8 Parks, Open Space and Recreation

Goals

- Existing park and recreation facilities will be enhanced and expanded as needed to meet the evolving interests and needs of Southfield residents.
- Southfield will have a unified community-based open space system that protects key natural features and provides valuable opportunities for appreciation of the City's natural resources.
- The City of Southfield will offer a variety of recreation programs and events that promote a high quality of life and encourage interaction of its residents.

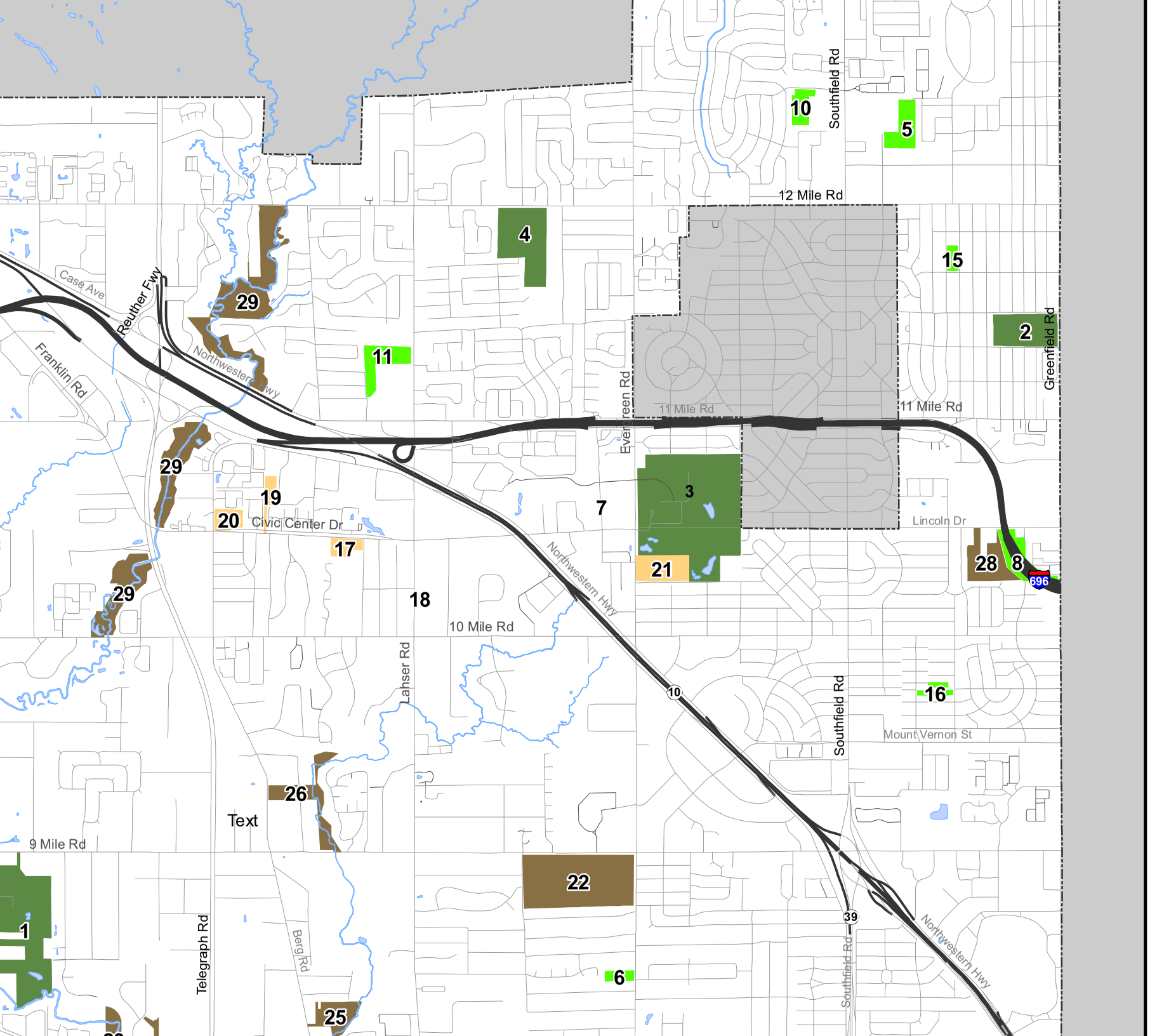
Current Conditions

City Facilities. The city of Southfield contains nearly 800 acres of parks and natural open space. The majority of this land is included in community or neighborhood parkland or historical sites, with the remaining acres categorized as open space and undeveloped parklands. Many of the parklands are nature preserves or incorporate significant areas of open space. These sites total nearly 400 acres. Other parkland (386.24 acres) is developed as community parks, and just under 84 acres is dedicated to neighborhood parks and recreation centers. All parkland and open space are depicted on Map 8-1. Table 8-1 identifies the acreages of parkland and open space by category, as further described on the following pages.

Table 8-1: Southfield Parkland and Open Space Acreage

Community Parks	
Beech Woods Park and Recreation Center	81.38
Civic Center Park	157.00
Inglenook Park	42.79
Total	**281.17**
Neighborhoods Parks and Recreation Centers	
Bedford Woods Park	14.71
Brace Park (Lease)	4.01
City Centre Plaza (Right of way)	0.72
Civic Center Drive Park	2.18
Eleven Mile/Greenfield Park	0.66
Evergreen/I-696 Park	0.73
Freeway Park (Right of way)	9.00
John Grace Park and Recreation Center	4.61
John R. Miller Park	8.79
Lahser Woods Park	15.80
Pebble Creek Park	16.27
Robbie Gage Park	16.97
Seminole Street Park	0.63
Simms Park	4.05
Stratford Woods Commons	5.29
Total	**104.42**
Historic and Cultural Sites Total *	**49.60**
Nature Preserves	
Bauervic Woods	80.45
Bridge Street	23.70
Carpenter Lake	42.36
Horsetail Woods	22.60
Hunters Lane Woods	22.31
Industrial Park	3.11
Lincoln Woods	10.27
Valley Woods	128.38
Total	**333.18**
Total Parkland and Open Space	**768.37**

