City of Highland Park

2027 – 2031 PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

Draft November 6 , 2026

FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

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1 | INTRODUCTION

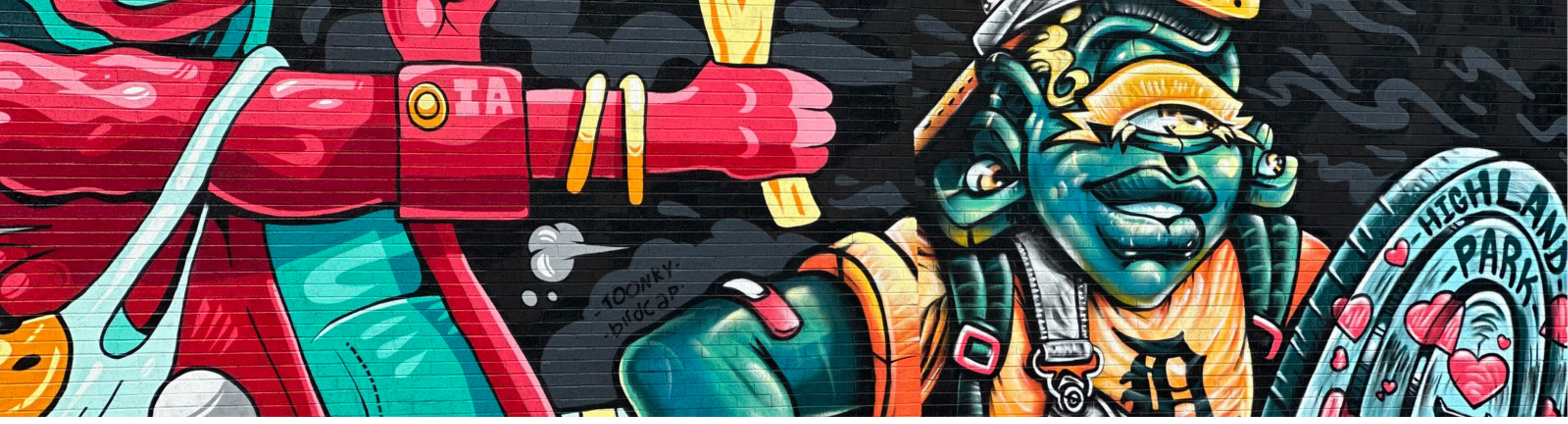
Planning Process

The City of Highland Park coordinated an open, public planning process to create a comprehensive vision for Highland Park parks and recreation programs, satisfying the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan covers the years of 2027 through 2031, though it will be a useful planning tool beyond the five-year mark.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan serves as a strategic tool to guide the development, maintenance, and programming of Highland Park's parks and recreational facilities. It fulfills State of Michigan requirements for recreation planning and positions the City to pursue grant funding for capital improvements.

Beyond regulatory compliance, this plan reflects the City's desire to respond to changing community needs, shifting demographics, and growing interest in sustainability, health, and inclusion. It aims to ensure that every resident has access to safe, welcoming, and well-maintained public spaces and recreation opportunities.



Executive Summary

The Highland Park Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for enhancing the City's parks, recreational amenities, and programming over the next five years. This plan was guided by robust community engagement, in-depth analysis of existing conditions, and a commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and long-term vitality.

Through public surveys, engagement events, and stakeholder meetings, the community identified specific priorities ranging from updated playgrounds and increased shade to improved communications and expanded programming for teens and seniors.

This plan translates community input into actionable goals and strategies, including investments in physical infrastructure, sustainability initiatives, and administrative improvements. Key themes include enhancing accessibility, modernizing outdated amenities, diversifying recreation offerings, and improving how the City maintains, programs, and communicates about its parks and recreation system.

Collaborative Planning Efforts

The City recently adopted its 2026 Master Plan Update. During this process, the community provided the following Community Goals and Priorities for the city:

- Be a distinct place with activity and investment along and just off of Woodward Avenue.
- Maximize the value created by the intersection of the Greenway and Woodward Avenue.
- Capitalize on proximity to downtown Detroit, Midtown, Wayne State, New Center, Ferndale, Royal Oak, Livernois, and all of the region's expressways.
- Expand tax base to minimize fee increases and grow the City's municipal services.
- Be a community of choice for living, working, learning, and playing.
- Be a safe and enjoyable place to walk.

This Plan serves as a coordinated strategy, aligning parks system priorities with housing initiatives, infrastructure investments, and Safe Routes to School corridors to create a connected network of livable neighborhoods. A key implementation partner is the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), which provides essential funding through programs such as the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Recreation Passport grants. These resources can support park acquisition, renovation, trail development, and recreational amenities, allowing the City to leverage external funding to maximize local impact. By prioritizing equitable access, ensuring all residents are within walking distance of quality green space, and integrating green infrastructure elements like stormwater management and tree canopy expansion, Highland Park can enhance environmental resilience while supporting housing growth. Through strong alignment with MDNR programs and broader redevelopment goals, the parks system becomes a powerful catalyst for neighborhood stabilization, increased property values, and long-term community vitality.

2 | COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Highland Park is a community with predominantly residential land uses. The City also includes commercial corridors and industrial sites. Encompassing 2.97 square miles, the City is located within Wayne County, Michigan. Uniquely positioned as an “island city”, Highland Park is almost entirely surrounded by Detroit, except for a small shared border with Hamtramck.

Parks and recreation are critical components of a thriving, healthy community, and this Plan serves as a roadmap to implementation of place-based, recreational improvements.

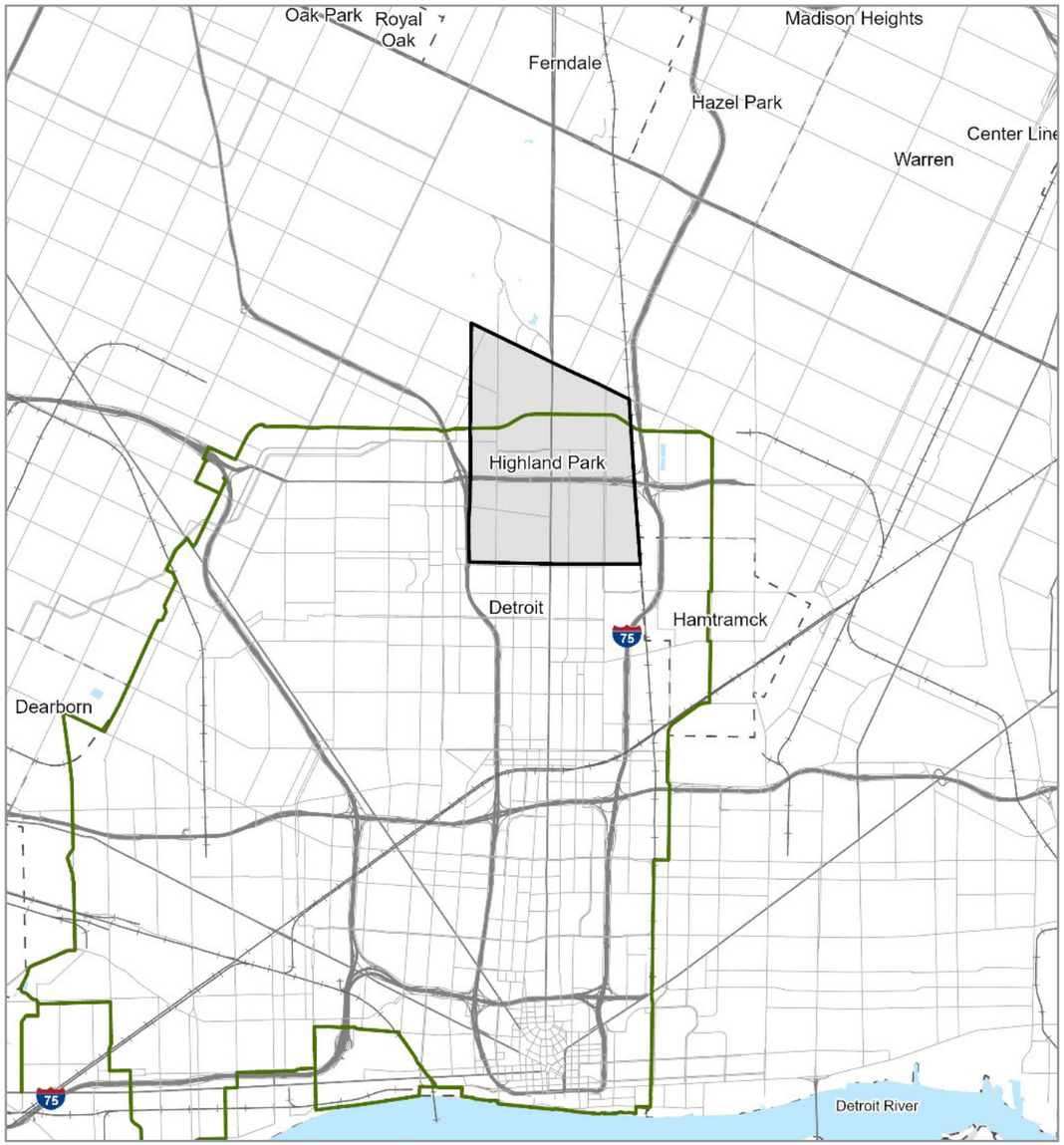
Demographics

The Highland Park Parks and Recreation Master Plan is updated and maintained to determine needs and opportunities that exist for the City’s park and recreational systems. Consideration is given to:

- Estimates of the number of likely users of recreational amenities;
- Projections of what type of programs users will enthusiastically participate in;
- The facilities that are necessary to further community’s parks and recreation-related goals and objectives.

By understanding current conditions and trends, the City can appropriately anticipate and plan for the future needs of the community.

Data within this plan is sourced from the Southeastern Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and the U.S Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, analyzed and synthesized by McKenna.



Map 1: Boundary Map

City of Highland Park, MI

LEGEND

- City of Highland Park
- Joe Louis Greenway

0 3,000 6,000 Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park Parcel Data. McKenna, 2026.

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Population

Population trends are important indicators for parks and recreation planning, as the current state of population growth, stability, or declining population translates into varying recreation needs and facility demands.

Highland Park's current population trends, described Table 1 below, provide the basis for understanding the types of amenities, programming, and facilities to focus investment towards for the next 5+ years.

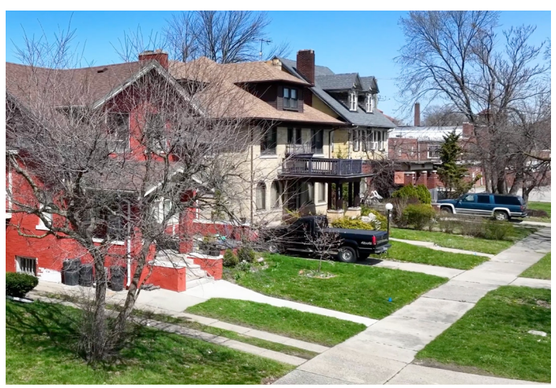
In its early history, Highland Park experienced rapid population growth due to the creation of the Highland Park automobile production plant within the city, but more recently population has been declining. Between 2010 and 2024, the population decreased by about 4,000 people, a more significant decline than Wayne County as a whole.

Table 1: Population

Population Trends	Highland Park	Wayne County	Michigan
2010	12,714	1,870,362	9,952,687
2011	12,288	1,844,186	9,920,621
2012	11,971	1,822,469	9,897,264
2013	11,293	1,804,507	9,886,095
2014	10,951	1,790,078	9,889,024
2015	11,102	1,778,969	9,900,571
2016	10,978	1,767,593	9,909,600
2017	10,955	1,763,822	9,925,568
2018	10,915	1,761,382	9,957,488
2019	10,867	1,757,299	9,965,265
2020	10,818	1,753,059	9,973,907
2021	9,304	1,789,781	10,062,512
2022	9,032	1,781,641	10,057,921
2023	8,798	1,773,767	10,051,595
2024	8,628	1,772,259	10,077,761

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2010-2024Households





Households

As shown below, Highland Park maintains a slightly smaller average household size compared to Wayne County and Michigan. Additionally, the 15% percent decrease between 2010 and 2024 highlights a quicker decrease in average household size compared to the county and state. Considering these demographic shifts in the community, Highland Park has the opportunity to tailor its park infrastructure and amenities to attract both current residents and potential residents.

