

# Recreation Inventory

Developing a complete inventory of recreation facilities, programs and events is an essential component of a 5-year Recreation Master Plan because it provides a base of information to use in determining the future needs for the community. Understanding what is currently available to the residents of the Fremont Area will assist in decision-making in the future.

This section is divided into two components: existing recreation facilities in the Fremont Area as well as Newaygo County and existing recreation programs and events. Each component includes an inventory of current available offerings and where available and relevant, capacity, level of use and number of participants data.

## Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities inventoried include those parks and equipment owned and operated by the City of Fremont, Sheridan Charter Township, Sherman Township, Bridgeton Township and Dayton Township, those facilities located on and managed by the Fremont Public School District, facilities on private school property, State of Michigan and finally significant recreation opportunities available to residents of the Fremont Area but outside of the planning boundaries.

Once the park inventory was complete, each public park and school property was categorized as either a mini-park, neighborhood park or community park based on the following classification system for local and regional recreation open space developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association<sup>1</sup>:

- A **mini-park** is an area of specialized facilities that serve a concentration or limited population or specific group, such as tots or senior citizens. It has a service area of less than ¼ mile in radius, with a desirable size of one acre or less. The standard for development is ¼ to ½ acre per 1,000 population, while desirable site characteristics include location within a neighborhood in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse developments or housing for the elderly.
- A **neighborhood park/playground** is an area for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc. It has a service area of ¼ to ½ mile in radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood). The desirable size for a neighborhood park/playground is at least 15 acres, with a standard of one to two acres per 1,000 population. Desirable site characteristics include suitability for intense development, easy accessibility to neighborhood population, and geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. Such neighborhood park/playground may be developed as a school-park facility.

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<sup>1</sup> Michigan Department of Natural Resources, *Guidelines for Preparing a Community Recreation Plan*, November 1996, P. A-5.  
*Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan*

- A **community park** is an area of diverse environmental quality, which may include areas suited for intense recreational facilities (such as athletic complexes and large swimming pools) or may be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation (such as walking, viewing, sitting and picnicking) or depending on site suitability and community needs, may be any combination of the above. It has a service area of several neighborhoods within a one- to two-mile radius. The desirable size for a community park is at least twenty-five acres, with a standard of five to eight acres per 1,000 populations. Desirable site characteristics include natural features (such as bodies of water) and areas suited for intense development, which are easily accessible to the neighborhoods served.

Some of the parks within the Fremont Area fit neatly into one of the above categories while several others do not. When comparing the overall facilities within the Fremont Area, there are three definite types of parks that follow many, but not all, of the published standards. The parks within the Fremont Area were essentially categorized dependent on types of amenities offered as well as their service area.

### **Public Parks & Facilities**

The following public parks are located in the Fremont Area: (see Map 6)

#### *Branstrom Park*

Branstrom Park is a community park located in the northeastern portion of the City, bordering Dayton Township. The park is over 112 acres in size and has many amenities including a fenced-in/lighted baseball field, several miles of rustic walking and hiking trails, a paved biking & walking path trailhead of the Town & Country Path, a multipurpose court for basketball, ice skating & hockey, sledding hill, a playground area with equipment, picnic tables and a pavilion, a 24-hole competition-level disc golf course, a community lodge with fire- place available for rental and parking for all of the above amenities.



The park remains relatively undeveloped offering acres of natural area to enjoy and explore. Due to its location, size and recreational opportunities, the park serves residents in all of the participating jurisdictions in the Fremont Area Community as well as all of Newaygo County.

### Clubview Park

Clubview Park is a small, 0.5-acre mini-park located within a residential neighborhood in the northeast portion of the City between Clubview Drive and Hillcrest Avenue. The park provides open space for residents in the immediate area, but does not generally attract visitors from outside the neighborhood.

### Beebe's Natural Park

Beebe's Natural Park is a 0.45-acre area on the east side of town, north of the abandoned railroad line. The park is accessed at the southern dead end of Beebe Avenue. The park remains undeveloped.

### Arboretum Park

Arboretum Park is a relatively large property nestled in the center of a residential neighborhood in the southeast portion of the City. The park is approximately 9.5 acres of primarily undeveloped wooded land and open space. Originally developed as an arboretum, there are numerous ground markers identifying Michigan-native trees, plants and floral.



The park has walking trails and paths as well as benches and picnic tables. The park not only provides an aesthetic quality to the neighborhood but also serves as a unique passive recreation area. The Parks beauty attracts an ever increasing amount of wedding ceremonies in various locations.