* Historic and Cultural Sites are discussed in Chapter 7.
Source: City of Southfield Parks and Recreation Department, LSL Planning


Community
1, BEEC
2, CATA
3, CIVIC
4, INGLE
Neighborhoo
5, BEDF
6, BRAC
7, CITY
8, FREE
9, JOHN
10, JOH
11, LAHS
12, PEB
13, ROB
14, SEM
15, SIMM
16, STR
Historical &
17, COD
18, PION
19, SOU
20, THE
21, MAR
Nature Pres
22, BAU
23, BRID
24, CAR
25, HOR
26, HUN
28, LINC
29, VALL
0 0.25
1 inch e
Southfield Rd
12 Mile Rd
Greenfield Rd
Case Ave
Reuther Fwy
Franklin Rd
Northwestern Hwy
Evergreen Rd
11 Mile Rd
Lincoln Dr
Civic Center Dr
10 Mile Rd
Lahser Rd
Mount Vernon St
9 Mile Rd
Telegraph Rd
Berg Rd
Text
696
10
39

Parkland. The city of Southfield classifies its parklands into four categories as follows:

- **Community Parks -** Community parks of at least 40 acres in size are intended to provide the entire community with leisure opportunities. As shown in Table 8-2, Southfield's community parks contain a wide variety of recreational facilities to meet the diverse needs of all residents. Some parks include larger natural areas, while others contain such improvements as parking and areas for both active and passive recreation.
- **Neighborhood Parks and Recreation Centers** Neighborhood parks, less than 40 acres in size, are typically multi-purpose facilities which serve as the focus of recreation for their more proximate neighborhood. Table 8-3 shows these facilities include an array of amenities including small parking areas, playlots, seating and picnic facilities, and athletic facilities such as ballfields or basketball courts.
- **Historic and Cultural Sites –** Southfield's historic and cultural sites are primarily used for passive activities and specialized recreation such as the gazebo concert series and senior gardens. These facilities are specifically described in *Chapter 7 Natural and Cultural Resources.*
- **Nature Preserves -** In addition to the 385 plus acres of open space contained in the community and neighborhood parks, the City owns an additional 333 acres of natural open space, contained in eight natural preserves. Table 8-4 summarizes the trail and parking amenities available at each of these parks. In all, eight nature preserves exist to provide additional natural open space for resident's enjoyment.

