

Action Plan

As was stated in the Basis For Action, a community must base recreation improvement and service decisions on recreational trends, national standards, participation data at existing facilities, community opinion and financial ability, as well as demographic trends and the availability of land. The following describes the Fremont Area's goals, guidelines and program to maintain and improve recreational opportunities in the community.

The plan for parks and recreation must support the overall goals and objectives for area-wide development, growth and services. Statements of specific goals and recommended guidelines will then guide the formulation and implementation of the Recreation Master Plan. These statements of goals and guidelines are expressions of agreement on the Plan, as established by the Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan Advisory Committee and adopted by the Fremont City Council, Sheridan Charter Township Board, Sherman Township Board and Dayton Township Board.

Goals

The following goals are established for the Fremont Area to guide the provision and enhancement of recreation in the area.

- Encourage safe recreation facilities and programs that are appropriately located and well-designed.
- Provide year-round facilities that encourage healthy activities and participation by residents of all ages, income levels and abilities.
- Encourage cooperation and foster relationships between the five primary public agencies in the Fremont Area: the City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township, Dayton Township and the Fremont Public School District.
- Provide sufficient recreation space and facilities within the Fremont Area to serve the existing and future needs of residents and visitors to the area.
- Allocate resources in a fiscally responsible and equitable manner to build and maintain existing and future parks, recreation facilities and programs within the Fremont Area.
- Continue the planning process through periodic review of the plan and necessary updates.

Guidelines

The following guidelines are established to assist in implementing the goals and providing effective and efficient recreation opportunities for the residents of the Fremont Area. The guidelines have been placed into one of eight categories relating to the organization, operation, maintenance, programming, staffing and facility development of recreation in the Fremont Area.

Organizational

- Establish and maintain open communication between the City of Fremont, Fremont Public Schools and Sheridan Charter, Sherman and Dayton Townships.
- Hold open and regular (at least semi-annual) meetings among representatives of all Five entities as a forum for inviting communication on how to best implement the area-wide Recreation Master Plan.
- Explore potential formation of a multi-jurisdictional recreation management entity (e.g. Recreation Authority) for the Fremont Area.

Staffing

- Explore opportunities for area students to assist in the development and operation of the recreation program
- Explore possibilities of partnerships in terms of maintenance, personnel and equipment

Programming

- Work closely with area advocates to accommodate and enhance various activities and programs for the physically and/or mentally challenged population.
- Develop additional activities and programs geared toward area residents of all ages, income levels and abilities.

Public Information

- Be clear and concise in communicating recreation-related activities with the general public.
- Establish, communicate and advertise policies for safety, loitering and hours of operation of public parks.
- Develop and release information regarding area-wide recreation opportunities and current events onto Fremont Area web sites.

- Continue to actively involve the public in the decision-making process.

Operation

- Encourage partnerships with public and private entities including corporations, foundations, civic associations, volunteer programs, etc. to avoid duplication and maximize resources.

Maintenance

- Evaluate and address solutions to maintenance issues.
- Discuss maintenance issues at semi-annual meetings to create awareness and ensure proper coordination of efforts.
- Keep apprised of current state and federal recreation guidelines and standards, including barrier-free and safety requirements.

Land Acquisition

- Investigate the potential expansion of existing sites through property donation, purchase and/or reuse.

Facility Development

- Promote facilities and activities that are accessible to all Fremont Area residents and visitors.
- In the development of new facilities, consider a central location to ensure ease of access, appropriateness of traffic generation and interrelation of facilities with school, home and work.
- Commit to facility design and location that produces the lowest impacts on the surrounding land uses and environment.
- Identify and encourage opportunities to provide consolidated facilities that offer a variety of recreational activities at one site.
- Consider the preservation of environmentally and agriculturally sensitive lands when determining the most appropriate location for new recreation facilities.

Capital Improvements

The capital improvements schedule for this Recreation Plan has been established not only to provide a framework for decision makers but also to enable the Fremont Area communities to apply for grant funds for proposed projects. The capital improvements schedule is not a fixed element and is neither all inclusive nor exclusive. The schedule merely reflects the results of the Committee's research, brainstorming and data gathering in conjunction with input from City, School and Township officials and staff as well as the general public. It is very likely that the schedule and plan will be amended at some point due to unanticipated circumstances such as private donations, changing recreation trends, community opinion and/or available grants.

