres of land along the Lake Michigan shoreline in northern Van Buren County. The focal points of the park are its high dune formations and one mile of sandy beach. The day use area has picnic facilities, a picnic shelter, and an accessible playground. The Park also provides 220 modern campsites and two group use areas.



Flesher Field

Public Parks in Adjacent Communities

Oshtemo Charter Township, to the north of Texas Charter Township, maintains two parks:

- » **FLESHER FIELD** located within a mile of Texas Charter Township—the closest park to the Township—along the west side of 9th Street, south of Stadium Drive, is a 24-acre community park and offers soccer fields, a baseball field, two whiffle ball fields, play equipment, unpaved walking paths, and a pavilion. The other park is Oshtemo Township Park, located further north on M-43.

The City of Portage, east of Texas Charter Township, maintains nineteen parks; a few of which are within a couple of miles of Texas Charter Township, and include:

- » **HARBORS WEST PARK**, near Angling Road and Milham Avenue, is 6 acres and includes basketball, volleyball, roller hockey, play equipment, picnic facilities, and walking/biking trails.
- » **OAKLAND DRIVE PARK**, located near Oakland Drive and Schuring Road, is 19 acres and offers picnic facilities, basketball, tennis, soccer, volleyball, softball, walking trails, a sledding hill, and play equipment.
- » Finally, **WESTFIELD PARK**, located near Milham Avenue and 12th Street, is 12 acres and includes basketball, tennis, soccer, volleyball, softball, picnic facilities, and play equipment.
- » The City of Portage offers a bikeway (a trail intended for bicycles located within the public road right-of-way) along a portion of 12th Street, the common border dividing the City from Texas Charter Township.

Natural Resources Trust Fund Projects

County	Municipality	Grant Number	Project Name	Amount	Governing Act
Kalamazoo	Texas Charter Township	10-025	Farmers' Market Trailhead / Mini-Park	\$287,800 Development	PA 16 of 2011
Kalamazoo	Texas Charter Township	11-047	Texas Drive Non-Motorized Trail Extension	\$300,000 Development	PA 283 of 2012

Planning and Analysis Process

Task One:

Community Description

1

The first task was to obtain a description of Texas Charter Township's physical and social features. These features include land use, community facilities, environmental and natural features, as well as population characteristics including age distribution, household size, and income. The information was obtained through resources available on the Township website, the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, conversations with Park Committee members, and on-site reconnaissance. The Community Description can be found in Chapter 2.

Task Two:

Parks and Recreation Inventory

2

The parks and recreation inventory includes written descriptions of facilities including both Township parks and facilities and recreational amenities operated by other entities. The information includes the acreage, barrier-free accessibility, types of recreation facilities, and other descriptions of the physical attributes of the area's facilities. The Inventory can be found in Chapter 4.

Task Three:

Administrative Structure and Funding

3

The administrative structure of the Township's parks and recreation facilities and programs, as well as budget and funding information, can be found in Chapter 3. The information was obtained through conversations with Township officials and Park Committee members.

Task Four:

Public Participation

4

The following public participation methods were conducted throughout the process of preparing the Plan:

Open House: An Open House was held at Pretty Lake Camp on October 9, 2019. While the primary purpose of the Open House was feedback for the Township’s Master Plan, residents identified potential locations for future parks and natural preserves.

Holiday Market: Township staff set up a booth at the Township’s popular holiday market on November 23, 2019 to obtain feedback for the Parks and Trails Plan and the Master Plan.

Survey: A survey was available to Township residents through the Township website throughout the summer of 2019. Selected results can be found in Chapter 6, with full results in the Appendix. Key public input takeaways can be found on the following page.

Review Period:
December 10, 2019 to
January 10, 2020

Public Hearing:
January 14, 2020

Task Five:

Analysis

5

Based on the data collected in tasks one through four, the information was analyzed in accordance with national and state guidelines, local needs, the experience of Township staff and consultants, the desires of the residents, and potential funding sources.

Task Six:

Action Plan

6

Taking into account the analysis, goals and objectives, and public input results, a five-year plan was created. The Plan provides the Township a checklist of what action is to be accomplished, when and where it will occur, who will accomplish it, how much it will cost, and potential funding sources. The Goals and Objectives of this plan can be found in Chapter 7, and the Action Plan can be found in Chapter 8.

Task Seven:

Plan Completion and Adoption

7

The Planning Commission approved the draft plan to be made available to the public on November 26, 2019. The Public Review Period lasted from December 10, 2019 to January 10, 2020. A Public Hearing was held by the Planning Commission on January 14, 2020. The Plan was adopted by the Township Board on January 27, 2020.