  Much of the City's open space is found in the Valley Woods Nature Preserve, which follows the Main Branch of the Rouge River. The City has been proactive in obtaining environmentally sensitive lands along this corridor and throughout Southfield. The City is a partner in the Rouge Green Corridor project. This project focuses on developing a multi-community management plan for preserving and protecting the natural river greenway of the main branch of the Rouge River through Southfield, Beverly Hills and Birmingham and for educating the public about the resource and its importance for recreation and water quality in the region.

Table 8-4: Southfield Parkland Facilities Inventory

Park	Nature Trails	Parking Spaces (gr=gravel pv=paved)	Miscellaneous
Nature Preserves			
Bauervic Woods	Y	18 gr	Playlot, Picnic Area with 10 tables & 4 grills
Bridge Street	-	-	-
Carpenter Lake	Y	42 pv	Accessible Fishing Platforms, Interpretive Signage
Horsetail Woods	-	-	-
Hunters Lane Woods	-	-	-
Industrial Park	-	-	-
Lincoln Woods	Y	-	-
Valley Woods	Y	-	Urban Fishery Project
Total	**3**	**18 gr 42 pv**	

Source: City of Southfield Parks and Recreation Department and LSL Planning

Table 8-2: Southfield Parkland Facilities Inventory

Park	Ball Fields (Little League)	Ball Fields (Softball)	Golf Course (9hole)	Handball Court	Ice Rink	Nature Trails	Parking Spaces (gr=gravel pv=paved)	Picnic Area	Playlot	Restroom/ Comfort Station	Soccer Field	Swimming Pool	Tennis Court	Track/Walking Path	Volleyball Court (Sand)	Miscellaneous
Beech Woods Park & Recreation Center	-	-	1	-	-	-	300 pv	1 shelter 21 tables 1 grill	Y	-	-	-	4	Y	1	Sports Arena, Field House/Gym, Locker Rooms, Meeting Room, Snack Bar, Wellness Center, Pro-Shop, 75 Lighted Tee Driving Range
Catalpa Park	-	2	-	-	-	-	168 gr	-	-	-	6					-
Civic Center Park	1	2	1	3	1 in	Y	1,036 pv	1 shelter 48 tables 6 grills	Y	Y	-	1 out	7	-	5	Miracle Field, Spray Pool, Water Slide, Parks & Rec Building, Admin. Offices, Multi-Purpose Rooms, Meeting Rooms, Exhibition Hall, Wood Shop, Mechanic Area, Sports Arena, Locker Rooms, Snack Bar, Pro-Shop, Commercial Kitchen, Plaza
Inglenook Park	-	4	-	-	-	-	216 pv	15 tables	Y	Y	-	-	-	Y	-	Concession Building, Miller Barn
Total	**1**	**8**	**2**	**3**	**1**	**1**	**1,552 pv 186 gr**	**2 shelters 84 tables 6 grills**	**3**	**2**	**6**	**1**	**11**	**2**	**6**	