The capital improvements schedule details the anticipated acquisition and development for the years 2011-2016. The schedule is organized by year and includes project names and cost estimates as well as a break down of those costs by the anticipated funding sources (See Appendix A for descriptions of the various funding opportunities.) The capital improvements schedule represents the project priorities for the entire Fremont Area (Fremont, Dayton, Sherman and Sheridan). The capital improvements schedule does not prioritize projects based on the individual communities' needs and wants; rather the needs and wants of the community as a whole. It is the intention of the Fremont Area Communities to coordinate efforts in the implementation of the capital improvements schedule over the next five years, including issues such as equitable cost sharing, operation and maintenance. The rationale for the capital improvements schedule is documented in the Basis For Action section of this plan. A map is also included identifying the location of the proposed improvements.

Actions to Address Barrier-Free Issues

The Fremont Area documented several barrier-free accessibility issues at their public park facilities (See Recreation Inventory). The Recreation Advisory Committee has identified several goals, guidelines and capital improvements to ensure that all new facilities and/or equipment as well as existing park sites and facilities are barrier-free, or will transition into barrier-free facilities. Those specific goals, guidelines and capital improvements are reiterated below:

Goal

- Provide year-round facilities that encourage healthy activities and participation by residents of all ages, income levels and abilities.

Guidelines

- Work closely with area advocates to accommodate and enhance various activities and programs for the physically and/or mentally challenged population.
- Keep apprised of current state and federal recreation guidelines and standards, including barrier-free and safety requirements.

- Promote facilities and activities that are accessible to all Fremont Area residents and visitors
- In the development of new facilities, consider a central location to ensure ease of access, appropriateness of traffic generation and interrelation of facilities with school, home and work.

Capital Improvements-ADA

While all new improvements to public facilities must be in compliance with ADA requirements, the Recreation Advisory Committee and the Fremont Area have incorporated several specific capital improvements to address and improve the barrier-free status of existing and future public facilities. They include:

- **Non-Motorized Pathway (The Town & Country Path)**
The Fremont Area has established an aggressive plan to incorporate additional non-motorized pathways connecting the Fremont communities to each other as well as other communities in the Newaygo County. This pathway system is constructed of an impervious surface that is barrier-free and accessible to all residents.
- **Recreation Center**
The Fremont Area has included the exploration and possible purchase or construction of a Community Recreation Center, which is envisioned to include a swimming area, workout room, meeting areas, etc., all of which will be designed to accommodate and encourage use by the disabled population.
- **Outdoor Facility**
The need for additional outdoor recreation opportunities, particularly soccer, baseball and football fields, were identified as high priorities within the Fremont Area. While a specific site has yet to be identified or secured for such a multipurpose facility, it is anticipated that the park would also include, restrooms, parking, concession stand and playground equipment, all of which would be designed to accommodate the disabled population.
- **Sheridan Charter Township Property (The Refuge)**
The Fremont Area envisions additional improvements at the 168-acre property, which would greatly improve its accessibility to all area residents. While it is envisioned that the park will remain a predominantly passive area, “The Refuge” bike tracks has been an improvement, while parking, picnic areas, pavilion and playground equipment are

additional planned improvements of which will be designed and constructed to encourage use by all segments of the population.

Long -Range Goals/Projects

The recreation planning process included numerous meetings and public input in which the Recreation Advisory Committee identified many projects, needs and wants of the community for recreation in the Fremont Area. All of those projects and goals identified were not included within the 5-year lifespan of this recreation plan but nevertheless remain important elements to document. The communities wished to record the long-term ideas generated throughout the planning process so that the work conducted in the generation of this plan could be continued in the generation of the next 5-year recreation plan.

It is a primary long-term goal of the Fremont Area communities to provide a continuous non-motorized pathway that traverses through all four communities and connects residents with each other, schools, parks, places of work, places of commerce, etc. Other projects that were discussed are as follows:

General

- Interpretive/educational natural areas
- Additional restrooms in parks
- Acquire wetland west off Osborn (Now part of Stoneycreek Subdivision)
- Acquire property surrounding Lorden Lake
- Develop City's Decker well field and tower site
- Acquire property to construct outdoor recreation facilities

Fremont Lake Park

- Develop parcel to the east of the existing park
- Acquire adjacent land to complete additional expansion efforts

Arboretum Park

- Acquire land to expand Arboretum Park

Veterans Memorial Park

- Minor upgrades to amphitheater
- Safety surfacing and handicap access surface at playground equipment