

Administrative Structure

Public Act 156 of 1917 entitled *Local Government, Operate System of Public Recreation* authorizes cities, villages, counties, townships, and school districts to *operate systems of public recreation and playgrounds.*¹

Section 1:

a. Any City, Village, County, or Township may:

1. Operate a system of public recreation and playgrounds;
2. Acquire, equip and maintain land, buildings or other recreational facilities;
3. Employ a superintendent of recreation and assistants; and,
4. Vote and expend funds for the operation of such a system.

Fremont Area Recreation Advisory Committee

Due to the pace of the Recreation Master Planning process and the current responsibilities and work load of the Fremont Area Planning Commission, a ‘Fremont Area Recreation Advisory Committee’ was created. Their purpose is to oversee and guide the planning process and to provide a recommendation in the form of a draft Recreation Master Plan to the Fremont City Council, Sheridan Charter Township Board, Sherman Township Board and Dayton Township Board for their approvals.

Members of the Advisory Committee represented a diverse cross-section of the Fremont Area population and have also exhibited interest and dedication in Fremont Recreation over the years. The Advisory Committee consists of the following ten citizens:

Dayton Township

Jean Sherman

Mrs. Shirley Hooker, Twp Supervisor

City of Fremont

Todd Blake, City Clerk/Finance Director

Brian Hettinger, City DPW Superintendent

Roger Tuuk

Rhoni Kaastra, FPS Board Member

Sheridan Charter Township

Jason Bieneman, Twp Trustee

Bryan Kolk

Sherman Township

Pam Zuchowski

Becky Content

The Park & Recreation Advisory Committee met several times throughout the planning process and served as a sounding board, citizen voice and recommending body to the City Council and Township Boards.

¹ Summary of Laws Relating to Local Parks and Recreation, State of Michigan 1978, MSU Dec. 1978.
Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan

Fremont Public Schools

The Fremont Public School District plays an essential role in the provision of recreational opportunities to the Fremont Area residents. Within the public school system is a Community Education Department which includes four programs:

- Child Care
- Family and Community Services
- Quest (Alternative Education)
- Recreation Enrichment

Under the direction of the Director of Recreation Enrichment, the Recreation Enrichment Program offers, organizes and operates the various recreational activities provided to area residents. The relationship of the School District and the four Fremont Area communities truly is an example of a coordinated partnership. Recreation Enrichment works very closely with the City to coordinate the use and maintenance of the various parks and schools. The City of Fremont maintains all of the public parks including Branstrom Park, the northern portion of which is owned by the school district. The schools schedule and organize the recreation programs and activities such as soccer, baseball, etc., on school properties, with the exception of the use of the ballfield at Branstrom Park. The City maintains Branstrom Field and School maintains the various fields on school property. The City of Fremont cleans the restrooms, cuts the grass and picks up the garbage at Branstrom Field. The School gets first priority on all the ball parks and Fremont Little League schedules their games accordingly.

City of Fremont

While the City of Fremont does not have an organized Recreation Department, there are several positions within city government that are responsible for coordination with the schools, maintenance of public parks and improvement decisions. The following personnel are involved with parks and recreation (see organizational chart on the following pages):

City Manager

The City Manager works directly under the City Council. The Manager directly supervises all department heads and indirectly supervises all other city employees. Operational duties include the initiation of studies and the monitoring of operations to ensure quality services are provided in an efficient and timely manner. The City Manager supervises the development of the annual budget and assists the Finance Officer with its preparation. The Manager also assists with the development of capital improvement programs. The Manager is in the position to recommend recreational policies and expenditures to the City Council and oversees the operations performed by his department heads and staff.

City Clerk/Finance Director

The City Clerk works under the direction of the City Council and City Manager. The Clerk manages and administers the City's finances including expenditures and revenues. The Clerk prepares the annual City operating and capital budgets and administers the final budget. The Clerk monitors capital needs and appropriate financing mechanisms for larger purchases and projects. The Clerk currently serves on the Fremont Area Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.

