

Draft 3/26/2010

Draft approved by Victor Township Board 6/1/2010 for 45 day comment period.

Comments due by July 16, 2010

Draft Victor Township Park and Recreation Plan 2010-2014

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Introduction and Benefits of Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation is critical to the quality of life and the economic health of Victor Township. Public parks provide places for all to enjoy and interact with nature, friends and family. They provide natural resources like rivers, wetlands and forests as well as human made facilities such as sports fields, picnic areas and trails. They welcome residents and visitors, benefiting both the participants in recreation as well as those businesses who serve them with food, fuel, sporting goods, souvenirs, etc.

Outdoor recreation is a voluntary use of one's free time. It provides for enjoyment and fulfillment and is vital to a healthy and well-balanced life. Public recreation venues are especially valuable as they bring the community together and are available to all, regardless of economic or social status. This link to others and the natural world reminds each of us of the interrelatedness of our world and our dependency on clean air, water and living resources.

Rationale for the Plan

Victor Township's previous plan expired within the past decade. Since that time, the Township has been ineligible to receive state or federal grants to support the acquisition of land for outdoor recreation or the development of facilities for the same purpose. These grants, such as the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), are substantial. The MNRTF was created by Michigan voters in the state constitution in 1984 and solely provides monies for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation lands and facilities. Its money is derived from royalties and lease payments on state owned minerals such as oil, natural gas and hard rock minerals. This takes a one-time funding benefit from a non-renewable resource and provides lasting good from this windfall.

In the 2008-09 funding cycle, the MNRTF provided over \$43 million to the DNR and local units of government to buy land for outdoor recreation and to develop outdoor recreation facilities. Most funds to local units were provided at a rate of 3 state dollars matching every 1 local dollar. A number of local units were able to purchase land with the selling landowner donating 25% of the appraised value, thus providing the local unit share and limiting the out of pocket costs to the local unit for acquisition to the price of the appraisal. However, without a plan, Victor Township is not eligible to access these funding

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sources. To date, Victor Township has received one MNRTF development grant to develop the existing park surrounding the Township Hall.

Finally, by following the DNR prescribed planning process to develop an outdoor recreation plan, the Township openly and transparently involves citizens in decision making and setting the future direction for locally owned public outdoor recreation opportunities. This is done by involving Village residents through various public input opportunities such as public meetings and surveys to determine their outdoor recreation needs. The planning process also takes into account the track record of the Township in maintaining existing outdoor recreation resources and the opportunities already provided by surrounding jurisdictions and the private sector.

Required Plan Content

The DNR requires the following for an approved plan:

- Community Description
- Administrative Structure
- Recreation Inventory
- Resource Inventory
- Description of the Planning Process
- Description of the Public Input Process
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Program

Victor Township's Plan fully meets these requirements.

Community Description

Victor Township is a friendly, mixed rural agricultural and residential community located in southeastern Clinton County. The township is named after the original home of its first white settlers: Victor, New York. Key natural features of the Township include the Looking Glass River, Lake Ovid, the Little South Maple River, Round Lake and many wetlands and forests. There are significant populations of game and non-game wildlife and fish and a wide diversity of plants. Unique species include Bald Eagle, which nest and hunt along the Township's waterways.

Victor Township's population has grown steadily in the last decade from 2,784 in 1990 to 3,275 in 2000. Public school districts serving the Township's residents include St. Johns, Laingsburg, Ovid-Elsie and Bath. Housing stock is generally single family residential and farms. Property values have generally appreciated with state equalized value in the township growing from \$83,417,000 in 2000 to \$158,342,000 in 2009 and taxable value increasing from \$70,133,584 in 2000 to \$118,502,323 in 2009. The tax structure is millage based. The total tax rate (inclusive of all county, school, and township millages) for a Victor Twp principal residence in 2009 was approximately 29 mills (1 mill equals \$1 per \$1000 of taxable value).

Newspapers include the Lansing State Journal, Clinton County News, the Laingsburg Independent, St. Johns Informer and the Weekly. A township newsletter is mailed to residents three times a year. Back issues are available on this site. Rich in history and natural beauty, the Township provides residents and visitors with numerous recreational opportunities including fishing, hunting, camping, boating, horseback

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riding, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, biking, running and walking. At the center of recreation is Sleepy Hollow State Park. The park offers a number of interpretive nature programs and hosts annual events such as Ichabod Crane Days, Winter Sled Dog races and the Lansing Legislator Ironman Race.

Victor is represented at the state level in the 33rd Senate District by Senator Alan Cropsey and in the 85th District by Representative Richard Ball. At the federal level, the Township is represented in the Senate by Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow, and in the House of Representatives 8th Congressional District by Mike Rogers. The Representative on the Clinton County Board of Commissioners is Adam Stacey.

The Township maintains an active, up-to-date website at www.victortwp.org. The site provides information and news on public hearings, bids, meeting schedules, agenda, current events and opportunities to get involved in Township government.

Demographics

Based on the 2000 Census, the population of 3,275 had the following characteristics:

- 97.6% white
- 1.4% black, Asian or Native American
- 1.0% multi-racial

The age structure of the population was 29% of the population children under 18, 6% young adults from 18-24, 31% from 25-44, 27% from 45-64 and 7% from 65 and up. The population is almost exactly 50% male and 50% female. There were 1,139 households with 82% family households (two or more related people). Of the family households, 50% had one or more children under 18 living in the household. The other 18% of households were non-family households (either one person or two or more unrelated persons) with 81% of non-family households a single adult living alone.

Of the population 25 years of age or older, 91.3% graduated from high school and 21.9% have a bachelor's degree or higher. In 1999, the median household income was \$59,375. Of the population aged 5 and older, 15.1% was disabled. Thirteen percent of the population 18 and over was military veterans.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

Administrative Structure

Roles of Commissions/Advisory Boards

Victor Township is a six square mile general law township governed by an elected five-member Township Board. Elected positions include Supervisor, Clerk, Treasurer and two Trustees, all serving four-year terms. The board meets the first Tuesday of every month at 7PM in the Township Hall at 6483 E. Alward Road in Laingsburg, Michigan.

The Supervisor also serves as the township Assessor. Township government also includes positions on boards, committees and commissions, giving residents many opportunities to be directly involved in Township government. Residents are able to currently serve on the following: Planning Commission, Road Committee, Board of Review and as election inspectors.

Department, Authority, Staff Description and Organization Chart

Membership of the Township Board of Trustees:

- Warren Malkin - Supervisor

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- Michelle Wilsey - Clerk
- Don McDonald - Treasurer
- Dan Morris – Trustee
- Duane Ginther – Trustee

The Township Board is responsible for managing the Township Park and works with community volunteers for operation of activities and programming. The township is primarily responsible for the following maintenance and operation activities:

1. Basic lawn maintenance and soccer field turf management including mowing, fertilizing, rolling, seeding, and repair of holes and damaged turf areas.
2. Site planning, planting and maintenance of landscaping.
3. Parking and traffic signage.
4. Maintenance of parking and security lighting.
5. Maintenance and repair of park pavilions.
6. Maintenance and repair of picnic tables, trash receptacles.
7. Maintenance and repair of heated, year-round park restrooms.
8. Trash collection and disposal.
9. Maintenance and repair of playground equipment.
10. Maintenance and repair of water fountain.
11. Maintenance of well and annual water testing.
12. Seasonal placement and removal of bleachers.
13. Facilities reservations for township hall and pavilions.
14. Supervision and support for all projects and capital improvements that involve volunteers.

The township coordinates with volunteers, primarily the AYSO and USSF Soccer organizations, township historical society, and the Boy Scouts, to accomplish the following maintenance and operation activities:

1. Inspection and repair of soccer equipment and fields.
2. Layout, lining and flagging of soccer fields.
3. Scheduling of soccer fields.
4. Stocking of restrooms during peak use.
5. Operation, renovation, cleaning and security of seasonal concession stand.
6. Renovation and maintenance of Historic Buildings.