RECOMMENDED SERVICE AREA BOUNDARY

Mini Parks /
Neighborhood Parks
0.25 – 0.5 miles

Community Parks
0.5 – 3.0 miles

Regional Parks
60 minute driving time

Comparison to State and National Standards

Acreage Analysis

It is also essential to consider the type of parks, their location, and their distribution throughout the Township. When evaluating parks and recreation service areas, it is important to closely consider where the residents in the Township live. The MDNR establishes a recommended service area for each park classification to determine the areas in the community that are lacking easy access to parks and facilities. The service area boundary for each type of park is shown to the left.

The table below evaluates Texas Charter Township’s park acreage in comparison to national guidelines for communities throughout the State. By comparing National Standards to the existing park and trail inventory in the Township, the results can help establish recreation priorities, and identify focus areas for future parks and trail enhancements.

The analysis below is based on the Township’s population of 16,391 (Source: American Community Survey 2017 Five-Year Estimates).

Table 3. Texas Charter Township Land Acreage Analysis

PARK CLASSIFICATION	MDNR GUIDELINE ACREAGE PER 1,000 RESIDENTS	TEXAS CHARTER TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDED ACREAGE	ACTUAL ACREAGE IN TOWNSHIP	SURPLUS/ DEFICIENCY
Mini Parks	0.25 to 0.5	4.1 to 8.1	1.2	-2.9 to -6.9
Neighborhood Parks	1.0 to 2.0	16.3 to 32.7	0	-16.3 to -32.7
Community Parks	5.0 to 8.0	81.5 to 131.1	16.3 (81.3 once 6 th Street Park is completed)	-0.2 to -49.8 (including 6 th Street Park)
Regional Parks	5.0 to 10.0	81.5 to 163.3	0 (Al Sabo is not considered a regional park)	-81.5 to -163.3
Total	7.25 to 20.5	183.4	17.5 (82.5 once 6 th Street Park is complete)	-100.9 , (including 6 th Street Park)

Source: American Community Survey 2017 Five Year Estimates

Facility Analysis

MDNR also publishes standards for the recommended numbers of various recreation facilities based on the population of a community. Table 4 compares Texas Charter Township to the MDNR standards.

For amenities that do not exist in the Township, many residents use parks in Kalamazoo, Portage, Oshtemo, or other communities. Partnerships may be possible to allow access to additional facilities in neighboring communities.

The analysis below is based on the Township's population of 16,391 (*Source: American Community Survey 2017 Five-Year Estimates*).

Table 4. MDNR Recreation Facility Standards

Facility	State Standard	Needed	Approx. Availability in Texas Charter Township
Basketball Court	1 per 5,000 people	3	1
Tennis Court	1 per 2,000 people	8	0
Volleyball Net	1 per 5,000 people	3	0
Baseball / Softball Field	1 per 5,000 people	3	1
Soccer / Football / Multi-use Field	1 per 10,000 people	2	3
Swimming Pool	1 per 20,000 people	0	0
Golf Course	1 per 50,000 people	0	0
Ice Skating	1 per 100,000 people	0	0

Source: American Community Survey 2017 Five-Year Estimates

Based on these standards, Texas Charter Township is deficient in a number of areas, although the addition of 6th Street Park will help. However, as a suburban-rural community with a number of private and quasi-public recreational amenities (as discussed early in this chapter), the Township may not need to provide the acreage and amenities recommended by the MDNR standards. In addition, residents have large backyards, some of which are lakefront, and a number of homeowners associations maintain recreational amenities for the use of their residents. While the Township takes great pride in its park and trails amenities, and does not feel discharged from its obligation to provide public recreation, these opportunities help to alleviate these deficiencies. Therefore, the acreage and number of facilities recommended by the MDNR standards may not be necessary.

Conclusion

Texas Charter Township has a popular and well-maintained system of parks, but does not meet the MDNR guidelines for acreage and amenities. Those guidelines may not be necessary to meet in a Township like Texas Charter Township, but the community's park amenities should still grow as it grows. New park locations should be identified to keep up with growth, especially as development pushes west.





5. EXISTING AND PROPOSED NON-MOTORIZED INFRASTRUCTURE

Non-motorized facilities are an important component of the Township's transportation and recreation infrastructure. Modes of active transportation that focus on efficient and safe movement of individuals and bicycle and pedestrian circulation play an important role in improving the community's connectivity, physical and mental health, and perception of safety.



