



Broomball at Winterfest. Image Source: C&G News

Chapter 3: Action Program

The action program details the manner in which the goals and objectives will be met. It includes a list of specific projects, as well as a schedule with suggested capital improvement projects along with a sequence and strategies for implementation.

ACTION PLAN

The following outline lists specific actions and projects which are recommended to be accomplished during the planning period. Plans showing the parks improvements are also included to illustrate the proposed projects.

ACTION #1: Maintain and Upgrade Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities

This action includes replacing aging equipment which is in a state of disrepair, outdated, or dangerous as well as improving the appearance of the parks, properties, and buildings through appropriate landscaping and maintenance. All upgrades must be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and efforts should be taken to remove all existing barriers to universal access.

Proposed projects include:

1. COMMUNITY CENTER:

- Perform community outreach to establish resident desires for a new facility. Communicate the results of an analysis which compares the cost of upgrading the existing structure with replacing the building with a new facility. Work with focus groups and other community stakeholders to develop a list of desired amenities and establish a cost estimate from that list which considers design, construction, and ongoing maintenance requirements. Upon completion, pursue a bond millage based on the results of the community input.

2. PARKS

- Address grading, turf condition, drainage and accessibility at all City parks.
- Replace lights at Community Park baseball fields #2 and #3.
- Upgrade ball field surface at Lazenby Field.
- Complete park upgrades at Merchants/Oxford Park.
- Upgrade playground equipment at all city parks and add structures which appeal to a variety of ages and abilities.
- Add exercise stations along internal park trails.
- Install restrooms and shelter/pavilion buildings, along with associated amenities such as picnic tables, drinking fountains, etc.
- Plant shade trees and add other sustainable features such as rain gardens to help mitigate stormwater issues.
- Add wi-fi and electrical access at all city parks.
- Evaluate different forms of “Smart Park” technology to determine feasibility in Berkley parks.
- Provide accessible routes to all park amenities.

JUSTIFICATION: These actions respond to park maintenance and facility needs, residents’ opinions, and planning fair input. They also respond to future parks and recreation trends, in particular environmental, social, economic, and demographic trends.

ACTION #2: Develop Future Parkland

Work with the Berkley City Council and Planning Commission to develop existing properties into parklands which allow a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities. Specific opportunities include:

- In cooperation with the city of Royal Oak, develop a linear park along the Coolidge corridor starting at Roseland Memorial Park Cemetery and continuing to Beaumont Hospital.
- Evaluate opportunities for pocket park development in underserved areas of the city and in the downtown area, including but not limited to Dorothea & Coolidge, Griffith & 12 Mile, Robina & 12 Mile, and Royal & 12 Mile.
- Work with the City Council and the Planning Commission to ensure parkland needs are considered in the review of new developments and to encourage or develop regulations for developers to set aside land for park facilities.

JUSTIFICATION: These actions were identified in the Berkley Comprehensive Master Plan, through the comparison with NRPA national standards, and in the community survey and virtual meetings.

ACTION #3: Develop a Continuous Pathway/Trail System

There is a strong need for more trails and walking paths in the City. Priority should be placed on the development of trails connecting the parks to form a continuous park system tying community facilities, schools, neighborhoods, downtown Berkley, and regional recreation facilities together. This includes:

- Development of a community-wide pathway plan, using existing sidewalks and roadways;
- Work with regional trail planners and the County to connect the City's trails/pathways to a regional system along Woodward Avenue;
- Install site amenities including bike racks, benches, trash receptacle, mile markers, and signs along the trails and at destination points; and
- Establish a marketing strategy for the trail system to attract support and sponsors including the development of a trail brochure and a walking club.

JUSTIFICATION: These actions respond to park maintenance and facility needs, residents' opinions, and planning fair input. They also respond to future parks and recreation trends, in particular environmental, social, economic, and demographic trends.