In 2006, the township established a citizen road committee to evaluate current and future road infrastructure needs and to formulate recommendations to the township for meeting them. Members of the road committee include:

- Dan Eggleston
- Robert Gaca
- Mark McEwan
- John Saller
- Duane Smith
- Danny Valasek

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The road committee has developed plans for both paved and gravel roads and will be instrumental in discussions regarding non-motorized trail and transportation opportunities in the township. In 2009 the township voters passed a 1.5 mil road millage to support core road maintenance needs outlined in the 2006 plan.

Park and Recreation Programming/Programs/Volunteers

Park and recreation programming is provided by citizen volunteers and non-profit organizations to which many belong. Key users of and programmers for township facilities are the AYSO (American Youth Soccer Organization) Region 862 and USSF (United States Soccer Federation) Soccer organizations. These organizations were key partners in the development of soccer fields at Victor Township. These two organizations engage more than 1,000 youngsters aged 4-14 years in recreational and competitive soccer in the spring and fall. In addition, nearly 200 volunteer coaches, managers, board members, and referees participate in these soccer activities. AYSO Region 862 is in the process of developing a Very Important Player (VIP) program in the area. The VIP program is designed for players with physical and/or mental disabilities ages 4 to adult (no upper age limit). The Mission of this program is to provide a quality soccer experience for individuals whose physical or mental disabilities make it difficult for them to successfully participate on a mainstream soccer team. Other soccer groups such as the St. Johns area homeschoolers, the adult men over 40 league, British Soccer Camp, and individuals utilize the fields for practice, drop-in games, and camps. For each youth, multiple adults and siblings watch and enjoy the soccer activities.

The second most predominant use of the township hall and facilities is for community gatherings. The township hosts an annual community picnic each fall. Hundreds of groups and individuals use the facilities year-round for a wide range of activities such as school and family reunions, markets and sales, sanctioned dog-tracking tests, benefits and fundraisers, open houses, weddings and receptions, anniversaries, holiday parties, informal family picnics, team picnics, 4H meetings and demonstrations, basketball, radio-controlled airplane flying, community service projects, etc. It also serves as a popular rendezvous point and base for bicycle riders and runners who utilize the region for these activities. Other than the annual township picnic, these activities are organized and managed solely by community volunteers.

In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, the Township has worked with the Laingsburg Wrestling Club to provide a practice facility for the club sport, due to constrained practice facilities at the Schools. It has also served as a back-up practice facility for competitive cheerleading when school facilities were not available, for soccer when weather is inclement, and as a shelter for teams and families when severe weather causes evacuation of the fields.

Boy Scout Troop 205 is an extensive user of the township hall and grounds for meeting, projects and training. It was used as a gathering and camping site for the 2009 International Boy Scout Festival. The Scouts also support capital improvement and maintenance projects such as renovation and operation of the concession stand, construction of the playground equipment, grading and seeding of the area around the Historic Denison Schoolhouse, construction of a mock outhouse, and painting of the interior of the large hall. An Eagle Scout Project to apply for a State Historical Marker for the Historic 1885 Reed Church has recently been proposed and approved by the Boy Scout Council for completion in 2010.

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Current Funding Sources and Park and Recreation Budget

The Park and Recreation budget comes from the general operating budget of the township. Approximately \$9,400 dollars annually is appropriated for parks & recreation operating expense. For soccer the AYSO and Laingsburg Soccer Club volunteer groups are the key funding source, using funds raised throughout the year and volunteer labor to provide maintenance and repair of soccer equipment with some assistance from the Township. The restroom facilities at the Park are also used during many other community events besides soccer as they adjoin the picnic pavilions and historic buildings such as the Reed Church.

Relationship with Schools, Other Public Agencies and Private Organizations

There are no public school buildings or incorporated cities or villages in Victor Township. Public school districts serving the Township's residents include St. Johns, Laingsburg, Ovid-Elsie and Bath. Nearby cities and villages include Laingsburg (Shiawassee County), Ovid, Bath, Dewitt and St. Johns (all in Clinton County). One key public agency partner to the Township in terms of outdoor recreation opportunity is the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment Recreation Division. They manage Sleepy Hollow State Park in the northern portion of the Township and a public access site on the Looking Glass River off Babcock Road. Also, in 2009 the township signed an agreement with the American Red Cross to designate the township hall facilities and grounds for potential use as an emergency shelter in time of disaster. It is the only facility currently serving the SE region of Clinton County.

Recreation and Resource Inventory

Using the recently completed inventory for the 2008-12 Clinton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan and the senior author's judgment based on his 30-year professional career in park and recreation management and planning through Michigan State University, the following recreation resources are available in Clinton County, which encompasses Victor Township.

State Owned Recreation

The State of Michigan has key facilities and lands that help meet outdoor recreational needs. Six of these areas are located within Clinton County. Each offers slightly different opportunities and activities that contribute to the diversity of the area.

Rose Lake Wildlife Research Center

Located in Bath Township, this area is owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and is comprise of over 3,500 acres of rolling hills, lakes and wetlands. The area is managed for wildlife research and wildlife associated recreation. It offers hunting and other outdoor recreation opportunities for people within several surrounding counties. The area has been developed with many parking areas, 15 miles of marked trails, skeet shooting, rifle ranges, youth group camping and is also a favorite place for non-motorized trail activities. The area is managed primarily for small game, wildlife habitat and is a site for the State's pheasant and wild turkey release programs. Hunting is also permitted in various locations within the area during the appropriate seasons.

Sleepy Hollow State Park

Located in Victor Township, the property is owned by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and encompasses over 2,600 acres of land. The South Maple Drain winds through the site and is the source of the 410 acre Lake Ovid, an impoundment located in the center of the park that is a popular cool water fishery. The park contains a modern campground, a primitive organization campground, three picnic areas, a half-mile beach, 16 miles of non-motorized trails, a boat launch, fishing piers, and hunting during the appropriate seasons. Mountain biking and cross country skiing are also popular uses of the

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various trails. Several playground areas are also located adjacent to the picnic areas providing swings, slides and other equipment.

Babcock Landing

The MDNR also maintains a boat launch within Victor Township. This launch is located on the Looking Glass River and is accessed from Babcock Road. It is a carry-down launching area, which means the site does not have an improved boat launch. It is suitable for car-top boats and canoes exclusively. The launch is open daily from 4:00 AM to 11:00 PM and is used by anglers and boaters

Muskrat Lake Game Area

Olive Township is host to this 219 acre area which includes a public access lake and surrounding uplands managed for wildlife habitat and hunting. A trail system is lacking in the Game Area.

Maple River State Game Area

Located in Lebanon and Essex Townships in Clinton County with additional acreage in Gratiot and Ionia County, this area has an extensive system of forests, wetlands and some widely spaced, generally primitive river access sites. The 11,000 acre area is managed for wildlife habitat, which in turn provides opportunity for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, boating and walking/hiking. Non-motorized trails are generally unimproved and provided to facilitate hunter access. The Maple River traverses the area and provides boating opportunities for canoes and other small boats as well as fishing. The river has a significant floodplain and navigation for powered watercraft is often challenging due to log jams, shallow water, etc.

Portland State Game Area

Located in the very southwest tip of the county, a portion of the Portland State Game Area is found in Eagle Township. It provides opportunities for hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing as well as being used for non-motorized trail activities.

Clinton County Facilities

Clinton County now owns three park areas. These include the 4-H Fairgrounds, Motz County Park in Greenbush Township and an access site to the Maple River in DuPlain Township at French and St. Clair Roads. Motz Park is currently under development with the support of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to provide a swimming beach, bath house and fishing platforms surrounding the park's 15 acre lake. All the facilities are universally accessible.