Public Works Superintendent

The Public Works Superintendent works under the City Manager and directly supervises the Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor. The Public Works Superintendent performs administrative and supervisory tasks related to the operations of the City's parks, water and wastewater utilities, cemeteries, streets, airport and other public works functions. The Public Works Superintendent also develops and administers operating and capital budgets as well as plans and implements public works capital projects. The Superintendent also establishes departmental operating policies and priorities.

Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor

The Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor works directly under the Public Works Superintendent and supervises employees assigned to cemetery, parks, public grounds and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) maintenance activities. The Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor also develops recommendations for changes in policies and park and cemetery expansion or development. The Supervisor oversees and assists with maintaining equipment and facilities including boat docks, picnic tables, park and playground structures, foot bridges, amphitheater, fountains, mowers, tractors, etc. The Supervisor also coordinates the set-up and breakdown of temporary shelters, staging and seating associated with festivals and other public events and ensures proper clean up after special events.

Public Works Laborer

This position is under direct supervision of the Public Works Superintendent and performs a wide range of laborer and semi-skilled tasks in support of public works operations. In regards to parks, this position is responsible for mowing, maintaining, repairing, pruning, etc at the City parks.

Sheridan Charter Township

Sheridan Charter Township residents are within the boundaries of the Fremont School District and are able to participate in programs offered through the Recreation Enrichment Program. All parks within Fremont are also available to the general public, regardless of residency. As described in the Recreation Inventory, Sheridan Charter Township has two primary public recreation areas located within its boundaries: the Sheridan Charter Township property at 88th Street and Osborn Avenue, which includes "The Refuge" bike-park, and the boat launch and picnic area located on the south side of Fremont Lake by the township hall. The operations and organization of Sheridan Charter Township are not

complicated. The Township Board has final authority, with the general administration and operations of Township business residing with the Township Supervisor. The Township also has a Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and Zoning Administrator. In regards to recreation, the majority of decisions and policies reside with the Supervisor and Township Board. The Township maintains the boat dock through contracting out services on an as- needed basis. Many of the improvements that have been made have been driven by citizen requests, including the upgrading of the boat launch area in the past few years.

Dayton Township

The Township is governed by the Township Board with administrative duties and everyday operations facilitated by the Township Supervisor. The Township also has a Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and Zoning/Building Administrator. There are no public recreation facilities currently located within Dayton Township.

Sherman Township

The Township is governed by the Township Board with administrative duties and everyday operations facilitated by the Township Supervisor. The Township also has a Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and Zoning/Building Administrator. As described in the Recreation Inventory, Sherman Township has three primary public recreation areas located within its boundaries: Crystal Lake Beach and Boat Launch, Robinson Lake Public Boat Launch, Alley Lake Roadside Park and a small portion of the North Country Trail.

Bridgeton Township

The Township is governed by the Township Board with administrative duties and everyday operations facilitated by the Township Supervisor. The Township also has a Clerk, Treasurer, Assessor and Zoning Administrator. As described in the Recreation Inventory, Bridgeton Township has one primary public recreation area located within its boundaries: Muskegon River Boat Launch & Playground Area,

Proposed Changes

Through the planning process, the Recreation Advisory Committee recognized the need for representatives from all four communities as well as the Fremont Public School District to continue to meet on a regular (semi-annual) basis to oversee the implementation of the area-wide recreation plan. It was suggested that this group of people meet on a relatively informal manner and discuss items such as funding equity, maintenance, grant applications, capital improvements, programming, etc. It was agreed that the formation of a committee to continue to oversee area-wide recreation would assist in providing recreation in a fair, equitable, efficient and effective manner.

Budget Analysis

Budget information for expenditures and revenues was gathered for the five primary entities involved in the Recreation Planning process: the Recreation Enrichment Program (Public Schools), the City of

Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township and Dayton Township. The City of Fremont and the Fremont Public School District are the two primary monetary contributors to recreation provided to area residents. There is no specific financial agreement established between the various parties. While each community may not directly contribute funding to the City or School District for recreation, all residents in the area do pay sales and property taxes, both of which contribute to the operation of the Fremont Public School District.

