

2017-
2022

City of Caro, Michigan Parks and Recreation Master Plan



Leisure Planning and Solutions, LLC
1717 Heritage Way
Mount Pleasant, MI 48858
989-774-4471
Leisureplanningsolutions.com

Preparation and Adoption

The 2017-2022 Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed during 2016 with assistance from numerous community groups, organizations, and individuals many of whom will be mentioned in this document. The planning process was facilitated with assistance from Leisure Planning and Solutions, LLC following the Michigan Department of Natural Resources *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans*.

Caro City Council

Joseph Greene, Mayor
Michael Henry, Pro-tem
Charlotte Kish
Brian Rickwalt
Rick Lipan
Gordon Taggett
Herb Sheardy

Caro Parks & Recreation Committee

LeRoy Hayward, Chair
Debra Lipan
Jeffrey Molby
Conni Sharp
Sean Smith
Bill Pouliot
Brian Rickwalt, Liaison



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Leisureplanningsolutions.com

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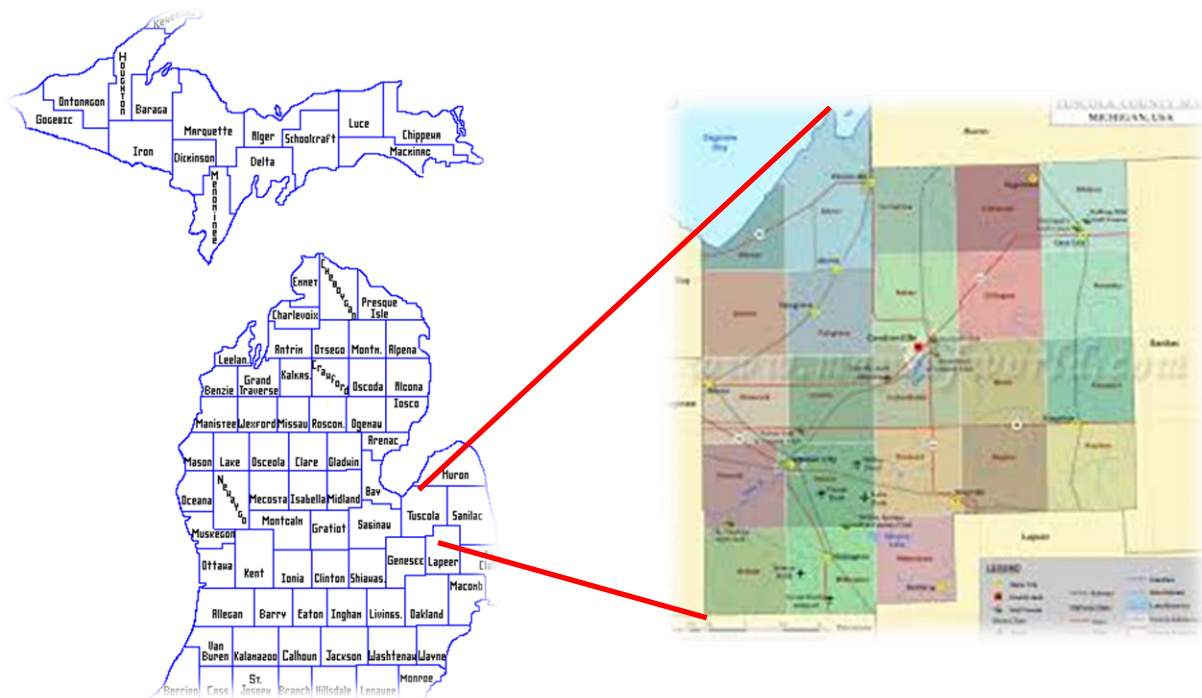
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I. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

GEOGRAPHY

The City of Caro is located in Tuscola County in Michigan's "Thumb" region. Caro is at the center of Tuscola County at the intersection of M-24 and M-81. The City of Caro is made up of 2.8 square miles of land straddling the Almer Township and Indianfield Township line.

Caro is the county seat of Tuscola County and is also the largest inhabited place in the county.



POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION:

The City of Caro had a population of 4,229 at the 2010 US Census. Caro has enjoyed a relatively level population since 1980. The population has remained in the 4,000 plus range since the 1980 US Census with a small loss in population of only 88 over those thirty years or just 2%. Neighboring townships have not fared so well. Indianfield Township has seen a population decline of 582 residents (17%) from a high of 3,387 in 1970. Likewise, Almer Township has seen a population decline of 605 (22%) from its high of 2,702 in 1980.

ETHNIC COMPOSITION:

The population of Caro is almost 92% white and just over 5% Hispanic. Each other ethnic group make up less than 1% of the population.

POVERTY:

Current census estimates indicate that 21.5% of City residents have household incomes below the poverty level including 29.8% of residents under the age of 18 and 22.2% of adults over the age of 65.

EDUCATION:

Eighty-Seven percent of Caro residents have a high school degree or higher. Over eighteen percent have bachelor's, graduate, or professional degrees. Over twelve percent of the population over age 25 does not have a high school degree or equivalent.

HOUSEHOLDS:

37% of Caro households are married couple families. Many households are occupied by a single resident. Over 14% are individuals over 65 living alone while almost 22% are other individuals living alone. Single parent households make up another 13% of households.

INCOME:

Median household income (and benefits) in Caro is \$33,656 although the average household income is \$45,963. The discrepancy is explained because almost 10% of households have incomes in excess of \$100,000. For families, incomes are even higher with median family income at \$49,286 and average family income at \$59,984.

EMPLOYMENT:

Fifty-nine percent of residents over the age of 16 are employed. The leading occupations in the city are management, business, sciences, and arts (20%), Service occupations (28.5%), and sales and office occupations (25.6%). The leading Industries in which residents are employed include education, health, and social services (29.3%), retail trade (15.3%), art, entertainment, recreation, accommodations, and food service (10.7%), and manufacturing (10.3%).

AGE:

The median age of Caro residents is 42.6 years. Over twenty percent are 65 years or older. Almost 21% are nineteen years of age or younger. Caro is an aging community. Since 1980 the mean age of Caro residents has increased from 30.8 years to 39.6 years.

MICHIGAN:

By comparison with the state of Michigan data:

- Caro residents are older than the state average by 4.6 years
- Caro has a much lower percentage of non-Caucasian and ethnic residents.
- Caro has is a higher proportion of seniors and a lower proportion of youth 19 and younger.
- Caro has a higher percentage of persons living in poverty.
- Caro has a lower percentage of persons with education beyond high school.
- Caro households have income more than \$13,000 less that the state median.

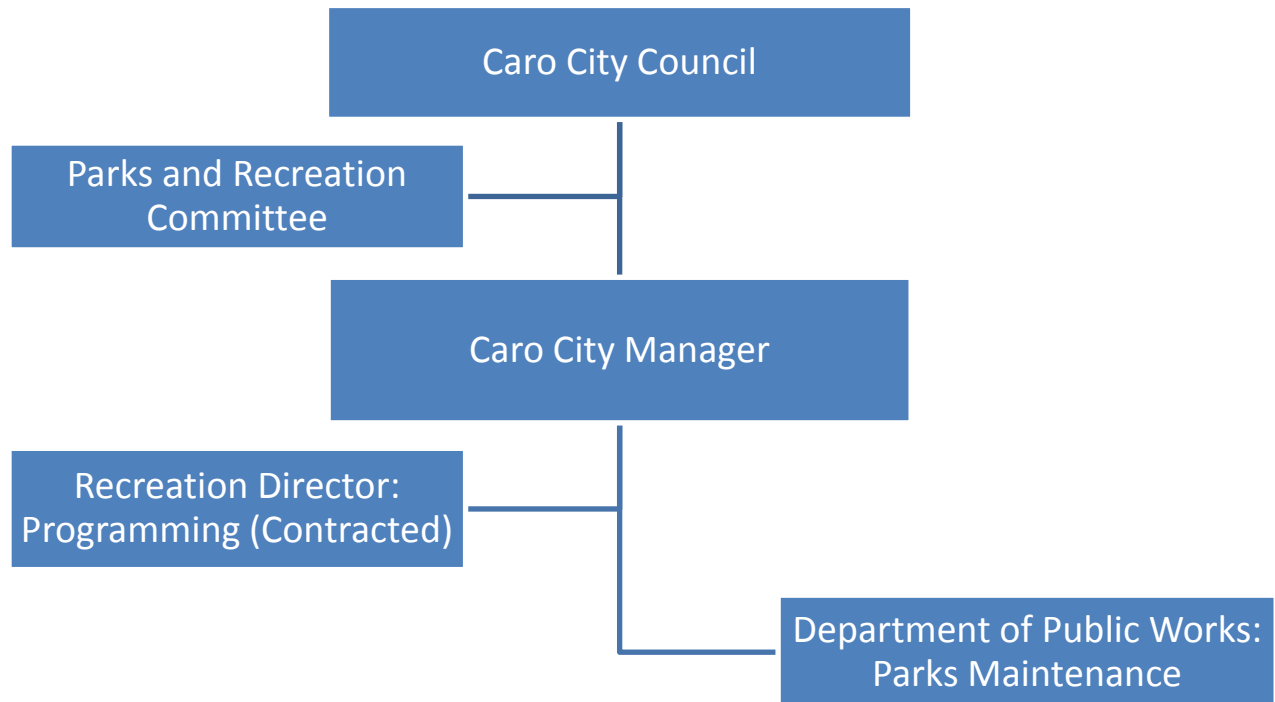
	Caro	Michigan
Ethnicity (% non-white)	8%	20.1%
Poverty (% population)	21.5%	16.2%
Education (High School or higher)	87.5%	89.3%
(Bachelor, masters, professional)	18.1%	26.4%
Income (Median Household)	\$33,656	\$49,087
Employment (% in labor force)	59%	61.4%
(not employed)	*6.8%	7%
Age (Median)	42.6 years	39.3 years
(% 19 and younger)	20.8%	26%
(% 65 and older)	20.5%	19.6%
With a Disability (ages 18 - 64)	*17.5	12.7%

*county data

Table 1: Selected Community Characteristics

II. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:



CITY COUNCIL:

The City of Caro is organized as a Home Rule City in the State of Michigan. The City Council is made up of the Mayor and six council members. Day-to-day operations of city government is handled by the City Manager.