The County uses the 4-H Fairgrounds as a special use park to hold events such as the Mint Festival. This area is adjacent to the St. Johns City Park and encompasses 38 acres. This area receives the top rating in regards to ADA compliance. There are 7 handicap/van accessible parking spots (4 is minimum according to the ADA guidelines), all paved walks are accessible (curb-cuts, etc.) and all facilities are accessible (36" doors, etc.). The following is a list of the 12 facilities located in the fairgrounds:

Smith Hall	Dairy Barn	Pavilion	Retention Pond	Uncovered arena	Horse Barn
Peck Hall	Swine Barn	Restrooms	Office building	Livestock Barn	Sheep, goat, and llama Barn

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The County has long-range plans for renovations at the 4-H Fairgrounds. Phase one has been completed of which included drive and access extension and repair, a storm water retention pond, Smith Hall improvements, a new swine barn and green space additions. The total cost for these renovations (not including the swine barn and Smith Hall improvements) was \$2,328,000 from the public improvement fund. There will be a total of five more phases of renovation of the Fairgrounds. Phase 2: Site work and south fairgrounds; Phase 3: Site work and covered arena; Phase 4: Site work and west access drive and lot; Phase 5: Site work and campground; Phase 6: Site work and conference center.

Township Facilities

The sixteen townships within Clinton County offer a wide range of recreational opportunities. For example, several townships offer nothing more than a small playground area adjacent to their township hall or no facilities at all, where as three of the townships have staffed parks and recreation departments and planned recreational programs. The following inventory represents established recreational opportunities in the Townships. In that some Townships do not have established facilities, those Townships are not listed. Lebanon Township, where the Village of Maple Rapids is located, is one of those townships with no park or recreation facilities.

Bath Township

Bath Township has several community parks that offer a range of recreational opportunities, as well as a township parks and recreation program, which offers programs and activities for township residents. The township also offers soccer, t-ball and baseball programs and a seasonal event area.

- James Couzens Memorial Park is a two acre park located on Main St. just south of Bath. The park features a pavilion, a war memorial and a historical marker commemorating the Bath School Disaster of 1927.
- Fletcher Robson Nature Park was recently donated to the Township for a natural area. Initial trails and a small parking area have been cleared by township staff and further trails, benches, amenities will continue to be completed in-house by township staff. This park is targeted for passive recreational uses and natural trails.
- Park Lake Waterfront/North Webster Road Park is a 26 acre site that is currently owned by the township and development of this site will depend upon the results of a forthcoming utilization study.
- Upton Road Park is a 19 acre parcel of property that is currently undeveloped. Possible uses are multiple active sports opportunities such as baseball, softball, basketball and football facilities.
- Gary Lane Soccer Complex (Bath Soccer Field) provides the only soccer area within the township. Additional improvements are being made to create a permanent soccer facility. This includes improvements to drainage, construction of a restroom/concession/storage facility, handicap accessible paths, fencing and equipment.
- The *Park Lake Beach* is a one-acre lake front site on Park Lake, which features 300 feet of clean sand beach. Public swimming is permitted from this area.
- *Rickard Park Boat Launch* is another facility on Park Lake that offers a one-acre site with the only public access to the lake for boating. It features a paved boat launch and a small picnic area.
- *Wiwasser Park* is a 1.5 acre park across the street for the Rickard Boat Launch Park with playground equipment, a sand volleyball court, picnic tables, a grill and mature trees.
- *The Michigan Wildlife Habitat Conservancy* (MWHC) is also located in Bath Township on approximately 200 acres south of Drumheller Rd. encompassing Grass Lake and other unique natural features. Their property also houses the Bengal Wildlife Center, an educational center

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offering demonstration projects in wetland preservation and enhancement as well as wildlife habitat development.

Dallas Township

- Fowler Conservation Club is a private 10 acre site with woods and river access. It also has an outdoor pavilion and a building that can be rented for various activities.

DeWitt Township

DeWitt Township offers numerous parks and playgrounds as well as recreational programs for township residents. A staffed position for a parks and recreation director provides the daily operation of the program and guidance to the township parks and recreation commission. Their programs include soccer, t-ball and baseball leagues, as well as indoor basketball and volleyball leagues and open court times. They also offer seasonal activities such as an Easter Egg hunt, bike rodeo and other events.

- Valley Farms Park & Kramer - Ruthruf Area is an 11 acre site that offers a variety of activities. A disc golf course and natural trails through wooded areas, along with soccer fields, basketball courts, sand volleyball courts, t-ball and softball diamonds and a playground with various equipment are found in this park. Additionally, there are horseshoe pits, 2 pavilions, picnic tables and restrooms. Numerous improvements have been made to this site over the past several years, making it a favorite township park.
- DeWitt Community Center is the former township hall. Portions of the building have been demolished, leaving a large recreational room and support rooms which offer indoor recreational opportunities year-round. This is also the location of the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority that provides recreational opportunities to DeWitt Township and the City of DeWitt.
- Stationhouse Playground is the newest Township Park. It was completed in the summer of 2002 and offers a modern piece of playground equipment with slides, climbing areas and more. Swings and picnic tables are also available. The adjacent township hall and the fire station provide parking.
- Richard A. Padgett Natural Area is a 42 acre community park, which is adjacent to a 38 acre parcel of property, which contains the local wastewater treatment plant. The park has authorization from the Water Department to utilize 27.4 acres of their property for recreational purposes, bringing the total park acreage to 69.4 acres. The park is mainly wooded with various types of forests and scrub/shrub areas. Walking/jogging trails, a parking area, restroom facilities and picnic tables are available. Programs to mark the trails are underway.
- Looking Glass Riverfront Park is a 5.2 acre park that provides approximately 930 feet of access to the Looking Glass River. This park provides the only access to a water body within the Township park system. The park offers a canoe launch, observation deck, parking area, picnic tables and several grills.
- Valley-Turner a 3.4 acre neighborhood park/playground which offers a climbing tower and several swings, along with a few picnic tables.
- Coleman Play Lot is a small, 1.3 acre, neighborhood park/playground which was given to the Township for use as a public park by the Granger Waste Management Company. This playground includes a playground structure with slides and climbers, as well as several benches.
- Wood-Webb Park is a 7.6 acres park, which is undeveloped at this time. There is no parking or other facility on site at this time.

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- Granger Meadows Park – As part of a community host agreement for the expansion of the Granger Wood St. Landfill, a park of approximately 76-acres in size has been developed. Facilities include a sledding hill, in-line skating rink, trails, softball/baseball diamond, playground, skating pond, basketball court, restrooms and pavilions.
- An 11 acre parcel acquired from MDOT by the Township is undeveloped at the time. It is bounded by US-127, Round Lake Road, Wood Street and provides more than 400 feet of frontage on the north bank of the Looking Glass River.

Duplain Township

- Friendship Park is located on the Maple River at the dam near Elsie. It has had minimal development and maintenance, although there is considerable potential to make it an attractive water-based recreation site.

Eagle Township

- Lincoln Brick Park, an Eaton County Park, is partially located within Eagle Township.
- Eagle Park owned by the Eagle Township Fair Association, a private entity. It includes pavilions, truck and tractor-pull area and mud bog area as well as softball fields, tennis/basketball courts, playground equipment and a caboose railcar.

Victor Township

- Victor Township has the Township Park which encompasses ten acres of property adjacent to the township hall. The park includes restroom facilities for outdoor recreation, five soccer fields, a large parking lot with basketball courts. The township soccer program is very active and well supported. A detailed analysis follows on pages 15-16.
- The *Grove Bible Church* on Price road is noted it has some recreational facilities including a playground, two soccer fields and two softball/baseball fields.
- *Lake Victoria* in Laingsburg is also mentioned as a recreational site, which is accessible to residents of Lake Victoria by several private beach areas and a ten acre park with a softball/baseball diamond, open play area and a pavilion.
- *Round Lake* is a lake that connects to the Looking Glass River in the southern part of the Township. Access is available at Don's Party Store for a fee, as are watercraft rentals. Fishing is popular on Round Lake on a year-round basis and the store sells bait and tackle.

Watertown Township

- Watertown Township Office Complex - Play area and open field behind Township Hall.
- *Looking Glass Park* is located ½ mile south of the Township Hall and contains three acres of property. It offers a canoe launch and access to the Looking Glass River, as well as baseball/softball diamond, sand volleyball, swings, ½ court basketball, pavilion with power and restrooms.
- *Heritage Park* located in Wacousta encompasses 9.3 acres and offers access to the Looking Glass River via a canoe launch, access to the Township Hall, 1 mile trail, baseball/softball diamonds, sand volleyball, soccer field, and a pavilion with power.
- *Holiday Haven* (private facility) is a Girl Scout Camp and educational center.

