

ARCHITECTURE

ENGINEERING

PLANNING

## 2010 – 2014 Recreation Plan

March 2010

City of Carson City  
Montcalm County, Michigan



## Table of Contents

Community Description.....	1
Administrative Structure.....	3
<b>Recreation Inventory</b>	
Carson City Recreation Facilities .....	6
Barrier Free Accessibility Assessment.....	9
MDNR Recreation Grant Inventory.....	10
Montcalm County Recreation Facilities .....	10
Recreation Facilities Operated by Other Public/Private Entities .....	11
<b>Description of the Planning and Public Input Process</b>	
Planning .....	13
Public Input Process.....	13
Goals and Objectives .....	16
Action Program .....	19
<b>Appendix A</b>	
December 2, 2009 Community Meeting	
March 25, 2010 Public Meeting	
March 29, 2010 Resolution Adopting Recreation Plan	
<b>Appendix B</b>	
Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan Certification Checklist	
Letter to Montcalm County Planning Commission	
Letter to West Michigan Regional Planning Commission	

### List of Tables

<u>Table No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Inventory of Carson City Owned/Operated Parks	7
2	Action Program	22

### List of Figures

<u>Figure No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Location Map	2
2	Organizational Structure	4
3	Parks Map	8

## COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Carson City is located along M-57 approximately 14 miles west of US127 and 12 miles east of M-66 in southeastern Montcalm County. M-57 is a primary east-west route connecting US127 with US131 approximately 15 miles west of Greenville. The 0.71 square mile rural community occupies Sections 11 and 12 in the northeast corner of Bloomer Township. The 2000 U.S. Census reported a population of 1,190 for Carson City and 3,039 for Bloomer Township.

Carson City was first platted in 1866 on land owned by R.M. Abbott, Delia Miner, and Hiram T. Sherman and recorded in 1871. A year later, the first lot was sold to Thomas Scott and John and Thomas LaDue, who built a saw mill and a grist mill in 1868 and 1870, respectively. The post office was transferred from North Shade in Gratiot County on August 3, 1868 and given the name Carson City by Scott, who had been in Carson City, Nevada during the gold and silver mining boom days; Sherman was appointed the first postmaster. Carson City was incorporated as a village in 1887 and as a city in 1960.

Historical data indicate that the population of Carson City has remained relatively constant since 1970, while the population of adjacent Bloomer Township has more than doubled. On a county-wide basis, for the period 1970-2000, the population has increased approximately 50 percent. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, for Carson City and adjacent Bloomer Township, the median age is approximately 35 years old with more than one half of the population in the 18-65 age group.

Land use/zoning within Carson City is predominately residential with a Main Street commercial corridor and an industrial area on the north side of town; recreation land use, including the City's park system, which includes Grove Park, Haradine Park, and West Park, is also a significant land use. The Carson City Hospital which, in 2009 was honored as one of the best in the nation, and the Carson City Correctional Institutions, including the Correctional Facility and the Temporary Facility, which are located southwest of the City in Bloomer Township, are the area's largest employers. The Carson City-Crystal Area School district includes two elementary schools, one each in Carson City and Crystal, and a middle school/high school campus in Carson City.

Fish Creek, which is a designated trout stream, flows from north to south along the west side of Carson City; it separates Haradine Park and West Park and borders Grove Park. Butternut Creek flows south through West Park and discharges into Fish Creek south of M-57. The mill dam/pond, which were integral to the development of Carson City, are also located along Fish Creek. Generally, the Carson City area topography is flat to gently sloping with primarily poorly drained loamy soils. The Fish Creek area includes poorly drained muck soils.

FIGURE 1 – LOCATION MAP



## **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

The City of Carson City was incorporated in 1960. Per its Charter, the City has a mayor-council form of government with an elected mayor, who serves as the City's chief administrative officer, and a six member council, which serves as the City's legislative body. The Council has the authority to formulate and adopt City policies, while the Mayor is responsible for carrying them out; the Mayor attends and presides over monthly Council meetings but does not vote, except in the case of a tie. Additionally, a Council appointed City Administrator assists with administrative and policy-related duties.