Parks and Recreation in Caro is authorized under PA 56 of 1917; the Recreation and Playgrounds Act which is titled *AN ACT authorizing cities, villages, counties, townships and school districts to operate systems of public recreation and playgrounds*.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE:

The Mayor and City Council approves and appoints the Parks and Recreation Committee (PRC) which is comprised of:

- Five members who live in the Caro School District or have at least one child attending the Caro Community Schools plus.
- One member appointed by the Caro School Board.
- One member of the City Council serves as a liaison and is appointed by the Mayor.

The PRC serve as an advisory body to the City Council and the City Manager. The PRC advises the Council and Director on matters including policy development, park improvement, park and recreation planning, and other issues as requested. The PRC holds monthly public meetings.

PARKS:

The Public Works Department provides maintenance support for Parks and Recreation and is responsible for mowing public spaces including parks.

RECREATION:

The Parks and Recreation Director position is currently vacant. The City has contracted with a private service provider to plan, organize, and implement events and recreation programs for the City of Caro. The vendor hires her own staff.

When the Director position is filled, the Parks and Recreation Director is responsible for hiring seasonal personnel as needed to assist with recreation programming and park maintenance. The Director is also responsible for planning, promoting, and implementing recreation programs, staying current with industry trends, grant writing, collaborating and partnering with other local recreation providers, coordinating maintenance of parks with Public Works, communicating with the PRC, City Manager, and Council. The Director reports directly to the City Manager and prepares agendas for PRC meetings. In the absence of the Parks and Recreation Director the City Manager is responsible for these tasks.

BUDGET:

Caro Parks And Recreation Budget			
	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>
Operations & Maintenance	\$4,560	\$61,388	\$39,103
Programming	\$7,000	\$7,000	\$7,000
Capital Expenditures	\$110,820	\$0	\$0
Total Budget	\$122,380	\$68,388	\$46,103

SOURCES OF FUNDING:

Parks and recreation receives primary funding from the City's general fund. User fees from recreation programs account for a minor portion of funding for parks and recreation. In addition to general fund allocations and user fees parks and recreation include donations from area businesses and organization on a project-by-project basis. The City also applies for grant funding when appropriate.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

As is the case in most small communities, numerous players make up the fabric of parks, recreation and leisure services including the public sector, the non-profit sector, and the commercial sector. Caro is fortunate to have a number of businesses, agencies, and organizations that play an active role in providing places, programs, and services to meet the needs of city residents.

- **CARO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS:** The City and Caro Community School have an excellent working relationship. The city and schools share facilities, work together on sports tournaments, camps, and special events.
- **CARO SENIOR SHUFFLEBOARD CLUB:** The Caro Senior Shuffleboard club is an active community organization offering classes and competition in the local community as well as hosting regional and state-wide events in Caro. The club makes use of city outdoor courts with the city partnering to provide maintenance and improvements.
- **TUSCOLA COUNTY FAIR BOARD:** The Fair Board works with the City to maintain and manage the fairground property. The Fair Board sponsors the Tuscola County Fair on property owned by the city.
- **CARO AREA TRAILS SYSTEM COMMITTEE:** The city supports the work of the Trails Committee to promote and advance a system of community trails and improve opportunities for walking, running, and riding.
- **CARO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE:** Promotes the Caro community. Sponsors cars & crafts weekend, gingerbread village, the farmer's market, and other community activities and events.
- **CARO EXCHANGE CLUB:** The Exchange Club leases 35 acres of heavily wooded property from the City. The Exchange Club works to promote the use of the property for walking, wildlife viewing, and outdoor recreation. The property is also used by local schools and scout groups to study forest ecology and environmental education.

- **CASS RIVER GREENWAY PLANNING COMMITTEE:** The City partners with the Greenway Committee. Cass River Greenway is an effort by a group of local volunteers, assisted by professional resources and municipal leaders, working to enhance recreational opportunities and the environmental well-being of the Cass River Corridor.
- **CARO BASEBALL FEDERATION:** The Caro Baseball Federation (CBF) organizes and runs youth baseball and softball for Caro area youth. The CBF uses and maintains the Knights of Columbus ball field complex just east of Caro on M-81.
- **CARO AMERICAN YOUTH SOCCER ORGANIZATION (AYSO):** The AYSO organizes and runs youth soccer program for Caro area youth and maintains fields located at Darbee Farm Park just east of Caro on M-81.
- **CARO GUN CLUB (TUSCOLA COUNTY CONSERVATION CLUB):** The gun club is a membership organization that leases 40 acres of city land. The gun club maintains facilities for shooting sports and provides instruction and competition. The city supports activities of the gun club.
- **CARO GOLF CLUB AND ARROWHEAD GOLF CLUB:** Caro is fortunate to have two golf courses within the immediate area. Arrowhead is an 18-hole public course and Caro Golf Club is a 9-hole public course. Both courses provide opportunities for instruction, training, league play, tournaments, and open play.
- **CARO ROTARY CLUB:** Raised funds for disc golf goals located at the fairground.
- **CARO MOOSE LODGE:** Ball diamonds, campground, family recreation.
- **CARO 150 WINTERFEST & SNOWMOBILE RACES:** Started in 2009, the Caro Winter Fest (CWF) is a hometown festival featuring family fun, wintertime activities, professional snowmobile racing, and community happenings. The event typically takes place the third weekend in January.
- **TUSCOLA COUNTY PUMPKIN FESTIVAL:** The Tuscola County Pumpkin Festival is the premier fall festival in the Thumb of Michigan. The festival brings the beauty of fall to downtown Caro with painted and decorated pumpkins from area schools.
- **MUSIC IN THE PARK:** Atwood Park is the location for this long running Caro favorite. Music in the Parks is sponsored by the Downtown Development Authority and grants from the Tuscola County Community Foundation and is coordinated by local volunteers who plan the 13 week

calendar of entertainment while the city manages the park for these events. Citizens arrive with lawn chairs that often spill out into the streets.

- **INDIANFIELDS TOWNSHIP PARK:** Indianfield Township Park, located just to the west of Caro on M-81, is a 67 acre mostly natural area along the bank of the Cass River. Indianfield Township Park includes opportunities for nature-based recreation, picnicking, hiking, river access, ball diamond, horseshoes, and volleyball.
- **ALMER TOWNSHIP PARK:** Darbee Farm Park is located just east of Caro on M-81 and includes seven soccer fields, two pavilions, a softball field, sand volleyball, basketball, playgrounds and picnic areas.
- **TUSCOLA COUNTY TECHNOLOGY CENTER / TUSCOLA ISD:** The Technology Center makes its facilities and meeting spaces available for parks and recreation programs. Former students have participated in projects to enhance Caro parks including construction of park signage. The Technology Center has also assisted with marketing recreation programs and conducting recreation interest surveys.

CARO CITY PARKS

The National Recreation and Park Association created a *Recommended Classification System for Local and Regional Recreation, Open Space, and Trails*. These recommended classifications are reiterated by the Department of Natural Resources *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans* handbook that guides park and recreation master planning in Michigan. In the case of the City of Caro, this classification system is being used.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS:

Generally about 5-10 acres, serving up to a ½ mile radius. Recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Play equipment, open play areas, and sport fields. Schools sites often serve a similar purpose in communities.

By their size and residential locations, three Caro city parks can best be classified as Neighborhood Parks. Williamsburg Park, Colonial Park, and Northwood Heights Parks were deeded to the city by the developers as a condition of the development of these neighborhoods. Each of these properties is 1.5 acres; slightly larger than the designation for a mini park. These properties have remained relatively undeveloped except for a Northwood Heights which has a baseball backstop and soccer nets.



Table 2: Colonial Park



Table 3: Northwood Heights Park



Table 4: Williamsburg Park

COMMUNITY PARKS:

A Community Park serves community-wide recreation needs. Defined as serving a ½ to 3 mile radius. Between 30 and 50 acres. Offering diverse recreational opportunities.