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- *Minibeast Zooseum and Educational Center* is a private learning/interpretive center devoted to insects. The center includes hands-on exhibits, resource center, science store and outdoor classroom.

City and Village Recreation

The cities and villages within Clinton County offer diverse recreational opportunities just like the townships. Some have small community parks while others have larger parks and activity programs. Those cities and villages without established facilities are not listed.

Village of Elsie

- Elsie Park has a picnic area and a series of baseball/softball fields.
- Hope Green Park

Village of Fowler

- Fink Park contains softball/baseball diamonds, playground, and a pavilion and restrooms.
- Victor Street Park contains an ice rink and playground.
- Field of Dreams includes playground and play equipment, picnic area and pavilion.

City of St. Johns

The City of St. Johns has an extensive park system, which supplements the local school system and their recreational facilities. Additionally, the community has a strong community recreation program with non-profit organizations such as the St. Johns Youth Athletic Association, the St. Johns Youth Baseball, American Youth Soccer Organization, etc. These organizations make use of the City and School district facilities to provide local recreation programs. In the case of St. Johns Youth Baseball, they operate five fields behind the Bee's Chevrolet dealership that the owner leases to the association. They serve over 500 youth each year with t-ball, softball for girls and baseball for boys and girls and in addition hold various tournaments attracting a wide variety of regional teams.

- Senior Citizen Park contains several basketball and tennis courts as well as a soccer field, picnic shelter, restrooms and grills.
- J.C. Park provides a small neighborhood park with playground equipment and benches.
- Kibbee Street Park is another neighborhood park with playground equipment, several picnic tables and a small basketball court.
- Water Tower Park is a neighborhood park with playground equipment, several picnic tables and a small basketball court.
- Oak Street Park has a small playground with various playground equipment.
- St. Johns Depot is host to city festivals and events and is located downtown.
- St. Johns City Park is the largest of the city parks and contains a multitude of facilities. The Veterans Memorial Swimming Pool is located within the park. There are also 4 tennis courts, a band shell, picnic pavilion, several playgrounds, numerous horseshoe pits, several smaller picnic shelters, benches and picnic tables throughout the park, and several restrooms. There are several paved and unpaved trails as well as a 1/4 mile paved track and roller blade court. As basketball court, three softball diamonds and a disc golf course are also available. A sand volleyball court, sledding hill, seasonal skating rink and warming house round out the facilities.

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- 4-H Fairgrounds are owned by Clinton County and governed by the Clinton County Board of Commissioners, however, the property is actually located within the City of St. Johns. The fairground consists of Smith Hall, which is used for community activities and meetings, several animal barns, restrooms an arena and a seasonal skating rink. Parking for many of the events held at the fair grounds is provided by the use of the St. Johns High School parking lot.

In addition to these existing facilities, the City is currently updating their plan to include provisions for the development of a rails-to-trails program, approximately 1.5 miles of asphalt trail through the city, and possibly a skate park. The rails-to-trails project would complement the County goals of a linear park system offering trail opportunities for county residents.

Village of Maple Rapids

- Three baseball/softball fields, basketball court, playground and picnic pavilion in one park covering multiple city blocks

Village of Ovid

- Gumaer Park - located near the North Elementary School, this park offers woods, exercise trails and a pavilion along with a vehicle parking lot.
- Boyer Park- located at 119 S. Main Road, this park offers picnic tables and benches.
- Ovid Recreation Field

Village of Westphalia

- Droste Memorial Park includes a softball field, horseshoe pits, playground equipment, picnic facilities, restrooms, barbecue area and pavilions, as well as green space and shade trees.

City of DeWitt

The City of DeWitt offers an extensive number and type of recreational opportunities to local residents. There are numerous parks are available, as well as recreation programs, ranging from soccer leagues to baseball leagues and special activities such as summer concerts in the Memorial Park. There are also numerous private recreational facilities within the community, which are mainly parks of recent subdivision developments. The City has made a concerted effort to connect all of the City parks with a bicycle trail and walking paths and has created a very attractive and efficient park system for local residents. There are also numerous private recreation facilities and playgrounds that are part of local subdivisions. These various lots have not been inventoried due to the private ownership of the property.

- McGuire Park is a neighborhood park along the Looking Glass River. This park has recently been redeveloped to include a new play structure, two picnic pavillions, portable restrooms, two zone soccer fields and a pedestrian pathway along the river.
- The City Hall and Police Department site on approximately 4.5 acres of land. The property is currently undeveloped with the exception of the river trail, which leads to River Trail Park. The city hall lot provides parking.
- River Trail Park has undergone a tremendous amount of development since it was first acquired in 1992. The park has been developed into a nine acre park with a play structure, picnic pavilion, restroom facility, parking lot and open spaces, as well as bicycle/walking trails to City Hall and River Side Park.
- DeWitt Sports Park is a 14.5 acre complex that provides a soccer field, two adult-size softball fields, a maintenance/restroom facility, concession stand, a large playground structure and a

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swing set, as well as a large parking area. This facility has extensive use by local residents and is connected to the other City parks by way of the bicycle/walking trail.

- Wilson Street Park is a 0.75 acre parcel, which is an open play space utilized for zone soccer in the spring and fall.
- Riverside Park is a 2.98 acre neighborhood park located along the Looking Glass River. The park has had recent upgrades, including a new picnic pavilion, a new playground structure, a barrier-free playhouse and restroom facilities. Large multi-use open space and parking lot are available as well. This park is linked with a trail to the River Trail Park and is located across the street from Memorial Park.
- Memorial Park is a small one-acre park that contains a gazebo, sidewalks and gardens and serves as a passive recreation area, just south of the downtown business district.
- City Park is currently an undeveloped piece of property containing 0.42 acres of property.
- Percy Carris Park is a 1 acre site with serves as a mini-park and contains various play equipment.
- Elmwood Park is a 0.7 acre site with a sand volleyball court horseshoe pit, picnic tables and a paved pathway.
- Well House #1 is an open space area of 6 acres which is undeveloped area leased to the Millbrook Homeowners Association for a small playground area.

School Facilities

The thirteen public school districts and several private schools that serve Clinton County residents offer various recreational opportunities. Play grounds and sports fields including baseball, football, soccer and running tracks are available at most, if not all of these schools. Although their size and style vary, the primary focus is that they offer recreational activities. The following lists the thirteen public school districts; however, no attempt has been made to inventory each school districts facilities at this time, because seven of these school districts actually have the majority of their school campuses outside of Clinton County.

- Bath
- Carson City - Crystal
- DeWitt
- Fowler
- Fulton
- Grand Ledge
- Haslett
- Laingsburg
- Lansing
- Ovid-Elsie
- Pewamo-Westphalia
- Portland
- St. Johns

School facilities play an important role in the provision of recreational opportunities within the County. They meet the local recreational needs and provide the majority of the local indoor recreational experiences. The availability of school recreational facilities to the general public varies by school district. The school facilities and programming are closely related to the local programming and facilities.

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Private Facilities

There are also numerous private facilities such that have not inventoried in detail since they predominately offer specific recreational opportunities that may not appeal to a broad enough cross section of the county population. They include golf courses, nature centers, shooting and archery clubs and private subdivision trails and pathways.

Regional Facilities

Being located at the northern edge of the Lansing metropolitan area provides a wide range of recreational opportunities the residents of Clinton County. For example Ingham and Eaton Counties have fairly extensive park systems and recreational programs. Ingham County owns seven parks, 2 canoe landings, a boat launch, a soccer complex and a trail system. Eaton County owns five parks totaling 285.5 acres. The cities of East Lansing and Lansing, as well as Haslett, Okemos, Grand Ledge and Holt offer parks and recreational programs, any of which are open to non-residents. Coupled with larger recreational facilities such as Oldsmobile Park, the Michigan State University Campus, Potter Park Zoo and the Woldumar Nature Center, there a many recreational opportunities available.