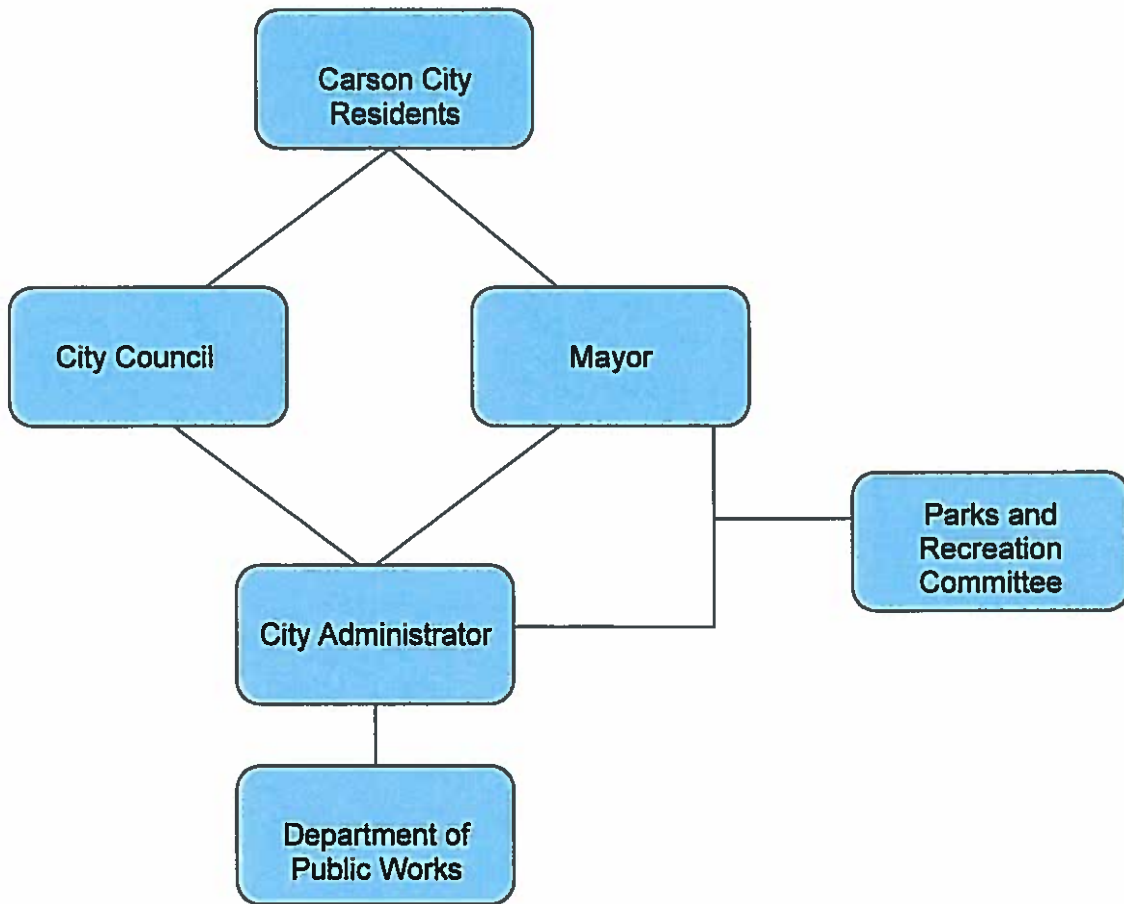
On February 2, 1960, in accordance with Act 156 of Public Act 1917, Recreation and Playgrounds, which allows for communities to provide public recreation and parks, the City established the Parks and Recreation Committee. Generally, the roles/responsibilities of the Parks and Recreation Committee, which consists of residents appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council, include advising the City Council/Administrator regarding parks and recreation. The Parks and Recreation Committee is responsible for developing, amending and administering the Five Year Recreation Plan, recommending park improvements to City Council and applying for Parks and Recreation grants. City Council is responsible for the approval of all policies and ordinances which affect parks and recreation.

The Carson City Department of Public Works, including the supervisor and one full-time general maintenance worker, are responsible for park operation and maintenance. A six man crew from the Carson City Correctional Institutions in adjacent Bloomer Township also assists with park maintenance.

The Carson City-Crystal Area Schools provide programs, staffing, and some facilities on the school campuses. Similarly, the Carson City Public Library, which is located in downtown Carson City, offers programs and meeting facilities. Community organizations, including the American Legion and area churches, host various events throughout the year and volunteers conduct fund raising activities for special projects.

The organization chart on the following page illustrates the City's administrative structure as it relates to parks and recreation.

Figure 2



Funding for annual park operation and maintenance and limited capital improvement projects is from the City's General Fund; the City Administrator is responsible for preparing the annual budget for review/approval by the City Council. For the 2010 fiscal year, the General Fund budget is \$640,000 and the parks budget is \$49,750. Typical annual expenditures have included grounds upkeep and repairs to play equipment, picnic tables, fencing, and underground utility and electrical systems. Pavilion rental fees are included in the General Fund and are used to supplement the parks budget.

Capital improvements are funded via the general fund with additional funds provided by grants and private donations. The budget for capital improvements is developed annually based upon available/anticipated funding. Due to the current economic forecast, future funding for parks is not expected to increase. The City will continue to pursue grant funds and donations for park system improvements.

Due to the location of the campus, the Carson City-Crystal Area Schools support, via staff and

facilities, several active sports programs, including football, cross country, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, baseball, softball, and track and field. Per the City's relationship with the Carson City-Crystal Area Schools, the City is allowed to utilize the school facilities for public programs free of charge, when not in use for school programs.

## RECREATION INVENTORY

### Carson City Recreation Facilities

The Carson City park system includes three parks: Grove Park, Haradine Park, and West Park. These parks occupy approximately 83 contiguous acres on the west side of town within the corporation limits and boast a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities for all ages.

In 1981 and 1988, the City secured MDNR grants to develop Haradine Park and West Park, respectively. The City has also been the benefactor of generous businesses, local residents, and energetic volunteers. Several improvements, including the play structure and basketball court at Grove Park and the skate park at Haradine Park, were implemented with a \$150,000 donation the City received from Dynergy, Inc. in 1998 and Fort Frontier was the result of fund raising efforts by parent volunteers. Table 1 on the following page includes an inventory of the City owned and operated recreation facilities; Figure 3 illustrates the locations of the parks.

Grove Park is situated along the east bank of Fish Creek on approximately 23 acres of primarily wetlands and/or woodlands. The site includes picnic and playground facilities, horseshoe pits, a basketball court that may be flooded for ice skating during cold weather, a sledding hill, and a paved parking lot. Portable restrooms are utilized seasonally.

Fish Creek separates Haradine Park and West Park; Haradine Park is located on the east bank of Fish Creek, while West Park is located on the west bank. A wooden bridge across Fish Creek and a walkway across the old mill dam on Fish Creek connect Haradine Park with West Park. Haradine Park is approximately 12 acres in size and includes picnic and restroom facilities, horseshoe pits, a skate park, the Mill Pond with a pond overlook/fishing pier, and a paved parking lot.

At 48 acres, West Park is the largest of the Carson City parks. An approximately 1/2 -mile trail, a playground structure, basketball and volleyball facilities, and a paved parking lot occupy the predominately open site.