Table 2: Average Household Size

	2010	2024	%Change
Highland Park	2.45	2.13	-15%
Wayne County	2.67	2.5	-7%
Michigan	2.53	2.42	-5%

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Housing Occupants

A large portion of Highland Park's household occupants are 60 years of age or older. The age breakdown of housing occupants highlights the importance of having access to amenities related to aging in place, programming, and services geared towards older population needs. An aging population requires different types of recreation programming and facilities. It also can require the City to anticipate the need to attract younger families into the community in the future.

Table 3: Household Occupants

Household Occupants	Highland Park	Wayne County	Michigan
With one or more people under 18 years	17.1%	27.5%	27.1%
With one or more people 60 years and over	51.2%	43.1%	43.5%
With one or more people 65 years and over	40.3%	33.1%	32.9%

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Table 4: Median Age

Median Age	42.7	
	Count	%
Total population	8,628	100%
Under 5 years	428	5.0%
5 to 9 years	393	4.6%
10 to 14 years	525	6.1%
15 to 19 years	479	5.6%
20 to 24 years	656	7.6%
25 to 29 years	501	5.8%
30 to 34 years	604	7.0%
35 to 39 years	438	5.1%
40 to 44 years	410	4.8%
45 to 49 years	316	3.7%
50 to 54 years	498	5.8%
55 to 59 years	654	7.6%
60 to 64 years	638	7.4%
65 to 69 years	669	7.8%
70 to 74 years	563	6.5%
75 to 79 years	378	4.4%
80 to 84 years	166	1.9%
85 years and over	312	3.6%

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Age Structure

Highland Park's population composition provides some indication of opportunities for focus: the relatively large population between 20-34 indicates that focus may be placed on attracting and retaining residents with increased amenities, services, and programming that cater to younger individuals and families. The proportion of the population over 60 suggests a need for senior-friendly amenities, social gathering spaces, and senior oriented programming.



Income

As shown below, the median annual household income is $29,309. Median household income declined almost 30% between 2010 and 2024, suggesting a focus on offering affordable programming and services.

Table 5: Median Household Income

Median Household income	2010	$41,370
	2024	$29,309
Percent Change (2010-2024)		-29.20%
Median Family Income (2024)		$56,225.00
Percent Below Poverty level (2024)		40.9%

Source: U.S. Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2010, 2024: 2010 income adjusted for inflation

Disabilities

As seen in the table below, 2,201 people in Highland Park indicated that they experience at least one disability. The Census Bureau defines each disability category as shown below:

- **Ambulatory Difficulty**: Having serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs (DPHY).
- **Cognitive Difficulty**: Due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty remembering, concentrating, or making decisions (DREM).
- **Hearing Difficulty**: Deaf or having serious difficulty hearing (DEAR).
- **Independent Living Difficulty**: Due to a physical, mental, or emotional problem, having difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping (DOUT).
- **Self-care Difficulty**: Having difficulty bathing or dressing (DDRS).
- **Sensory Disability**: Conditions that include blindness, deafness, or severe vision or hearing impairment. Used in the Americans with Disabilities report series.

Table 6: People with Disabilities

Disability Categories	Count	Total Pop %	Disability Pop %
		8,628	2,201
Ambulatory difficulty	1,593	18.5%	72.4%
Independent living difficulty	1,095	12.7%	49.8%
Cognitive difficulty	965	11.2%	43.8%
Vision difficulty	691	8.0%	31.4%
Self-care difficulty	500	5.8%	22.7%
Hearing difficulty	336	3.9%	15.3%

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2024

Of the disabilities listed, much of the population experiences an ambulatory difficulty at 72.4% making up 18.5% of the total population. Next, 49.8% of the population experience an independent living difficulty, 43.8% experience a cognitive disability, 31.4% experience a vision disability, and 22.7% experience difficulties with self-care. By assessing the different abilities of the Highland Park population, the City can better provide tailored services, programs, and opportunities based on the needs of the population.

Further, in recent years, changing trends in childcare show that grandparents are taking a larger role in assisting with childcare needs for parents. As such, parks facilities and playgrounds are more frequently utilized by seniors, older adults, and those of retirement age. For this reason, it is imperative that park design and amenities consider and accommodate this age group as well. These amenities can include more benches and seating areas, pavilions, walking paths, and other items.

Table 7: Vehicle and Mobility Access

Workers 16 years and over	Total	Car, truck, or van-drove alone	Car, truck, or van-carpooled	Public Transportation
Total Count	2,887	1,753	322	322
No vehicle available	18.2%	5.5%	14.4%	82.1%
1 vehicle available	35.6%	33.8%	62.1%	17.9%
2 vehicles available	38.0%	50.4%	18.0%	0.0%
3 or more vehicles available	8.2%	10.4%	5.6%	0.0%

Source: U.S Census ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2024

As shown in the table above, workers who are 16 years or older display the following trends for vehicle and mobility access. Predominately, for those who do not have a vehicle available, public transportation provided a majority of the mobility access. Of those with access to 1 vehicle, a majority carpooled to work (62.1%). The trend shifts to a majority of those with two vehicles drove alone (50.4%). Lastly, of those with access to three or more vehicles, a slight majority drove alone and the total number of people with that access only makes up 8.2% of the population. By assessing vehicle access, the City can better determine the different types of mobility needs of the Highland Park community and connectivity opportunities for the parks and recreation system.



Inclusive Play

For children with and without disabilities, the community playground can facilitate a positive environment for physical activity and inclusion.

The ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), signed into law in 2010, detail enforceable standards for physical accessibility. However, these standards do not include elements designed for children with Down syndrome, sensory disorders, and visual and hearing impairments.

New attention has been focused on inclusive playgrounds and universal design that can serve a diverse population, including children with physical, cognitive, emotional and sensory disabilities.

The following elements are considered essential activities for inclusive play:

- Sensory play
- Music
- Swinging
- Spinning
- Sliding
- Socialization/imaginative
- Safety, comfort and access

Physical Characteristics

Topography

Consistent with neighboring communities in the Metro-Detroit area, Highland Park is primarily flat throughout the community. The elevation of the City of Highland Park is approximately 640 feet. It is not likely that topography will play a role in play equipment or future needs for park amenities or upgrades.

Water Resources / Fish and Wildlife

The City of Highland Park has no major body of water within or running through its boundaries. All drainage throughout the City is served by storm drains and underground pipelines. The City is nearly entirely developed, without natural wooded areas that would be habitable for fish or wildlife populations.

Soils

Soil characteristics play an important role in the ability of land to support various types of equipment, drainage, and park target areas. Specifically, four key characteristics impact the type of use supported by the soil composition.

1. **Bearing capacity:** the ability to support the weight of trails, buildings, and vehicles,
2. **Erodibility/stability:** the susceptibility to withstand erosion hazards,
3. **Drainage:** the ability for soils to retain, drain, and receive water,
4. **Resource value:** the economic value of the land and soil.

Vegetation

The City is nearly built out. Most vegetation has been planted as landscaping.

Climate

In Highland Park, the summers tend to be warm with an average high temperature of 73 degrees Fahrenheit. In the winter, the lowest average temperature is 25 degrees Fahrenheit. This climate is suitable for a variety of outdoor recreational activities, such as biking, running, basketball, ice skating, hockey, etc.

At this point in time, Highland Park is expected to experience shifts in predictable temperatures, precipitation, and access to essential natural resources due to climate change. Continuing to offer cooling center services at the Recreation Center, and incorporating sustainable practices such as tree canopies, greenspaces, green stormwater infrastructure, and permeable surfacing throughout the City and within the parks systems will aid in mitigating the harmful effects of climate change.

Additionally, the City of Highland Park Parks Department has the opportunity to work with local organizations and community centers, such as Highland Park Community Crisis Coalition (HPC3), Soulardarity, Parker Village, and Avalon Village to ensure that the current and future energy-related efforts are consistent and clear across the City .

Existing Land Use Characteristics

The City of Highland Park includes the following land uses:

1. Single-family
2. Multi-family
3. Commercial
4. Office
5. Industrial
6. Public/Semi-public
7. Park/Open Space

As proposed in the Master Plan Amendment, the future land uses include:

» Traditional Neighborhood
» Mixed Residential Neighborhood
» Neighborhood Center
» Downtown
» Employment Center
» Industrial and Research
» Civic
» Parks



Transportation Systems

As a result of the grid pattern, the land was divided into blocks which created neighborhoods for the residents of Highland Park. This neighborhood character is one of the greatest assets of the City.

The City has several major regional thoroughfares that connect Highland Park to the larger Metro-Detroit area. These thoroughfares include:

» Woodward Avenue
» I-75 Highway
» Davison Freeway

Public transportation in the City of Highland Park is serviced by the SMART Fixed- Route Bus System.

Notably, Highland Park is in the process of implementing the 2017 Downtown Streets Plan, with the following priority corridors:

» Manchester Parkway
» Victor Street
» Aston Street
» Hamilton Avenue
» Gerald Street
» John R. Street
» Woodward Avenue

Within these priority corridors, the City is focusing on enhancing the safety, accessibility, functionality, and visual character of Highland Park's major transportation and redevelopment corridors. These improvements are intended to support multimodal transportation, strengthen neighborhood and commercial connectivity, encourage economic reinvestment, and create more walkable and vibrant public spaces throughout the city.



Inclusion and Accessibility

Why plan for inclusive parks? It is evident that historically marginalized individuals experience considerable health, environmental, and economic inequalities due to various social factors affecting their well-being. These factors include housing, employment, education, healthcare, access to healthy food, and the availability of safe and environmentally sustainable recreational areas. The quality of these determinants significantly influences people's overall quality of life and life expectancy. Highland Park's Parks and Recreation can play a vital role in creating welcoming and inclusive spaces that promote positive health outcomes physically, socially and mentally and connect people to the City's natural habitats, with an emphasis on reaching vulnerable and historically underserved community members.

It is important to aim to not only provide physical access but also to cultivate a culture of inclusivity that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds and abilities, enabling their active participation in recreational activities. This holistic strategy prioritizes the creation of accessible facilities that accommodate the city's diverse resident base, which includes people with mobility challenges and cognitive disabilities. It encompasses designing pathways suitable for individuals with varying motor skills and offering spaces and activities that promote the development of fine motor skills, ensuring that inclusivity extends to everyone, regardless of their physical capabilities. Additionally, access and inclusion can be reinforced by ensuring that communication within park spaces are clear and effective.

In tandem with these physical considerations, it is important to acknowledge the potential to foster social-emotional development. This means envisioning outdoor environments intentionally designed to encourage emotional expression, support the nurturing of relationships, and facilitate positive social interactions among community members. The emphasis here is on interaction and cooperation, providing opportunities for individuals to connect through outdoor activities while honing essential relationship skills.

Furthermore, development of inclusive, universally designed playgrounds can help to instill self-confidence by helping children interact with others and the environment in a variety of ways. A creatively designed recreation space can also embrace the sensory domain, encompassing the seven senses. By integrating sensory experiences into park design, spaces are created that cater to varying sensory needs, benefiting all visitors, including those with sensory sensitivities. Parks and playgrounds should also thoughtfully consider cognitive development by encouraging features that promote problem-solving, abstract thinking, and experiential learning.





Equity and Inclusion: Foundations for a Vibrant Recreation System

Striving for a universally inclusive recreational space is the goal, but it's essential to start by embracing the fundamental principles of equity and inclusion to cultivate a thriving community.

Equity means recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach doesn't work. Every individual has unique starting points, and it's crucial to create opportunities that cater to their specific needs. Prioritizing equity involves ensuring that all community members have access to the resources necessary for their success, distributing these resources based on individual needs.