Detailed Inventory of Community Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities in Victor Township Park

The senior author evaluated the Township owned park and recreation facilities through an on-site inspection of all facilities on March 7, 2010 and through records and information provided by the Township Clerk and Supervisor. All Township park facilities are designed to serve the entire Township and are also used by those from neighboring jurisdictions such as Laingsburg in neighboring Shiawassee County. The park type is local. The detailed inventory of the Township park and recreation facilities uses the DNR's rating scale of accessibility found on page 7 in the Guidelines for Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Green Space Plans:

1=none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

2=some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

3=most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

4=entire park meets accessibility guidelines

5=entire park developed/renovated using principals of universal design

- Township Park. This 10 acre site has 3 soccer fields, parking for more than 100 cars on a paved lot and includes clearly designated parking for handicappers. A portion of the lot is open for basketball with a regulation court and two goals and backboards. There are 3 fully accessible picnic pavilions (no lip to ground, firm ground surrounding, concrete pad, accessible tables) that will in total provide picnic facilities for approximately 175 persons. The entire site is flat and firm with mowed grass and no slopes that exceed 5%. Rest room facilities are found inside the adjacent Township Hall. A second set of restrooms are located on the north side of the adjacent fire station. Both sets of restrooms are fully accessible and heated with running water. The restrooms adjacent to the fire station have direct access from the exterior of the building and are open 24/7. These restrooms serve the needs of those using the park as well as those using the area for recreation such as bicycling, running, walking, cross country skiing, etc. . There is no lip from the parking lot to any portion of the park, allowing mobility impaired individuals to use the full area. Trash receptacles are open and less than 42 inches in height and require no pressure to open, thus are universally accessible. A couple pieces of playground equipment (swings, small 3-

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6 year old age group play structure) are also available. This playground equipment is not in one location, but in two. There is also a small concession stand used at selected times (e.g. during community events, soccer league games). It has a roof, concrete pad on grade with the surrounding turf and sufficiently wide travel way to accommodate a wheel chair under the roof. There are two small historic structures on the property that represent days gone by and they are available for use by appointment/reservation. The park as a whole would be rated a 5 with the exception of the two historic structures.

- Victor Township Hall (which is surrounded on three sides by the Park) provides a meeting place for a wide variety of community events and can also be reserved for family related events (e.g. reunion, wedding reception, etc.). The Township Hall is on grade with no steps up or down and a door jamb that does not preclude access by a mobility impaired individual. Doors are 36” to accommodate a person in a wheelchair. The restrooms at the community center are accessible, but the building is often locked unless opened for a specific event. Parking is available for more than 100cars in a paved lot adjacent to the building with no curb or significant variation in grade. Requisite handicapper parking sites are marked and provide the closest and most direct access to the building. The Township Hall is rated as a 5.

One final observation is that the Township takes considerable pride in excellent maintenance of all park and recreation facilities. The Township Board members live nearby and, along with many volunteers, spend considerable time insuring that the facility is in excellent shape including accurate signage, all structures properly painted, sidewalks were level and in good repair, historic buildings and picnic pavilions in good repair and trees (both established and recently planted) flourishing. A positive relationship with the area Fire and Rescue Authority, its many volunteers and parents and friends of youthful soccer players have been very valuable in creating and maintaining the outstanding condition of the facilities.

DNR Recreation Grant Inventory

As of March 12, 2010 DNR Grants Management reports that Victor Township has not received an acquisition grant and has received one development grant from the Clean Michigan Initiative (which is counted as receiving an MNRTF grant for scoring purposes) in 2000 of \$57,000 per their data base (pers. comm. Linda Hegstrom). Hence, they should be eligible for additional points under the current MNRTF scoring system for acquisitions as a having never received such funding.

Summary

As the inventory and community description illustrate, while Victor Township has a number of other public and private recreation facilities nearby in Clinton County, the Township has a growing population. It has done an excellent job with its existing parkland which is focused on providing active (soccer) and passive (picnic area, playground, historic buildings, quiet and shaded public space) recreation opportunities for community residents and visitors. However, it is lacking non-motorized trails and non-motorized connection to key recreation resources within the Township or beyond in Clinton County.

Planning and Public Input Process

The planning process used is what the DNR, in the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park and Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans, characterizes as the “systems approach to planning”. The needs of the community are assessed by multiple levels of public input and translated into a framework for meeting the physical, spatial and facility requirements to satisfy those needs.

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The process began with a request from the Township Clerk Michelle Wilsey for the senior author to submit a proposal through Michigan State University Extension to update the lapsed Park and Recreation Plan for the Township. Dr. Nelson provided this proposal March 17, 2009 to the Township. The proposal was accepted May 12, 2009 by the Board of Trustees. Following their acceptance, a widely publicized public meeting was held at the Victor Township Hall on July 9, 2009 for the purposes of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis meeting about parks and recreation in Victor Township. This was publicized in the June 2009 Township Newsletter (Volume 7, Issue 2) that was distributed to every household in the Township in June 2009 (Appendix A). Five members of the public attended the meeting and notes from the meeting are found in Appendix B. There was strong support to move forward with the plan and to focus efforts on non-motorized trails and transportation and to improve the existing park surrounding the Township Hall. Based on the results of that meeting and the support of the Township Board of Trustees, the senior author developed a questionnaire that was mailed to each household in Victor Township to assess their recreational needs. Based on the responses to that questionnaire, the input from the public meeting, the recreation inventory of Victor Township and the surrounding Clinton County and the judgment of the authors, a draft plan was submitted to the Township Board on March 12, 2010. At a well publicized regularly scheduled meeting on __TBD__ the Township Board of Trustees reviewed the draft plan and approved distribution of the plan for public input for 45 days (longer than the required minimum public review period of 30 days to insure full input) through appropriate means including having it available at the Township offices and on the Township website (victortownship.org). Following that review, a well publicized public hearing on the plan by the Township Board of Trustees was held ____TBD____ at which time the plan was ____TBD____.

Victor Township Recreation Needs Assessment

The needs assessment is presented using the questionnaire that was distributed to all Township households in late August 2009. Frequencies in the form of percentages are placed directly on the questionnaire, making it easy for the reader to follow the flow of the questionnaire and the information. The questionnaire was developed by the authors partially based on public input received at a well advertised public meeting at the Victor Township Community Center held July 9, 2009.

Of the 1100 households receiving the questionnaire, 351 responded for a 32% response rate. Comparison of the demographic characteristics of respondent households to 2000 Census data suggest that the respondents were representative of the population of Victor Township in demographic terms (e.g. household size, percentage of households with children, etc.). All responses and commentary are in *bold italics*.

**Victor Township
PARK AND RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

The Victor Township Community Outdoor Recreation Plan has expired. To be eligible for grant monies from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and other state and federal grant opportunities, the plan must be updated and follow DNR guidelines. Those grant monies provide up to a 3:1 match, meaning that for every \$1 the Township puts up, the State through the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund provide \$3 for the acquisition of outdoor recreation lands and the development of outdoor recreation facilities.

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This survey is one of the methods to better understand the outdoor recreation needs of Victor Township residents and visitors and how those needs should be met over the next 5 years. It is a follow-up to a public "visioning" meeting held at the Township Hall July 9, 2009. One questionnaire has been provided for each household on Victor Township's mailing list. Please take the 10 minutes necessary to respond and mail the survey back in the postage paid envelop to Dr. Chuck Nelson, 131 Natural Resources, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824. Your response is voluntary and you will remain anonymous. The data will be analyzed by personnel from Michigan State University Extension. We look forward to your response by October 15, 2009. Thank you for taking the time to help guide the outdoor recreation future of Victor Township.

Dr. Chuck Nelson

Department of Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies

Michigan State University and MSU Extension

SURVEY

Victor Township has one township-owned park that includes soccer fields, picnic pavilions, playground equipment, a basketball court, and historic buildings on Alward Road just west of Shepardsville Road, adjacent to the Township Hall.