Two city parks fit into the Community Park category: Bieth Park, and Chippewa Landing Park. Being 20 and 16 acres respectively, they are small for community parks, but size is relative. The entire city of Caro is less than three miles across. Both of these parks have diverse recreation and leisure opportunities and are the “favorite” city parks based on the interest survey done during the summer

of 2016. Although both are located on the south end of the city, both are relatively accessible by surface street or sidewalk.

Bieth Park and the Tuscola County Fairground are both city owned and the use areas are relatively inseparable. Bieth Park includes tennis courts, several playgrounds, basketball courts, shuffleboard facility, equestrian arena, picnic pavilions, and restrooms.

There is one lighted softball field located in the infield of the fairground track that is used by area softball organizations sponsoring Adult leagues. In addition the Fairground property has the horse track, grandstands, and associated fairground buildings and stables.



Table 5: Bieth Park and Tuscola County Fairground

Chippewa Landing Park provides numerous leisure opportunities for Caro residents. Fronting on the Cass River, the park provides opportunities for water-based recreation including fishing and boating. A hard-surface boat ramp provides access when the water level is sufficiently high. A fishing pier is located on the west end of the park. The park also offers several playground areas, picnic shelters, grills, and tables. For winter recreation the park has a sledding hill. There are also some great wildlife viewing opportunities along the river where deer and water fowl can be spotted regularly.



Table 6: Chippewa Landing Park

PARK TRAIL:

Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus on recreational value and harmony with natural environment.

The Chippewa Landing Park Trail is a 1.1 mile paved trail that runs through Chippewa Landing Park and crosses the Cass River in two locations. The trail follows a pathway and boardwalk along M-24, passes through the park, then re-crosses the Cass River on a pedestrian bridge. The trail then connects to Columbia Street, Frank Street, and back to M-24.



Table 7: Chippewa Landing Park Trail

NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS:

Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetic character, or buffering.

The Caro Exchange Club leases 45 acres of heavily timbered city property on the southeast corner of M-24 and Gun Club Road. The Tuscola County Conservation Club (Gun Club) leases 40 acres.

The Exchange Club maintains and manages 45 acres on this public property in partnership with the city to provide opportunities for nature-based recreation, hiking, wildlife viewing, nature interpretation, environmental education, and outdoor recreation.



Table 8: Exchange Club Forrest and Caro Gun Club

SPECIAL USE AREAS:

Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single purpose use.

Four city park properties seem to fit this classification best: Noble Boulder Garden, Memorial Gardens, and Botanical Gardens offer quiet, introspective, and meditative leisure opportunities for city residents. Atwood Park offers a quiet place near downtown with benches, attractive landscaping, and a small gazebo. Atwood is primarily known as the location for Music in the Park during the summer months.

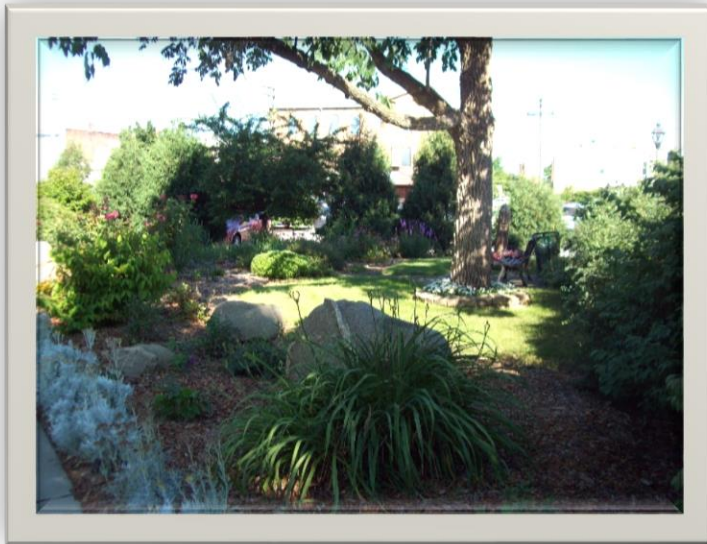


Table 9: Noble Boulder Garden

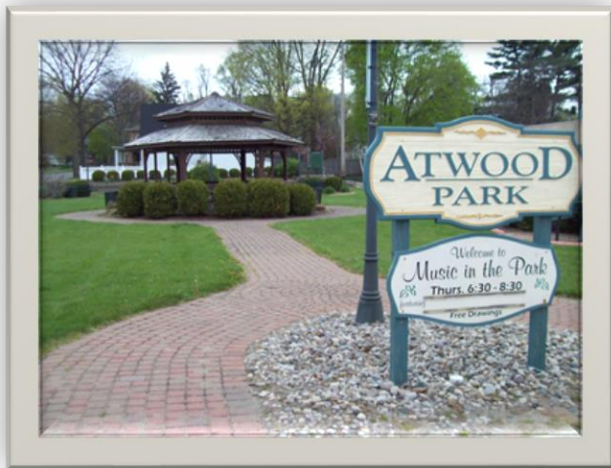


Table 10: Atwood Park (L) and Memorial Garden (R)

CARO SCHOOL PARKS AND FACILITIES

Schools are also public property. Although primarily for educational use, school properties provide additional recreation and leisure opportunities for residents of the city and surrounding community. Many youth who were surveyed indicated that school playgrounds were their favorite park.

The Caro Community School District includes four properties; a high school, a middle school, and two elementary schools. In addition, the Tuscola County Intermediate School District's Highland Pines School for special needs students is located in the City of Caro.

All of the city schools have gyms, the elementary schools have playgrounds that may be used for community recreation on a space available basis. See Table ____ for complete inventory.

ALMER TOWNSHIP PARK

Almer Township Park, located just east of Caro, provides numerous opportunities for active and passive recreation including ballfields, volleyball and basketball courts, horseshoes, playground equipment, open field space, picnic areas and pavilions.

The southeastern third of the park hosts seven soccer fields, a pavilion, clubhouse, and concession stand that are home to the Caro American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) programs.



Table 11: Almer Township (Darbee Farm) Park

INDIANFIELDS TOWNSHIP PARK

Indianfields Township Park, located just west of Caro, offers excellent opportunities for natural resource based recreation with access to the Cass River. The park includes trails, picnic sites and pavilions.



Table 12: Indianfield Township Park

OTHER AREA RECREATION AND PARK RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources maintains a public access at five sites in Tuscola County.



In addition several other municipalities and townships also maintain access points on lakes and rivers including:

- Anderson Ponds
- Cat Lake
- Fish Point State Wildlife Area

State fish and game areas in Tuscola County include:

- Almer Township State Game Area
- Cass City State Game Area (western portion; majority)
- Clark Lake State Game Area
- Columbia Township State Game Area
- Deford State Game Area
- Denmark Township State Game Area
- Elmwood Township State Game Area
- Fish Point State Wildlife Area
- Gagetown State Game Area (southern portion; majority)
- Murphy Lake State Game Area
- Quanicassee State Wildlife Area (eastern portion)
- Tuscola State Game Area
- Vassar State Game Area

The greater portions of state lands open for hunting are located just east and south of the City of Caro.