Additionally, the City, via its relationship with the Carson City-Crystal Area Schools, is allowed to utilize the school facilities for non-school sponsored community programs when they are not in use by the school. The following paragraphs describe the school facilities.



**Table 1**  
**Inventory of Carson City Owned/Operated Parks**  
**2010-2014 Recreation Plan**  
**Carson City, Montcalm County, MI**

	Grove Park	Haradine Park	West Park
Park Type	Community Park	Community Park	Community Park
Service Area	City and Adjacent Township	City and Adjacent Township	City and Adjacent Township
Accessibility	2	2	2
Acres	23	12	48
Basketball Court	x		1 goal
Benches	x	x	X
Drinking Fountain	x	<del>x</del>	X
Fishing Pier		x	
Flag Pole		x	X
Horseshoe Pits	<i>NO</i> x		
Ice Skating	<i>NO</i> x		
Skate Park		x	
Landscaping			X
Lighting	x		X
Old Mill (remains of)		x	
Parking Lot	Paved	Paved	Paved
Pavilion	1	2	①
Picnic Tables	x	x	X
Playground Area	x	x	
Play Structure	x	<del>x</del>	X
Pond		x	
Portable Restrooms	x		X
Restrooms		x	
Sand Volleyball			X
Sign	x	x (MDNR Plaque)	X
Sledding Hill	x		
Trails		<del>x</del>	1/2 mile
Trash Receptacles	x	x	X
Walkway over Dam		x	X
Wind Mill		x	
Wooden Foot Bridge		x	X

**Carson City-Crystal Middle School and High School:** The Carson City-Crystal Middle/High School campus is located on the northeast side of the City. In the early 1980's, the community built a traditional outdoor sports facility, which includes a football field with stadium, lights, and concessions building, an eight lane running track, three baseball/softball fields, and an open practice field. The Middle School and the High School also include one each indoor multi-purpose gymnasium. The facilities predominately service the needs of the School programs, and are available

on a limited basis for community organized sports activities.

**Carson City Elementary School:** Carson City Elementary School is located on the southeast side of Carson City. The site includes an assortment of playground equipment and a small baseball/softball field. While primarily intended for the school children, the play area also satisfies neighborhood open space needs and the ball field is used for general use and practice/little league programs. The Elementary School is also equipped with an indoor multi-purpose gymnasium.

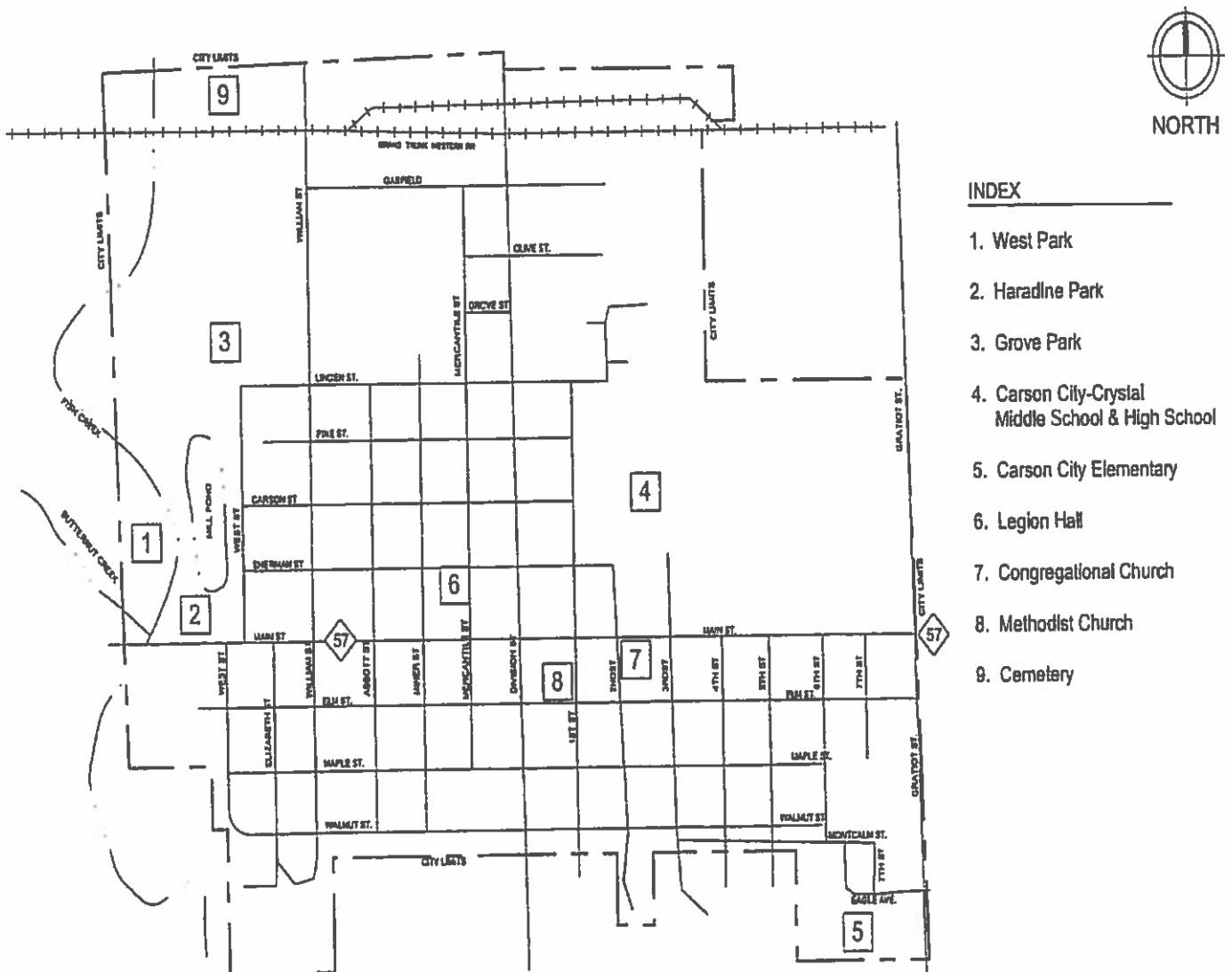


Figure 3

The First Baptist Church in Carson City maintains a softball field and a soccer field and Fallor Field in adjacent Bloomer Township includes a baseball/softball field. Sports teams/camps are organized/run by community volunteers; instructive programs are coordinated by the Carson City Library; and vacation bible

schools are conducted by several of the area churches.