Source: City of Southfield Parks and Recreation Department and LSL Planning

Table 8-3: Southfield Parkland Facilities Inventory

Park	Ball Fields (Little League)	Ball Fields (Softball)	Basketball Court	Parking Spaces (gr=gravel pv=paved)	Picnic Area	Playlot	Restroom/ Comfort Station	Roller Hockey Court	Soccer Field	Tennis Court	Track/Walking Path	Miscellaneous
Neighborhoods Parks & Recreation Centers												
Bedford Woods Park	1	1	1	128 gr	6 tables 1 grill	Y	-	-	-	3	Y	-
Brace Park	2	-	-	29 pv	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
City Centre Plaza	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Festival Plaza
Civic Center Drive Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eleven Mile/Greenfield Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Evergreen/I-696 Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Freeway Park	-	-	-	17 pv	-	Y	-	-	-	-	Y	Pedestrian Plaza, Seating, Gardens
John Grace Park & Recreation Center	1	-	1	51 pv	12 tables	Y	-	1	-	-	-	Rec. Center, Library, Multi-Purpose Room, Meeting Rooms
John R. Miller Park	-	2	1	86 pv	-	Y	-	-	-	1	-	-
Lahser Woods Park	-	-	-	15 gr	4 tables 3 grills	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-
Pebble Creek Park	-	-	-	84 pv	1 shelter 20 tables 1 grill	Y	1	-	1	1	Y	-
Robbie Gage Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Seminole Street Park	-	-	-	-	-	Y	-	-	-	-	-	-
Simms Park	1	-	-	-	1 shelter 4 tables 1 grill	Y	-	1	-	-	Y	-
Stratford Woods Commons	-	-	-	-	7 tables	Y	-	-	-	-	Y	-
Total	**5**	**3**	**3**	**267 pv 143 gr**	**2 shelters 51 tables 6 grills**	**8**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**5**	**6**	

Source: City of Southfield Parks and Recreation Department and LSL Planning

Educational Facilities

Public. A significant portion of public recreation and open space in Southfield is provided by school sites. The Southfield Public School district has 15 school properties, totaling more than 245 acres, within the cities of Southfield or Lathrup Village. These facilities serve the enrolled student population and supplement the broader range of public recreational opportunities provided by the City.

In addition to the physical grounds, Southfield Community Education, a part of Southfield Public Schools, offers area residents a number of educational and enrichment programs.

Private. Twelve private schools located in Southfield provide varying levels of recreational facilities. Typical recreational facilities include play lots, athletic facilities, and open space for their students.

Colleges. The Lawrence Technological University Campus and Oakland Community College's Southfield campus, provide a variety of recreation facilities including an athletics building, tennis courts and softball diamonds. Facilities are reserved for students and faculty.

Private Facilities

The private sector addresses more regional recreation needs of the population.

Commercial. Commercial recreational facilities are generally open to the public, but typically charge fees for use and/or membership and are not accessible to all residents. Also, in contrast to City or school facilities, commercial recreation resources serve customers from areas beyond Southfield. Private commercial recreation facilities in Southfield include:

- **Bowling.** Plum Hollow Lanes, Southfield Bowl
- **Entertainment.** Star Theater, Millennium Theater (City-owned), Jeepers (Indoor amusement park and arcade at Northland)
- **Exercise and Athletic Clubs.** Bally's, Curves, Fitness Factory, Franklin Athletic Club, Fitness USA Supercenters, Grunt Personal Training Studio, It Figures of Southfield, Powerhouse Gym
- **Golf.** Plum Hollow Golf Course (Private)
- **Swim Clubs.** Cranbrook Swim Club, Village Swim Club (Lathrup Village)

Multiple-Family Residential Complexes. The majority of multiple-family complexes, including rental apartments, townhouses and condominiums, provide their tenants and owners with on-site recreational facilities. Swimming pools, clubhouses, fitness centers and weight rooms, tot lots, tennis courts or on-site natural open space may be provided. Facilities in these complexes are not available to the general public. These recreational facilities are important because they provide recreational opportunities within close proximity to the population residing in the complexes. In addition, these facilities supplement municipal recreation resources in the vicinity.

Nature Preserves. The city of Southfield encourages environmentally sensitive design for new projects being built in Southfield. A premiere example of privately developed nature preservation is located just north of Eleven Mile within the American Commerce Center. The office development features a boardwalk over protected wetlands and interpretive nature signage which is open to the public.