5. Existing and Proposed Non-Motorized Infrastructure

Pedestrian Network

The majority of the pedestrian infrastructure in Texas Charter Township is located along Q Avenue near Texas Corners and various residential developments along Texas Drive, and some parts of Texas Heights. Additionally, a sidewalk network is constructed on 9th Street, connecting Kalamazoo Valley Community College with nearby commercial and industrial uses to the north. Many of the sidewalks located along main roads in the Township, particularly in Texas Corners, have protected pedestrian crosswalks for safe access. As future development occurs, the Zoning Ordinance requires the installation of sidewalks and trails.

Trailway Network

Trails/Linear Parks Connector Trails are multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation. Type I trails offer separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists located in independent right-of-way (e.g., old railroad right-of-way). Type II trails are typically located within road right-of-way.

Since the development of the previous Parks and Trails Plan in 2014, Texas Charter Township has accomplished several milestones in the trailway network. Currently, the majority of the trailways are constructed in the northeast section of the Township. More specifically, a separated trailway is constructed along Texas Drive, connecting Texas Drive Park to nearby residential developments, and extends to Texas Corners. Additionally, an extensive separated trailway is constructed within the Al Sabo Land Preserve from Texas Drive to the sidewalks near the KVCC Main Campus. Using this route, individuals can travel from Texas Corners to the KVCC Main Campus, as well as to multiple Township parks by separated trailway.

In terms of proposed trailways, Texas Charter Township has a well-connected conceptual trailway network. One major priority for future connections is the north-south connector route from O Avenue to Q Avenue. This route has been determined by utilizing a Consumer's Energy utility corridor. Eventually, that route is planned to extend north to the 9th Street network.

Other proposed trailway opportunities utilizing utility corridors are being explored to connect to neighboring jurisdictions. These include a north-south route parallel to 22nd Street on the west side of the Township, and a northeast-southwest diagonal route from N Avenue to the corner of P Avenue and Pennycress Lane. Additionally, other proposed route opportunities are being explored along Q Avenue, around Eagle Lake, O Avenue, and north-south along 8th Street from Q Avenue to O Avenue.



In addition to the Township-owned system, several residential developments include privately-owned trailways within the neighborhood limits. These trailways are designed to connect adjacent neighborhoods to one another. The majority of these private trailways are located between neighborhoods on Texas Drive.

Overall, the proposed trailways in Texas Charter Township are planned to provide non-motorized recreation opportunities to access various points of interest in the Township such as Texas Corners, Township parks and the Al Sabo Land Preserve, other trails in adjacent municipalities, and various neighborhoods.

Paved Widened Shoulder Network

The existing paved widened shoulders are located on 10th Street on the northeast portion of the Township and on 8th Street from Q Avenue to R Avenue. To expand this network of paved widened shoulders, the Township is exploring opportunities to construct routes along the entirety of Q Avenue, 8th Street from Q Avenue to O Avenue, 6th Street from N Avenue to P Avenue, and N Avenue from 11th Street to 6th Street.

Additionally, the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) is in the process of planning a large bike commuter network in their service area, covering greater Kalamazoo County. Several of these routes are planned in Texas Charter Township along major transportation corridors.

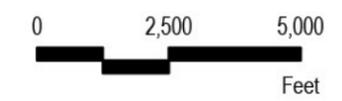
Non-Motorized Network

Texas Charter Township

December 4, 2019

Legend

-  Township Parks
-  Al Sabo Land Preserve
-  Existing Trailway
-  Proposed Trailway
-  Existing Paved Widened Shoulder
-  Proposed Paved Widened Shoulder
-  Existing Neighborhood Trailway
-  Existing Sidewalk
-  Proposed KATS Bike Commuter Route



Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 17a.
Data Source: County or Local Community Source. McKenna 2018.

Intentionally left blank (back of map)







Joyce J. Neubauer Pavilion



6. PUBLIC INPUT

Input from citizens and the Park Committee played a critical role in the development of the Plan. As a result, recommendations described within the action plan reflect the needs and ideas of the Texas Charter Township community. The process included seven tasks that are discussed in Chapter 4.



Survey and Public Input Results —Key Takeaways

Texas Charter Township advertised an online community survey available to the public between August and October 2019, hosted a public open house at the Pretty Lake Camp, and solicited additional public feedback from residents at the annual Holiday Market. The overarching goal of the public input process was to assist with determining the goals, objectives, and implementation measures for the Texas Charter Township Parks and Trails Plan.