1. Have one or more household members visited the park in the past 12 months? **49 % Yes**
51% No

1A. If NO, what is the ONE main reason your household doesn't use the park?

No Need/ Desire 18%

No Children 14%

Visit Other Facilities/Recreate Elsewhere 10%

Age 9%

Other 9%

No Interest in Park 8%

Programs/Activities of Interest not Offered/Lack of Interest in Activities Offered 8%

No Time 6%

None/No Reason 5%

Non-Responsive 5%

Distance/Convenience 5%

Unaware of Park 3%

1B What ONE change would most encourage your household to use the Township Park?

None/No Change 35%

Non-Motorized Trails 14%

More Activities Offered 14%

Other 13%

No Children in the Household 9%

Additional/Improved Facilities 8%

More Improved Playground Equipment 7%

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2. If **YES**, please check ALL the activities in which one or more members of your household participated while visiting the park.

11% Picnicking 23% Soccer 7% Walking/Hiking 8% Visit historic bldgs
18% Community gathering 17% Private event/gathering 9% Relaxing/socializing 3% Basketball
1% In-line skating/skateboarding 6% Other

Other Activity listed:

Family Activities 22% Voting 22% Concessions Stand Volunteering 7% Boy/Girl Scouts 7%
Biking 7% Playground 7% Wedding 4% Dog Walking 4%
Other 4% Running 4% Fishing 4% Cemetery 4%
Craft Sale 4%

2A. For your household, what is the ONE most important reason of the above for visiting this park?

Soccer 36%
Other 31%
Community Gathering 10%
Private Event/Gathering 10%
Visit Historical Buildings 5%
Walking/Hiking 4%
Picnic 1%
Relaxing/Socializing 1%
In-line Skating/Skateboarding 1%
Basketball 1%

2B. Please check your rating of the facilities in the park.

Soccer Fields:	34 % Very Good	47% Good	18% OK	1% Poor	0% Very Poor
Pavilions:	39% Very Good	49% Good	12% OK	0% Poor	0% Very Poor
Playground:	23% Very Good	43% Good	28% OK	4% Poor	2% Very Poor
Historic buildings:	36% Very Good	43% Good	28%OK	4%Poor	2%Very Poor

2C. What is the ONE most important reason for any rating of "poor" or "very poor" for the facilities rated above?

Playground Unsafe/Lack of Equipment 50%
Maintenance/Safety 17%
Poor Landscaping 17%
Historical Building Concerns 16%

2D. Please check your rating of the overall level of maintenance at the park.

36% Very Good 54% Good 9% OK 0% Poor 1% Very Poor

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2E. What is the ONE most important reason for your rating?

Clean/Neat/Well Kept/Positive Maintenance 49%

Positive Appearance 26%

Needs Upgrades/Better Maintenance 6%

Good Facilities/Activities Offered 5%

Other 4%

Room For Improvement 4%

Nice Park 2%

Lack of/Unsafe Playground Equipment 2%

Negative Maintenance 2%

2F. What ONE most important improvement would you suggest for the park?

Improve/Expand Playground 22%

Additional Facilities/Activities 13%

Improve Current Facilities 10%

Other 10%

No Change/None 10%

Better Signage/Advertising for Facilities/Activities 7%

More Trees/Shade 6%

Unsure/No Opinion 6%

Trails 4%

Pavilion Expansion/More Picnic Tables 4%

More Space 3%

More Bleachers/Seating 3%

Garden/Flowers/Landscaping 2%

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

3. If the Township were to provide additional outdoor recreation opportunity to residents and visitors, please list the ONE type of outdoor recreation opportunity/facility/activity that your household would most strongly support.

Non-motorized Trails 36%

None/Unsure/No Opinion 14%

Other 11%

Baseball/Softball Facilities 6%

Swimming 4%

Tennis Courts 4%

Bike Lanes/Roads 3%

Boating/Jet Skiing/Lake Access 3%

Archery/Shooting 3%

Volleyball Courts 2%

Outdoor Concerts/Live Music 2%

Dog Park 1%

Kids Activities 1%

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Winter Activities 1%

N/A 1%

Equestrian Trails/Facilities 1%

Motorized Trails 1%

Fishing 1%

Flea Market 1%

Farmers Market 1%

Gardens 1%

Oppose New Development 1%

Playground for Younger Children 1%

4. At the July 9, 2009 Township meeting, the following were suggested as potential new public outdoor recreational opportunities to be provided by the Township. Please check the box that best characterizes your level of support for each potential opportunity.

Opportunity	Strongly Support	Moderately Support	Neutral	Moderately Oppose	Strongly Oppose	No Opinion
Acquire land for public access park, boat launch on Looking Glass River	17%	23%	26%	8%	16%	10%
Cooperate with DNR to develop/manage State-owned access site (Babcock's Landing) on Looking Glass River	19%	32%	25%	6%	9%	9%
Acquire land for conversion of sand/gravel mining operation to public access lake, park, boat launch.	16%	24 %	23%	12%	16%	9%
Acquire additional land for future expansion of township hall park.	10%	25%	32%	9%	16%	8%
Develop additional soccer fields, other athletic fields at Township Hall park	11%	26%	35%	6%	12%	10%
Improve playground at township hall park.	19%	27%	36%	4%	5%	9%
Develop a system of walkable/bikeable trails (on or off the existing road system) in the Township to link populations and assets such as parks, schools, other recreation facilities, etc.	46%	27%	15%	2%	6%	4%
Develop system of equestrian trails linked with Sleepy Hollow State Park.	15%	14%	35%	13%	13%	10%
Acquisition of right of way, land for nature corridor connecting Sleepy Hollow State Park and Looking Glass River.	21%	27%	23%	6%	14%	9%
Further develop historic/cultural assets of Township Hall Park	13%	26%	38%	8%	7%	8%
Develop community gardens at Township Hall Park	15%	23%	38%	9%	9%	6%
Improve recreation signage and way-finding markers throughout the township.	12%	25%	41%	7%	7%	8%

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- *Grandkids use the park frequently all summer.*
- *I'm not in favor of spending large amounts of money on anything that will increase taxes.*
- *We love Sleepy Hollow but feel their activities are weak/lame. Advertisements for Sleepy Hollow events are not conclusive. Could do a weekly bike/hike.*
- *When we moved here 25 years ago, the river behind us was fairly nice but as time went by it grew to be pretty impossible. I tried to find someone connected with "friends of the Looking Glass River" to no avail. Our son and friends did move some log huge logs but it's pretty messed up and no one can canoe anymore, sad....*
- *I know the expansion/developing is necessary but with the economy right now I don't feel new expenses are a smart idea. My husband has been out of work for over a year and I just had surgery that has me off work for the next 3 months. I can't pick new projects that may cost more in taxes or up my dues when I'm struggling to keep my house and feed my kids.*
- *Beautiful facility- price for resident rental a little high. Outdoor pavilions are very nice.*
- *Victor Township needs to stop wasting our time and money & fix the roads and ditches and stay out of hunting regs!*
- *Not too important to us – I'm in three softball (Seniors) leagues and travel to several out-of-state tournaments too.*
- *Wider shoulders on main roads for bikes and peds. No more access to Round Lake, the party store is already overwhelming the lake with traffic.*
- *I am very happy you are doing this.*
- *We support our township board on whatever they do- and we believe we need to do whatever keeps our younger generations safe and happy.*
- *Sleepy Hollow- How about using the vacated parking/pavilion area on the west side of the lake for group camping sites? Right now there is ample space, parking, even restrooms & lake access going to waste (being unused) while camping sites at the loops are always at max capacity on weekends.*
- *Because money may be available people will find a way to spend it even if the project will benefit few residents. We have lots to do in and around Victor Township now.*
- *Even though I don't use the park for myself I support what it is doing for the children in the community!*
- *Cooperate and coordinate plans/grants regionally improve signage and way finding locally and regionally.*