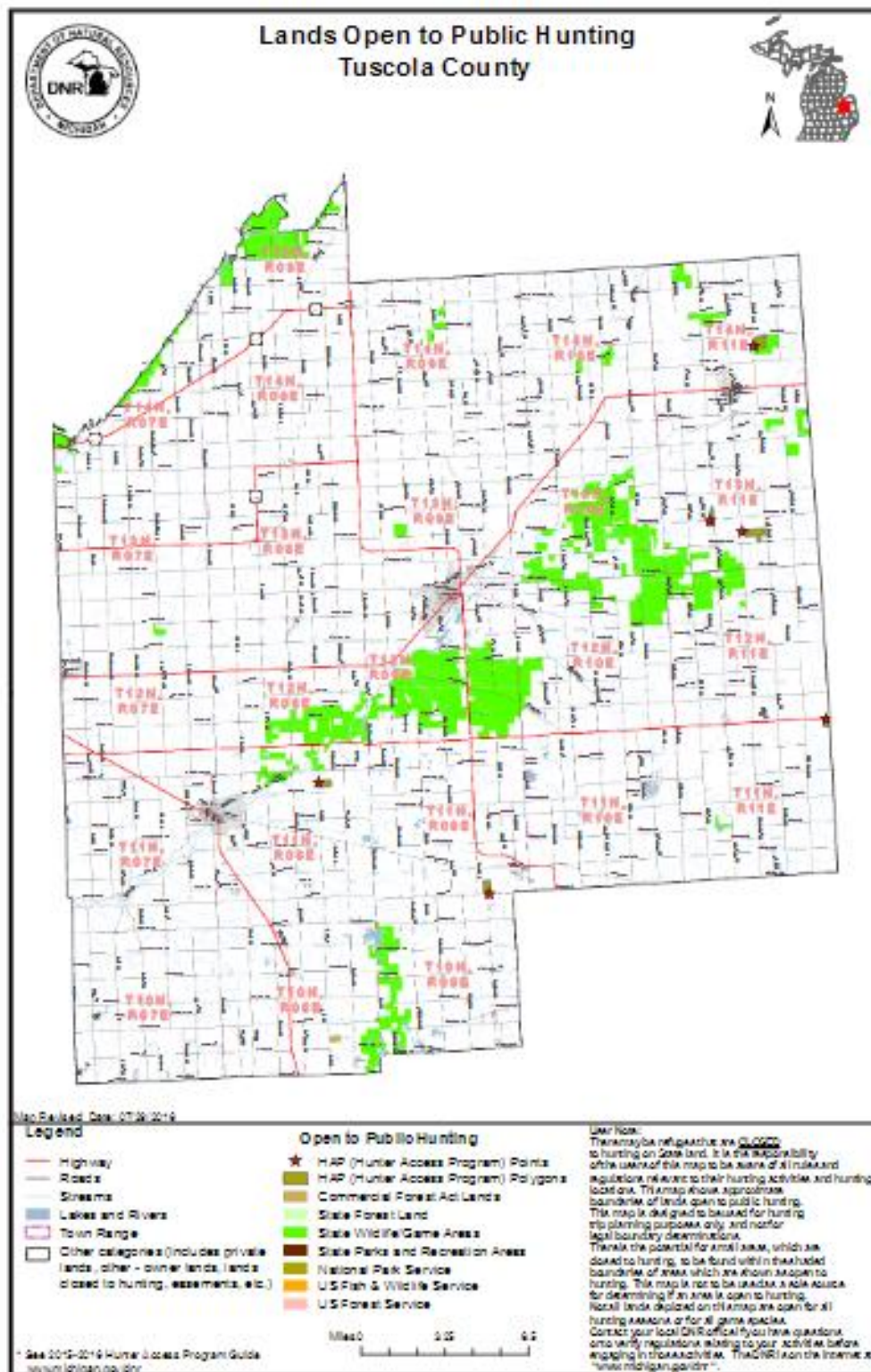


Table 13: State Lands Open to Hunting

The 2017-2021 Tuscola County Parks and Recreation Master Plan contains a detailed inventory of Township, Village, and City parks and recreation areas within Tuscola County.

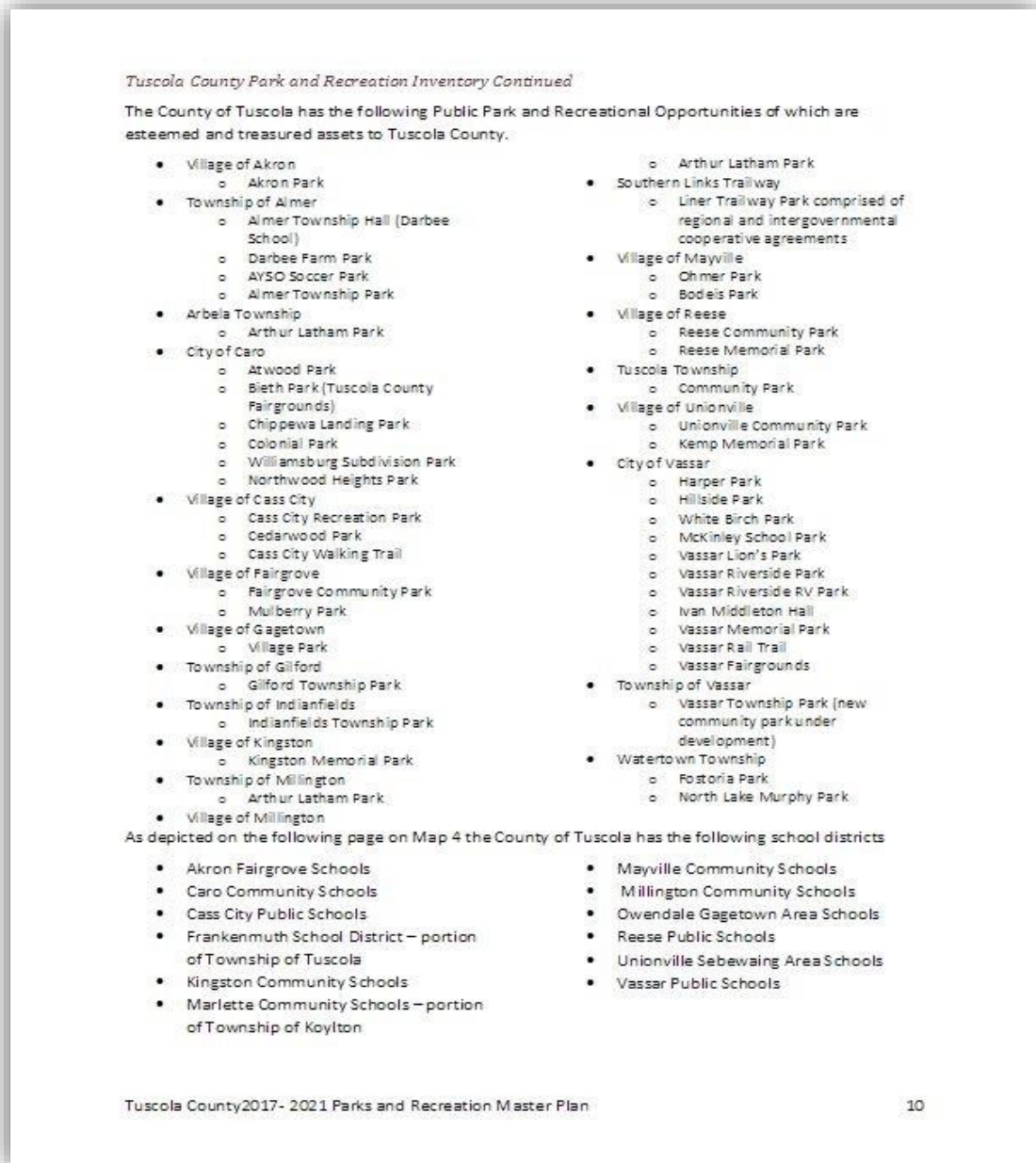


Figure 1: Tuscola County Inventory¹

¹ Tuscola County Parks and Recreation Master Plan: 2017-2021

STANDARDS ANALYSIS

Standards offer a method of making a general comparison of the recreation and park assets of a given community with a *national average*. Standards were developed in the 1960's and 1970's by national park and recreation organizations to provide useful data for park and recreation planning. Standards most commonly used are the Park Land Standard, which measures the amount of park land needed, and the Activity Area Standard, which measures the types and number of recreation activity types in a community.

PARK LAND STANDARD



The City of Caro owns 43 acres of park space. Of that 38.5 acres are developed park spaces. The long-standing standard for park land for communities has been between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of developed park land per 1,000 resident. Based on Caro's population of 4,229, the Caro has 9.1 acres of developed park land per 1,000 residents; well within the recommended standard.

RECREATION ACTIVITY AREA STANDARD



Between the assets owned by the City of Caro, Caro Public Schools and other community organization the City of Caro meets or exceeds recommended standards for most activity types. For example, between the city, the schools, and other organizations there are 4 baseball and 9 softball ball fields serving the city but the standard would suggest only 2 baseball (1 youth and 1 regulation) and 1 softball field.

It should be noted the activity area standards should be looked at with caution as participation trends and populations have changed significantly since the standards were created and many currently popular recreation activities were not represented in the original standards: i.e. spray parks, dog parks, disc golf, etc.

	Classification	Size	Service Area	
1	Mini-Park	2,500 S.F. to 1 Acre	Less than ¼ mile distance in residential settings	.025 to .5 ac./1,000
2	Neighborhood Park	1 to 15 Acres	One neighborhood to ¼ to ½ mile radius	1.0 to 2.0 ac./1,000
3	Community Park	16 – 99 Acres	Several neighborhoods to 2 mile radius	5.0 to 8.0 ac./1,000
NA	Metropolitan Park	100 – 499 Acres	Several communities within 1 hours drive	5.0 to 10.0 ac./1,000
NA	Regional Park	500+ Acres	Several communities within 1 hours drive	Variable
6	Special Use Areas	Varies depending on size	No applicable standard	Variable
7	Linear Park/Linkages	Sufficient width to protect resources and provide maximum usage	No applicable standard	Variable

NA: Park Type not applicable in City of Caro.