### Fremont Lake Park

Fremont Lake Park is also a unique community park located on the northern shore of Fremont Lake in the southwest



portion of the City. Fremont Lake Park is approximately 20 acres in size and has a public campground that offers 67 sites for trailer camping



and a public free boat launch access to the lake. The campground also has restrooms and a bathhouse available and is adding 30 additional sites in 2012. Fremont Lake Park also has a well-groomed beach, parking, sand volleyball court, picnic shelter pavilions, picnic tables and grills and serves as an additional trailhead for the Town & Country Path. The City also leases space to “The Swirl”, a family-owned ice cream parlor that offers a nice variety on their menu.

### Sheridan Charter Township Boat Launch

The Sheridan Charter Township Boat Launch is approximately 6.5-acres of land located on the south shore of Fremont Lake, directly behind the Township Hall. The site has a large gravel area for parking and the maneuvering of vehicles and boats as well as a seasonal boat dock, a playground area and picnic area.

There are plans to expand the picnic area and extend pathways along the lake shore.



### Sherman Township Crystal Lake Boat Launch & Beach

Sherman Township has a park on the north side of Crystal Lake off 24<sup>th</sup> Street. The park has a boat launch, beach area and parking.

### Fremont Avenue Tot Lot

The Fremont Avenue Tot Lot is a small, 0.5-acre mini-park located north of Main Street in the neighborhood just west of the Gerber Products Company factory and offices. This park has several pieces of playground equipment and primarily serves the residents in the immediate neighborhood.

### Veterans Memorial Park & Amphitheater

Veterans Park is the most accessible and visible park in the Fremont Area due to its prime location along Main Street in the heart of downtown Fremont. Veterans Park is a small community park approximately 2.4 acres in size. The park serves as one of the focal points for the downtown area providing playground equipment, a walking path, a memorial to the Fremont Area veterans of war, an amphitheater which is the location of the popular summer concert series as well as a picnic shelter and tables.



### Newaygo County Fairgrounds

The 28-acre plus fairgrounds property is a city-owned parcel leased to the Newaygo County Fair Association for the annual county fair held for two weeks in August. The site is located along M-82/Stewart Avenue in the southern side of the City. There is an event stadium and several other permanent structures at the site used for fair activities and various other recreational events. Throughout the summer season, special events such as Horse shows, Mud Run and Moto Cross Racing are held at the County Fair grounds. They also rent out the facilities for family reunions and other events. During the winter they offer storage rental for cars, rv's and other seasonal recreation vehicles. Newaygo County Fairgrounds is location on the south end of the city limits along South Warner Avenue(M-82).



### Town & Country Path

The Town & Country Path is a non-motorized paved pathway for walking, biking, hiking, rollerblading and skate boarding. Currently, 5.5 miles of the path have been constructed (Phase 1 & 2) meeting ADA requirements. The Path connects Parks, schools, residential areas and business districts, with hopes of connecting to another West Michigan trail system in the near future.

The Path's public committee is actively pursuing funding for additional construction and extension of the Path (Phase 3) to traverse around Fremont Lake to connect with the Sheridan Charter Township Boat Launch & Playground. This would add an additional 2.5 miles of pathway.



### Cherry Hill Park

Cherry Hill Park is a 2.8-acre park located in the northern portion of the City near Hemlock Street and Michigan Avenue, north of the Gerber Products Company. The park contains a grass practice ball field, play area and open space.

### Fremont Skate/Bike Park

The Skate/Bike Park is located on approximately 2 acres along Lake Drive, across from the Fremont Middle School and Bus Garage. The park entails seven types of ramps and was completed in 2002 to accommodate the increasing popularity of skateboarding and trick-bike riding. Parking is provided and the T&C Path traverses between it and Lake Drive.



### "The Refuge" Sheridan Charter Township Property

“The Refuge” is located on a 168-acre parcel owned by Sheridan Charter Township in the southeast portion of the Township near the intersection of 88th Street and Osborn Avenue. It is a myriad of various biking racing and obstacle tracks, with varying degrees of difficulty. The remaining 120+ acres of property is unsigned and remains as an undeveloped passive recreation area with natural walking and hiking trails. Parking is available off 88<sup>th</sup> Street.

*Fremont Industrial Park- Natural Outlots (A,B & C)*

The Fremont Industrial Park contains several outlots preserved as natural buffers between the Industrial Park and its surrounding residential areas and internal businesses. The Town & Country Path travels along Locust Avenue in the Park and enters into the wooded outlots traversing to and from one another and over and along creeks and offering resting/viewing areas along the way.