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- *I don't go to Victor Township Park. I have no children or grandchildren living in this area to use this park.*
- *I live at Lake Victoria and have no need for the boat launch.*
- *Money, money, money. Taxes, taxes, taxes. Victor Township already sucks us dry. NO MORE. Retired people can't afford all this crap.*
- *Money needs to go to maintain roads not gardens around the hall- they can't keep up with what they have now-worry about what we have now and spend money on that not future acquired items.*
- *I live on Lake Victoria which is why I haven't visited the other lakes- no need. But if trails were developed or public beaches I would use them.*
- *Ok as is- keep up the good work.*
- *Expand geographically to new parks but don't add more amenities to existing parks. Thank you for all parks and conservation efforts. We love living here.*
- *Would love a running/walking track.*
- *I would love to see all the young people to be able to enjoy all the wonderful opportunities in the park.*
- *Victor Township has made many improvements and has made an effort to get the community involved.*
- *There are many more important issues than advocating more money to this. Didn't we spend a large sum of money to a dock?*
- *River access is a nice idea, especially if the needs of occasional users could be explored. Perhaps a small equipment rental through the township hall for canoes and other related equipment?*
- *ORV Trails- Rail to Trail Access.*
- *Why does this survey seem to allow comments from only one member of the household?*
- *Thanks for asking.*
- *There was existing railroad trail not pursued that would not have cost anything they didn't use: so why purchase or even think about a different one.*
- *We are not interested in having our tax dollars go for "wants" in our township- We must think about the "NEEDS" we have- Roads & Maintain what we do have. Our tax dollars are not spent*

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wisely now, and we do not see how people in charge(elected officials) can continue to vote in proposals for even MORE STUFF. Don't they have to pay taxes too?!

- *At this point our riding club gives all of its money to Ionia (Sessions Lake) horse camp vs. Sleepy Hollow, secondary to the fact we need overnight accommodations. We spend quite a bit for horse camp each year. Ionia is getting Laingsburg's money.*
- *I appreciate the efforts that go into the Victor Township park and recreation needs.*
- *Victor Township has made many improvements and made an effort to get the community involved.*
- *Advertise/signage.*
- *When we first built here we used the park for swimming-our grandchildren loved it- I am sure whatever you do will be great for the new young people.*
- *Provide funds to Round Lake. Thanks!*
- *Would like to see improvement for biking- wider shoulders, signs, or bike lanes.*
- *We have access to a private lake. We utilize the lake and surrounding parks.*
- *Stop spending money on these projects. There is enough to do and enjoy without adding more. Just because you can get the money doesn't mean you should- we should use the developed facilities at schools for our sporting needs (ie. Soccer, football, etc.)*
- *Places to bike safely.*
- *Beach access & a boat launch on the river would be great additions!*
- *No needs, don't raise taxes, we bought a house that fulfills our needs and don't want to pay more for people who didn't.*
- *I refer back to question 5 golf carting has become more & more popular. There are a lot of us and nowhere legal for us to ride any park that would open trails with annual permit (Sleepy Hollow) would make a fortune in permit sales.*
- *Bike trails would be nice.*
- *We need a safe bike path on the north side of Round Lake for all of the kids. Cars & trucks go 45 mph through this area while the kids ride up and down the street.*
- *If more land could be acquired it would be great to offer (or sell) boat & trailer storage- more activities- concerts-children's activities.*

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- *Sorry we did not have enough information about needs for additional playgrounds or soccer fields or where the money would come from for land purchases.*
- *We get a lot of bicycles on Round Lake Road. Last year a cyclist was killed near my home. I feel that a bike lane would be safer for both cars and bikes.*
- *Stop spraying brush along the roadside so it is a more beautiful place to live.*
- *Parks need to provide opportunity to public to realize the “realities of agriculture”. Become familiar with animals and plants in nature and agriculture. Role historically, agricultural, food and medicinal, not everyone is an isolated computer person. There are people who work with their hands, animals, and mature to achieve satisfaction in life.*
- *Thank You for asking. No more “development” please. Our township board does a fine job, and we are pleased to pay our taxes for our honest and direct governance. Our needs are simple and they have been met.*
- *Let’s spend our scarce tax dollars on infrastructure improvements and that attract business and jobs.*
- *Great ideas listed above.*
- *The economy needs to stabilize & improve before any more funds can be utilized into support of parks/recreation!!*
- *I prefer not to participate in this survey because I am not familiar with any of this. Thank You.*
- *We would love trails at the park.*
- *I would strongly support public access to park and acquisition of sand & gravel, etc. as long as there is NO eminent domain.*
- *We use the schools- That’s enough.*
- *Biking trails.*
- *I think the old school house and church have a lot of public use possibilities such as: local artistic center& shows twice a year in summer & around Christmas, flower trail, historic gallery, renting opportunities for small gatherings, evening classes of some sort, farmer’s market location. I would be able to donate some time to these projects.*
- *In this economy I do not feel it is the time for any additional expenses!*
- *The paving of township roads would encourage the recreational use of bicycles.*
- *Over the next few years our family does plan on using the facilities.*

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- *Would kayak the Looking Glass more often if downed trees, etc. were cleared more often/better. Can Victor Township work with Friends of the Looking Glass to do this on a regular basis?*
- *There are lots of bikers on our roads (I'm sure many of whom are not residents of Victor Township) But we have no bike lanes and many hills. This creates a dangerous situation for bikers and motorists. I like the idea of community gardens, nature corridor, trail system, and playgrounds. Thanks for asking us what we would like to see!*
- *The park serves an important purpose in providing soccer fields for the youth soccer programs. We no longer use them as the kids are grown but I support their establishment and purpose.*
- *No more horse trails!!!*
- *We would use Sleepy Hollow more often if the daily park fee were only \$2 or \$3. \$6 is too much, and buying the annual sticker doesn't work because we have more than one vehicle and always seem to be in the one without the sticker. Consider free admission or a discount for seniors, disabled, etc.*
- *We could really use a recreation path like rails to trails!*
- *Primary interests bike trails, walking trails, cross country trails, community gardens, and connections to Sleepy Hollow, and Looking Glass River.*
- *Sell the property use the money for Police/Ambulance Service. Current system is the result of inefficiency and power struggles. The twp. Is trying to increase it's local power and not adhering to the principals of small town government.*
- *Please make it known in newsletters or email when the next meeting will include park development info. Thanks!*

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED SURVEY BY OCTOBER 15, 2009

Mail to: Dr. Chuck Nelson, 131 Natural Resources Bldg., MSU

Goals and Objectives

Based on the needs assessment, the input from the public meeting, the recreation inventory of Victor Township and Clinton County as a whole, the judgment of the senior author and the input of the Victor Township Board of Trustees, the following goals and objectives are proposed.

Goals

Over the next five years, the overriding goal is to acquire and develop a functional system of non-motorized transportation and trail opportunities in the Township linking community assets and

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surrounding communities and their assets per the simultaneously developing Clinton County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Additionally, further strengthening the recreational opportunities already provided at the Township Park surrounding the Township Hall will be a secondary goal. These improvements of existing parkland will complement the outstanding work done by the Township and volunteers to maintain the existing public park infrastructure and make the park more welcoming to all residents and visitors. They may also entail acquisition of adjacent land to expand the range of recreational opportunity provided at the existing park considering key, universally accessible infrastructure is in place including parking, picnic shelters and restrooms as well as the flat and firm character of the site as a whole. A third goal will to enhance cooperation and coordination with other recreation providers in the area including the Michigan DNRE at Sleepy Hollow State Park and Babcock Road Water Access Site, Clinton County and others.

Objectives

1. Develop a non-motorized transportation/trail system in the Township connecting recreational and community assets. This may use existing roads and their rights of way as well as benefit from new dedicated non-motorized trails. This will be done in conjunction with broader planning efforts for non-motorized circulation planning at the County level and may also integrate with efforts of many non-profit organizations representing a variety of non-motorized trail users.
2. Explore options of providing additional recreational opportunities at the Township Park if its size were expanded through acquisition of adjacent property from a willing seller. Suggestions to date for additional opportunities include additional soccer fields, baseball/softball diamonds and community gardens. Another benefit is to limit any actual or potential conflict with active recreation and historic structures in the park or the adjacent cemetery. This would also provide the ability to expand cultural/historic resources should they become available, such as the existing historic structures in the park.
3. Seek a community tree planting grant from the Forest Management Division of the Michigan DNR to provide additional living shade and scenic beauty to the Township Park. This could be done in each year as the cost is minimal and communities are drawn at random.