Inclusion is about fostering a culture of belonging by actively inviting everyone to contribute and participate. It entails creating environments where people can access facilities and engage in programs that make them feel safe, welcomed, and respected.

When equity and inclusion work hand in hand, the result is a vibrant community. Such a community is committed to creating inclusive environments where every individual feels welcome, safe, and respected.

Expanding Inclusion Across Recreation

Universal design is a key principle that ensures all individuals, regardless of age or ability, can enjoy the parks and recreation facilities in Highland Park. To implement universal design effectively, several strategies should be considered:

Inclusive Play Areas. Creating inclusive play areas in parks by incorporating universally designed playground equipment allows children of all abilities to engage in play together.

Accessible Trails and Pathways. Developing accessible trails and pathways that connect different park amenities allows everyone to explore and enjoy the natural environment. Pathways should ensure that curb cuts are accessible from parking areas and crosswalks.

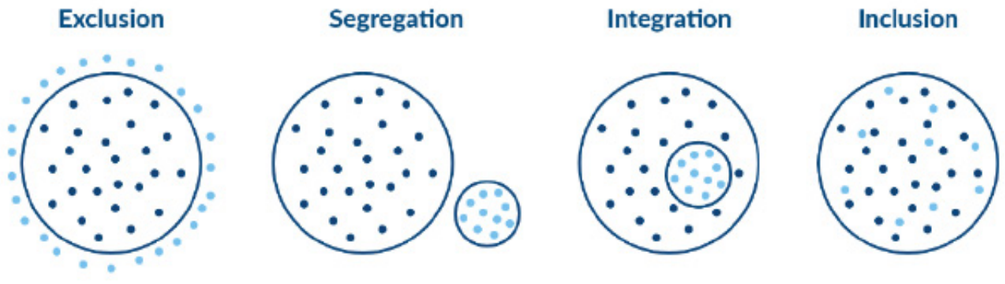
Seating and Rest Areas. Installing seating and rest areas at regular intervals throughout parks better accommodates individuals with varying mobility needs.

Accessible Restrooms. Upgrading or building new restroom facilities with accessible stalls, changing tables, and clear signage indicating their location allows individuals to stay at parks longer and enjoy more amenities.

Universal Signage. Implementing universally designed signage throughout parks by using clear and simple language, large fonts, and high-contrast colors helps allow people to more easily locate facilities.

Shade and Shelter. Providing shade structures and shelters with accessible seating areas allows park visitors to take refuge from the sun or rain.

Adult Fitness Equipment. Incorporating adult fitness equipment creates opportunities to increase health and fitness for a wider range of users, especially older adults.



Safe Routes to School

As described in the Master Plan Update, the City aims to implement Safe Routes to School best practices and increase connectivity throughout Highland Park. This Plan aims to support that vision. Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an international movement and federal program that prioritizes safe, convenient, and fun pathways for children and those with disabilities, to bicycle and walk to and from school. With the emphasis on safety, walking or biking to and from school is an opportunity to encourage regular physical activity for the community. With increased connectivity between the parks system and the city-wide initiative for Safe Routes to School, this Plan outlines the opportunities for the City to further encourage community connection, while utilizing best practices for the safety and welfare of residents, visitors, and stakeholders.

BEST PRACTICES: ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS

To ensure park facilities are enjoyed by users of all ages and abilities, accessible paths and walkways should be primary considerations in park design and capital improvements. MDNR guidelines for accessible paths include:

DIMENSIONS

Walkways within a site: at least 6 feet wide with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%

Multi-Use Trail: at least 8 feet wide, with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%

Regional Trail System: at least 10 feet wide, with 1-foot buffers on either side, with cross-slopes under 2% and running slopes under 5%

MATERIALS AND DESIGN

Unitary surface like concrete, boardwalk or asphalt, crushed aggregate/screenings that have been "stabilized" or natural soils enhanced with soil stabilizers

Transition plates between trail and pedestrian bridges, decks, etc.

Contrasting color treatment of the surface and textured surface treatments such as brushed concrete at intersections or interpretive stations to cue people who have vision impairments that there is something to pay attention to at that spot

Larger (greater than 60 x 60") level areas at all turns and intersections thoughtfully laid out on the site to maximize the experience with minimal difficulty.

3 | INVENTORY OF RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS OVERVIEW

The physical inventory of local facilities consisted of site inspections of all city parks and recreation sites, conducted in the summer of 2026. An inventory of playground equipment and park facilities was recorded and reviewed with regard to location, acreage, quantity, quality, accessibility, and condition. The regional inventory consisted of review and compilation of park facilities available as of summer 2026.

Municipal Facilities

The City owns, operates, and maintains ten (10) parks within the muncipal boundaries of Highland Park. See **Map 2** for an illustration of the locations of these parks.

Table 9 illustrates the existing inventory of the recreational equipment and fields at these facilities. Play areas include various fields for organized games such as in Casey/Monterey Park, Storen Park, and Perchman Park. Hard court areas include basketball courts as seen in Casey/Monterey Park. Play structures are modular equipment while playground equipment includes swing sets, slides, and jungle gyms. Passive areas include picnic areas and footpaths.



Map 2: Parks and Facilities

LEGEND

- Highland Park City Boundary
- Highland Park Parks & Facilities
- Joe Louis Greenway
- Regional Parks & Facilities

1. Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center
2. Ives Park
3. Midland Park
4. Ford Park
5. Storen Park
6. Perchman Park
7. Glendale Block Park
8. Massachusetts Ave Park
9. Martin Luther King Park
10. Casey / Monterey Park

0 500 1,000 Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park Parcel Data.. McKenna, 2026.

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Accessibility Assessment

The McKenna planning team conducted the Accessibility Assessment through site visits in the summer of 2026. At each park, the team reviewed the current condition of the parks and facilities and cross-referenced these conditions with the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design. Below, each park and facility is rated based on the DNR Accessibility Grading System for Parks and Recreation Facilities, as described in the table below.

Table 8: DNR Accessibility Grading System for Parks and Recreation Facilities

Accessibility Grade	Definition
1	None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
2	Some facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
3	Most facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.
5	The entire park was developed using the principles of universal design.



Parks & Facilities

Recreation Center Campus

(includes Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center, 2.58 acres, Ives Park/Reggie McKenzie Field, 4.76 acres, and Midland Park, 0.88 acres)



The Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center is the main facility on the Recreation Center Campus and for the Highland Park parks system. This facility offers a variety of indoor amenities and recreation, and is undergoing several renovations to expand these offerings. Inside of the facility, Highland Park residents and visitors can access amenities that include pool tables, TV sets, exercise equipment, table games, and a basketball court. The facility is available for basketball leagues, meetings, and parties. Additionally, the facility offers open gym hours between 11:00am - 3:00pm and senior open gym hours between 9:30am - 7:00pm.

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a wide-variety of rental and reserve services for its parks. Some of these options include:

- Walkathon
- Run/Marathon
- Carnival/Circus
- Concert/Performance
- Bike Ride/Race
- Religious Ceremony
- Political Event
- Festival
- Filming
- Parade
- Sports/Recreation
- Rally/Demonstration
- Picnic/Family Gathering

Within the Recreation Center Campus lies Ives Park/ Reggie McKenzie Field and Midland Park.

In these spaces, the Recreation Center Campus offers a wide-variety of recreational amenities. North of the recreation center and along Midland St, the Recreation Center Campus offers a newly-installed playground, modern fitness court, and is undergoing active renovations for a several park improvements. To the west of the recreation center lies the Reggie McKenzie Field / Ives Field.

After all planned renovations are complete, the Recreation Center Campus will have the following amenities:

- Little League Field & Backstop
- Playground
- Pickleball Court
- Pavilion & Gathering Spaces
- Sidewalks
- Trees
- Fitness Court (existing)
- Basketball Courts (existing)
- Parking Lot (existing)
- Connectors to the Joe Louis Greenway

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Consistent Signage and Wayfinding**: The campus would benefit from consistent signage and wayfinding amenities to direct visitors and residents to the many offerings of the facility.
- **Expand Facility Offerings**: As the main facility of the Highland Park parks system, the Recreation Center Campus would benefit from expanded facility offerings such as swimming pools, splash pads, activated community gathering spaces, and events such as movies in the park, yoga in the park, and club meetup spaces.

IVES FIELD

PROGRAM

1. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD
2. LITTLE LEAGUE BACKSTOP
3. PLAYGROUND
4. PICKLEBALL COURT
5. PAVILION
6. TAILGATE GAMES
7. SIDEWALKS
8. TREES

A. RECREATION CENTER
B. EXISTING FITNESS PAD
C. EXISTING BASKETBALL COURTS
D. EXISTING PARKING LOT

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES AND GRANTS

a. JOE LOUIS GREENWAY
b. JOE LOUIS GREENWAY CONNECTIONS TO IVES FIELD
c. LOOP TRAIL
d. SOLAR LIGHTING

- WAYNE COUNTY HAS DEDICATED TO DONATE $50,000 TOWARDS NEW PLAYGROUND
- REPRESENTATIVE TLAIB HAS DEDICATED TO DONATE $35,000 TOWARDS NEW PLAYGROUND



HIGHLAND PARK

Casey/Monterey Park











LOCATION:
Intersection of Hamilton Ave and Monterey St

SIZE:
0.64 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
3

Located at the intersection of Hamilton Ave and Monterey St., Casey Park is used for many recreational activities. The park offers a playground, large open space for gatherings, a basketball court with seating, a bike repair station, tables and grilles for gathering, and a fitness park.

AMENITIES:

- Benches (9)
- Play set (1)
- Grilles
- Tables
- Basketball Court (1)
- Lighting
- Fitness equipment
- Park signage (3)

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES

- **Conduct Repairs and Improvements**: The existing park amenities would benefit from more ADA accessible offerings such as ramps to the play set and paved areas to access the picnic tables.
- **Consistent Signage and Wayfinding**: The park includes three (3) signs, which range in font, size, and name for the park. Consistent signage and wayfinding throughout the park would benefit the community, both in the consistent understanding of the park name and the different amenities offered at the park.
- **Incorporate Pervious Surfaces**: The park includes a few water drains located throughout. Incorporating pervious surfaces and activating the green spaces would help mitigate flooding within the park.
- **Expand Passive Areas**: Incorporate more passive recreational amenities such as pavilions and shaded gathering spaces.

Ford Park







LOCATION:
Between Oakland St and Woodward Ave

SIZE:
24.88 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
1

Located between Oakland St and Woodward Ave, Ford Park sits across from the Boys & Girls Club of Southeastern Michigan: Fauver-Martin Club, and neighboring subdivisions. The Joe Louis Greenway runs parallel to the park, along the southern border. Currently, the park is not used actively for park and recreational events and is in need of repairs prior to activation. The park includes bleachers, a football field, a parking lot, and an extensive green space that is overgrown and in need of landscaping.

AMENITIES:

- Large green and open space
- Parking lot (needs repair)
- Football field and bleachers (needs repair, unusable)

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Connect to the JLG**: “I think investment in Ford Park would greatly benefit the safety and well being of our residents. Pairing this timing with the construction of the adjacent greenway could have a compounding effect, especially for the happiness, hope, and economic prosperity for our residents.”- Community Survey Respondent. Ford Park is a prime location to activate for collaborative regional efforts and events along the Joe Louis Greenway.
- **Expand Programming and Events**: Post repairs, Ford Park would be an excellent park to host food truck events, farmer’s markets, sporting events, movies in the park, and other parks and recreational events that would encourage community connections and collaborations.

Glendale Block Park *(Mulford)*



LOCATION:
Along Glendale St and Mulford

SIZE:
1.02 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
2

Located along Glendale St and Mulford, this park serves as a tranquil area for the Mulford Place residents and neighbors to enjoy a shaded, green space to walk and rest.