Regional Facilities

Regional parks offer unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as wildlife viewing and nature study, fishing, boating, hiking and trail use. Many also include active play areas such as ballfields or courts. There are several regional recreational opportunities located within a short drive of Southfield, provided by Oakland County, Wayne County, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and other sources.

Oakland County Park Facilities. Since 1966, more than 6,000 acres of land have been acquired by the Oakland County Park System with assistance from state and federal governments. To date, there are 11 County parks which range in size from 125 acres to 1,088 acres. Only Glen Oaks, Red Oaks and Lyon Oaks are located in the southern half of the County; however, Southfield is conveniently situated within a short drive of the following facilities:

- Glen Oaks (Farmington Hills)
- Lyon Oaks (west of Wixom)
- Red Oaks (Madison Heights)
- Waterford Oaks (northwest of Pontiac)
- White Lake Oaks (White Lake Twp.)

Wayne County Park Facilities. The Wayne County Park System has more than 7,500 acres of public recreation land throughout 10 parks. The Wayne County parks listed below are conveniently located within a short distance of Southfield; and provide athletic fields, golf courses, swimming pools, trails, playgrounds and picnic shelters.

- Bell Creek (Redford Township)
- Chandler Park Family Aquatic Center (Detroit)
- Hines Park (Northville to Detroit)
- Inkster Valley Golf Course (Inkster)
- Lola Valley (Redford Township)
- Lower Rouge Parkway (Inkster)
- Warren Valley Golf Course (Dearborn Heights)
- William P. Holliday Forest and Wildlife Preserve (Westland)

Other Regional Opportunities. Several other recreational facilities exist throughout the region, most of which are provided by the state of Michigan or the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. The parks provide a full range of recreational and educational opportunities, including playgrounds, picnicking, hiking, golf, biking, winter sports, golf, water-related activities, camping, boating, hunting, fishing, skiing, horseback riding, and special programs.

- **Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority Facilities .** The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority (HCMA) is a regional park district that encompasses the counties of Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw and Livingston. The HCMA regional parks located within a short drive of Southfield include Huron Meadows Metropark (Brighton), Indian Springs Metropark (White Lake), and Kensington Metropark (Milford Twp.).

- **Michigan State Facilities**. There are several Michigan State Parks in southeast Michigan totaling more than 55,000 acres of recreational lands that provide recreational opportunities to the citizens of Southfield and the surrounding areas. The state parks in the region include Dodge No. 4 State Park (Waterford), Highland Recreation Area (White Lake), Island Lake Recreation Area (Brighton), Maybury State Park. (Northville), Michigan State Fairgrounds (Detroit), Pontiac Lake Recreation Area (Waterford), and Proud Lake Recreation Area (Wixom).

Programming

Southfield Parks and Recreation offers more than 1,000 different classes, programs and special events for people of all ages and interests throughout the year. Athletics, cultural arts, and senior citizen programming represent major components of Southfield's offerings.
The types of activities currently offered include:

- **Adult Programs.** Arts, athletics, dance classes, fitness, special interest classes.
- **Children's Activities.** After school drop-in, arts and crafts, athletics, dance classes, martial arts, school break activities and specialty camps.
- **Concerts, Plays and More.** Eat to the Beat Lunchtime Concerts, Kids Koncerts Series, Metropolitan Singers, Smooth Jazz Festival (co-sponsor), SRO Productions.
- **Fun for All Ages**. Classes and athletics.
- **Senior Programs.** Art, athletics, dance, fitness and trips.
- **Special Events.** Arbor Day, Boo at the Burgh, Daddy-Daughter and Mother-Son Dances, EGGS'travaganza, Family Pool Parties, Fishing Derby, Holiday Tree Lighting, Movie Night at the Pool, Native American Festival & Mini Pow-Wow, Snow Drop/Ride with Santa, Star Spangled Southfield Festival, Teen Jam and Therapeutic Halloween Party.
- **Sports**. Baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football, golf, figure skating, hockey, soccer, softball, swimming and tennis.