Table 14: Park Type Legend

Table 15: Park and Recreation Inventory

Site	Park Type	Acerage	Ownership	Ball Diamonds	Basketball Courts	Volleyball Courts	Tennis Courts	Football / Soccer Fields	Horseshoe Pits	Playground Equipment	Playfield (open)	River access / Boat launch	Picnic Area	Pavillion / Shelter	Restrooms	Walking trail	Other / Comments
City of Caro Parks / Facilities																	
Williamsburg Park	NP	1.5	Caro														Undeveloped open space
Colonial Park	NP	1.5	Caro														Undeveloped open space
Atwood Park	SUP	0.75	Caro											1			Bench seating, gardens.
Northwood Heights Park	NP	1.5	Caro														Undeveloped open space
Bieth Park	CP	20	Caro	2	2+		5		4	Y	1		Y	2	1*		Disc golf, shuffleboard courts, riding arena. *restrooms locked
Chippewa Landing Park	CP	16	Caro							Y		Y*	Y	2	1*	Y	Sledding hill, boat ramp, fishing pier, BBQ pits. *portable restrooms
Noble Bolder Park (Garden)	SUP	0.25	Caro														Bench seating, gardens.
Memorial Gardens	SUP	0.5	Caro														Bench seating, gardens.
Botanical Gardens	SUP	1	Caro														Bench seating, gardens.
Chippewa Landing Park Trail	LP		Caro													Y	1.1 mile paved trail passing through Chippewa Landing Park
School Properties & Facilities																	
McComb Elementary	SP	2	Sch		1					Y	Y						
Schall Elementary	SP	1.5	Sch		1					Y	Y						
Caro Middle School	SP	1	Sch		2												
Highland Pines School	SP	2	Sch					1			2						
Caro High School	SP	7	Sch	2	2			1			2			1			1/4 mile track, indoor pool,
Tuscola Technology Center	SP	NA	Cnty														Indoor Pool
Other Local Parks & Facilities																	
Tuscola County Fairground	SUA	20	Caro	1										1	3		Horse track, stables, show arenas.
K of C Ball Diamond Complex	SUA	8	Priv	7										1	1		Concession stand
Indianfields Township Park	CP	67	Twp	1		1			4	Y	Y	Y	Y	4	2	Y	
Darbee Farm Park	CP	40	Twp	1	1	1				Y	Y		Y		1	Y	
Caro Exchange Club Forest	SUA	45	Priv													Y	Natural area with interpretive trails
Caro Gun Club	SUA	40	Priv														Private membership club
Arrowhead Golf Course	SUA	NA	Priv														18 hole golf course
Caro Golf Club	SOA	NA	Priv														9 hole golf course

#Recreational facilities available to the public. *Open field areas not maintained for a particular sport activity.

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ACCESSIBILITY EVALUATION

Department of Natural Resources planning guidelines place a great deal of emphasis on Barrier Free access to parks and recreation areas. City parks underwent an ADA assessment of in 2009.

Visual inspection of the parks made during the inventory process reiterate the need to take additional steps to make parks more accessible. There is evidence that improvements have been made since 2009.

Park	Rating	Comments
Atwood	3	Lacking accessible parking and signage, benches are not along an accessible pathway.
Bieth	2	Lacks accessible parking and signage. Playgrounds, pavilions, picnic tables and grills not along accessible pathway. Playground equipment lacking accessible features.
Botanical Garden	3	
Boulder Garden	4	
Chippewa Landing	3	Lacks accessible parking and signage. Playground equipment not located along accessible trail, surface not accessible. Restrooms not accessible.
Chippewa Park Trail	3	Lacks benches for resting at appropriate intervals.
Colonial	NA	Not developed
Exchange Club Forest	2	Lacking accessible parking. No accessible trails.
Memorial	3	
Northwood Heights	2	Minimal development: Lacks accessible parking and signage, pathways to access play elements.
Williamsburg	NA	Not developed

Standards Key:

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. The entire park meets accessibility guidelines.
5. The park was developed/renovated using principles of universal design.

Examples of inaccessible park features include an inaccessible playground surface leading to a wheelchair transfer; inaccessible portable toilets; picnic shelter not connected to an accessible pathway; inaccessible approach to informational signage.

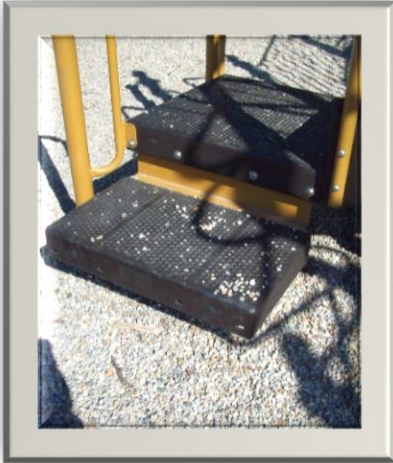


Table 16: Common ADA Issues

IV. PLANNING PROCESS

The planning process undertaken complies with the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans* Published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

The planning process began on April 28, 2016 with an initial meeting between the planner (Leisure Planning and Solutions, LLC, and the City of Caro Parks and Recreation Committee following awarding of the contract. Background research (Community Description, Administration & Financial structure, Recreation inventory) and public input (Cars & Crafts weekend, needs & interest survey, public meeting) began in June.

V. PUBLIC INPUT

Two primary methods of public input were chosen: A needs and interest survey and an invited public meeting.

PUBLIC SURVEY:

With input from the Parks and Recreation Committee a short household survey was and a short youth survey were constructed. The survey was designed to be completed either in person or online. The public survey was begun June 3 & 4 during Cars and Crafts festival; an annual Caro event. Leisure Planning and Solutions made arrangements to have a booth for the Cars & Crafts festival. Festival visitors were intercepted at the booth on both days of the festival and asked to complete either the household survey (adults) or the youth survey (youth).

The online survey was also launched that weekend. The web address of the survey was advertised at the booth. The planner also handed out over 150 cards with the survey address to festival goers with encouragement to complete the survey at home in their leisure.

In addition to attending the Cars & Crafts festival, survey collection boxes were placed at city hall and at the Caro Area District Library through the end of July.

SURVEY RESULTS

One hundred ten participants completed the park and recreation survey between June 3 and September 7, 2016. Respondents represented a broad range of local residents.

Residence: Respondents were asked to identify where they live. Almost 70% indicated they were residents of the City of Caro while 15% indicated they live in neighboring Almer or Indianfields Township. Fifteen percent were from other communities.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
City of Caro	69.7%	76
Almer Township	7.3%	8
Indianfields Township	7.3%	8
Other	15.6%	17

Table 17: Where Respondents Live

Respondents Age: The largest group of survey respondents were youth from 13 thru 18 followed closely by adults ages 51 thru 60. Only two youth completed the survey online. Only 24 total surveys were completed online.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
5 thru 12	1.9%	2
13 thru 18	22.4%	24
19 thru 30	15.9%	17
31 thru 40	15.0%	16
41 thru 50	10.3%	11
51 thru 60	21.5%	23
61 thru 70	7.5%	8
Over 70	5.6%	6

Table 18: Respondent Age

Proximity to a City Park: The majority of respondents indicated that they lived closest to The Fairgrounds/Bieth Park (41%) and Chippewa Landing Park (20%), placing the majority of park users on the south side of town below Frank Street.

Which city park do you live closest to?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Bieth Park	13.0%	10
The Fairgrounds	28.6%	22
Williamsburg Park	2.6%	2
Northwood Heights Park	3.9%	3
Botanical Garden	11.7%	9
Exchange Club Forest	2.6%	2
Chippewa Landing Park	19.5%	15
Colonial Park	1.3%	1
Atwood Park	7.8%	6
Memorial Gardens	2.6%	2
Chippewa River Trail	6.5%	5

Table 19: Proximity to a City Park

Parks Frequented: Chippewa Landing Park is clearly the most popular of Caro's city parks with almost 60% of respondents indicating it as a frequent destination for members of their household. The least use park properties were the undeveloped parks: Colonial, Northwood Heights, and Williamsburg. Twice as many respondents indicated they frequented the Fairgrounds compared to Bieth Park. This may be a function of confusion over the difference between the two, or the fact that these questions were answered only by adults.

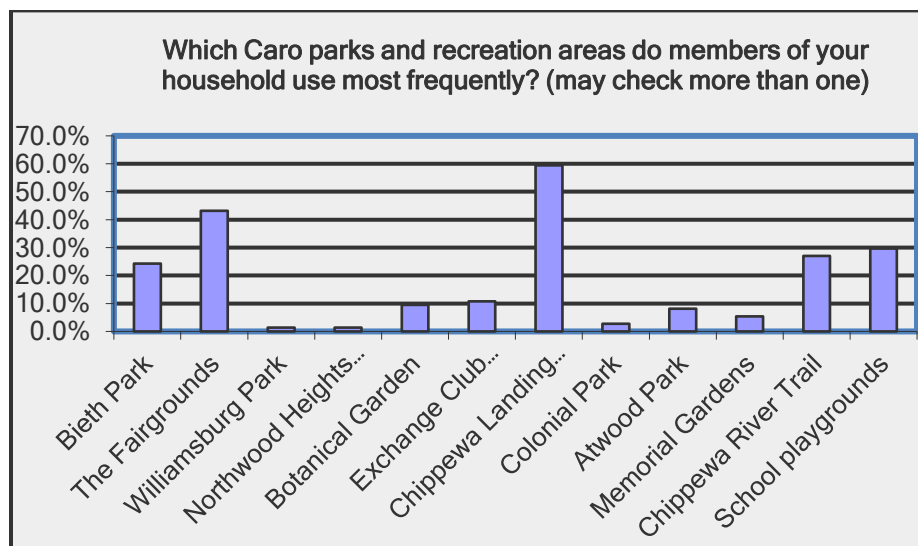


Table 20: Parks Most Frequented

Favorite Park of Youth: It is interesting that none of the youth surveyed indicated Bieth Park as their favorite. Rather, Chippewa Landing was the clear favorite of youth while about 20% of youth indicated the Fairgrounds was their favorite. School Playgrounds were also cited as a popular choice by just under 20% of youth.



Table 21: Favorite Park of Youth

Opinions about Caro Parks: Respondents were asked to record their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about Caro Parks. A five-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1) was employed.