AMENITIES:

- Benches (4)
- Mini-library (needs repair)
- Lighting
- Bench swing
- Native plants gardens
- Wide sidewalk
- Tree Cover and newly planted trees

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES

- **Consistent Wayfinding and Signage**: Several comments during the public engagement period touched on the need for consistent and accurate park signage throughout the City. Additionally, public engagement input about this park included attendees and community survey respondents noting that they did not know this is a City-owned and maintained park.

Martin Luther King Park











LOCATION:
Along Glendale St and Mulford

SIZE:
1.96 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
2

Located along Lincoln St, Martin Luther King Park has a few historical structures and a large open space.

AMENITIES:

- Benches
- Large open paved space
- Two pyramid structures
- Greenspace/Grass
- Historical structures

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES:

- **Expand Shaded Areas and Tree Cover**: "MLK park is very close to me so I occasionally go there to walk and be in a quiet outdoor space. It is very hot and a shady area or trees to hang a hammock would be nice. I think it has a nice potential for nature areas that I would personally enjoy." – Community Survey Respondent
- **Expand Programming and Events**: Martin Luther King Park would be an excellent space to activate for community gatherings such as movies in the park, food truck events, yoga in the park, club meetups, neighborhood gatherings, etc.
- **Consistent Wayfinding and Signage**: Several comments during the public engagement period touched on the need for consistent and accurate park signage throughout the City. Aligning park signage and wayfinding with other parks in the City would promote the park assets and amenities available to the City's residents and visitors.

> "I love the development I'm seeing surrounding the rec center, greenway, and MLK park."
> – Community Survey Respondent.

Massachusetts Avenue Park









LOCATION:
Intersection of Woodward Ave and Massachusetts St

SIZE:
0.28 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
2

Located at the intersection of Woodward Ave and Massachusetts St, Massachusetts Avenue Park includes a sidewalk, green space, and trees. The park features no recreation facilities and is only used as a passive open space area. The park is located adjacent to a large vacant lot owned by the City, allowing for the possibility of future expansion.

AMENITIES:

- Greenspace
- Sidewalk
- Trash can (1)
- Tree canopy
- Street parking
- Signage (1)

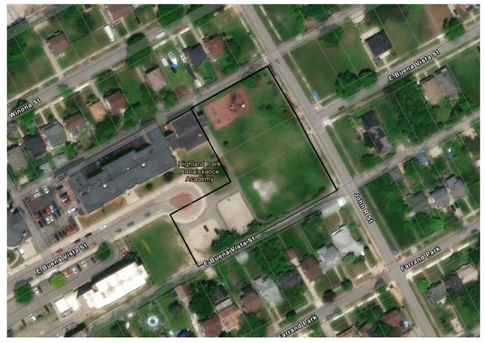
FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES

- **Expand Programming and Events**: Several comments from public engagement expressed an interest in expanded programming and events offered at the City parks. Massachusetts Avenue Park would be an excellent space to offer expanded programs and events such as yoga in the park, community gardens, volunteer events, and park tours.
- **Expand Passive Areas**: Massachusetts Avenue Park would be an excellent space for more passive park amenities such as benches and picnic tables.
- **Connect to City Assets**: Located near City Hall, Massachusetts Avenue Park is a prime location to further connect to city assets and connectors. One such asset is the large open space between the park and City Hall that would be an excellent space to activate with parks and recreation and city-wide events.
- **Consistent Wayfinding and Signage**: Several comments during the public engagement period touched on the need for consistent and accurate park signage throughout the City. Additionally, public engagement input about the parks included attendees and community survey respondents noting that they did not know this is a City-owned and maintained park.

Perchman Park *(aka Edith Perchman Park)*









LOCATION:
Adjacent to the Barber Preparatory Academy

SIZE:
1.8 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
2

Located adjacent to the Barber Preparatory Academy, this park serves the school and neighboring residents. The park features a large playground area as well as a basketball court and an open field area. Although the park is utilized by students at Barber Focus School, it is owned by the City and is open to the general public.

AMENITIES:

- Benches (5)
- Play set (1)
- Swing set (4)
- Basketball court
- Picnic Table (1)

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES

- **Expand Programming and Events**: Located next to the Barber Preparatory Academy, Perchman Park is an excellent location to activate for youth programming and events.
- **Expand Passive Areas**: The park includes a few benches and picnic table. In addition to these existing amenities, this park would benefit from expanded passive areas such as pavilions and gathering spaces.
- **Consistent Wayfinding and Signage**: Several comments during the public engagement period touched on the need for consistent and accurate park signage throughout the City. Aligning park signage and wayfinding with other parks in the City would promote the park assets and amenities available to the City's residents and visitors.

Storen Park









LOCATION:
Between Gerald St and Brush St

SIZE:
2.3 acres

ACCESSIBILITY:
2

Located between Gerald St and Brush St, Storen Park serves the nearby neighborhood and offers a peaceful greenspace for residents, visitors, and nearby business employees. Located within the park is a memorial that is in need of repair.

AMENITIES:

- Benches (4)
- Trees
- Play set (1)
- Swings (6)
- Trash can
- Greenspace
- Signage (2)

FEEDBACK/OPPORTUNITIES

- **Expand Passive Areas**: "Recently was at Storen Park which was nice and clean for the Community Event I attended. However, very few picnic tables or benches to use. Most of the other small neighborhood parks I don't use or have any knowledge of events or programs."- Community Survey Respondent
- **Conduct Repairs and Improvements**: The existing amenities such as the benches, memorial site, and sidewalks would benefit from repairs.
- **Consistent Wayfinding and Signage**: Several comments during the public engagement period touched on the need for consistent and accurate park signage throughout the City. Aligning park signage and wayfinding with other parks in the City would promote the park assets and amenities available to the City's residents and visitors.

Table 9: Existing Parks Inventory

	Recreation Center Campus*	Casey / Monterey Park	Ford Park	Glendale Block Park	Martin Luther King Park (MLK)	Massachusetts Avenue Park	Perchman Park	Storen Park
Parking Spaces	♦	♦	■	♦	♦	♦	♦	♦
Concessions								
Restrooms	x							
Storage	x							
Vending Machines								
Basketball Courts	x	x					x	
In-line Skating Area								
Skate Park								
Tennis Courts								
Track								
Benches		9	n/a	4	15+	0	5	4
Fishing Pier								
Pathway								
Fitness Equipment	x	x						
Pavilion		x					x	x
Picnic Areas								
Stage / Band Shelter / Amphitheater	x							
Spectator Seating								
Ball Diamonds (Baseball/Softball)	x							
Swings				x			x	
Slides	x	x			x			x
Jungle Gym / Climbers								
Lighting								
Multiple Purpose Field								
Pool (Outdoor)								
Sand Volleyball Court								
Soccer								
Metal Play Structure								
Modular Play Environment								
Number of Playgrounds	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Resilient Surface								
Fitness Center								
Gymnasiums								
Ice Skating Rink								
Meeting Rooms	x							

■ Parking Lot
♦ Street Parking

School Facilities

The Highland Park School District includes the following two schools within the City limits:

Barber Preparatory Academy. Barber Preparatory Academy is a public, community school authorized by the Highland Park School District. Community schools (also known as charter schools) are free and open to all students and focused on meeting student needs for success. Community schools are among the top-performing schools in the nation. The Barber Preparatory Academy is managed by ACCEL School , a high-performing network of over 50 charter schools located throughout the United States.

At the Barber Preparatory Academy, the middle school students can participate in a wide variety of athletic programs, all free of charge (with a small fee for uniforms and incidentals):

- Basketball
- Cheer
- Football
- Track & Field
- Volleyball
- Practices held 2–3 days per week at school
- Transportation provided to and from games; parents pick up from Barber

Highland Park High School. Although currently closed, Highland Park School District is committed to reopening Highland Park Community High School. Closed in 2015, this historic school has long been a cornerstone of the Highland Park community. The Highland Park School District is actively working to bring it back as a modern, innovative learning environment that meets the needs of today's students and families.



Highland Park High School



Barber Preparatory Academy

Regional Recreation Resources

Beyond the parklands that are located within the City, a broad range of recreational facilities are located within the larger region that are available the residents of Highland Park. These facilities include Michigan State Parks, Huron-Clinton Metroparks, Wayne County Parks and Detroit City Parks. In addition to these regional park facilities, many other cultural and recreational attractions, such as museums and professional sports venues, are available within the region. These regional facilities offer a variety of activities that are not available within the City but are desired by residents.

Although all of the regional recreational facilities in Southeast Michigan are too numerous to mention, a brief description of the facilities having the most significance to Highland Park, is included below.

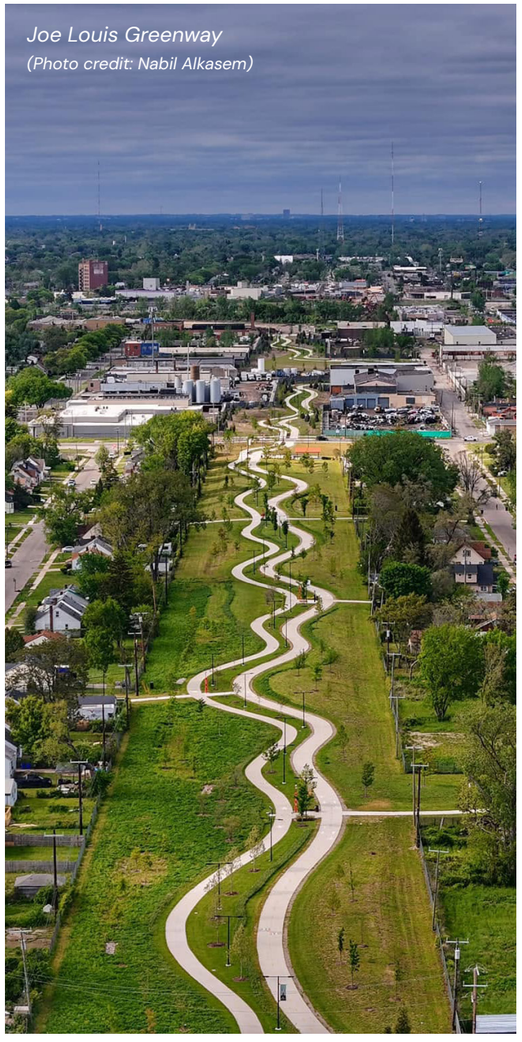
Joe Louis Greenway. The Joe Louis Greenway (JLG) is a planned 27.5-mile biking and walking trail that extends from the Detroit Riverfront to Highland Park, Dearborn, and Hamtramck. This non-motorized trail will include the Dequindre Cut as well as will eventually connect to the planned Iron Belle Trail, a statewide hiking and biking trail, and the Southwest Greenway. In Highland Park, the planned portion is set to run parallel to two major park system locations, the Recreation Center Campus and Ford Park. This proximity poses a significant opportunity for the Highland Park parks and facilities system to be connected to the larger regional and statewide recreational network.

Palmer Park. Directly to the north of Highland Park, Palmer Park is a 281-acre park that includes woodlands, meadows, recreational areas, dog parks, and athletic fields. As one of the thirteen City of Detroit parks, Palmer Park serves the nearby neighborhoods and regional park users.