Some of the key takeaways in regards to Township Parks from the public input process include:

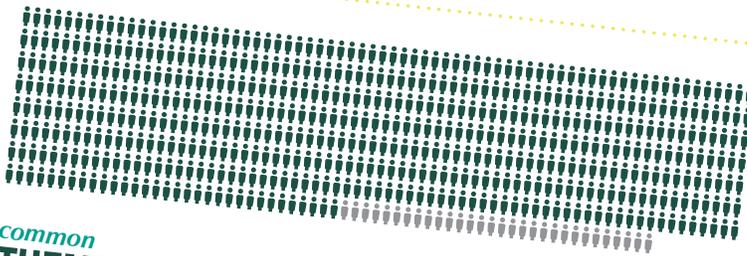
- » A total of 622 people responded to the online survey. Of the 622 respondents, over **95% identified themselves as Township residents.**
- » **61% of respondents believe that providing parks should be important**, but either at no cost or with existing funds. On the other hand, 34% of respondents note that providing parks and other recreation amenities are priorities important enough to provide additional funding. These results indicate that residents believe that parks and recreation are an important priority for the Township, but perhaps not the most important one.
- » Approximately **39% of respondents indicated that they frequent parks and recreation facilities within the Township at least monthly.** Moreover, when excluding the use of the recreation facilities at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), that number rises to 45%. Likewise, approximately 28% of respondents indicated that they visited park and recreation facilities outside of Texas Charter Township. **These results indicate that, while residents of Texas Charter Township value the recreation opportunities available to them regionally, they are more likely to use the facilities nearest them.**
- » A majority of survey respondents (82.1%) believe that the parks augment overall quality of life.
- » The survey indicated overall satisfaction with existing parks and recreation facilities, and that, if the Township were to offer more programs, such as those for seniors, people with disabilities, and young families with children, the public would utilize them.
- » Of the additional features that respondents would like to see in Texas Charter Township, a majority (**55%**) **noted they would like the Township to offer more hiking and walking trails.** Moreover, a minority (**42%**) **indicated that more restrooms should be installed** in park facilities. Other facilities on the “wish list” of survey respondents include a **splash pad (approximately 37%) and a dog park (28%).**
- » Numerous survey and public input respondents expressed an interest in adding disc golf facilities to the Township.
- » Because the Parks and Trails Planning process ran concurrently with the Township’s Master Plan process, Parks and Trails were also discussed at public outreach events that were primarily aimed at Master Plan input, including the October 9, 2019 Open House at Pretty Lake Camp and the input booth at the Holiday Market on November 23, 2019. At both events, residents expressed a desire to ensure that natural spaces and parks are preserved as more of the Township’s rural areas are developed, but specific recreational amenities were not discussed.





You have a vision for your community, and we want to hear it!

An online survey was developed to help steer Texas Township into a vibrant and sustainable future through a planning process collectively known as **Texas Tomorrow: Preserve and Enhance**. You spoke, so we listened – and here are the results:



622 PEOPLE RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY
over **95%** OF THOSE WERE TOWNSHIP RESIDENTS

Common THEMES

THROUGHOUT THE SURVEY RESPONSES



44% PRESERVING THE RURAL CHARACTER OF TEXAS TOWNSHIP



36% IMPROVING THE APPEARANCE OF THE TEXAS CORNERS AREA



92% OF RESPONDENTS SAY TEXAS TOWNSHIP IS A "decent" or "wonderful" PLACE TO LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY

PARKS

within Texas Township AND THROUGHOUT KALAMAZOO COUNTY

44%

"Members of my household use township parks on a regular basis and I believe that they are **important** to quality of life."

39%

"Although members of my household **do not use** Township parks frequently (or at all), I still believe that they are **important** to quality of life."



61% INDICATED IMPROVING WALKABILITY is **important**



90% OF RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS PLAN TO STAY FOR THE *foreseeable future*

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

"The Township is growing..."



"Development should be..."



56% WANT MORE

neighborhood-serving

COMMERCIAL USES







7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Park improvements are part of Texas Charter Township's commitment to provide excellent recreational facilities designed to enhance community and provide greater connection for families.

GOAL:

Maintain and improve existing Township parks.

1

OBJECTIVES:

- » Continue to improve Township parks using the approved schematic master plans as a guide
- » Upgrade and redevelop Texas Drive Park
 - Develop the approved Sensory Garden
 - Install walking trail and exercise equipment
 - Develop plans and install playground
 - Focus on passive recreation
 - Provide more accessibility including more barrier free parking spots
 - Transition active recreation uses to 6th Street Park from Texas Drive Park
- » Phase I of 6th Street Park is currently under construction, continue development.
- » Assess the need for more shade at the Farmers' Market / Pocket Park playground
- » Develop a maintenance / management plan

GOAL:

Work with neighboring communities for connectivity via non-motorized trails and bikeways.