Since 1973, Carson City has celebrated Frontier Days. Volunteers collaborate with the City, the schools, businesses and residents to organize the four day event, which includes a community picnic, an outdoor family movie, a pie baking contest, a softball tournament, a car show, a hot-air balloon launch/fly-in, a craft show, sidewalk sales, concerts, and parades. Frontier Days utilizes several venues, including the Carson City parks, the school campus, and the American Legion, which hosts a chicken BBQ and Beer Tent. Participants come from near and far to enjoy all that Frontier Days has to offer.

### Barrier Free Accessibility Assessment

The City owned and operated parks, including Grove Park, Haradine Park, and West Park, were evaluated in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans, dated February 5, 2009, as prepared by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) for accessibility to people with disabilities. As required, the assessment considered the accessibility of the facilities as well as the access route(s) to the facilities. Based upon visual inspections conducted in November 2009, a barrier free ranking, per the following system, was assigned to each of the parks:

- 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 entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

As noted in Table 1, each of the parks was rated “2 - some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”. The City is committed to improving accessibility, including, but not limited to, activity areas, restrooms, trails, and parking, at each of its parks.

Recreational areas, facilities, and programs play an important role in the life of the community; therefore it is essential that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to enjoy these areas and any programs provided. State/federal laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability; these laws apply to parks and other recreation lands and programs controlled and operated by local units of government.

The Utilization of Public Facilities by the Physically Limited Act (1966 PA 1, as amended) states that all public facilities must meet the barrier free design requirements contained in the state construction code. The local/state agency responsible for building permit issuance is also responsible for administration/enforcement related to barrier free design requirements; if no building permit is required, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth is the jurisdictional agency.

Because the state construction code is not applicable to many recreation facilities, an awareness/understanding of existing federal guidelines is critical. In July 2004, the federal Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board issued updated guidelines titled Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) for new or altered facilities covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. While the updated ADAAG have not yet been adopted as federal standards, they represent the best information available for developing barrier free recreation facilities and should be referenced when designing new/renovated facilities. However, in the event of a conflict between the current and updated ADAAG, the current ADAAG shall apply.

#### MDNR Recreation Grant Inventory

Grant Number: 26-01233  
Grant Amount: \$12,067.98  
Project/Park Name: Haradine Park  
Project Year: 1981  
Project Description: Picnic shelter and tables, landscaping, and sign.  
Project Condition: All of the park facilities constructed with this grant are still in use by the public.

Grant Number: TF-88-086  
Grant Amount: \$375,000  
Project/Park Name: West Park  
Project Year: 1988  
Project Description: Dam removal/water cascade, pond construction, paved trails, picnic area, and parking lot. As a result of site contamination issues, the City/MDNR team deleted some paved trails/bridges, the restroom/park office, and rustic campground from the initial project.  
Project Condition: All of the park facilities constructed with this grant are still in use by the public.

Grant Number: TF-88-140  
Grant Amount: \$68,250  
Project/Park Name: Trout Stream South  
Project Year: 1988  
Project Description: Acquisition project – City withdrew grant application.

#### Montcalm County Recreation Facilities

The Montcalm County park system includes five day use parks and one over-night facility, which are operated by the Montcalm County Parks and Recreation Commission and are accessible to the Carson City residents. These parks include:

Artman Park – is located 28 miles northwest of Carson City on Amy School Road just north of M-82 between Howard City and US131. It covers 30 acres of prime recreation land with large forested tracts and frontage on Tamarack Creek; a foot bridge connects an island to the mainland. Artman Park is ideal for picnicking, swimming, hiking, and fishing; restrooms and parking are available.

Krampe Park – is located 33 miles northwest of Carson City on Church Road between Masters Road and Amble Road (south of Amble). The 20-acre Krampe Park is situated on the northwest shore of Winfield Lake and is covered with large shade trees. Recreation facilities and amenities include a pavilion with picnic tables and grills, a bandstand with electricity, restrooms, playground equipment, horseshoes, and a boat launch.

McCarthy Park – is located 22 miles northwest of Carson City on M-91 between Turk Lake and Langston (north of Greenville) just south of County Road 522 on the Flat River. McCarthy Park covers 26 acres and includes woodland nature trails along the Flat River and three pavilions with picnic tables and grills, playground equipment, restrooms, and parking. Fishing and swimming are also available.

Schmeid Park – is located 32 miles northwest of Carson City at the intersection of Robin Drive and Caroline Drive (east of Lakeview) on the northwest side of Townline Lake. The 4-acre Schmeid Park includes mature shade trees, picnic tables and grills, playground equipment, restrooms, a basketball court, a boat launch, and parking. Fishing and swimming are also available.

Ford Lincoln Park – is located 32 miles northwest of Carson City on Schmeid Road at Hickory Drive (east of Lakeview) on the northwest side of Townline Lake and is the County's only overnight facility. The 3-acre Ford Lincoln Park includes two rustic cabins, two heated cabins (one of which is ADA accessible), restrooms with showers, and a heated kitchen/dining hall. A pavilion with tables and grills, basketball and volleyball, and fishing and swimming are also available.