*Robinson Lake Public Boat Launch (Sherman Twp)*

The Michigan DNR owns a public access to Robinson Lake on Park Lane, on the north side of the lake. There is a public boat launch, picnic area and restrooms with parking available.

*Alley Lake Roadside Park (Sherman Twp)*

The Michigan DNR owns a roadside park on the north side of Alley Lake along Old M-20. There is public access, a picnic area, restrooms and parking available.

*North Country Trail (Sherman Twp)*

The North Country Trail (NCT) traverse over 4,000 miles from the Adirondacks of New York State to the plains of North Dakota. Currently, approximately 3 miles of the NCT lie in the northern portion of Sherman Township.

## Public School Properties

There are seven public school properties in the Fremont Area, all of which are located within the boundaries of the City of Fremont. The schools in the area play a significant role in recreation for the Fremont community and often times serve as community and neighborhood parks due to their size, location and amenities. Public school properties include the following:

### Pine Street Elementary

The Pine Street Primary School serves as the District's office and a neighborhood park in the southeast portion of the City. The property includes over 16 acres of land with two junior soccer fields, a gazebo and playground equipment as well as a picnic shelter and tables. The school also has an indoor gymnasium.

### Pathfinder Elementary



Pathfinder Elementary School (grades 1-3), a relatively new school that opened in the Fall of 1997, located in the northern portion of the City at the intersection of Weaver Avenue and 44<sup>th</sup> Street, bordering Dayton Township. The school is on approximately 22-acres of land and includes open space, a regulation size soccer field (or three junior soccer fields), a practice baseball field, significant amounts of playground equipment, six basketball hoops, picnic tables and an indoor gymnasium. The school is also linked to the Town and Country Path.

### Daisy Brook Elementary

The Daisy Brook Elementary School (grades 4-5) is located on 13.9 acres, southeast of the Pathfinder Elementary School. The school provides a practice soccer field (or two junior soccer fields), a practice baseball field, playground equipment, open space, a gazebo and picnic tables. The school is also linked to the Town and Country Path.



### Fremont Middle School

The Middle School property is a relatively large site encompassing over 69 acres of land in the southern portion of the City near Fremont Lake. The school serves as a community park due to its size and recreational opportunities. The property includes a regulation soccer game field, two baseball fields (one lighted), one



softball field, eight new lighted tennis courts, two batting cages, eight basketball hoops, two indoor gymnasiums and a nature trail and gazebo along a creek south of the school. In addition, the Fremont Skate Park and Town and Country Path border the property to the west.

### *Fremont High School*

Fremont High School is located on just over six acres at the corner of Stewart Avenue and Main Street in downtown Fremont. While the high school property provides little in terms of outdoor recreation activities, the school gymnasium and indoor swimming pool are heavily used by residents of the Fremont Area.

### *Pine Street Athletic Field*

The Pine Street Athletic Field is located south of Pine Street and is under the jurisdiction of the Fremont Public School District. The 16+ acre site includes a football stadium with bleachers, locker rooms, lights, public restrooms and concessions building. A 6-lane track encircles the football field. Outside of the stadium area is a practice T-ball area and two football practice fields.



### *Cedar Street / Quest Alternative Education Building*

The Cedar Street School building and is located adjacent to the Fremont Middle School on ten acres of land. A soccer game field and playground area is located south of the building.

## **Private School Properties**

There are four private school properties which play a small role in the provision of recreation opportunities within the Fremont Area, three of which are located within the city limits.

### *Providence Christian High School*

Providence Christian High School is located on 20 acres three miles south of town at the intersection of 72<sup>nd</sup> Street and S. Warner Avenue. Outdoor amenities include a high school competition soccer field and open space. The school also has an indoor gymnasium.

### *Christian Middle School*

The Christian Middle School is located on 13.4 acres on the east side of town along Hillcrest Avenue. Outdoor amenities include a soccer field, two practice ball diamonds and open space. The school also has an indoor gymnasium.

### Christian Elementary School

The Christian Elementary School is located directly across Hillcrest from the Middle School. The school is on 3.9 acres and includes two practice ball diamonds, playground equipment, two basketball hoops, a soccer field and open space. The Elementary School also has a small indoor gymnasium.

### Cornerstone Christian Academy

The Cornerstone Christian Academy (Grades K-8) is located on 3.6 acres in the northern portion of the City along 44th Street. The school has a play area, two basketball hoops, volleyball court and is linked to the Town & Country Path.

## **Private Recreation**

There are several private recreation providers within the Fremont Area including:

### Fremont Lanes South (Bowling)

The Fremont Lanes South is located just 1/2 mile south of the City limits on Warner Avenue. The facility has 16 computer controlled alleys and a restaurant open to the public.