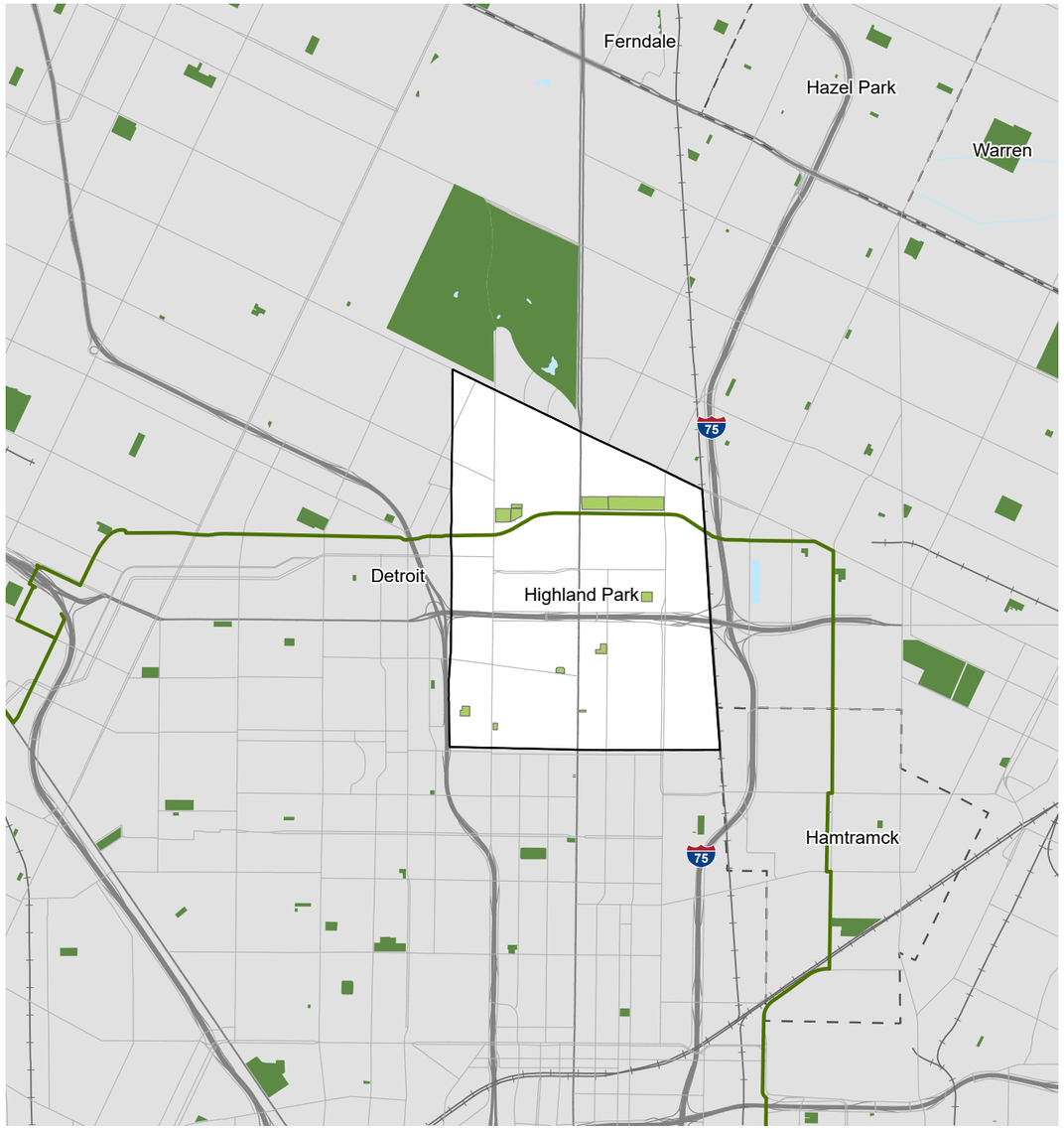
Detroit Zoo. The Detroit Zoo is located approximately 5 miles north of Highland Park along Woodward Avenue in Oakland County. The zoo, which opened in 1928, features hundreds of animals and animal exhibits as well as numerous other special attractions.

Belle Isle Park. Belle Isle is a 983-acre island within the Detroit River and a major recreation attraction within the Detroit Metropolitan region. The park was purchased in the late 1800's and was developed based on a master plan by Frederick Law Olmstead. Owned and operated by the City of Detroit, the park features the Nancy Brown Peace Tower, The Casino, Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Scott Memorial Fountain, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Belle Isle Beach and Water Slide, Kid's Kingdom Playscape, bicycle/walking trails, fishing areas, various sports facilities, and large natural areas.

William G. Milliken State Park & Harbor. The William G. Milliken State Park, located along the Detroit River in Downtown Detroit, is Michigan's first urban state park. This 31-acre natural area in the heart of the City features the Detroit Riverwalk, picnic areas, fishing opportunities, carousel, a 52-slip harbor, and is host to various events throughout the year.



Joe Louis Greenway
(Photo credit: Nabil Alkasem)



Map 3: Regional Parks and Facilities

City of Highland Park, MI

LEGEND

- Highland Park City Boundary
- Highland Park Parks & Facilities
- Joe Louis Greenway
- Regional Parks & Facilities

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park Parcel Data. McKenna, 2026.

MCKENNA



Historical Sites

Ford's Highland Park Ford Plant. The Highland Park Ford Plant is a historic former Ford Motor Company factory located at 91 Manchester Street in Highland Park, Michigan. It was Ford's third factory and the second American Model T production facility, but the factory gained notoriety as the first factory in history to assemble automobiles on a moving assembly line. The Highland Park Ford Plant became a National Historic Landmark in 1978.

There are no known recreational sites or structures that have historical relevance.

Recreation Program

The Highland Park Parks and Recreation Department hosts a variety of recreational activities and programs.

Senior Programming

- Bingo
- Card Games

Youth Programming

- Local youth football use Ives Field for practice

General Programming

- Rent-a-Park
- Adopt-a-Park

4 | ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE AND FUNDING

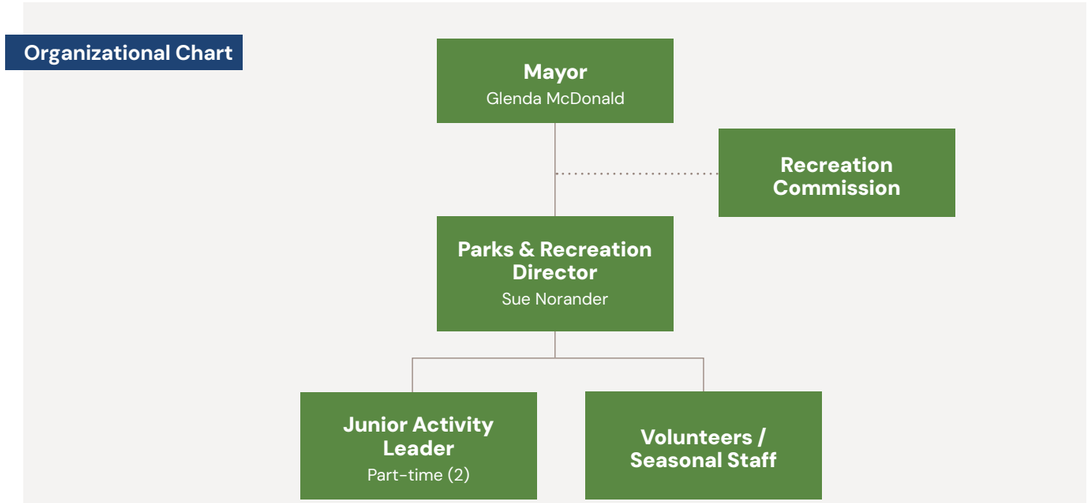
The Charter of the City of Highland Park was adopted by the Charter Commission of the City on April 24, 1968, was approved by the Governor of the State of Michigan on June 11, 1968, in accordance with Act No. 279 of the Public Acts of 1909, as amended, and was adopted by the electors on June 25, 1968. The Charter established the Department of Recreation as a city department and asserts that this department functions as the local recreation commission, overseeing parks, programs, and facilities. Per Section 7-15 Recreation. The Council shall provide for the recreation program of the City including parks, playgrounds, reading rooms, and both open and enclosed spaces for the conduct thereof. It may combine with the school district or other units of government in the ownership and operation of such facilities and programs.

Administrative Structure

Administrative Staff & Roles

- **Parks and Recreation Director**: Oversees the Recreation Department as a whole and is assisted by the Junior Activity Leaders and countless volunteers and seasonal staff.
- **Junior Activity Leader**: Assists the Parks and Recreation Director on the parks and recreational activities and every day functions of the Recreation Department.
- **Volunteers / Seasonal Staff**: The Recreation Department hosts volunteers and seasonal staff members to assist with youth sports events, park clean-ups, and community gathering events.

Organizational Chart





Parks and Recreation Funding

Annual Budget

Funding for parks and recreation activities in the City of Highland Park is generally supported by the City's General Fund, user fees, and grants. A budget summary is presented in the table below.

Table 10: Highland Park Budget

Department: 751 PARKS AND RECREATION	2023-2024	2024-2025			2025-2026
	Activity	Original Budget	Amended Budget	Activity	Mayor Proposed
101-751-702.000 Salaries	$59,050.93	$82,309	$82,309	$33,607.48	$66,000
101-751-706.000 Overtime	–	$200	$200	–	–
101-751-709.010 Pension-Employer Match	$ 2,042.12	$1,926	$1,926	$1,522.42	$3,600
101-751-711.000 Employer FICA & Mcare	$4,319.57	$4,015	$4,015	$2,451.40	$4,550
101-751-717.740 Hosp- Blue Care Network- Active Emp	$ 5,988.68	$6,500	$6,500	$3,706.18	$7,000
101-751-725.000 Worker's Compensation	$ 451.14	$600	$600	–	$600
101-751-727.000 Office Supplies	$ 633.25	$1,000	$1,000	$58.88	$905
101-751-728.000 Forms & Printing	–	$ 300	$300	–	$300
101-751-730.000 Maintenance Supplies/Exp	$863.27	$2,000	$2,000	$319.11	$2,000
101-751-740.100 General Operations	–	–	–	–	$1,500
101-751-780.000 Equipment / Tools	$4,368.11	$3,000	$3,000	–	$4,000
101-751-801.000 Contractual Services	–	–	–	–	$2,000
101-751-812.000 Special Clean-Up	–	–	–	–	$200
101-751-812.100 Program Expenses	$5,533.78	$9,000	$9,000	$2,084.15	$9,000
101-751-863.000 Travel\Training\Meet \Seminars	–	$350	$350	–	$350
101-751-863.010 Prof. Dues And Membership	–	$300	$300	–	$795
101-751-984.000 Computer Upgrade\Software	–	–	–	–	–

Current and Potential Funding Sources

There are several existing or potential funding sources available for parks and recreation facility improvements. In addition to the City's General Fund, other potential sources of funding for parks and recreation include: a dedicated millage (such as a land acquisition millage), user fees, revenue bonds, donation of land and/or easements, and contractual agreements involving privatization. Following is a brief description of current funding sources and other potential sources the community may consider:

General Fund. The General Fund is the basic operating fund for the City of Highland Park. It is also the traditional source of operating funds for parks and recreation. General Fund revenues are derived from property taxes, state-shared revenues, federal grants, license and permit fees, charges for services, interest on investments, and court fines or forfeitures. Recreation program user fees are usually channeled through the General Fund.

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

User Fees. Fees can be charged by the community to the users of specific recreation facilities or for enrollment in recreation programs. User fees can provide substantial support for park facilities. Other communities throughout Michigan have established user fees for swimming pools, tennis courts, wave pools, use of lighted athletic fields, and use of indoor facilities. User fees are a promising source of funding in the municipality if used selectively for specific facilities and services.

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

- **General Obligation Bonds**: General Obligation Bonds are issued for specific community projects and may not be used for other purposes. These bonds are usually paid off with property tax revenues.
- **Revenue Bonds:** Revenue Bonds are issued for construction of public projects that generate revenues. The bonds are then retired using income generated by the project. For example, revenue bonds could be issued for construction of a concession and restroom facility at one of the community parks.
- **Special Assessment Bonds:** Special Assessment Bonds are issued to pay for projects that benefit a particular segment of the population. For example, recreation improvements that benefit a defined subdivision or neighborhood could be financed using special assessment bonds, in which case the residents who receive the benefit would be assessed.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants

Following is a summary of the three most well-known recreation grant programs now available through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) for communities that have an up-to-date and approved recreation plan on file with the state.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF). Eligible projects include acquisition of land or rights in land for recreational uses or for protection of the land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, including additions to existing parks, forest lands or wildlife areas. Development of public outdoor-recreation facilities is eligible (such as picnic areas, beaches, boating access, fishing and hunting facilities, winter sports areas, playgrounds, ballfields, tennis courts, and trails).Funds are provided through sale of oil and mineral leases on State land. Local contributions equal to at least 25 percent of the project cost are required. There is no minimum or maximum amount for acquisition projects. The minimum allowable grant for development is $15,000 and the maximum is $500,000.