Fremont Public Schools (Recreation Enrichment)

As was described in detail in the previous pages, the Recreation Enrichment Program, through the public school district, operates as the traditional ‘Recreation Department’ for the Fremont Area. The Program administers and organizes all of the recreation programs as well as schedules and maintains all school properties that are used for the recreation programs. In general, the programs offered through Recreation Enrichment support themselves. In other words, participants’ fees cover the expenses needed to operate that particular program. The schools do subsidize the personnel to operate and organize the Enrichment Program. The schools also make their indoor and outdoor facilities available for the Enrichment Programs. This includes both the indoor and outdoor maintenance fees and costs to keep the buildings open throughout the year and after-school hours.

City of Fremont

The City of Fremont funds the operation of the Public Works Department, the position of Parks and Cemeteries Supervisor and related staff to maintain the existing public parks within Fremont. The City also contributes funding on a project-by-project basis. For example, the schools requested materials to upgrade the Branstrom ballfield which the schools utilize. The City purchased and delivered a load of field dressing to the field and school personnel and volunteers worked on the improvements.

City of Fremont Expenditures 2008 to 2011

Account Classification	Actual FY 07/08	Actual FY 08/09	Actual FY 09/10	Actual FY 10/11
Dept: 751.000 PARKS & RECREATION				
702.000 Salaries	44,425	44,425	52,262	46,725
740.000 Supplies & Materials	3,895	3,895	6,763	4,025
801.000 Professional & Contractual Serv	9,795	9,795	11,071	4,740
920.000 Utilities	25,650	25,650	21,544	25,585
930.000 Repair & Maintenance	9,740	9,740	9,359	10,335
940.000 Equipment Rental	16,870	16,870	13,186	14,130
Park & Rec Operation & Maintenance -	95,202	110,375	114,185	105,540
970.000 Capital Outlay	199,294	72,340	43,469	11,330
999.000 Trans Out-FPS Community Recr	20,000	20,000	10,000	0
Total Park & Recreation Expenditures -	314,496	202,715	167,654	116,870

NOTE: City of Fremont fiscal year ends June 30.

The table above details the expenditures from fiscal year 2008 to 2011 for recreation and culture. Expenditures fall within one of seven categories including salaries and wages, supplies and materials, professional and contractual services, utilities, equipment rental and repairs and maintenance. The total expenditures from the City of Fremont for recreation and culture have decreased, due to fewer construction projects. But annual operation & maintenance costs have remained somewhat constant. The City used to make a \$20,000 annual contribution to the Community Ed Recreation School Program, but was discontinued in 2010 for budgeting purposes.

The only recreation-related revenue generator within the City of Fremont is the rental receipts associated with campground sites at Fremont Lake Park. The following table illustrates the revenues generated over the past three years, which averages approximately \$110,000 per year. This money is placed in the City General Fund to help offset the park systems operating costs and to cover matching requirements for future park redevelopment grants.

Tourist Park Rental Revenues

2008/09	\$110,600
2009/10	\$112,365
2010/11	\$105,880
Source: City of Fremont Revenues	

Sheridan Charter Township

While Sheridan Charter Township does not currently contribute funds directly to the City of Fremont or the public school district for recreation purposes, the Township does fund the maintenance and operation of their facilities. Approximately 15 years ago, the Township paid for the dock on the south side of Fremont Lake, and volunteers dedicate their time and efforts to put the dock in and out each year. The only other maintenance related to the facility are dust control measures and the placement of additional gravel as needed. The Township annually gives permission for a private fireworks display on property at the east end of Fremont Lake which is paid for with private donations. The City and Township make land available for viewing and assist in the planning and safety coordination of the event.

Dayton Township

Dayton Township does not have any public park facilities under its jurisdiction and therefore has not had any expenditures or revenues in regard to recreation.

Sherman Township

Sherman Township has not had any expenditures or revenues in regard to recreation in the recreation facilities within their township.