Flat River Nature Park – is located 28 miles northwest of Carson City on South Johnson Road south of Sidney Road (south of Gowen). New in June 2007, the 69-acre Flat River Nature Park includes 4,200 feet of frontage on the Flat River and walking trails (one each 0.8 mile and 1.8 mile), which are also open for horseback riding. Parking is also available.

### **Recreation Facilities Operated by Other Public/Private Entities**

In addition to the County parks, there are five State game areas, fourteen privately operated campgrounds, and 25 public lake access sites in Montcalm County. The Red Pines Campground, which is a 30-site campground, is located two miles north of Carson City on East Condensery Road west of Mt. Hope Road. The other facilities are located throughout the County and require special trip planning for Carson City residents to utilize them. There currently are no bike/hike trails connecting the City to any of these facilities. A portion of the Manistee National Forest is located in the extreme northwestern portion of Montcalm County.

Fred Meijer Heartland Trail - is currently 41 miles long and extends along the abandoned CSX railroad right-of-way from Alma westerly through Elwell, Riverdale, Vestaburg, Cedar Lake, and Edmore, and southerly through McBride, Stanton, Sidney, and to Greenville, where it connects to

the Fred Meijer Flat River Trail. Additionally, the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail are developing a 37.5 miles trail along the abandoned railroad right-of-way connecting the communities of Lowell, Ionia, Belding, and Greenville. In Greenville, it will connect with the existing Fred Meijer Heartland Trail and the Fred Meijer Flat River Trail establishing a 120 mile of trail network.

Montcalm Community College - is located in Sidney approximately 18 miles northwest of Carson City. The College provides several recreational programs and facilities, including a gymnasium, an Olympic size indoor pool, youth sports and fine arts camps, and senior citizen activities, which are available for the community.

Montcalm County 4-H Fairgrounds - are owned and operated by the fair board, which hosts the 4-H Fair each July. The fair board recently purchased new fairground property outside of the Greenville City limits and anticipates selling the old fairground property.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AND PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

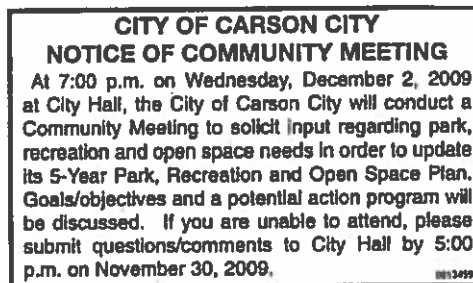
### Planning

A systems approach was used to assess Carson City's park, recreation, and open space needs. Initially, the existing recreation facilities inventory was compared to the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines, as published by the National Recreation and Park Association; these Standards/Guidelines are generally population based. In conjunction with the Standards/Guidelines assessment, the characteristics of the community were also considered. More specifically, the evaluation included the following:

- demographics, including age, gender, and income distribution,
- needs/lifestyles of today's residents (i.e., quality of life)
- needs/preferences of people in the area being served
- recreation opportunities offered by schools and nearby communities/facilities
- barrier-free accessibility
- financial feasibility
- land availability
- reasonably attainable based upon timeframe and funding

### Public Input Process

Public input for the Recreation Plan update was solicited via a Community Meeting, which was conducted on December 2, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. at Carson City City Hall. A notice was published in the November 30, 2009 edition of the Carson City Gazette inviting the stakeholders to attend the Community Meeting; representatives of Bloomer Township and the Carson City-Crystal Area Schools were contacted directly and invited to attend. Community members unable to attend the meeting were encouraged to submit their questions/comments to the City Administrator by 5:00 p.m. November 30, 2009. A copy of the Community Meeting notice is included below.



Carson City Gazette, November 30, 2009

At the Community Meeting, a presentation describing the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' process for updating the Recreation Plan was given by the City Administrator and the City's consultant. The current Recreation Plan, improvements implemented since development of the (current) Recreation Plan, goals/objectives and specific action items relative to recreation programs and facilities, and potential funding were reviewed/discussed. Approximately fifteen participants offered public comment regarding existing and future recreation opportunities. Table A.1 in Appendix A includes a summary of the public comments/discussion provided at the Community Meeting.

Next, representatives of the Parks and Recreation Committee, the City Administrator, and the City's consultant met to review the data from the Community Meeting. Goals/objectives and action items were outlined and preliminarily prioritized. Cost opinions were prepared for the proposed improvements and the Action Program was defined based upon discussions with the Parks and Recreation Committee relative to need and anticipated funding.

A public notice was printed in the Carson City Gazette/Daily News on February 24, 2010 announcing that the draft 5-Year Recreation Plan was available for public review and comment, directing public input to Mr. Mark Border, the City Administrator, and scheduling a public meeting for March 25, 2010. During the public comment period, the City Administrator received no questions/comments from the public regarding the draft 5-Year Recreation Plan. A copy of the public notice for the draft 5-Year Recreation Plan review and comment is included below.

**City of Carson City  
Request for Public Input  
5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan**

Carson City is updating its 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. A "draft" copy of the Plan is available for public review and comment until March 25, 2010 at the following locations:

Carson City Public Library, 102 East Main Street, Carson City, MI  
Carson City City Hall, 123 East Main Street, Carson City, MI

Comments regarding the "draft" 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan may be directed to:

Mr. Mark Border, City Administrator  
City of Carson City  
123 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 340  
Carson City, MI 48811-0340  
P: (509) 584-3515  
F: (509) 584-6609  
E: [mborder@carsoncitymi.com](mailto:mborder@carsoncitymi.com)

**Notice of Public Meeting  
5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan**

Carson City will conduct a public meeting for the 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at City Hall, 123 East Main Street, Carson City, MI 48811.