There are three special initiatives approved by the Trust Fund Board of Trustees. Proposals will receive special attention if they:

- Are located within U.S. Census Bureau Metropolitan Statistical Areas;
- Increase environmental education facilities statewide; but particularly in urban areas; and
- Acquire land or develop trail ways that contribute to the development of a statewide trail network.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). Administered eligible projects include community recreation and trailway improvements. These are grants of $10,000 to $250,000 to local units of government for development of facilities such as ballfields, tennis courts, playgrounds, trails and picnic areas; and including support facilities; renovation of existing facilities and retro-fitting of existing facilities to make them accessible to persons with disabilities. Funds are provided through federal appropriations. The grant match basis is 50 percent MDNR/50 percent local.

Recreation Passport. The Recreation Passport program is funded through proceeds of park passes purchased for admission to State Parks in Michigan. Grants of between $7,500 and $75,000 are available to communities mainly for the improvement of existing parks, though new park development is technically eligible

Community Development Block Grant. Revenues obtained through the Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program can be used for a variety of community improvement projects, including development of recreation facilities or land acquisition for new parks or athletic fields in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods that qualify under the program; the City is a sub-recipient of Macomb County's CDBG program.

Donations. Businesses, corporations, private clubs, PTO's (Parent Teacher Organizations/Associations) and community organizations will often contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located. Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment or facilities.

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

Lease Or Contractual Agreements. The City of Highland Park could consider contracts with private entrepreneurs to provide services at city-owned park facilities, such as recreation programming, food service, or facility maintenance. Typically, the privatization of services can increase recreation opportunities available to residents, while minimizing the City's administrative costs.

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

Grant History

When preparing a Parks and Recreation Plan, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requires that information be provided concerning grants that have been received in the past for acquisition or development of recreation facilities. As of October 2026, the City of Highland Park has received the following grant funding:

Table 11: Highland Park Grant History

Funding Source	Year	Project Name	Amount	Project Results
Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)	1992	Ford Fieldhouse Renovations	$112,500.00	Renovated the roof, floor, etc, of the Ernest T. Ford Fieldhouse and maintenance building.
Wayne County	2001	Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center	239,533.84	Renovate recreation center to include a new roof, shower facility, and replace glass throughout the facility.
SPARK Grant (CMF/DNR)	2024	Ernest T. Ford Field and Ives Field Enhancements	$982,700	***(Active Project)*** Renovate and develop the Recreation Center Campus playground, fitness area, and courts along Midland Street and Ives Field.

5 BASIS FOR ACTION PLAN

This Chapter describes the public input received, analysis of existing facilities, and facility benchmark data published by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NPRA). Benchmark data is used to describe average recreation facility provision communities across the country. . These benchmarks are compared to the existing inventory of community-wide and school district recreation facilities to determine potential deficiencies. The results of this analysis are incorporated, in part, into the Action Plan that follows.

Summary of Public Input

The planning process involved public outreach and input to best inform the Plan recommendations.

» Online & In-Person Community Survey
» Community Pop-ups:
  - Michigan Week Parade
  - Senior Bingo
  - Summer Program Open House.
  - Community Vision Forum
» Passive Engagement Opportunities
» Public Comment- 30-Day Period

Online Survey Engagement

From May 28th to July 27th, McKenna launched an online community survey for Highland Park residents to provide feedback on existing park and facilities conditions as well as recommendations for improvements. In total, fifty-seven (57) respondents completed the seventeen (17) question survey. A majority of the respondents live in Highland Park (78.9%), often as a community events and social gatherings attendee (52.9%), senior citizen (32.4%) or parent with children (29.4%).

» Expand resting area offerings at the City parks such as benches and shaded pavilions.
» Maintain sidewalks to fix cracks, uneven pavers, root growth, etc.
» Expand accessible parking offerings at the City parks, where applicable.
» Expand wayfinding and signage throughout the City parks.
» Improve lighting features at the parks.
» Host more community events at each park, such as live music, farmer's markets, community celebrations, yoga in the park, etc.
» Expand educational programs and opportunities.
» Establish recreational clubs for activities such as walking/running clubs.
» Offer more community events and festivals.
» Offer transportation services for seniors and youths.
» Expand green spaces, sidewalks, safety, and security at the City parks.
» Improve the quality of current programs.
» Diversify program offerings to include swimming, bowling, more outings, movies at the Recreation Center, etc.





Michigan Week Parade

McKenna attended Highland Park's annual "Michigan Week Parade" on Saturday May 17, 2026, to collect feedback from community members on existing parks, recreation facilities, and programming opportunities within the city. The parade spanned the length of Hamilton Avenue from Manchester Street south to Monterey Park. At the parade's conclusion, attendees were asked to interact with a "What's Working? What's Not?" and "Share Your Vision" boards at the Parks and Recreation Master Plan vendor table on Hamilton Avenue just outside Monterey Park.



Park Improvements

When asked to provide general feedback on the parks system, community members shared that they would like to see improvements made to existing parks within the city, and green space converted into additional neighborhood parks. Specific feedback included:

- Water attractions like fountains (Example provided: Hart Plaza fountain)
- Development of pocket parks
- Improved and repaired lighting
- Musical toys in parks

Programming Opportunities

Residents expressed a desire for community building through events, clubs, and free activities. Suggestions for recreational programming included:

- Walking and gardening clubs for senior citizens
- Supervised youth activities like horseback riding, drama club, and other creative pursuits
- Activities for families (Example provided: fire pit for smores)
- More midday activities for youth and seniors



Senior Bingo

McKenna attended Highland Park's Senior Bingo event on Wednesday May 27, 2026, to collect feedback from senior community members on existing parks, recreation facilities, and programming opportunities within the City. The event took place at the Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center from 12pm to 3pm. During the event, attendees were asked to interact with a "What's Working? What's Not?" and "Share Your Vision" boards at the Parks and Recreation Master Plan vendor table as well as asked to fill out physical and digital surveys.

When asked to provide general feedback on recreation activities and park infrastructure, community members shared that they would like to see additional community events and activities for all age groups for Highland Park, increased security at parks, park beautification and improvements to park conditions. Specific feedback included:

- Installation of Benches
- Parking lot resurfacing
- Paved walking paths
- Community security volunteers
- Increased lighting
- Repair of current park infrastructure
- Increased community events
- Increased communication regarding events and activities occurring within Highland Park
- Increased public transport
- Improved park access for those with disabilities
- Increased accessibility for all parks

Residents expressed a desire for community building through events, clubs, and free activities. Suggestions for recreational programming included:

- Walking and gardening clubs for senior citizens
- Activities for families
- Volunteer events
- Senior oriented events
- After school programs for youth
- Farmers markets
- Events for those with disabilities

Summer Program Open House

McKenna attended Highland Park's annual "Summer Program Open House" on Saturday June 13th, 2026, to collect feedback from community members on existing parks, recreation facilities, and programming opportunities within the City. The event took place at the Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center from 12pm to 3pm. During the event, attendees were asked to interact with a "What's Working? What's Not?" and "Share Your Vision" boards at the Parks and Recreation Master Plan vendor table as well as asked to fill out physical and digital surveys.

When asked to provide general feedback on the parks system, community members shared that they would like to see improvements made to existing parks within the city, green space converted into additional neighborhood parks, park beautification and improvements to park conditions. Specific feedback included:

- Water attractions like splash pads
- Creation of dog parks
- A park like the Campus Martius Park in Downtown Detroit
- Improved and repaired lighting
- Leveling of grass
- Paved walking paths
- Securing of park facilities (Fence repair/ improvements)
- Repair of current park infrastructure
- Community events like farmers markets and food trucks
- Installation of shade structures

Residents expressed a desire for community building through events, clubs, and free activities. Suggestions for recreational programming included:

- Walking and gardening clubs for senior citizens
- Activities for families
- Volunteer activities (Example provided: community park cleaning days)
- More midday activities for youth and seniors
- Yoga in the park
- Farmers markets
- Roller-skating events

Community Vision Forum

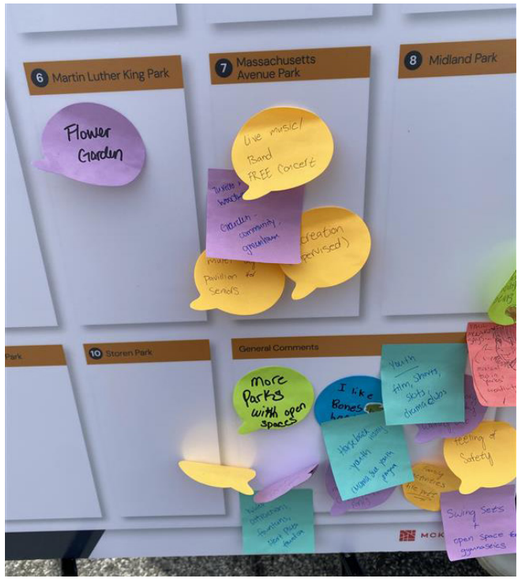
McKenna attended the Highland Park Community Vision Forum 2026 on June 25, 2026. This event showcased the combined efforts across the City, including the following:

- Parks & Recreation Plan engagement,
- Master Plan updates,
- Housing Study findings,
- Joe Louis Greenway update,
- SHP 2.0 Statewide Housing Plan Planning Session, and
- Community priorities & feedback.

During this event, the McKenna Parks and Recreation Plan update staff engaged with Highland Park residents to learn more about their experiences with the park system. Additionally, attendees of the events were informed of the active Community Survey and opportunities to engage with the planning process.

Passive Engagement Boards

Throughout the engagement process, the "What's Working, What's Not?' Board was posted at the Ernest T. Ford Recreation Center to gather community feedback and ideas. During this time, the recreation center visitors left their feedback on individual parks and priorities for each park.