More than 300,000 people attend Southfield-sponsored or co-sponsored events annually. The vast majority of these events take place on the Civic Center site, either in the Pavilion, at the ballfields or the arena and pool. Other locations include Beech Woods, Mary Thompson Farm and the Burgh site.

Many public events are also held at the Pavilion, which are sponsored by outside groups and organizations including art exhibits, antique shows and international festivals, as well as trade shows and business meetings.

Sidewalks and Multi-Use Pathways

A comprehensive pathway system adds to the overall quality of life for residents by providing access to various community facilities and parks and by offering a source of recreation for residents that bike, jog or walk. *Chapter 9 Transportation and Circulation* details the type and location of pathways that currently exist or are proposed to be provided in the future.

In addition to the City, Oakland County envisions an interconnected trail system throughout the region for enjoyment of outdoor and fitness activities. The County Parks and Recreation and the Oakland Trails Advisory Council are teaming up to expand and coordinate a network of trails.

Recommendations

The City will prepare an update to its Parks and Recreation Master Plan following adoption of this Plan. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan guides future improvements, investments and changes to parks and recreation in the City. The development of the updated Parks and Recreation Plan should build upon the goals and recommendations of this Plan.

Park and Facilities Analysis

Increased development and higher than normal use levels due to Southfield's location within the metropolitan area puts a high demand on the City's park resources. Currently, the City maintains nearly 800 acres of parks and natural open space. Where possible, the City should continue to acquire property according to the criteria of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The City should also continue to modernize and update existing facilities and maximize the use of existing parkland.

The City has a both a large number and wide variety of recreation facilities to meet the diverse needs of residents. Based on local demand, additional facilities have been identified that would best serve City residents as follows:

Playgrounds. Southfield is recognized for high quality playgrounds. New or renovated playgrounds could be located at several existing parks to help alleviate any deficiencies. Many play areas have been replaced and upgraded in recent years. A few neighborhood parks are scheduled for upgrades within the next few years.

Pathways. As the popularity of jogging, hiking, cycling and rollerblading increases, so does the demand for multi-modal pathways. Additional on- and off-street pathways are needed to create a comprehensive system in the City. Refer to *Chapter 9 Transportation and Circulation* for pathway recommendations.

Sports Fields. There is a demand to light fields for fall sports such as flag football. Currently participants are forced to go to the adjacent community of Oak Park to meet this need.

Softball Fields. While the number of softball fields is sufficient to meet demand, the City only has one lighted field and annually turns teams away. The City needs to increase the mount of lighted fields that are available.

Basketball Courts. Indoor basketball courts have been successful at Beech Woods Arena. The addition of outdoor basketball courts are considered where they do not conflict with other uses.

Volleyball Courts. The growing sport of sand volleyball has increased demand for this amenity, particularly at picnic areas and neighborhood parks. An increase in the number of courts at the Civic Center and other neighborhood locations will help to meet this demand.

Soccer Fields. The increasing popularity of soccer has caused increased demand for the number of fields. The City is able to adequately handle the current demand for soccer due to the number of fields at various schools and at Catalpa Oaks and Miller parks.

Swimming Pools. The City has no indoor pool available for year-round use and offers little in the way of family water-play activities. The pools at the two high schools have limited availability for general public use and have accessibility problems. None of the pools in the City meet new competitive standards. The development of a modern indoor pool at one of the community center locations should be investigated.

Park Improvements

Each park in the Southfield system has a different level of development, from the extensive level of development of Civic Center or Freeway Park to the minimal development of Valley Woods Nature Preserve. Many parks such as Lahser Woods or Miller, were developed many years ago. They are now in need of redevelopment. Because the parks vary considerably, it is necessary to look at each one individually to identify specific items for park improvement. All new park development should feature sustainable or "green" design and operation.