0910017

2/24

Carson City Gazette/Daily News, February 24, 2010



On March 15, 2010 and March 22, 2010, the Carson City Gazette included the following notices for the March 25, 2010 public meeting:

**City of Carson City  
Request for Public Input  
5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan**

Carson City is updating its 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan. A "draft" copy of the Plan is available for public review and comment until March 25, 2010 at the following locations:

Carson City Public Library, 102 East Main Street, Carson City, MI  
Carson City City Hall, 123 East Main Street, Carson City, MI

Comments regarding the "draft" 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan may be directed to:

Mr. Mark Borden, City Administrator  
City of Carson City  
123 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 340  
Carson City, MI 48811-0340  
P: (909) 584-3515  
F: (909) 584-6609  
E: [mborden@carsoncitymi.com](mailto:mborden@carsoncitymi.com)

**Notice of Public Meeting  
5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan**

Carson City will conduct a public meeting for the 5-Year Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 25, 2010 at City Hall, 123 East Main Street, Carson City, MI 48811.

09140201 3/15,22

Carson City Gazette, March 15, 2010 and March 22, 2010

At the March 25, 2010 public meeting, the City's consultant presented an overview/update of the recreation plan process highlighting the Action Program, as outlined in the draft 5-Year Recreation Plan; refer to Appendix A for a copy of the minutes for the March 25, 2010 public meeting.

The public review process was incorporated into the 5-Year Recreation Plan and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans, the final 2010-2014 Recreation Plan for Carson City, Michigan, dated March 2010, was approved and adopted via resolution by City Council on March 29, 2010. A copy of the March 29, 2010 Resolution is included in Appendix A.

Additionally, a copy of the required Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan Certification Checklist and copies of the letters transmitting the adopted plan to the County Planning Agency and the Regional Planning Agency are contained in Appendix B.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Developing goals and objectives is a critical part of the recreation planning process. While the overall goal is to provide recreation opportunities, more specific goals are based upon the demographic characteristics of the population and the physical and environmental characteristics of the area. Public input, via public meetings, was reviewed in conjunction with the demographic characteristics included below and the physical/environmental characteristics included in previous sections. This information provided the basis for developing the goals and objectives outlined below/on the following pages.

- **Population:** The 2000 U.S. Census population was 1,190; the area has experience little growth and is expected to remain relatively constant.
- **Age:** The median age is approximately 35 years old with 30% of the population under 18 years old, 55% between 18-65 years old, and 15% over 65 years old (i.e., seniors).
- **Gender:** Approximately 55% of the population is female.
- **Disabilities:** Of the approximately 20% of the population that is disabled 55% are under 65 years old.
- **Racial:** Approximately 95% of the population is categorized as white with the remaining 5% composed of African American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, and others.
- **Education:** Approximately 85% of the population graduated from high school with 25% having earned an Associate Degree, Bachelor's Degree, and/or a Graduate Degree.
- **Households:** There are approximately 500 households; approximately two thirds of the households are family households.
- **Income:** In 2000, the median household income was \$32,500 with approximately 15% classified as being below the poverty level.
- **Employment:** Over the past few years, the unemployment rate has ranged from 10-15%.

### **Goal 1: Develop a non-motorized trail system.**

#### Objectives

- Extend trails within existing parks.
- Extend trails to connect existing parks.
- Link parks, schools, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and potential railroad corridors.
- Evaluate potential railroad corridors.
- Add directional/instructional signage to direct users to activity areas.
- Incorporate educational signage in natural areas.

**Goal 2: Update/expand recreation facilities to provide active and passive leisure time activities that enhance the quality of life for multi-generations.**

Objectives

- Encourage regular use of recreation facilities.
- Encourage year round use of recreation facilities.
- Provide recreation facilities to improve health and fitness.
- Develop recreation facilities that reflect the changing/diverse needs of the community.
- Provide shaded areas adjacent to playground equipment for adults watching children play and for children needing a break from the heat/sun.
- Develop additional passive recreation opportunities such as benches, educational signage, and landscaping that appeal to a broad range of users.
- Provide additional restroom facilities.

**Goal 3: Improve/provide barrier-free access to recreation facilities in accordance with applicable codes/guidelines.**

Objectives

- Provide recreation opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Improve/provide barrier-free access to existing recreation facilities.
- Upgrade trails to improve barrier-free access.
- Provide barrier-free access for new recreation facilities.

**Goal 4: Enhance aesthetics of existing park properties.**

Objective

- Buffer spoils area on north side of West Park.
- Encourage volunteers to adopt a landscape circle, including planting and maintenance, at West Park.
- Add public art.

**Goal 5: Develop recreation opportunities that take advantage of area water resources.**

Objectives

- Improve use/access to stream corridors, including fishing, canoeing and kayaking.
- Provide another pond overlook/fishing pier for the Mill Pond.

**Goal 6: Acquire and protect or conserve open space and natural areas/resources.**

Objectives

- Acquire property adjacent to existing park properties.
- Acquire additional property when it becomes available.
- Develop opportunities for education about the natural areas/resources, including floodplains and wetlands.

**Goal 7: Continue to embrace/enhance regional collaboration of recreation facilities.**

**Objectives**

- Continue to coordinate existing recreation partners, including the school and Frontier Days festival.
- Coordinate/cooperate with public agencies, private enterprise, citizen groups, and other interested organizations.
- Encourage volunteer participation for development of recreation facilities and management of natural resources.

**Goal 8: Manage financial resources through regular assessment/budgeting to develop and maintain recreation facilities.**

**Objectives**

- Pursue funding opportunities, including public agencies, private enterprise, citizen groups, and other interested organizations, to implement recreation facility improvements and to acquire additional open space and natural areas/resources.
- Maintain existing buildings/equipment.