ACTION #4: Maintain and Develop New Partnerships With Local Groups and Organizations

- Facilitate and promote the shared-use of the area's parks and recreation facilities including the school district, Oakland County, and private recreation providers as well as city facilities by community groups.
- Work with Oakland County to investigate new recreation opportunities for Catalpa Oaks Park, including possible new dog park facility.
- Develop relationships with neighboring communities to allow development and shared-use of large, capital intensive projects such as pools, ice arenas, and dog parks.

JUSTIFICATION: These actions respond to park maintenance and facility needs, residents' opinions, and planning fair input. They also respond to future parks and recreation trends, in particular environmental, social, economic, and demographic trends.

ACTION #5: ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING

- The Department must seek and consider a variety of income sources to allow development of a new community center or renovation of the existing facility, including grants, bonds, millages, donations, and public/private partnerships.
- A means of generating operational costs and increasing revenues where possible must become a priority to support the capital improvement projects mentioned above and to maintain the existing and future park facilities to a high quality standard.
- Investigate feasibility of seeking dedicated Parks millage to ensure continued financial stability for the Department.
- Pursuit of grants and sponsorships must be done consistently and aggressively.
- Consider grant writing workshops and training to improve awareness of funding opportunities.
- Be open to opportunities presented by joint public / private funding efforts.
- The Parks & Recreation Department and Advisory Board must advocate and promote the social, economic, and environmental value and benefits of parks and recreation by reaching out to the community and the region.

JUSTIFICATION: These actions respond to park maintenance and facility needs, residents' opinions, and planning fair input. They also respond to future parks and recreation trends, in particular environmental, social, economic, and demographic trends.

Project Schedule

Table 2 lists the individual projects along with the specific tasks the City would like to accomplish, the project goal reference, a cost estimate, and potential funding sources. These projects are not prioritized, and will be implemented as funding and/or resources are available. However, to guide implementation, each project is assigned a time frame for completion.

Short-term (ST) projects are recommended for completion within one to two years, while longterm (LT) projects may take longer to be completed, five years or beyond. Mid-term (MT) falls between the two other categories. Ongoing (OG) items are activities that are not necessarily project-related but instead are part of standard daily practices.

Table 2. Improvement Schedule

Description	Cost Estimate	Funding Source*	Time Frame
All Berkley Parks			
Install recycling and trash receptacles	\$ 5,000 - 10,000	GF, RRF, D	ST
Add trees and/or shade structures	\$ 30,000 - 40,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Add demonstration rain gardens to address stormwater issues	\$ 30,000 - 40,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Address grading, turf condition, drainage, and accessibility issues	\$ 50,000 - 100,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Add benches, bike racks, and drinking fountains	\$ 40,000 - 50,000	GF, RRF, D	ST
Continue to maintain parks and facilities in good working order to ensure the safety and enjoyment of users	-	GF	OG
Community Center			
Perform community outreach and work with stakeholders to establish amenity requirements for a new community center.	-	-	ST
Based on results of community outreach, develop funding plan and prepare bond proposal for community consideration	-	-	MT
Community Center Park			
Add exercise stations along trails	\$ 10,000 - 20,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Add small picnic shelter	\$ 20,000 - 30,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Upgrade play structure with universally accessible equipment	\$ 90,000 - 140,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Add permanent restroom	\$ 100,000 - 150,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Regrade and address drainage issues at former ice arena site	\$ 40,000 - 50,000	GF, RRF	ST
Add storage facility	\$ 50,000 - 60,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Add lighting for Field #1 and upgrade lighting at Fields #2 & 3	\$ 30,000 - 40,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Reconfigure/add parking	\$100,000 - 120,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT
Merchants / Oxford Park			
Complete development project including construction of permanent restrooms, play structures, pathways, and splash pad	\$ 785,548	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Address drainage & grading issues at open fields to allow use as practice facility for Berkley Steelers and other groups	\$ 40,000 - 50,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Kiwanis Tot Lot			
Upgrade playground equipment	\$ 90,000 - 140,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Add permanent restrooms	\$ 170,000 - 200,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Add shade structures and/or trees	\$ 30,000 - 40,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Add small picnic pavilion	\$ 20,000 - 30,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT