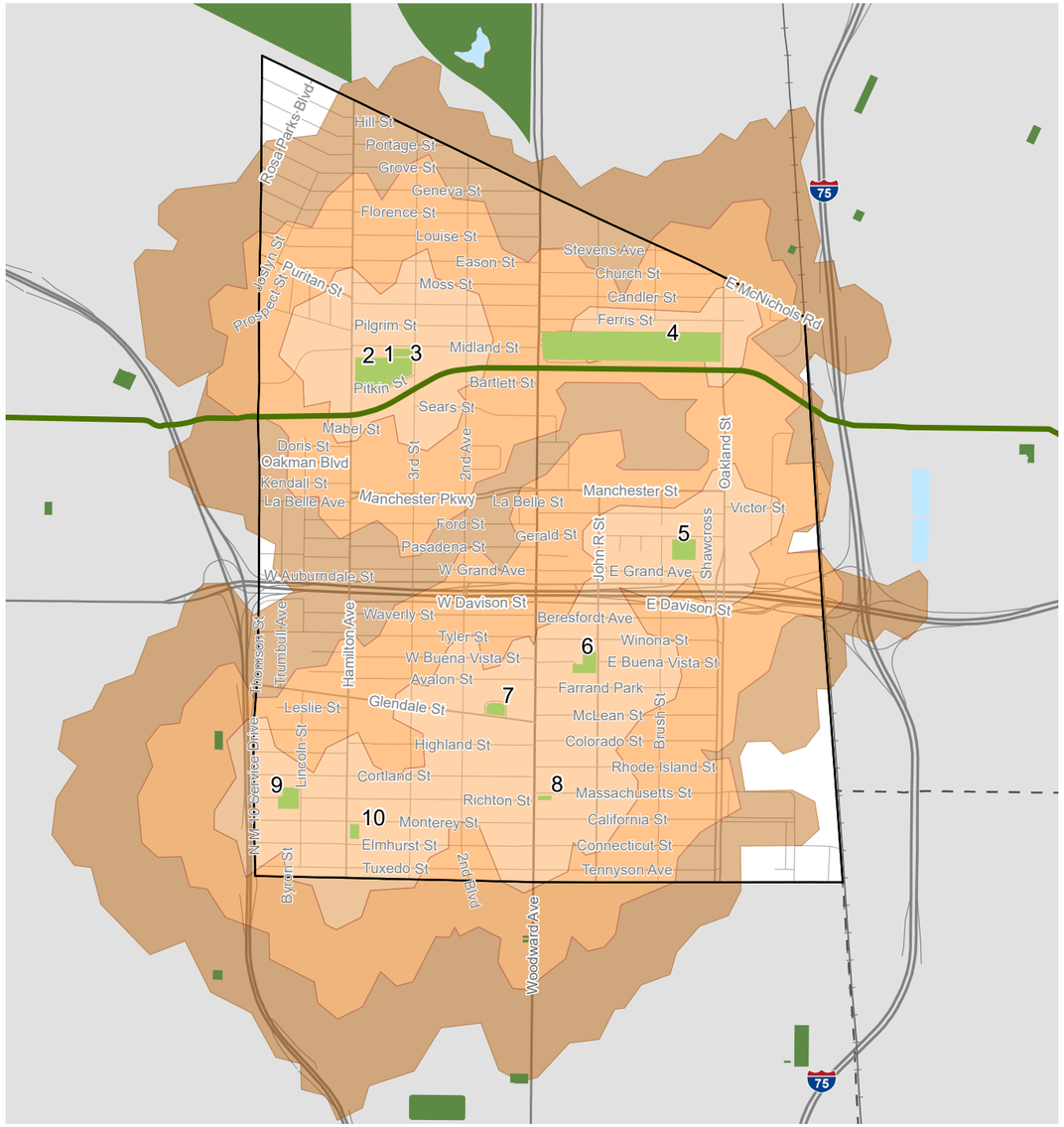


Recreation Opportunities

Service Areas

Map 4 illustrates the typical service area in Highland Park, based on a 5, 10, and 15-minute walkability analysis. The map indicates that the majority of the City is within a 15-minute walk of a park or recreation facility. Please note that this walkability analysis is a general analysis based on distance from parks and does not factor in sidewalk condition, different walking abilities, and other factors that impact walkability. The city is largely underserved by safe, clear, and connected sidewalks and road access to these existing parks and facilities. As a result, the service area map serves as a general guide for this Plan and provides insights into the opportunities to tailor Highland Park infrastructure to the needs of the community while promoting access to existing parks and facilities.





Map 4: Service Area

City of Highland Park, MI

LEGEND

- City Boundary
- Highland Park Parks & Facilities
- Joe Louis Greenway
- Regional Parks and Facilities
- 15-Minute Walk
- 10-Minute Walk
- 5-Minute Walk

1. Ernest T. Ford Recreation center
2. Ives Park
3. Midland Park
4. Ford Park
5. Storen Park
6. Perchman Park
7. Glendate Block Park
8. Massachusetts Ave Park
9. Martin Luther King Park
10. Casey/Monterey Park

0 500 1,000 Feet

Basemap Source: Michigan Center for Geographic Information, v. 17a. Data Source: City of Highland Park Parcel Data. McKenna, 2026.

MCKENNA

Existing Facilities

Table 12 outlines recreation standards recommended by the National Recreation and Park Association and by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. These standards recommend minimum conditions for different recreation facilities based on existing and projected population. According to this analysis, the Highland Park project area generally has areas to improve and opportunities to offer multiple recreational facilities such as sports fields/courts, swimming facilities, ice rink facilities, and other recreation activities.

The raw numbers do not address the quality of existing parks and recreation facilities. Upon closer examination, limitations are apparent because of the maintenance, level of development, and individual size of existing open space available.

Accessibility

The City of Highland Park includes some ADA accessibility features within its parks. Accessible facilities and equipment exist in recently-updated play structures, including in the Recreation Center Campus and Casey/Monterey Park Much has been accomplished regarding accessibility in Highland Park parks recently, and more can be done.

Explored further throughout this Plan is the need to achieve more accessibility to Highland Park's parks in terms of ADA compliance and non-motorized connectivity.

Program

Development of additional programs for teenagers and adults have been identified as a need in the community via the public survey. Throughout the duration of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the City of Highland Park should also continue to provide programs and activities for seniors. Further, the City should continue to examine areas for improvement and expansion of program variety.

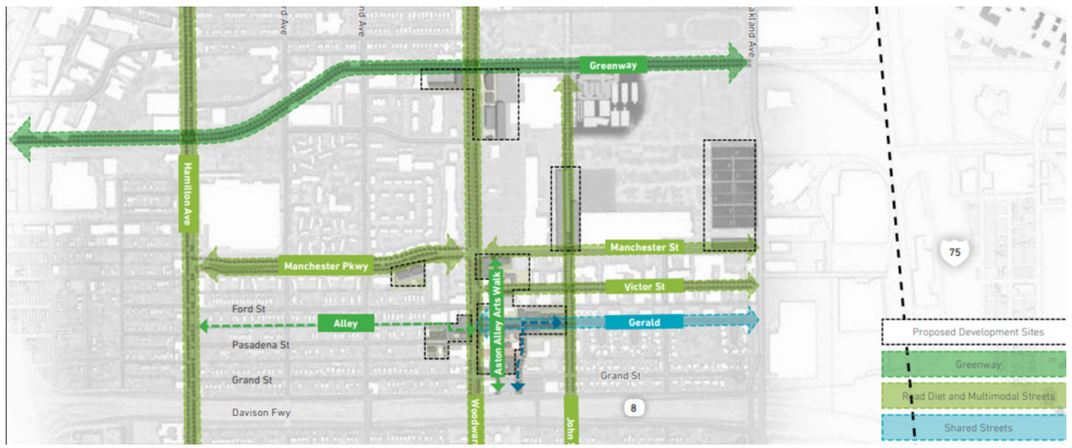
Pedestrian Linkages

Many residents would like to see sidewalks, non-motorized trails, and paved pathways for pedestrian and bike use throughout the City, linking community assets to one another. The City's Master Plan update notes the following corridors for future mobility improvements and non-motorized transportation facilities:

- Manchester Parkway
- Victor Street
- Aston Street
- Hamilton Avenue
- Gerald Street
- John R. Street
- Woodward Avenue

The existing parks in the City are generally located along these corridors. To promote and ease accessibility from one park to another, as well as to surrounding neighborhoods, the City should seek funding for various types of non-motorized connections along major corridors.

Figure 1: 2017 Downtown Streets Plan



ADA Compliance

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that all citizens have access to all facilities provided by the City regardless of physical disability. Each of the City's 10 parks should be updated to ensure ADA accessibility and compliance in terms of:

- Pathway resurfacing
- Sidewalk resurfacing
- Play structure equipment, ramps, and access
- Benches and pavilions
- Signage

Further, the City should ensure that all citizens have access to all recreation programs.

Safety

Safety and the perception of safety are important to increasing the use of existing parks. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a program adopted nationally that increases the perception of safety for a normal user and the perception of risk for a would-be offender. CPTED "is [the] proper design and effective use of the built environment which can lead to a reduction in the incidence and fear of crime and an improvement in the quality of life" (National Crime Prevention Institute, 1986).Four principles are utilized:

1. The placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility (Natural Surveillance);
2. The physical guidance of people coming and going from a space by the judicial placement of entrances, exists, fencing, landscaping and lighting (Natural Access Control);
3. The use of physical attributes that express ownership, such as fences, pavement treatments, art, signage and landscaping (Territorial Reinforcement); and
4. Maintenance.

The City of Highland Park is committed to ensuring that all parks and municipal buildings are safe and welcoming to all visitors and citizens

The Importance of Park Inspections

Parks face unique challenges: playground equipment wears down, pathways crack, lighting systems fail, and landscaping can become hazardous if not properly maintained. Without proper inspections, these issues can lead to accidents, liability risks, and a negative experience for visitors. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) highlights how proactive maintenance not only improves safety but also extends the lifespan of public assets.

- Playground Equipment: Checking for loose bolts, rust, and broken parts.
- Pathways & Trails: Identifying cracks, trip hazards, or erosion.
- Lighting & Security: Ensuring proper visibility and safety at night.
- Landscaping & Green Areas: Managing overgrowth and ensuring proper upkeep.
- Facilities: Inspecting benches, restrooms, and other public amenities.

It is recommended that parks schedule inspections consistently throughout the year, especially for the following reasons:

- Before a special event (e.g., festival, campout) to confirm safety compliance.
- After a reported hazard (e.g., broken equipment, unsafe surfacing, structural issues).
- When preparing for seasonal use (spring opening, fall closure) to ensure facilities meet standards.

Analysis of Existing Facilities

The data in the table in **Table 12** utilizes data from a survey by the National Recreation and Parks Association of recreation agencies throughout the country. The table contains four key pieces of information:

Percent of Agencies that Provide Facilities. This percentage indicates how many of the surveyed agencies have the specific facility in their system.

Median Number of Residents per Facility. This figure tells us approximately how many people each facility serves in communities with similar populations to Highland Park.

Number of Facilities Benchmark. To contextualize Highland Park's situation, we've established a benchmark. This involved dividing Highland Park's total population by the median number of residents served by agencies in similarly-populated communities. This provides a generalized 'average' provision of facilities, and in context can be useful to consider potential opportunities for changes. It's important to note that this is only one measure of facility provision, and must be considered in context of the actual needs and desires of Highland Park residents.

Actual Facilities. The actual number of facilities in Highland Park, as shown in the last column of the table, can be easily compared to the benchmark

Table 12: Outdoor Recreation Facilities Benchmarks – City of Highland Park

Facility Type	Percent of Agencies that Provide Facility	City-Owned and Operated Facilities in Highland Park		Median Number of Residents/Facility	Number of Facilities Benchmark
		Presence	Number		
Playgrounds	97.7%	Yes	4	1,866	4.6
Basketball courts	86.5%	Yes	3	4,928	1.8
Diamond fields	78.2%	Yes	2	2,165	4.0
Dog parks	48.9%	No	0	10,311	0.8
Rectangular fields	69.2%	Yes	2	3,400	2.5
Fitness zones	33.8%	Yes	2	7,421	1.2
Splash pads	31.6%	No	0	12,304	0.7
Community garden	36.8%	No	1	9,857	0.9
Disc golf courses	28.6%	No	0	9,514	0.9
Pickleball courts	34.8%	Yes	1	2,667	3.2
Skateboard parks	25.9%	No	0	11,028	0.8
Multiuse racquet courts	26.4%	No	0	4,375	2.0
Multi-use courts	29.3%	No	0	5,323	1.6
Driving range stations	10.5%	No	0	6,978	1.2
18-Hole Golf Courses	7.5%	No	0	11,904	0.7
9-Hole Golf Courses	4.5%	No	0	11,790	0.7
Overlay fields	14.3%	No	0	8,570	1.0
Ice rinks	19.6%	No	0	8,894	1.0
Racquetball/Handball/ Squash Courts	2.5%	No	0	14,000	0.6

6 | ACTION PLAN

This Chapter of the plan is the culmination of a comprehensive planning effort that began with the thorough analysis of the physical and demographic attributes of the community, followed by public engagement, inventory and analysis of existing parks and recreation facilities and an assessment of need. Finally, these needs were analyzed and reviewed by the City with input from the public to articulate goals and objectives and recommended actions.

Goals and Objectives

Parks & Facilities

Goal 1 – *Renovate, improve, and where possible and appropriate, expand existing and future parks and recreation facilities.*

OBJECTIVES:

A. Develop and implement consistent signage within parks and along access roads to raise the level of awareness of park locations and facilities.

B. Implement improvements that ensure parks are safe, inviting, friendly, aesthetically pleasing, and ADA accessible.

C. Prioritize park upgrades, recreation investments, and connection to regional park systems in areas with the greatest gaps in service.

D. Prioritize the activation and maintenance of existing parks throughout the City.

Goal 2 – *Strive to ensure effective and efficient operation and maintenance of public parks and facilities within the City.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Renovate aging playgrounds and park facilities and develop flexible, multi-use spaces that support drop-in recreation, youth activities, older-adult programming, fitness, events, and community gatherings.