### Ramshorn on the Lakes

Ramshorn on the Lakes is a private restaurant and golf course located on the City's north side on First and Second Lakes. The Club's restaurant is open year round.

### Northwood Golf Course

The Northwood Golf Course is a 142-acre, 18-hole course located in Dayton Township along Comstock Avenue between 24th and 32nd Streets.

### Summer Breeze Par 3 Golf Course

The Summer Breeze Par 3 Course is a 9-hole course located on the same site as the bowling alley on Warner Avenue, south of the City limits.

### Briar Hill Golf Course

The Briar Hill Golf Course is an 18-hole course on 150 acres located on 40<sup>th</sup> & Gordon, 2-miles from M-37. Briar Hill also has a driving range along Ferris, less than a mile west of the Golf Course.

### **Other Recreation Opportunities**

Recreation opportunities are also available outside of the City of Fremont and Sheridan Charter, Dayton and Sherman Townships limits, some of which include:

#### Newaygo County Parks

There are several County parks offering recreational opportunities including:

- Sandy Beach Campground  
220 campsites on the backwaters of Hardy Pond near White Cloud
- Henning Park Campground  
60 campsites on the Muskegon River near Newaygo
- Pettibone Lake Campground  
16 campsites in northern Newaygo County near Bitely
- Hardy Dam Marina  
37 boat slips on the backwaters of Hardy Pond near White Cloud
- Day-Use Parks (Four)
- NC Winter Sports Park “John Grey’s Lodge”  
Located on M-37, north of the City of Newaygo includes sledding hills and access to 84 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.
- Camp Swampy  
52 campsites, swimming area, beach volleyball, hiking trails, picnic area, boat rentals and boat launch on Diamond Lake, 6 miles northwest of White Cloud.

#### Huron-Manistee National Forest

There are over 108,000 acres of the Manistee National Forest in Newaygo County. The forests provide numerous recreational opportunities including camping, fishing, swimming, hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, motorcycling, ATV trails, snowmobiling, mushroom hunting, picnicking, game hunting and canoeing.

### Newaygo State Park

The Newaygo State Park is located at Beech and 32nd and offers picnicking, shelters, fishing, swimming, a bath house, boat ramp, campgrounds and hiking.

### North Country National Scenic Trail

Newaygo County is the exact center of the 4,000-mile-long North Country National Scenic Trail which stretches from the Vermont/New York border through seven states onto the Lewis and Clark Trail, North Dakota. The trail traverses through many areas of Newaygo County including the Manistee National Forest. No motorized vehicles are permitted on the trail. Sponsored hikes are held throughout the year with several trailheads located throughout Newaygo County. There is a “school house” owned by the North Country Trail, and located along 5 Mile Rd. It is a rentable facility to trail travelers and the public.

### True North (NCCS) Camp Newaygo and Wetland Trail

Camp Newaygo, owned by True North (formerly NCCS) is located not far from Fremont, north of Newaygo. The camp includes traditional summer programs such as resident camping, overnight camping for families and day camping for youth. True North is also collaborating with private groups, schools and others to offer training programs in professional development and recreation. The Camp is also home to a 1.25-mile boardwalk trail through an unusual bog to educate citizens about the importance of preserving natural areas and wetlands. The trail is the only one in Michigan to cross a sphagnum bog.

### Camp Echo

Camp Echo is a YMCA camp located on Long Lake. The camp is operated by McGaw YMCA in Evanston Illinois. The camp includes several one to two week summer programs for youth. Among other things the camp has several overnight cabins, beach access, a softball field, basketball courts, tennis courts, a volleyball court, horseback riding, bike trails, nature trails, a Frisbee golf course, ping-pong tables, an amphitheatre and a craft center.

### White Cloud City Campground

The White Cloud City Campground (formerly a state park) sits on 89 acres adjacent to the White River. The campground can accommodate large groups and is equipped with showers, electric and sanitation hookups and an enclosed shelter with kitchen facilities.

### Hardy Dam Rustic Nature Trail

The trail is a three-mile round trip along an unpaved trail over varying terrain. The trail parallels the Muskegon River.

### Muskegon River

The Muskegon River flows through Newaygo County providing many unusual canoeing opportunities. Quiet water canoeing is available on the backwater of Croton and Hardy Dams and down river canoeing is accessible from below Croton Dam to Maple Island Road.