**Goal 9: Continue to improve opportunities for recreation by periodically reassessing community needs, trends, and characteristics.**

**Objectives**

- Periodically update this Recreation Plan.
- Review the intensity of recreation facilities use and characteristics of users.
- Provide opportunities for identification, selection, and development of recreation facilities.

## **ACTION PROGRAM**

The goals and objectives provided the basis for developing a five year Action Program to maintain and/or improve park and recreation opportunities. The “action” items were prioritized based upon public input and meeting discussions with the Parks and Recreation Committee. The Action Program is described in the following paragraphs, while Table 2 on page 22 presents a summary with estimated construction costs and references applicable goals/objectives. The implementation schedule may be impacted by funding availability and as a result, may require reprioritization of the items included in the Action Program.

### **Year 1**

#### **1 – West/Haradine Park to Grove Park Connector Trail**

Trails were identified as a priority throughout the recreation planning process. More specifically, the City wants to extend the existing trail system to connect West Park and Haradine Park with Grove Park. The City also wants to incorporate site furnishings and educational signs to promote the Parks’ natural resources. The proposed trail improvements would provide passive recreation for a variety of users.

#### **2 – Grove Park - Frisbee/Disc Golf Course**

The City proposes to utilize the existing natural features/topography of Grove Park to develop a nine hole Frisbee/disc golf course.

#### **3 – Grove/Haradine Park – Shuffleboard**

The horseshoe pits at Grove Park are used on a regular basis. As such, the City wants to offer additional activities/opportunities for visitors and proposes to install a pair of shuffleboard courts at Grove Park or Haradine Park.

#### **4 – West Park – Sun Screens**

Fort Frontier is situated in a large open area at West Park. The proposed improvements would include installing four sun screens around the perimeter of the play structure to provide much needed shade for parents supervising their playing children and for children who need a break from the sun. The sun screens would have to be removed in the fall, stored over the winter, and reinstalled the following spring.

## Year 2

### 1 – Grove Park – Restrooms

Currently, at Grove Park, public restroom facilities are provided seasonally via portable restrooms. With the increased uses/activities, which are proposed for Grove Park, the City would like to construct permanent facilities with public water and sanitary sewer service. The new restroom facilities would comply with the required ADA standards/regulations.

### 2 – Fish Creek Dam Restoration

Previously, part of the dam across Fish Creek was removed/modified. The proposed improvements include completing the removal of the dam.

## Year 3

### 1 – West Park – Amphitheater/Band Shell

The proposed amphitheater/band shell would provide opportunities for cultural events, as well as coordination/teaming with organizations such as Frontier Days for movies in the park.

### 2 – West Park – Pavilion near Fort Frontier

As a result of the significant use of the existing pavilions at Haradine Park and at Grove Park facilities, the City implemented a reservation system. A new pavilion near Fort Frontier would be provide much needed, additional picnic space, as well as provide shelter from the sun for children playing at Fort Frontier and for adults supervising the play.

## Year 4

### 1 – Grove Park – Pavilion

Similar to the proposed pavilion at West Park, this new pavilion would expand the picnic space.

### 2 – Grove Park – Parking Area

Additional parking will be required to support the expanded facility use, including the Frisbee/disc golf course, shuffleboard, and picnicking.

## Year 5

### 1 and 2 – Pedestrian Bridges Across Fish Creek and Butternut Creek

Currently, pedestrians cross Fish Creek and Butternut Creek via M-57; pedestrians may also cross Fish Creek via the wooden foot bridge in Haradine/West Parks. Pedestrian bridges located along the north side of and adjacent to M-57 would provide a safer and more convenient route/link from the downtown area to the busy commercial area west of town and west of the Parks. Implementation in conjunction with M-57 improvements would allow for the City to team with MDOT as applicant for potential funding opportunities through the MDOT enhancement grant program.

### 3 – Property Acquisition for Sports Complex

Soccer, baseball, and softball are popular sports in Carson City. As a result, the City would like to develop a sports complex that includes a mix of ball fields and soccer fields; the sports complex would also potentially include a restroom/concessions facility.

**Table 2**  
**Action Program**  
**2010-2014 Recreation Plan**  
**Carson City, Montcalm County, MI**

	Description	Construction Cost	Relates to Goals/Objectives
	<b>Year 1</b>		
X	10-foot Wide 1500' Paved Pathway /Connector Trail	\$90,000	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9
	Grove Park - Frisbee/Disc Golf Course	\$6,000	2, 8, 9
	Grove Park or Haradine Park – Shuffleboard	\$13,000	2, 8, 9
X	West Park - Sun Screens	\$32,000	2, 3, 8, 9
	<b>Total for Year 1</b>	<b>\$141,000</b>	
	<b>Year 2</b>		
	Grove Park - Restrooms (via private donation)	\$100,000	2, 3, 8, 9
	Dam Restoration	\$25,000	1, 6, 8, 9
	<b>Total for Year 2</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	
	<b>Year 3</b>		
	West Park - Amphitheater/Band Shell	\$100,000	2, 3, 7, 8, 9
X	West Park - Pavilion near Fort Frontier	\$70,000	2, 3, 8, 9
	<b>Total for Year 3</b>	<b>\$170,000</b>	
	<b>Year 4</b>		
X	Grove Park - Pavilion	\$70,000	2, 3, 8, 9
X	Grove Park - Parking Area	\$40,000	2, 3, 8, 9
	<b>Total for Year 4</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>	
	<b>Year 5</b>		
	Pedestrian Bridge Across Fish Creek	\$95,000	1, 2, 7, 8, 9
	Pedestrian Bridge Across Butternut Creek	\$64,000	1, 2, 7, 8, 9
	Property Acquisition - Sports Complex	\$25,000	7, 8, 9
	<b>Total for Year 5</b>	<b>\$184,000</b>	



APPENDIX A

December 2, 2009 Community Meeting  
Recreation Plan  
City of Carson City, Montcalm County, MI

Minutes for Community Meeting held 7:00 p.m., Wednesday, December 2, 2009, at City Hall.