* GF = General Fund, RRF = Recreation Revolving Fund, D = Donations, G = Grants

Description	Cost Estimate	Funding Source*	Time Frame
Jaycee Park			
Restore existing pavilion	\$ 30,000 - 40,000	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Add park lighting	\$ 40,000 - 50,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT
Upgrade existing grill facilities	\$10,000 - 15,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Upgrade playground equipment	\$ 70,000 - 90,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Install permanent bathroom facilities	\$ 100,000 - 120,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT
Friends Park			
Upgrade pathways to meet ADA standards	\$ 20,000 - 30,000	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Resurface tennis courts	\$ 25,000 - 30,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT
Parkland Development			
Work with cemetery representatives and the City of Royal Oak to develop a linear park along the western and southern edges of Roseland Park Cemetery with connections to Beaumont Hospital	\$ 500,000 - 1,000,000	GF, RRF, D, G	LT
Work with City Council and Planning Commission to review development proposals and to encourage / develop regulations for developers to set aside open space and parkland	-	-	OG
Evaluate opportunities for pocket park development in underserved and downtown areas	TBD	GF, RRF, D, G	OG
Continuous Pathway & Trail System Development			
Develop a community-wide pathway plan, using existing sidewalks and roadways	TBD	GF, RRF, D, G	ST
Work with regional trail planners and neighboring communities to establish a regional trail authority.	-	-	MT
Work with regional trail planners and Oakland County to connect the city's trails & pathways to a regional system along Woodward Avenue	TBD	GF, RRF, D, G	MT
Install site amenities along existing and proposed bike route locations such as benches, mile markers, bike repair stations, street markings, and route signage	\$ 40,000 - 50,000	GF, D, G	MT
Establish a marketing strategy for the trail system to attract support and sponsors including the further route development, trail brochures & signage, and a walking/bicycling club	TBD	GF, D, G	MT

* GF = General Fund, RRF = Recreation Revolving Fund, D = Donations, G = Grants

Implementation Strategies

In order to accomplish the recommended actions during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current budget provides only a limited amount of funds for park development and improvements. The amount is well short of the projected expenses involved in the project schedule. Therefore, the following strategies are recommended to proceed as planned.

Apply for Federal Funding

At the federal level, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) funds **Transportation Enhancements (TE)** activities for community-based projects that expand travel choices and enhance the transportation experience by improving the cultural, historic, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the transportation infrastructure. To be eligible, a project must fall into one of the TE activities. Activities which may apply to Berkley include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles such as walkways, curb ramps, bike parking, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges and underpasses; and
- Educational programs for pedestrians and bicyclists designed to encourage walking and bicycling by providing potential users with education and safety instruction through classes, pamphlets, and signage.

A minimum 20 percent local match is required for proposed projects and applications are accepted online on an on-going basis.

The **Safe Routes to School** program is a national movement to make it safe, convenient, and fun for children to bicycle and walk to school. When routes are safe, walking or biking to and from school is an easy way to get the regular physical activity children need for a healthy lifestyle. In Michigan, the program is sponsored by the Michigan Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and has gained momentum over the past few years. With the passage of the federal transportation legislation in 2005, Michigan's Safe Routes to School program made schools eligible for transportation enhancement funds, providing for infrastructure improvements and education campaigns. The purpose of the program, as defined in the federal legislation, is to:

- Enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school;
- Make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age; and
- Facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in school areas.

The program provides mini grants for programming and major grants to help communities build sidewalks, crosswalks, and other infrastructure. Up to \$200,000 per school is available for infrastructure projects, and \$8,000 to build programming around the project. Communities must undergo an in-depth planning process prior to submitting an application. Deadlines are ongoing and awarded on a rolling basis. SR2S funding is 100 percent federal; no match is required.