### Golfing

There are several public golf courses available to area residents including:

- Ramshorn on the Lakes (Fremont) 18 holes
- Briar Hill Golf Course (Newaygo) 18 holes
- Brigadoon Golf Club (Grant) 27 holes
- Village Green Golf Club (Newaygo) 18 holes
- Northwood Golf Course (Fremont) 18 holes

### Steven B. Wessling Observatory

The Stephen F. Wessling Observatory is located approximately 8 miles north of the city of Fremont on the corner of Baseline and Stone Road. The Observatory is located on the Kropscott Farm donated to the Newaygo Conservation District by Earle and Mildred Kropscott. The telescope is located in an open-air room and is available to the Newaygo County Dark Sky Astronomers (NCDSA), a local club.

### ***Programs and Events***

#### Newaygo County Fair

The Newaygo County Fair is held for two weeks in early August at the fairgrounds in Fremont. There are daily judging's and shows of livestock. Evening entertainment includes a demolition derby, modified tractor pull and moto-cross racing. The fair has been held since 1954.

#### Events at the Fairgrounds

Throughout the summer season, special events such as an Antique Tractor Club show and Moto-Cross Racing are held at the County fair grounds located on the south end of the city limits along South Warner Avenue (M-82).

#### Summer Concert Series

Fremont Area Recreation Master Plan

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On Thursday evenings in June and July, the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce sponsors free concerts performed at the amphitheater in Veterans Memorial Park in downtown Fremont.

### *Newaygo County Council for the Arts*

The Council for the Arts (NCCA) is located in the ARTSPLACE building in downtown Fremont. The facility includes a gallery showcasing various art media and offers classes and programs for all ages.

### *Fremont Outdoor Art Fair*

An annual juried art fair is held in June under the Fremont Downtown Market Pavilion and surrounding parking area. The fair includes exhibitors specializing in fine arts, paintings, jewelry, pottery and much more. The well attended fair began in 1965 and is sponsored by the NCCA.

### *The National Baby Food Festival*

Fremont celebrates the City's distinction as the "Baby Food Capital of the World" by hosting the annual National Baby Food Festival each summer. Downtown Main Street is closed to motor vehicles during the festival which focuses around a theme of the "Great American Lifestyle". The festival attracts more than 100,000 people during its five-day run. Events include the baby crawl, baby food eating contest, a carnival midway, arts and crafts, a car show and nightly headliner entertainment.

### *Fall Harvest Festival*

The Fall Harvest Festival is sponsored by the Fremont Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Fremont. Activities are held downtown and at Branstrom Park in October. The festival offers live performances, various culinary cook-offs, bingo and a beverage tent downtown and various competitive family events at Branstrom Park.

While this list is not all inclusive, other activities and events held in the Fremont Area include:

- Fun Horse Show at the fairgrounds
- Annual Carnival & Auction at Fremont Christian School
- Walk America at Veterans Memorial Park
- Open Horse Show at the fairgrounds
- Holiday Arts & Craft Fair at the Fremont High School
- NCCA full schedule of arts programming

**FREMONT RECREATION PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**  
**June 2011-February 2012 (9 months)**

<u>YOUTH RECREATIONAL SPORTS LEAGUES</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
Fall 2011 Soccer (Co-ed)	108
Spring 2012 Soccer (Co-ed)	N/A
Tee-Ball (Co-ed)	-
Coach Pitch (Co-ed)	-
Boys' Basketball	111
Girls' Basketball	63
Golf	2
Wrestling	32
F.A.S.T.	N/A
	<u>316</u>

<u>YOUTH ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
Tennis Lessons	24
Swimming Lessons	148
MYST	12
Kids Karate	56
Tumbling	62
Bumper Bowling	16
Lifeguard Training	N/A
Lifeguard Recertification	N/A
CPR Renewal	N/A
Equestrian	N/A
Guitar	26
Violin	N/A
Ski Trips	87
	<u>431</u>

<u>ADULT SPORTS LEAGUES</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
Coed Church League Slo-Pitch	141
Ladies' Church League Volleyball	84
Men's Church League Basketball	72
Disk Golf League	N/A
	<u>297</u>

<u>ADULT ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
Red Wings Hockey Outing	20
Detroit Tiger Outing	N/A
Adult Karate	37
Table Tennis	10
Adult Beg. Guitar	4
Basic Training	31
Power Yoga	N/A
Work It Out	N/A
Zumba	N/A
Self-Defense	N/A
Senior Citizens Aerobics	75
Senior Water Exercise	195
	<u>372</u>

<u>OPEN SWIM/AM SWIM</u>	<u>PARTICIPANTS</u>
	1970

TOTAL PARTICIPATION June 2011- Feb. 2012	3386
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