Action Plan

The action plan is designed to lay out a calendar of events. This is not a rigid schedule, rather it is a hoped for timetable. The action plan also does not commit the Township to the dollar amounts listed. It may be that financial circumstances necessitate waiting to apply for a grant or that costs come in below those estimated. It is instead a guideline that details the intentions of the Township. It should also be noted that the primary grant source noted is the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF). It has a maximum match rate of 3:1, meaning for every one dollar the local unit puts up, the MNRTF will provide three. Those funds do not include maintenance costs. However, the Township does an outstanding job with its existing parkland and facilities in terms of maintenance. Proposals for a non-motorized trail/transportation network are done in cooperation with the county to dovetail with plans related to county roads and the ability of Act 51 (McNitt Transportation Act) entities to seek Transportation Enhancement grants to develop non-motorized transportation infrastructure. All future design/construction will emphasize low maintenance, sustainable features.

Year	Action	Possible Funding Sources	Total Estimated Cost for all Funding Sources
2011-14	Submit DNR tree	MDNR	\$200 for Arbor

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Year	Action	Possible Funding Sources	Total Estimated Cost for all Funding Sources
	planting grant	Community Forestry grant; MDNR Arbor Day Mini-Grant (no match needed)	Day Mini-Grant; up to \$2,000 for Community Forestry Grant
2010-11	Submit MNRTF grant application to purchase parkland on Maple River	Village funds	\$500
2010-11	Develop non-motorized circulation plan in conjunction with Clinton County non-motorized circulation plan development	Clinton County, Township funds, local fundraising (unsure if County grants/funding will cover local units at this time, that is a goal however)	Up to \$5,000
2012-13	Working with Clinton County non-motorized circulation plan submit grant proposal to implement Township non-motorized circulation plan	MDOT, MNRTF, Clinton County, Township funds, local fundraising (unsure if County grants/funding will cover local units at this time, that is a goal however)	Unknown, likely to be minimal to \$0
2013-14	Acquire additional parkland contiguous to existing Township Park to provide additional recreational opportunity such as baseball and softball, playground, community gardens, etc.	MNRTF, Landowner donation, Township funds (likely for appraisal only if landowner provides 25% match through bargain sale)	Up to \$75,000
2013-14	Implement Township non-motorized circulation plan	MDOT (minimum local match is 25%)	Up to \$50,000

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It is also important to note that these funds are contingent on the local unit continuing to maintain the acquired parkland and its facilities into the future. Victor Township has an outstanding record in this area.

Appendix A

– Text of Newsletter Article Distributed to Every Household in Township in Township Newsletter Vol. 7 Issue 2 Regarding Planning Process and Welcoming Public Participation to July 9, 2009 Meeting

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN UPDATE

Good planning leads to great communities! The township parks and recreation plan is out of date and needs to be updated. This is a great opportunity to review our current status and future needs, priorities and dreams as a community. It is also important to keep our plan current so that the township is qualified to participate in State of Michigan grant opportunities.

Dr. Charles Nelson, a Victor Township resident and Director of the Community, Agriculture, Recreation and Resource Studies at Michigan State University will facilitate the planning process. The first community visioning session is scheduled Thursday, July 9, 7:00 p.m. at the Victor Township hall. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss possible parks and recreation needs and ideas. The information collected will be used to construct a township wide survey to collect further input and data on parks and recreation needs and priorities. All organizations and individuals interested in recreation, greenspace, trails, etc. are encouraged to attend!

Appendix B

Victor Township Community Outdoor Recreation Plan Public Meeting Notes July 9, 2009

Victor Township Park and Recreation Plan Update Public Meeting July 9, 2009 at Township Hall

Dr. Chuck Nelson from Michigan State University Extension facilitated the initial meeting in the process to update the five-year Victor Township Park and Recreation Plan, which has lapsed. A current plan allows the Township to seek grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and federal Land and Water Conservation to acquire and develop outdoor recreation resources. It also provides numerous opportunities for the public to participate in developing Township goals for public outdoor recreation opportunities. Finally, it builds on the Township's initial plan that provided much of the funds to develop the existing park at the Township Hall.

The purpose of the meeting was to ask interested citizens to identify the outdoor recreation strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for Victor Township over the next 5 years. After these results are compiled, a mail survey sent to a randomly selected sample of approximately 25% of the households of will be developed and administered to determine general public preferences for the initiatives assessed as feasible by the Victor Township Board. The sample will be selected from voter registration records and the surveys will be mailed out in September, closely following Labor Day. Residents will be able to either mail the survey back to the Township Office or drop them off in a drop box set aside for that purpose.

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The completed surveys will be analyzed by MSU. Based on the results and the guidance received by Dr. Nelson from the Township Board, he will develop a draft Township Park and Recreation Plan. This will then be widely available for public review for more than 30 days and there will also be a public meeting devoted to receiving input on the draft plan. Following that, a final plan will be developed based on the draft plan and public review and submitted to the Township Board for approval and subsequent submission to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Facilitator

Charles Nelson

Attendees

1. Dan Morris
2. Richard Lyons
3. Linda Lyons
4. Natalie Elkins
5. Michelle Wilsey

Strengths of the Township Related to Outdoor Recreation

Bus service from Clinton County Transport (Blue Bus) available for all township residents

Picnic pavilion at Township Hall Park

Soccer fields at Township Hall Park

Township cemetery which is quiet, provides cultural link to past

Scenic landscape

Water resources including Looking Glass River and lakes

Sleepy Hollow State Park

Near developing CIS rail-trail

Township is close to major populations

Orchards, tree farm, tree/plant nursery, diverse agriculture

Good hunting, fishing and boating

Has limited development and positive rural character

Rolling topography

Gas/oil resources untapped but available

Sand and gravel mining for potential lakes

Good fire department and public safety in general

Weaknesses of the Township Related to Outdoor Recreation

Lack of connectivity among different recreation and community resources

Lack of universal access at outdoor recreation opportunities

Lack of public access to local natural resources such as lakes, Looking Glass River

Lack of \$\$ for maintenance of outdoor recreation opportunities

Lack of local canoe/kayak access, canoe/kayak trails

Lack public senior citizen opportunities

Under developed private resources (e.g. lack of opportunities for seniors)

Lack of opportunities for safe non-motorized recreation including bicycling, walking, equestrian use, in-line skating, etc.

Lack of public support/too much apathy for people to get involved

Lack of signage/way finding so visitors and new residents know where they are

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Opportunities for the Township Related to Outdoor Recreation

Expand historic village/structures at Township Hall Park or elsewhere

Create access/public park on a lake

-may be existing lake or one created by sand/gravel mining

Build maintenance/support building at Township Hall park to support soccer, picnicking, etc.

Develop safe playground for children at Township Hall Park

Identify and protect nature ways/ecological corridors through tools such as easements in cooperation with others such as conservancies, county drain commissioner, etc.

Develop public community garden opportunities

Develop additional access to the Looking Glass River including upgrade Babcock Landing

Develop safe non-motorized links to existing trails and other recreational and community assets

- Sleepy Hollow State Park
- Communities
- Looking Glass River
- CIS Rail-Trail

Need to acquire land to expand existing Township Hall Park

-reduce conflict among soccer, picnic, historical/cultural efforts, fire dept.

-provide room to grow as township population/needs increase

Develop tourism/recreation attractions in cooperation with others including government, non-profit and commercial partners

Improve existing soccer fields

-field leveling, turf improvements, new nets, etc.

Explore having ball diamonds/team sport facilities currently not available on township property

Appendix C – Literature Cited

U.S. Bureau of the Census. (2010). Census 2000, Victor Township, Michigan.