Answer Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Rating Average
I feel that Caro parks are well maintained.	6	42	13	14	2	3.47
Caro parks contribute to the livability of the community.	32	31	8	4	1	4.17
I feel my family is safe when visiting city parks.	21	50	7	2	0	4.13
I feel like the city needs to acquire additional land for park development.	19	17	32	9	2	3.53
I feel like city parks offer something for everyone in the community.	16	37	10	10	4	3.66
I feel my family is safe when traveling to city parks.	22	43	8	4	0	4.08
Caro residents have adequate access for river-based recreation.	8	29	20	17	3	3.29
City parks offer adequate opportunities to improve one's health and fitness.	15	28	22	11	2	3.55
The City is doing a good job of improving city parks.	6	27	26	11	2	3.33
Caro parks contribute to a sense of pride in the community.	18	36	16	5	1	3.86
Between the city and other local organizations there is an adequate range of recreational opportunities for all residents in Caro	7	27	12	19	7	3.11

Table 22: Opinions about Caro Parks

Respondents gave the highest overall rating to the statement: *Caro parks contribute to the livability of the community* (4.17). In addition, respondents feel safe when traveling to (4.13) and while in city parks (4.08).

The lowest overall rating to the statement: *Between the city and other local organizations there is an adequate range of recreational opportunities for all residents in Caro* (3.11). Respondents also rated access to the river low (3.29), and gave the city a low rating for efforts to improve city parks (3.33).

In considering the ratings keep in mind that on this scale a 3.0 reflects an opinion of “neither agree nor disagree”. Thus the average response to all opinion questions still leans toward “agreement”.

Priorities for Park Improvements: Respondents were asked to prioritize a number of prospective park improvements. A five-point scale ranging from highest priority (5) to lowest priority (1) was used.

Answer Options	Lowest priority	Low priority	Neither low or high priority	High priority	Highest Priority	Rating Average
Acquire more land for parks.	10	20	17	17	8	2.90
Expand access to trails.	3	7	14	31	19	3.76
Develop additional river access opportunities.	2	6	25	27	13	3.59
Develop a community center.	4	4	16	26	22	3.81
Develop existing undeveloped park lands.	5	4	15	36	14	3.68
Improve parking.	6	10	27	12	13	3.24
Improve restroom facilities.	2	0	7	30	32	4.27
Improve access to park facilities for persons with disabilities.	2	4	19	20	23	3.85

Table 23: Priorities for Park Improvement

The clear preferred focus for park improvement is the restrooms in the parks (4.27). This was the only improvement that was rated above 4.0. Improving access for persons with disabilities (3.85) followed by developing a community center (3.81) and improving access to trails (3.76) also received higher ratings. Respondents feel the lowest priority should go to acquiring more land for parks (2.90) and improving parking (3.24).

Other recommendations for Park Improvements: Respondents were given the opportunity to make their own suggestions for park improvements. Additional submitted recommendations include a dog park, some kind of water feature (pool, spray park, swimming area), trails, and improved maintenance. A full list of respondent comments can be found in Appendix C.

Priorities for Programs and Services: Respondents were asked to prioritize a number of prospective recreation programs and services. A five-point scale ranging from highest priority (5) to lowest priority (1) was used.

Wellness and fitness programs followed by teen programs and sports programs for children and youth

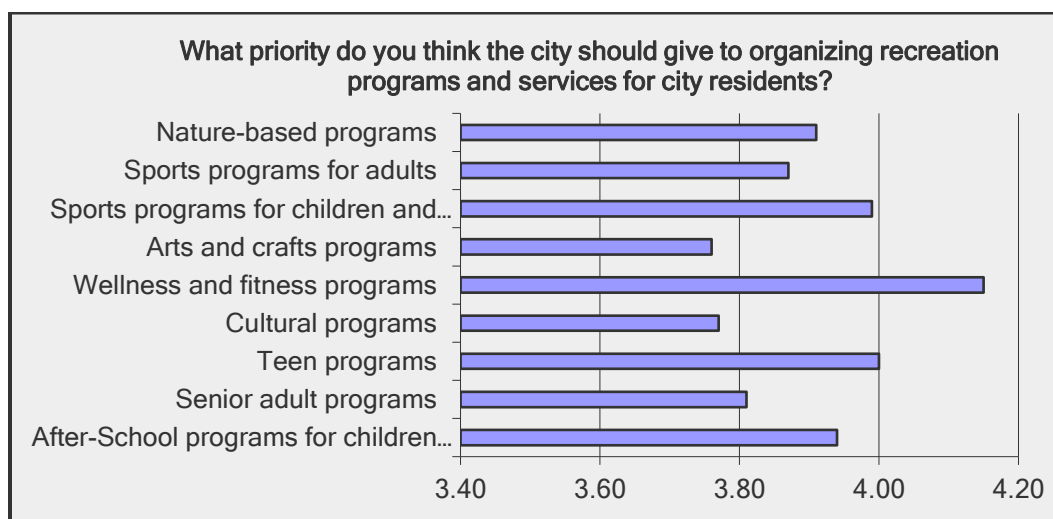


Table 24: Priorities for Programs and Services

Sources of Information: Respondents were asked to indicate where they get information about city parks and recreation activities.

The newspaper was the leading source of information for most respondents (41%) followed by the City web site (27%) and Caro Schools (22%). Radio (9%) and the Tech Center (1%) were the least used.

Thirty-one percent indicated that they used other sources of information. The most frequently mentioned other source of information was word-of-mouth, the library, community events (including Cars & Crafts), and Facebook.

How do you hear about what is happening in parks and recreation? (mark all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Village web site	27.6%	21
Electronic message board	13.2%	10
Flyers and brochures	14.5%	11
Newspaper	40.8%	31
Radio	11.8%	9
Caro schools	22.4%	17
Tuscola Tech Center	1.3%	1
Other (please specify)	31.6%	24

Table 25: Sources of Information

INVITED PUBLIC MEETING:

Twenty-five Caro area residents participated in the public meeting held on Wednesday, June 15, 2016. Over sixty individuals were identified to be personally invited because of their involvement or connection to area sport, parks & recreation, leisure, civic, arts, cultural, and education organizations as well as those in leadership in local government. The meeting was also advertised locally to the public.

The public meeting started at 6:00 pm and was held at the Caro Area District Library.

The meeting was facilitated in three phases:

- Caro Parks and Recreation: Today's Perspective
- Caro Parks and Recreation: Into the Future
- Caro Parks and Recreation: Back to Today

Caro Parks and Recreation: Today's Perspective

The first phase of the public meeting was designed to just get the participants focused in on parks and recreation in their community. In order to get the participants thinking about parks, recreation, and leisure services in Caro, participants were asked to answer the following question:

In order to meet the future recreation and leisure needs of City of Caro residents and visitors the City of Caro should....

Participants were given ten to twelve minutes to silently list their ideas. See Appendix A for a complete list of ideas submitted in this phase of the exercise. They have been categorized for the reader.

Caro Parks and Recreation: Into the Future

The second phase of the public meeting was the "future" phase. Participants were asked to teleport themselves into the future to June 15, 2026; ten years to the day from this meeting. Participants were then asked to:

think back over the previous ten years and recall all the improvements to Caro's parks, recreation facilities, streets and sidewalks, gathering spaces, and facilities and to list as many as they could recall.

Participants were given approximately ten to twelve minutes to identify all the improvements they recall over the "past" ten years.

At the end of silent listing period, participants were asked, one-by-one, to share some of the "accomplishments" they had envisioned by stating "*The accomplishment I am most proud of is*" Accomplishments were listed on flip chart pages in front of the group. Listing of

accomplishment ended once new ideas had been exhausted. The final listing of “accomplishments” included thirty items.

See Appendix B for a listing of all parks and recreation improvements that participants envisioned in this phase of the exercise. Written responses are categorized here to aid the reader. Some comments may appear in more than one category if the comment addressed more than one issue.

Caro Parks and Recreation: Back to the Present

The third phase of the public meeting brings the participants back to the current reality. The reality is that all of the ideas envisioned in the phase two exercise are likely not affordable. Therefore we need to prioritize those projects. The meeting was concluded by asking participants to “vote” for the five accomplishments they thought were the highest priority. Participants were given five colored stickers each and asked to place their stickers next to the “accomplishments” they would most value.

A total of 120 votes were cast. Following are those projects voted by the participants as the highest priority. The number of votes cast for each is indicated in parentheses.

Infrastructure:

Developed the river front property (music shell, a skateboard park, a spray park, a dog park, canoe & kayak access, docks, etc.) (31)

Trails (connecting parks, a bike park, Thumb trail hub, etc.) (17)

Built a Community Center (16)

Repair the dam (10)

Enlarged, refurbishes, updated Shuffleboard courts (3)

Administrative:

Improve accessibility (13)

Partnering (library, marketing, school district wide recreation authority, etc.) (10)

Following completion of the community description, inventory, and public meetings, a meeting was held with the Parks and Recreation Committee and the City Manager to review and synthesize the findings. The following guiding question was posed:

What should Parks do for the City of Caro?

Input from this meeting was consolidated into the following Goal statements to be used to guide development of the Action Plan.

GOAL 1: PROMOTE ACTIVE, HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

- Add new park features that encourage physical activity for all ages.
- Create a network of safe trails, paths, and sidewalk connecting city parks, township parks, schools, the library, and other public spaces with the downtown.
- Create additional opportunities for quiet, contemplative park use.