2

OBJECTIVES:

- » Continue to collaborate with neighboring communities for regional trails connectivity and long-term regional non-motorized planning
- » Work with new developments in the Township and the DDA to connect the community using non-motorized trails and bikeway connections



GOAL:

Develop new parks, trails and recreation facilities as necessary.

3

System Wide Recommendations

OBJECTIVES:

- » When warranted, require developers to provide walking and biking trails or neighborhood parks
- » Assess the impact of new housing development on the capacity of the Township's parks
- » Identify and acquire land for new parks as development pushes further west

- » Develop new recreation amenities such as disc golf, splash pad, and pickleball courts
- » Non-motorized pathway/ bikeway connections
 - Continue to develop connections throughout the Township and to neighboring cities and townships.
 - Work with the Kalamazoo County Road Commission for traffic calming/ pedestrian/ trail crossings
- » Continue to provide Barrier Free Accessibility through new facilities and maintain and improve at existing facilities
- » Continued Public Involvement
- » Promote and maintain strong working relationships with Kalamazoo County, City of Kalamazoo, City of Portage, neighboring Townships, local school districts and KVCC to enhance recreation opportunities available to area residents





8. ACTION PLAN

This Chapter summarizes the overall system recommendations as well as specific improvements to individual parks. Some are multi-year efforts that will involve time and coordination, while others are park improvements that require a largely monetary investment. The table in this Chapter incorporates the top recommendations that require capital improvement in the next five years for planning purposes.

8. Action Plan

Priorities should be reviewed on an annual basis and adjusted to respond to updated findings and identification of funding opportunities. In particular, costs should be closely monitored as the proposed plan estimates are in 2019 dollars and are strictly preliminary. Actual costs for each project will be more specifically determined as land acquisition, site surveys, programming elements, and engineering plans are developed if applicable, as well as through further analysis of the proposed improvement. If funding levels are lower than required to implement the Plan based on the schedule provided, the implementation could be stretched over additional years.

The dates of the Action Plan represent the year the Township would like to construct the projects. Planning and funding for each project will need to be completed prior to the anticipated construction year.

Table 5. Parks and Trails Action Plan

Year	Project	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
2020	Texas Drive Park: Implement sensory garden	\$75,000	TGF, D/P
	6th Street Park – Phase I Continued Implementation: 2 multi-purpose fields, walking trail, paved parking lot, 8 pickleball courts	\$850,000	GR, TGF, D/P
2021	Texas Drive Park: Replace playground equipment with CPSC, ASTM compliant and accessible multi-age structures, implement walking path with exercise equipment	\$425,000	GR, TGF
	6th Street Park: Implement restroom building, picnic shelter, park signage	\$400,000	GR, TGF
	Trails: Study and determine routes through existing residential developments along Q Avenue to connect: parks, existing trails, Texas Corners and neighboring communities	TBD	GR, TGF, D/P
2022	Texas Drive Park: Upgrade restroom and picnic shelter	\$425,000	GR, TGF
	6th Street Park: Implement playground and picnic shelter	\$550,000	GR, TGF
	Trails: Study routes and develop trail / bikeway from Texas Corners to KVCC	TBD	GR, TGF, D/P
2023	Texas Drive Park: Implement splash pad	\$300,000	GR, TGF
	6th Street Park: Implement sledding hill and paved parking	\$350,000	GR, TGF
2024	Texas Drive Park: Implement Sports Court, drainage improvements and landscaping	\$210,000	GR, TGF
	6th Street Park: Implement additional athletic courts and play fields	\$250,000	GR, TGF
	Trails: Determine route and develop trail / bikeway from 10th Street Corridor	TBD	GR, TGF, D/P

D/P = Donation or Partnership
 GR = Grants (MNRTF, TAP, LWCF, etc)
 TGF = Township General Fund
 OG = Other Government Resources
 KC = Kalamazoo County

Intentionally left blank



MCKENNA

Communities for real life.

**151 S. Rose Street, Suite 920
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49007
T: (269) 382-4443
F: (248) 596-0930
www.mcka.com**

John Jackson, AICPPresident
Chris Khorey, AICP Project Manager
Danielle BouchardProject Planner
Carrie LeitnerArt Director



**350 East Michigan Ave, #415
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
T: (269) 381-3357
F: (269) 381-2944
www.ocba.com**

Sandra Bliesener President
Rachel Hughes-Nilsson Park Design
Monica Johnson Parks Planning