Bauervic Woods Park. At 80 acres in size, Bauervic Woods is one of the largest parks in Southfield. Consisting almost entirely of woodlands and wetlands, extensive recreation facility development is precluded for this nature preserve. A new concept park plan is required that should include goals to:

- Improve public access.
- Expand and improve parking.
- Expand picnic area with shelters.
- Expand trail system with handicapped accessible portion and interpretive and directional signage.
- Improve park signage.
- Install pathways along site frontage and to park features.
- Develop restroom facilities.

Bedford Woods Park. Future plans for the park include:

- Renovate play area.
- Pave parking lots and trails.
- Additional trail to north end of park.
- Construct picnic shelter and picnic area.
- Improve park signage.
- Install sand volleyball court.
- Renovate tennis courts.
- Add park benches.
- Develop new soccer fields.
- Landscaping.

Beech Woods Park. Beech Woods Park is extensively developed but is in need of major redevelopment. A new concept park plan has been developed which features sustainable design that includes:

- Expanded picnic area.
- Improved park signage.
- Renovated parking and circulation with permeable pavement and bioswales.
- Improved site pathway system.
- New landscaping, irrigation and site lighting.
- New site furnishings.

Brace Park. Brace Park is a leased parcel from the Southfield School District. As a result, there are no plans to invest in capital improvements at this park.

Bridge Street Nature Preserve. Minor development of trails and picnic tables along the river could be developed for area residents and employees. The site could also be used to pick-up canoes dropped off at 12 Mile Road.

Carpenter Lake Nature Preserve. The newest park in the Southfield park system, Carpenter Lake opened in 2008 with an interpretive trail system and viewing and fishing platforms. Future plans for the park include the development of a nature center.

Civic Center. The Civic Center is the primary parks and recreation site for the City, as well as the center for municipal government. Recent and anticipated redevelopment of the Civic Center will result in significant relocation and improvement of facilities. Possible improvements to this site include:

- New community center including indoor pool and aquatic center.
- Enhancements to the ice arena.
- Relocation of the Parks and Recreation administrative offices.
- Miracle Field.
- Tennis center/restroom building.
- Wildlife habitat demonstration area, picnic area and trail development at pond.
- Improvements to the site pathway system
- Interpretive nature trails in preserve area.
- Improve the picnic area.
- Improved and lighted ballfields.
- Play area renovation.

Freeway Park. Freeway Park is a passive-use park built as part of the I-696 freeway construction to provide for pedestrian circulation across the highway. Improvements planned for Freeway Park include:

- Overall modernization of site including new seating, signage, landscaping and lighting.
- New playground equipment with safety surfacing.

Horsetail Woods Nature Preserve. Primarily a nature preserve, the park is the only public open

space for residents along Berg Road just north of 8 Mile. A nature trail could be developed at this site in the future. Additional land to the south would encompass a larger natural area for preservation.

Hunters Lane Woods. Hunters Lane Woods is the only parkland on Berg Road between 9 Mile and 10 Mile Roads but contains some floodplain property. The site could be developed as a neighborhood park in the future and include a small picnic area, playground and pathway system. Some consideration should also be given to redesign the private road which now bisects the property into a cul-de-sac design, which requires agreement from the neighborhood.

Inglenook Park. Inglenook Park is one of Southfield's most popular parks. Opened in 1985, the park is in need of redevelopment including:

- Improve picnic facilities.
- Improved site pathway system.
- Landscape improvements.
- Improved park signage.
- Redevelop fitness trail.
- Site furnishings.
- Lighting for ballfields.
- Additional parking.
- Ballfield shelter.

John Grace Community Park and Recreation Center. Future improvements are limited to new park signage.

John R. Miller Park. Goals for future improvements are as follows:

- New playground equipment.
- Improve site pathway system.
- Improve park signage.
- Landscape.
- Replace fencing around tennis courts and neighborhood to the west.

Lahser Woods Park. Lahser Woods Park is a relatively old park which needs completely redeveloped. Including:

- Pave parking lot.
- Improve site pathway system.
- Landscape improvement package.
- Park benches.
- Improve park signage.
- Renovate tennis court.