GOAL 2: CONTRIBUTE TO BUILDING A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

- Continue to support local Festivals, fairs and events that provide opportunities for community members to be engaged in their community and to interact with neighbors and visitors
- Expand opportunities for community members to participate in sports and tournaments that build teamwork and cooperation.
- Create opportunities for community members to volunteer to serve their community and neighbors.

GOAL 3: CONTRIBUTE TO A POSITIVE IMAGE, PRIDE, AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Maintain parks at a level that increases community pride.
- Exercise good stewardship of the park resources
- Offer recreation programs and activities that make memories for residents.
- Create an environment that attracts new businesses and residents

GOAL 4: PROVIDE ACCESS TO RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL CITIZENS

- Assure that all park resources are physical accessibility to residents of all ages and ability.

GOAL 5: ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

- Implement administrative policies and procedures that encourage planning, financing, marketing, and maintenance of park resources.

VII. ACTION PLAN

Following the completion of the inventory, public meeting and analysis of the survey data, and goal development a list of proposed action items was created. Action items fall under one of three categories of actions:

- **Policy Development:** Policy development items include actions to be taken by the Parks and Recreation Committee, City Manager, and City Council to provide position Caro to meet its park and recreation goals in the longer term.
- **Planning:** Planning goals include items to be taken by the Parks and Recreation Committee, City Manager, and Community members to study, recommend, and implement long-range improvements and practices to further park and recreation goals in the future.
- **Improvement:** Improvements are actions to be taken in the next five years to make immediate improvements, upgrades, and additions to park areas.

Following identification of proposed action items, members of the Parks and Recreation Committee, along with the planning consultant ranked all proposed actions on a scale of one to five in terms of priority for the City of Clare. In addition, reviewers were asked to recommend a timeframe for implementing each action item. The table below includes action items that were ranked by all four reviewers and resulted in a priority ranking of 3.0 (out of 5) or greater. In addition, estimated timeframe for each item are listed. Linkage to Goals and Objectives is also included.

Action Item Rankings

Action Item	Goal(s)	Rank	Year
Policy: Assure all future park improvements meet ADA guidelines or are planned following universal access guidelines.	4, 5	4.63	17
Policy: Develop a park maintenance plan for each park based on use.	3, 5	4.50	17

Policy: Work with local landowners and public officials to repair the dam.	3, 5	4.00	17
Planning: Create site plans for Bieth Park/Fairground and the water treatment property across the river	5	3.88	17
Marketing: Explore a partnership with the Library to plan, promote, and conduct recreational programs within the community.	2, 3, 4, 5	3.75	18
Improvement: Create snowmobile and ATV access into city to access food, restaurants & gas	2, 4	2.50	19
Improvement: Upgrade existing restroom facilities in Chippewa Landing Park.	3, 4	3.38	19
Improvement: Create accessible pathways to and onto playground equipment in Chippewa Landing and Beith Parks	1, 4	2.38	19
Improvement: Add an accessible canoe/kayak launch at Chippewa Landing Park	1, 4	2.88	19
Planning: Organize a community group to work with the city to study prospects for a dog park, location, and raising funds,	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2.75	19
Planning: Organize community advisory groups around Colonial, Williamsburg, and Northwood Heights parks to explore development and use of those properties.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	2.63	20
Improvement: Create shaded seating area at Bieth Park basketball courts.	1, 3	2.25	20
Improvement: Add 3-4 new disc golf goals at Bieth Park / Fairgrounds.	1, 2, 3	2.00	20
Improvement: Create accessible parking, signage, and route of travel to at least one picnic table at Atwood Park.	1, 4, 5	2.25	20

Improvement: Create accessible and safe pathway from Beith Park to Chippewa Landing	1, 2, 4	2.25	20
Improvement:: Create accessible pathway to interpretive signage at Chippewa Landing Park	1, 4	2.13	20
Planning: Conduct a feasibility study for a spray park or other water feature.	1, 2, 3, 4	1.75	20
Improvement:: Add a warming house at sledding hill in Chippewa Landing Park	1, 3, 4	1.88	20
Improvement: Convert one tennis court to two paddleball courts	1, 2, 3, 4	1.43	20
Improvement: Create an accessible picnic site (accessible route, table, grill, trash can) in all parks that offer picnicing	1, 2, 4	3.25	21
Improvement:: Create a safe crossing between Chippewa Landing Park and the Exchange Club Forest.	1, 3, 3	3.13	21
Planning: Explore alternatives for a community center	2, 3	2.25	21
Improvement: Create senior exercise trail	1, 2, 4	1.25	21
Improvement: Purchase modular skateboard elements to place at Bieth Park basketball courts.	1, 2	1.75	21
Improvement: Replace aged playground equipment at Bieth and Chippewa Landing parks.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	3.00	21
Improvement: Continue to add uniform park signage.	2, 3, 5	2.38	22
Improvement: Create accessible feature(s) in Exchange Club Forest including parking, trails, and interpretive information.	1, 4, 5	2.25	22

Repair/Replace the Dam: One of the most frequently mentioned desire of Caro residents and officials was repair or replace the Dam on the Cass River west of Caro. In spring 2016 this 108 year old structure which formed the Lake Caro. This body of water has been a significant source of recreation for Caro area residents for over a century. Chippewa Landing Park as well as other public land on the north side of the river present an outstanding opportunity for outdoor recreation. There is currently a walking trail and bridge that crosses the park and river, a fishing pier (now high and dry), and a boat launch in similar state of disuse. There is great interest in restoring this water feature and expanding opportunities for canoeing/kayaking as well as the traditional river-based recreation. Because the dam is on private land it will take a collaboration of public and private parties to reach a solution.

VIII. POST-COMPLETION SELF-CERTIFICATION

Post completion reports were submitted to the DNR in September, 2015. Following is a copy of communications between the planner and DNR verifying completion of this requirement:

Hello Al,

You are correct, the Post Completion forms were submitted on 09/25/15. You are all set.

Thanks,

Amy Matloff

Grant Coordinator (Regions: 5, 6 & 7)
Grants Management Section
Finance and Operations Division
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Phone: 517-284-5916

~~MIRGS~~ Grants Application Website:
<https://secure1.state.mi.us/MIRGS/login2.aspx?APP THEME=MIDNR>

DNR Grants Homepage:
<http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-58225---,00.html>



The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund is
celebrating 40 years of funding high-quality
public outdoor recreation projects
for Michigan citizens and visitors!

From: Ellard, James Allen (<mailto:ellardja@cmich.edu>)
Sent: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 2:11 PM
To: ~~Matloff~~, Amy (DNR)
Subject: post completion reports

Amy

I am working on updating the City of Caro parks and recreation master plan. The city manager indicates that he recalls recently submitting those. I am just writing for direction. Do I need to re-do those post-completion reports or is that requirement now satisfied?

Thanks.

Al Ellard, Professor
Recreation, Parks & Leisure Services Administration
Central Michigan University
Mount Pleasant, MI 48859
989-774-4471
aellard@cmich.edu

A. PUBLIC MEETING: QUESTION 1 RESULTS

In order to meet the future recreation and leisure needs of City of Caro residents and visitors the City of Caro should....

FACILITIES

Maintenance and Operations

Develop, improve & update the parks they already have.
Promote continued use through upgrading of park systems and spaces
Expand equipment for all ages for fun things to do.
Make sure existing playgrounds and parks are well maintained.
Utilize assets that currently are not being used. (Riverside park for kayaks)
Allocate budgeted amounts to maintain equipment.
Better upkeep if budget allows.
Focus on family-centered spaces. Offer spaces for young families with small children to gather.
More gathering places for young families with toys.
Make sure parks are safe and patrolled.
Areas should have proper signage
Safety

Water

Rebuild the outdoor pool or build a splash park.
Outdoor pool/splash pad
Add a splash pad for summer play
Public outdoor pool
A water park with fountains, music.

Riverfront development

Canoe launch and portage around the dam.
Use river/kayaking, fishing
Develop river frontage
Develop the river frontage, allow for private enterprise along the riverfront.
Possible launches for river access. (minor launch, kayaks, canoes)
Ensure recreation opportunities through high public use activities such as fishing, kayaking, canoeing,

Sport-specific Facilities

City softball fields – kids and adults
Enlarge and update the current shuffleboard court to accommodate the quickly growing club. This club brings people from out of town....includes professional players and new players and hall of famers. A state tourney is held here each year.
Enhance shuffleboard courts – make bigger.
Additional shuffleboard courts if we continue to grow.
Bleachers for spectators and players seating when not playing (shuffleboard)
Designated disc golf course

Community Center

Youth and Senior Center
A big facility YMCA would be wonderful

Trails

Trails to Almer and Indianfield parks

Snowmobile route to gas and food

4-wheel trail to gas and food

Ensure usage through easy accessibility to recreation areas.

Connect parks with trails.

Accessible walking trail.

More spaces that are wheelchair accessible.

Bike paths

Possible bike trails if space allows.

Include easy walking/biking transportation ways into and out of town. Bike paths, walking paths.

Develop a non-motorized connection system that connects our parks to each other,

Accessibility

Accessibility at all sites

Accessible walking trail.

More spaces that are wheelchair accessible.

Ensure usage through easy accessibility to recreation areas.