B. Maintain a consistent schedule for trash pick-up, facility maintenance, and park upkeep.

C. Align efforts with the 2026 Highland Park Master Plan Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Recommendations.

Programming

Goal 3 – *Deliver affordable, welcoming, and Highland Park centered programs that promote physical activity, mental well-being, social connection, and lifelong recreation.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Expand programming to offer farmer's markets, movie nights, live concerts, and additional community events for each park.
B. Expand programming to incorporate volunteer, part-time, and seasonal job/position opportunities.
C. Expand programming to offer active community events such as yoga in the park, fitness events, tennis and basketball events, and run/walk clubs.

Goal 4 – *Be responsive to the programming needs of the Highland Park community.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Track and publicly report progress through performance measures such as park access, participation, program affordability, facility conditions, tree canopy, maintenance response times, and resident satisfaction.
B. Maintain and broadcast the senior programs currently offered and expand as necessary.
C. Maintain and broadcast the youth-based programs currently offered and expand as necessary
D. Offer educational services/sessions related to parks and recreation for people of different ages, cultures, identities, and abilities.

Administration and Organization

Goal 5 – *Coordinate with other recreation providers and entities in order to provide the community with diverse program and facility opportunities that are cost effective and efficient.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Coordinate with the City of Detroit, Hamtramck, and Dearborn to host shared events along the Joe Louis Greenway.
B. Partner with local neighborhood organizations to host community events in each park.
C. Update the website and outreach strategies to consistently market and showcase upcoming events for the Highland Park community.

Goal 6 – *Establish the funding, staffing, information, partnerships, and governance needed to deliver the master plan over the long term.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Develop a prioritized capital-improvement plan that identifies project costs, phasing, funding sources, and operating costs.
B. Utilize diverse funding options such as grants, sponsorships, foundations, nonprofit partnerships, and developer investments.
C. Track and publicly report progress through performance measures such as park access, participation, program affordability, facility conditions, sustainability measures, and resident satisfaction.
D. Partner with local schools and organizations to offer volunteer and seasonal job opportunities for Highland Park community members.

Accessibility & Inclusivity

Goal 7 – *Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible, and provide non-motorized transportation links to promote a walkable and connected community.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Close gaps in the sidewalk network so residents can safely walk, bicycle, or use mobility devices between neighborhoods, parks, schools, transit, and commercial areas.
B. Acquire and designate land to serve as walking/biking trails and greenspaces for the Highland Park community.
C. Improve non-motorized connectivity to local bus stops.

Goal 8 – *Ensure that every resident, regardless of neighborhood, age, ability, income, or background, has access to safely enjoy high-quality parks and recreation programming.*

OBJECTIVES

A. Prioritize inclusive play structures and accessibility strategies.
B. Ensure that parks and facilities are ADA accessible.
C. Continue to assess walking distance to parks, population density, park acreage, demographics, and facility condition to best gauge the needs of the Highland Park community.

Sustainability & Beautification

Goal 9 – *Use the parks system as essential public infrastructure that reduces heat, flooding, and environmental stress while providing safe places for residents during extreme weather.*

A. Increase tree canopy, shade structures, drinking-water access, cooling features, and heat-resilient materials at parks, playgrounds, and the recreation center.
B. Incorporate green stormwater infrastructure, such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable surfaces, restored floodplains, and detention areas where feasible.
C. Develop emergency-use protocols for recreation facilities and parks, including roles as cooling centers, evacuation-support sites, distribution locations, or community-information hubs.

Goal 10 – *Ensure parks and recreation facilities feel safe, clean, comfortable, and welcoming at all times of day for people of different ages, cultures, identities, and abilities.*

A. Provide appropriate lighting, clear sight lines, wayfinding, visible entrances, active uses, and maintenance standards for each park.
B. Establish consistent maintenance response targets for litter, restroom service, landscaping, and repair requests.
C. Establish community gardens and greenspaces for native plants and butterfly gardens.

Action Program

Table 13 below is a summary of actions that the City and its partners should undertake during the planning period, and beyond. These activities are discrete and consistent with the Goals and Objectives, public input received, and the analysis of the City's parks and recreation needs.

Table 13: Summary of Key Recommendations – City of Highland Park

Focus Area 1 – Parks & Facilities

A. Repair aging play sets, bike repair station, tables, fence, and basketball court at Casey Park.
B. Replace aging playground structures and equipment at all parks with inclusive, ADA compliant equipment, including ramps, multi-age group play sets, and sensory playgrounds.
C. Update and install lighting across all parks to provide an inviting park atmosphere and improve user safety.
D. Renovate and build athletic fields at Ford Park, as shown in the 2030 Master Plan, as well as activate the green space with bioswales, pollinator gardens, or community gardens.
E. Install consistent signage across all parks.
F. Activate Martin Luther King Jr Park with pavilions, community gathering spaces and events, green stormwater infrastructure, and accessible playgrounds. Incorporate the history of the Martin Luther King Jr Park into the activation of the park.
G. Repair all walkways, benches, play sets, and the memorial at Storen Park.
H. Activate Massachusetts Park by adding benches and hosting community events with the local stores, City Hall, and local residents.
I. Renovate Ives Field at the Recreation Center Campus to host sports games and youth sports practice.
J. Investigate potential locations for dog parks within the parks system, such as at Ford Park or the Recreation Center Campus.
K. Repair all sidewalks and walkways that serve the parks system.

Focus Area 2 – Parks & Facilities

A. Establish youth-based programs and events schedule by offering parks tours, youth-based events, and educational programs.
B. Partner with the local and regional youth-based programs in Highland Park to expand youth-based program offerings for mentorship, use of park space, educational opportunities, and volunteer opportunities.
C. Partner with local businesses, vendors, and organizations to host movie nights, block parties, yoga in the park, farmer's markets, and other expand programming.
D. Update the website to showcase the park events, services, and locations of the parks.
E. Expand existing programs such as rent-a-park and adopt-a-park for the Highland Park community to utilize the park space more often.



Focus Area 3 – Administration & Organization

A. Schedule consistent maintenance and inspections for all parks.
B. Expand staff capacity and establish consistent volunteer, seasonal, part-time, and full-time positions for the Parks and Recreation Department.
C. Acquire the lot adjacent to Massachusetts Park to offer a dedicated space for park expansion, community gardens, and events such as yoga in the park, movie nights, and themed gatherings to celebrate Highland Park.

Focus Area 4 – Accessibility & Inclusivity

A. Install ADA-compliant park structures such as ramps and pathways to the playgrounds, ADA-accessible sidewalks, ADA-accessible seating, and ADA-accessible equipment.
B. Incorporate universal design principles in current and future playgrounds and park facilities.
C. Diversify playgrounds to include sensory playgrounds, adaptive play sets, and other remedies that offer a range of accessible play for users of all ages.
D. Expand seating and rest areas in all parks to offer amenities for people of all abilities.

Focus Area 5 – Sustainability & Beautification

A. Increase shade available at all parks by installing shade sails, trees, or pavilions at each park.
B. Build a community garden at Martin Luther King Park.
C. Pursue grants for park beautification and green stormwater infrastructure.
D. Maintain and renovate parks to mitigate flooding.
E. Maintain and expand partnerships with regional sustainability-oriented organizations, such as the Greening of Detroit, to support sustainable park renovations and restorations.
F. Investigate grants and funding for EV charging station installations for parking lots within the parks and recreation system.

Table 14 summarizes proposed improvements that the City may undertake in the next five years. While this period may not be sufficient to accomplish all of the stated goals and objectives, the table prioritizes those projects that may be achievable within the next five years.

Table 14: Proposed Improvements

Observation	Proposed Improvements
Recreation Center Campus	
» The Campus is currently under renovation at the time of this plan. » Inconsistent signage, wayfinding, and references to the Recreation Center Campus that includes Midland Park and Ives Field. » Limited space for parking and access to the existing basketball courts. » Grass and landscaping maintenance needed near the basketball courts and play set that is no longer in use.	1. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 2. Expand facility offerings to include activated community gathering spaces, events, and youth programs. 3. Maintain the ADA-accessible improvements at the new play set, fitness court, and McKenzie Field / Ives Field. 4. Host events to share information about the parks system in Highland Park with the community. 5. Install a parking lot near the basketball courts.
Casey / Monterey Park	
» Uneven sidewalks and ground within the park. » Lack of ADA-accessible infrastructure. » Inconsistent signage that calls the park either Casey Park or Monterey Park. » Repairs needed for basketball court. » Fence repairs needed.	1. Install ADA-accessible infrastructure such as ramps to the play sets and paved areas to access the picnic tables. 2. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 3. Repair fence along park perimeter. 4. Repair sidewalks and uneven ground within the park to improve park user safety.
Ford Park	
» Ford Park is not currently activated as a park at the time of this plan. » Lack of signage indicating that this park is a public park.	1. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 2. Install infrastructure and develop partnerships that connect to the Joe Louis Greenway. 3. Align renovations with the 2026 Master Plan proposed renovations and concept plans. 4. Install sufficient lighting to improve safety for park users.
Glendale Block Park	
» Lack of signage indicating that this park is a public park. » Trees were recently planted at this park.	1. Install appropriate infrastructure to host events. 2. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 3. Install ADA-accessible passive recreation amenities for the benches. 4. Expand passive recreation amenities to include picnic tables.
Martin Luther King Jr Park	
» Lack of shade. » Lack of ADA-accessible playgrounds and passive areas. » Lack of signage. » Lack of lighting for the park. » Overgrown green space that could act as flooding mitigation.	1. Install appropriate infrastructure to host events. 2. Install sufficient lighting to improve safety for park users. 3. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 4. Expand shaded areas and tree cover. 5. Renovate green space and beautify the park to include green stormwater infrastructure such as bioswales and rain gardens.
Massachusetts Avenue Park	
» Lack of signage. » Lack of lighting for the park. » Proximity to community gathering spaces along Woodward and City Hall.	1. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 2. Expand programming and events yoga in the park, community gardens, volunteer events, and park tours. 3. Install sufficient lighting to improve safety for park users. 4. Expand more passive park amenities such as benches and picnic tables. 5. Connect to City assets in proximity to the park such as the large open space between the park and City Hall that would be an excellent space to activate with parks and recreation and city-wide events.
Perchman Park	
» Lack of lighting for the park. » Lack of signage. » Proximity to Barber Preparatory Academy » Proximity to key City assets such as residential, commercial corridors, and health centers. » Repair basketball court and fencing along the park perimeter. » Activate large open field at this park.	1. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 2. Install sufficient lighting to improve safety for park users. 3. Install ADA-accessible infrastructure such as ramps to the play sets and paved areas to access the picnic tables. 4. Expand youth programming and partner with Barber Preparatory Academy. 5. Host events at the park for youth, seniors, and City residents and seniors. 6. Activate large green space to include walking track, passive and shaded areas, and community gathering spaces.
Storen Park	
» Lack of lighting for the park. » Lack of signage. » Repairs needed for the memorial / gathering space in the park. » Repair benches. » Lack of ADA-accessible access to the play sets.	1. Install ADA-accessible infrastructure such as ramps to the play sets and paved areas to access the picnic tables. 2. Install consistent signage and wayfinding. 3. Install sufficient lighting to improve safety for park users. 4. Renovate the memorial at the park. 5. Install passive recreation facilities such as pavilions and community gathering spaces. 6. Expand placemaking activities for the Highland Park community to paint the wall and offer art-based education opportunities.

7 APPENDIX SUPPORTING DOCS

[TO BE ADDED AFTER PLAN ADOPTION]:

Post-Completion Self-Certification Reports

Early Input/Survey results or workshop minutes

Notice for 30 day public comment

Notice of public hearing

Minutes from public hearing

Minutes from meeting adopting resolution

Transmittal letters to Wayne County and SEMCOG

City of Highland Park
12050 Woodward Avenue
Highland Park MI, 48203

HighlandParkMI.gov