Lincoln Woods Nature Preserve. The City should coordinate development of this site with the adjacent elementary and junior high schools to develop an environmental education program and interpretive trail system. MDOT developed a wet prairie habitat and pond on both Lincoln Woods and MDOT property to the east which features re-created native grass habitats. This MDOT property will ultimately be incorporated into Lincoln Woods and is currently under City management. The interpretive trail system would allow public access to a unique and a sensitive environment after a five-year establishment period.

Pebble Creek Park. This would also be a good location for installation of a sand volleyball court as a companion facility with the picnic area. The playground is in poor condition and does not meet current standards for accessibility and needs to be replaced. Supplemental tree planting, particularly mature trees in the picnic area, should also be planned. The newly opened American Drive exit ramp from I-696 caused the relocation of the park's entrance; therefore, improved signage and access is needed.

Robbie Gage Park. Robbie Gage Park is currently undeveloped. Future enhancements are planned for neighborhood use including:

- New playground equipment.
- Parking lot.
- Picnic area.
- Trails.
- Park signage.

Seminole Street Park. Seminole Park's play equipment is in need of replacement. Park signage is also recommended at this park.

Simms Park. Simms Park could benefit from new tot lot play equipment.

Stratford Woods Commons. Primarily a passive use park with a walkway through the center, this site requires updating to include:

- Replace playground to ADA and CPSC standards.
- Improve site pathway system.
- Improve park signage.
- Landscaping and drainage improvements.
- Site furnishings.

Valley Woods. Valley Woods is one of Southfield's most significant properties. A linear park, the first

phase of trail development along the Rouge Green Corridor was completed in 1995. Future plans include a trail system to be developed along the banks of the Rouge Green Corridor from 10 Mile to 12 Mile Road. A proposed canoe drop at 12 Mile with pick ups at 10 Mile and again at 8 Mile Roads would provide unique recreational opportunities in the City on a seasonal basis. Fish habitat improvements and stream bank erosion reparations, which run from Telegraph Road to I-696, should be extended through the river's length to improve water quality and fishing opportunities for Southfield residents. There is also a need for better pedestrian access from Civic Center Drive.

Land Acquisition

Southfield is a highly developed community with relatively little vacant land. Much of the vacant land is suitable only for limited recreational development due to a high incidence of wetlands, floodplain or mature woodlands. Vacant land should be investigated by the city of Southfield to maintain a comprehensive open space system and develop active parks in underserved neighborhoods. The City should continue to acquire land along the Rouge River and its tributaries.

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund has been the primary source of all acquisitions in the past along with landowner donation of local match requirements; however, other sources of funding will continue to be sought.

As an alternative to acquiring the additional properties, the City should consider the use of conservation easements with access. This ensures the long term preservation of natural features and open space, while providing recreational access through pathways or nature trails.

The following is a list of acquisition proposals; some specific, some general, which represent the Parks and Recreation Department's priorities for land acquisition. The program is intended to be flexible and is dependent on the property owner's willingness to sell to the City and in most situations wait for outside funding to become available.

- Properties suitable for neighborhood or community park development in Sections 20, 21, 26, 27, 29 and 35.
- Large parcels along the Rouge Green Corridor with significant natural features as identified in the Green Infrastructure Plan prepared by Oakland County should be considered for acquisition whenever they become available.
- Property south of Horsetail Woods which is environmentally sensitive and on the Evans Branch of the Rouge Green Corridor.
- Property along the Rouge Green Corridor, particularly that which is contiguous to Valley Woods.
- Property at the rear portion of the WXYT property. It is the only Southfield property identified as significant on the Michigan Natural Feature Inventory listed with the Natural Conservancy.
- Acquisitions of property contiguous to existing parkland, school sites or portions thereof.
- Properties which possess significant natural resource and scenic values such as wetlands, mature woodlands, and floodplains. Each property would be evaluated individually for quality and suitability for parkland.