Other Improvements

Campground

Horse arena/Ice rink shared bldg.

Art & sculptures around town.

More activities for seniors: horseshoes, bocce courts, pickle ball, senior dance.

Have a Dog Park

Draw people into town like a dog park that will draw residents and nonresidents

Have Wi-Fi (in parks)

Clean air smell

Lose the sugar factory smell

Concession stands now and then (hot dogs, ice cream)

Know what kind of recreation will be popular in the area

Make a skate park

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Provide activities for all ages

Dance classes, Adult classes, cooking, art.

Music in the park

Gymnastics classes/Yoga

City sponsored entertainment

Hold events or promote events open to public at various sites

More activities for seniors: horseshoes, bocce courts, pickleball, senior dance.

Have summer activities for children; day camps, arts & crafts

Create a summer program for children. I think it's done or has been done.

City-wide BBQ

Outdoor movies

Biking, geocaching, etc.

Information and Promotion

Ensure that residents are aware of public recreation offerings.

People need to know all that is offered in town (Promote)

Promote and advertise its many public rec spaces

Promote events at parks
Schedule events & use the park
Provide more information to residents as to the recreational areas & activities available.
Make sure park locations are known.
Think about advertisement

Coordination

Coordinate with other entities
Invite other local organizations to hold activities in the parks to draw attention to what is available.

B. PUBLIC MEETING: QUESTION 2 RESULTS

think back over the previous ten years and recall all the improvements to Caro's parks, recreation facilities, streets and sidewalks, gathering spaces, and facilities and to list as many as they could recall.

Administration

Community donations of time & resources.
Tax credits for donations of time & resources.
People know all the available recreation opportunities in our city.
Publicity shared with community.
City-wide wi-fi.
A central information system for parks and recreation.

Community building

Having the community feel: connected to where they living.
Community pride in parks and recreation.
People knowing their neighbors looking out for each other.
More community involvement.
Multiple opportunities for social interaction – young/families/seniors – in the downtown.

Trails

Enhanced trail system.
New connected trail system.
Trails, bike, horse & 4-wheel.
Starting point (trailhead) biking, 4-wheel, snowmobile.
Safe-interconnecting trails: walking, biking, jogging.
Improvements to river front on M-24 and walk trail to it.
Connect to trail systems throughout the Thumb.
Bike paths.
Accessible trails.
Connected bike & walk paths.
Sidewalks on all city streets.
Horse trails.
Connecting walking and biking trails.
Trail way / connected walkability.
Accessible river/playgrounds/trails.
More children riding bikes in safe areas.
Walkways across M-24 & M-81.
Sidewalks everywhere.
Connected non-motorized trail system.

Riverfront development

Riverfront improvement making Caro a destination rather than a pass-thru.
Riverfront kayaking, canoeing opportunities.
Waterfront Park for kayak, splash pad, dock, and skatepark.
Developing riverfront.
People now travel here to hike/canoe/kayak.
Improvements to river front on M-24 and walk trail to it.
Canoe and kayak rental along river.
Music shell in Chippewa park.

River front development both sides of M-24.
Develop the water front.
Kayak launching/canoes.
River front improvement.
Portage around dam.
Availability of kayak rental at river.
People using the river for recreation.
Beautiful riverfront development.
Automated boat ramps.
Fully used riverfront that is clean and vibrant.
Dam fixed.
Dam is fixed to keep river depth consistent.

Community center

Community center.
Central Community center.
Community center.
Nice big building to house all key kids for activities.
Community center.
Build Rec Center.
Community center.
Community center.
Construction of community center.
Community center.
Community center.
Community center.
Community center.
Community center with indoor and outdoor spaces, activities, and fitness opportunities.
Band shell in back of the community center.

Partnerships for parks and recreation

The partnership between parks and recreation and the library that allows both programs to use each other's facilities and educate residents of available services.
Regional parks and recreation authority (school district wide) that coordinates many citizen lead groups and activities.
Partnership w/ schools for each grade to visit a different park every year.

Programming

Mandatory outdoor time for youth.
Using our current outdoor spaces with many positive options for fun and recreation for multiple ages.
Activities for all ages.
Music/Movies in the park.
Groups walking everywhere.
Increase recreation programs.
More community programs.
Increase festivals and events.
More public music/dance/art opportunities.
Recreation opportunities for all age groups and family units.
Utilize all of our outdoor and indoor spaces.
Dances for seniors and card playing.
Summer activities for kids/handicapped.

Expanded rec programs.
Winter activities indoor & out.
Lots of activities for all ages from seniors to children.
Youth programming.
Organized activities of children and youth.
Neighbors gathering together.
Playgroups in the parks.
Outdoor movies every night.
Skate park competitions.
Fishing tourney – water front.
Waiting list programming for children
Host of skateboard/BMX/X-Games
There are a variety of activities

Accessibility

Access to every part of our parks for wheelchairs.
Accessibility
Accessible trails
Accessible river/playgrounds/trails
Several areas accessible to everyone
Handicapped access everywhere

Water Features

Water park.
Swim and splash facility indoor & out
Splash park
Great big water park
Pool-Splash pad
Splash village
Water park
Waterfront park for kayak, splash pad, dock, and skate park
Outdoor pool
Splash park/pool
Lots of water recreation
Outdoor swimming pool
Splash pad/water park

Shuffleboard

Expanded shuffleboard courts – 2 new courts with roof
Covered shuffleboard courts that look new and modern
Shuffleboard courts doubled
Enlarge shuffleboard court area, Refurbish existing courts, Bleacher/spectator area added, Larger shed for supply storage, Finish desk area for chart tournament, New & updated scoreboard, Covered courts for rain days.

Skateboards & Bikes

Skate park developed
Skateboard park
Bike park
Skate park competitions
Host of skateboard/BMX/X-Games
Skate park

Skate park
Frisbee golf at park

Dog Park

Dog park
Dog park
Dog park
Dog park
Dog park

New Sport Facilities

Bocce courts
Ball fields
Baseball/softball fields
Nice ball diamond - tournaments
Hockey complex (ice & roller)
Ice rink for skating and organized hockey
Ice rink
Pickle ball courts
Horse arena

Air Quality

Smell eliminated
Air doesn't turn people away
Clean air award

Miscellaneous & Other

Agriculture history center
Campground
Band shell
New kids playground equipment at park
Kids park with toys
Concession stand in park
Availability of kayak rental at river
Canoe and kayak rental along river
Ride share availability
Giant piano in the park that you can play by walking on
Paved parking lots and drives
Increase population & economic growth
Voted safest parks in Michigan
Snowboard Mo

C. SURVEY WRITTEN COMMENTS

Other Park Improvements:

- I personally suggest a well developed disc golf course. Disc golf is a fast growing sport and offers a fun and healthy opportunity for the young adults in the community.
- dog park
- get rid of smell more playground equipment - spread out more - too close together. Plant more trees
- Maintain! Trash & cigarette butts everywhere. Edge walkways and sweep regularly
- Cleaning/Depolluting Parks
- Dock at chippewa fishing area at chippewa
- Restrooms very important keep up on pest control, bees at Bieth park dock at chippewa landing out sooner more benches by river
- Dog park needed
- Yes, people with disabilities
- state land, nature, park & trails
- add Bike trails
- A pool and wading park
- It is pretty bad when my kid has to play baseball at KC Hall. Caro should make better baseball fields and a concession stand. Any?
- Maintenance
- Creating amenities inside of the city are crucial for residents to stay here and for Caro to compete with other cities. Nightly softball, volleyball, tennis, horseshoe, etc. that are held inside the park grounds creates a feeling of community and pride in the parks we have. The fairgrounds as an example are poorly kept with very little softball or other recreational use. The basketball courts are nothing compared to Cass City, the baseball fields are used never compared to when I was a child. Get residents biking, canoeing, fishing, hanging out in our parks and it creates better value for home owners, etc.
- Caro needs a swimming area. A man made lake & a sprinkler park like the other cities are putting in. Davison just put 1 in a year ago. The lake area for Caro resident would be AWESOME. As our grand children visit we have no where to take them swimming unless we go to Caseville
- Need pool for low impact exercise for seniors
- handicap accessible highest children's park highest dog park highest
- bike trail to other bike trails snowmobile access to
- fitness club - affordable
- pool
- would like to see a spray park
- handicapped children's park splash pad dog park biking trails and walking trails
- more walking trails
- splash pad dog park
- monkey bars, tire obstacle, climbing ropes
- maybe add a splash pad for the summer time since the pool was filled in. for the winter time they should bring back the ice rink.
- use river more build campgrounds

Other Recreation Programs and Services:

- Try to reinstate Car-Mar games. St Mary's, Ontario. At least start with adult activities to get interest going
- Use our parks to garden, help low income families with local food, help with the obesity of our region and children. Use the money brought in by adult sport programs to fund the childrens programs. The adult league fees can come down with the idea of constant use which would then bring in more money.
- allow people to keep up small garden areas and have a small sign?
- opportunity for women to meet other women to walk together. walking/bike trail would like to see a food coop downtown, healthy foods free concerts on weekend several times in the summer gazebo (easy listening)
- incorporate (arts & crafts and sports programs for youth in after school programs. Schools do this.