

Planning Process

For purposes of this plan, the Fremont Area communities include the City of Fremont, Dayton Township, Sheridan Charter Township and Sherman Township. The four units understand and realize that, especially in regard to the provision of recreation, they function as a single community. In 2000, the City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township and Dayton Township joined forces to produce the first Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan. Sherman Township joined the partnership in 2007, sharing our vision to create an area-wide recreation plan that will enable the communities to provide recreational opportunities for their residents in the most efficient, effective and fiscally responsible manner.

Plan Development Process

The process of developing the Recreation Master Plan was carried out by the Recreation Advisory Committee. The Committee was originally created in 2000 to help develop the first community-wide recreation master plan. Today, this committee is comprised of two representatives from Dayton Township, two from Sherman Township, two from Sheridan Charter Township and four from the City of Fremont, one being a Fremont Public Schools representative. Committee members were asked to serve because they represented a diverse cross-section of community interests and due to their active and vocal role in recreation throughout the years. The committee's primary responsibility was to oversee the task of preparing and recommending a Recreation Master Plan for the Fremont Area. The Committee meets quarterly, but more frequently if needed and it held four special meetings for this renewal process.

Community Description

Data for the community description portion of the plan was gathered from a number of different sources including the US Census Bureau, Soil Conservation Service, Newaygo County, West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, City of Fremont, Dayton Township, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township, Fremont Public Schools and MIRIS (Michigan Resource Information System). The data was gathered, compiled, mapped and presented to the Recreation Advisory Committee at their second meeting. The agenda for the second meeting also included an overview of the planning process, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requirements, a revised work plan and schedule and a preliminary draft community description section of the document.

Recreation Inventory

Site visits were conducted of the parks within the City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, and Dayton Township for the first Area Recreation Master Plan in 2000. For this plan, the location of each park, public and private school and private recreation facility was re-inventoried and mapped to reflect new facilities, including addition of facilities located in Sherman and Bridgeton Townships. The Recreation Inventory portion of the plan discusses the various programs, activities and events that are offered throughout the four communities and the Fremont Public School District. This information was

gathered directly from staff as well as community brochures. Information regarding programs and facilities outside of community boundaries was gathered to establish opportunities in the general proximity of the Fremont Area communities. The revised draft Recreation Inventory and 5-yr Capital Project Schedule were distributed and reviewed with the Recreation Advisory Committee at their January and February 2012 meetings.

Administrative Structure

Information regarding the existing organizational structure of recreation operations in the area was documented including operations and financials in regard to the Public School District. Duties of the various City, Townships and school employees were also gathered from staff and summarized within the body of the text.

Basis for Action

The Basis for Action portion of the plan was outlined and portions completed for presentation to the Advisory Committee at their January and February, 2012 meetings. This chapter includes information on national and state trends, acreage deficiencies by community and neighborhood, park land per capita analyses and facility standard analyses as well as a depiction of the current service area radii for the varying hierarchy of parks within the community. A community-wide survey was conducted in 2007 and referenced, and an annual notice was published inviting public input on the annual update of the Capital Improvement Schedule. Also included are the summaries and results of the public input throughout the planning process as well as data on participation at numerous facilities and programs.

Action Plan

The Action Plan of the document details the culmination of the Committee's research and discussions into recommended goals, guidelines and capital improvements for the next five years. The results of the background studies, recreation inventory, needs analysis, community input and Advisory Committee discussions were used to create this portion of the plan. The Committee initiated the process with an initial review of inventory and the Capital Project Schedule at their December, 2011 meeting. Then at their January, 2012 meeting they conducted the first public hearing to discuss goals, guidelines and an updated capital improvement schedule. Public and committee input was synthesized and presented to the Committee again at their February 16, 2012 meeting where they were further refined. Scheduling issues were also discussed at the February meeting regarding the plan completion, public hearing and adoption dates. The Action Plan was finalized at an Advisory Committee Meeting on March 15, 2012.

Public Involvement Process

The involvement of the public was a high priority throughout the development of this plan. Several opportunities and venues were available to the public throughout the planning process, the focus of which is discussed below.

Park & Recreation Advisory Committee

Public involvement opportunities began with the creation of the Recreation Advisory Committee. This group of residents (as is detailed in the body of the text) is a twelve-member committee established to oversee the Master Planning process. Committee members include representatives not only from geographically diverse areas of the five communities but are people who represent many of the primary issues including operation, maintenance, funding, programming and coordination. This committee dedicated much of their time and effort to see the entire planning process through and produce a document that is thorough and provides direction for the City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township, Bridgeton Township and Dayton Township over the next five years and beyond. The public was invited to participate in Advisory Committee meetings and made several comments on the plan in general as well as identifying recreation needs throughout the community. Notices for Advisory Committee meetings were published in the local newspaper.

Initial Public Meetings

As part of the comprehensive planning process, the Recreation Advisory Committee held two Public Meetings to discuss preliminary sections of the recreation plan. In addition, public input was solicited. Summaries of the comments made at these meetings can be found in the Basis for Action section of this plan.

Project Website

To further support the comprehensive planning process, the City of Fremont providing interested citizens with information regarding the planning process, meeting dates, contact information, *draft* sections of the plan and opportunities for public comments.

Final Public Hearing

Minor edits were made to the plan per Committee and staff comment and a legal notice of a public hearing was published in the local newspaper with copies of the draft document made available at the Fremont Community Public Library. The final public hearing was held in March 15, 2012. Meeting minutes can be found in Appendix D.

Adoption

At their regularly scheduled meetings, the following jurisdictions adopted the updated Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan by resolution on the following dates: (See Appendix D)

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| <i>Fremont City Council</i> | <i>March 29, 2012</i> |
| <i>Dayton Township Board</i> | <i>April 12, 2012</i> |
| <i>Sheridan Charter Township Board</i> | <i>March 20, 2012</i> |
| <i>Sherman Township Board</i> | <i>April 2, 2012</i> |