Apply for State Funding

At the state level, the *Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)* and the *Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)* continue to be the primary funding sources for parkland acquisition and development.

The MNRTF provides funding for the purchase and development of parkland for natural resource based preservation and recreation. Goals of the program are to:

- Protect natural resources and provide for their access, public use and enjoyment;
- Provide public access to Michigan's water bodies, particularly the Great Lakes and facilitate their recreation use;
- Meet regional, county and community needs for outdoor recreation opportunities;
- Improve the opportunities for outdoor recreation in urban areas; and
- Stimulate Michigan's economy through recreation related tourism and community revitalization.

Grant proposals must include a local match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum for acquisition projects. For development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$300,000. Applications are due in April and August for acquisition projects and April (only) for development projects.

The LWCF is a federal appropriation to the National Park Service, who distributes funds to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment for development of outdoor recreation facilities. The focus of the program has been on trailway systems and other community recreation needs such as playgrounds, picnic areas, skate parks, ball fields, soccer fields and walking paths. Minimum grant requests are \$30,000 and maximum grant requests are \$500,000. The match percentage must be 50 percent of the total project cost. Applications are accepted throughout the year, but must be in by April 1 to be considered for the following years grant funds.

The *Recreation Passport* grant program offers funding for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Minimum grant requests are \$7,500 and maximum requests are \$150,000. The local match obligation is 25 percent of the total project cost. Application are typically due on April 1st.

Local units of government may use the Forest Stewardship program to develop a management plan for a municipal forest which would include a component targeting outreach to private landowners. A total of \$2,000 may be granted with a 50 percent local match. Applications are due in September. Non-game Wildlife Fund Grants have also been offered in the past to identify, protect, manage, and restore native plant and animal species, natural communities, and other natural features.

Apply for Other Grant Funding

The ***Detroit Edison Tree Planting program*** began as DTE joined the US Department of Energy's voluntary Climate Challenge Program to address greenhouse gas emissions. Cost-share funds are available to municipalities in the Detroit Edison's service area on a competitive basis for tree planting projects. A total of up to \$4,000 may be granted to eligible tree planting projects on public and school property with a 50 percent local match. Applications are typically due in February.

There are also a variety of smaller grant programs available for the establishment of greenways/pathways or greenway-related facilities such as ***Bikes Belong Coalition***. The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Their mission is to put more people on bikes more often. The program funds projects in three categories: Facility, Education and Capacity Building. Requests for funding can be up to \$10,000 for projects such as bike paths, trails, lanes, parking, and safe routes to school. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis.

Access to Recreation is a grant program available for universal access of people of all abilities to a wide variety of recreation opportunities, such as nature viewing and photography areas, hiking trails, scenic outlooks, waterfalls and water activities of all kinds, beaches, fishing and boating, playgrounds, picnic areas, campgrounds, and much more. There are two primary grant programs under this source of funding:

Recreation Access Matching Grant provides up to 50 percent matching funds (up to \$10,000) for the purchase of universally accessible recreation equipment and materials such as all terrain hiking wheelchairs, pool lifts, accessible playground surface, transfer systems, beach access mats, trail surface enhancements, and accessible picnic tables that enhance recreation participation by people with disabilities; and

Accessible by Design Awards is designed to stimulate the development of creative universally designed recreation experiences that invite, welcome, and support the inclusion of people of all abilities. Winning designs demonstrate how going above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act can create greater access and usability for people of all abilities in the community. Winning designs are awarded cash prizes to build the projects up to \$250,000 with 25 percent minimum match.

Increase Support for Parks

Public support for parks and recreation will be crucial in determining the level of services the City will be able to provide in the future. A specific park or project millage over a limited period could be considered in the future for particular projects such as park or trail acquisition, development, or maintenance.

Seek Other Sources of Funding

Berkley Parks & Recreation should continue to search for additional sources of funding. Seeking donations, attracting sponsors, holding fund-raising events and seeking out other revenue sources are methods that should be pursued aggressively to raise funding for park acquisition and development.