Mark Borden, City Administrator, introduced Maureen Wegener, C2AE, stating that the City had hired C2AE to update the City's recreation plan in accordance with MDNR's guidelines.

Maureen Wegener provided an overview of the MDNR's process for preparing/updating the recreation plans, including the Carson City Recreation Plan. She added that, in order for the City to be eligible to apply for MDNR recreation grants, the City was required to have a MDNR approved recreation plan.

She explained that the purpose of the Community Meeting was to gather citizen opinion on park/recreation priorities. The community was encouraged to share general goals/objectives, as well as specific projects. As citizens offered comments/ideas, they were recorded on large post-it paper.

Mark Borden, City Administrator, indicated that he received no questions/comments from community members unable to attend the meeting.

Note: The information collected during the Community Meeting is summarized in Table A.1 on the next page.

Table A.1	
December 2, 2009 Community Meeting	
2010-2014 Recreation Plan	
City of Carson City, Montcalm County, MI	
1	Expand trail system, including skiing
2	Connector trail from Haradine Park to Grove Park to school campus
3	Emergency phone at parks
4	Baseball/softball fields
5	Soccer fields
6	Storage building for equipment/supplies
7	Restroom at Grove Park
8	Fairground/community center/facility
9	Tennis courts
10	Racquet ball
11	Putting green
12	Batting cages
13	Improve sledding hill at Grove Park; tow rope
14	Canoe launch
15	Clean up Fish Creek
16	Pavilion near Fort Frontier in West Park
17	Another pavilion at Grove Park
18	Amphitheater/outdoor theater
19	Interpretive dam site
20	Educational signs
21	Additional parking at Grove Park
22	Fix flooding problem at West Park
23	Improve M-57 clear vision at driveways to West and Haradine Parks
24	Finish demolition of old dam and replacement with boulders
25	Buffer spoil piles at West Park
26	Landscaping
27	Sound system for parks and downtown
28	Lighting, electrical system
29	Additional overlooks for fishing
30	Fire pit/gas
31	Program committee – sports and activities
32	Parks and recreation director
33	Sunscreen roof at Fort Frontier at West Park
34	Climbing/rock wall with zip line across Fish Creek
35	Frisbee golf
36	Play (i.e., adult fitness) equipment
37	Water park/features
38	Irrigation system
39	Pedestrian bridges along M-57 at Fish Creek and Butternut Creek
40	Shuffle board
41	Museum
42	Statues/sculptures
43	Horseshoes/washers
44	Land acquisition

March 25, 2010 Public Meeting  
Recreation Plan  
City of Carson City, Montcalm County, MI

Minutes for Public Meeting held 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 25, 2010, at City Hall.

Maureen Wegener, C2AE, briefly described the process for preparing/updating the Carson City Recreation Plan. She said that, in accordance with the MDNR's Guidelines, the draft Recreation Plan had been made available to the public for review/comment for a 30-day period. Copies of the report were on display at City Hall and at the Carson City Library.

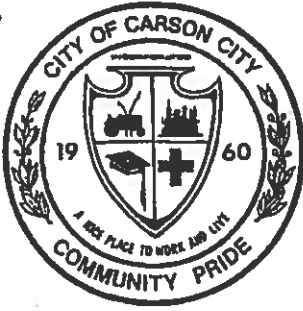
Mark Borden, City Administrator, indicated that he had received no questions/comments from community members regarding the draft Recreation Plan.

Maureen Wegener used a presentation board (with project descriptions and corresponding construction cost estimates) to review the Action Program contained in the draft Recreation Plan. She stated that the Action Plan was developed from information collected at the Community Meeting that was conducted in December and subsequent meetings with the Parks and Rec Committee.

A member of the audience asked about the location of the trail included in the Action Program. Maureen Wegener responded that it was a connector trail between the existing parks.

Another member of the audience asked about the bridges across Fish Creek and Butternut Creek. Maureen Wegener responded that the two pedestrian bridges would be constructed across the creeks on the north side of M-57 to allow for pedestrians to safely travel to the commercial area west Carson City and west of the parks. Mark Borden also added that MDOT funding may be available to construct the bridges.

Maureen Wegener concluded by saying that the Recreation Plan was on the agenda for the March 29, 2010 City Council meeting and that approval by resolution was necessary to complete the process for submittal by April 1, 2010.



*City of Carson City*

123 E. Main Street  
P.O. Box 340

Carson City, Michigan 48811-0340

Phone (989) 584-3515

Fax (989) 584-6609

[www.carsoncitymi.com](http://www.carsoncitymi.com)

## RESOLUTION NO. 03-10

**WHEREAS,** The City of Carson City is a Michigan Municipal Corporation operating under a charter adopted February 2, 1960, which was ratified on March 14, 1960 and went into effect on April 1, 1960; and

**WHEREAS,** The City of Carson City owns and operates several public parks within its city limits; and

**WHEREAS,** The City of Carson City continues to work on upgrading its parks for public and recreational use; and

**WHEREAS,** As part of its overall endeavor to upgrade its parks for public and recreational use the City of Carson City has undertaken a Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain the City's recreation facilities during the period between 2010 and 2015; and

**WHEREAS,** A public comment session was previously held on March 25, 2010 in the City Hall located as 123 E. Main Street, Carson City, Michigan to provide the residents of Carson City and other interested parties to express opinions, ask questions and to discuss the aspects of the City's Parks and Recreation Plan; and

**WHEREAS,** After the public comment session a special meeting of the City Council was held to vote on the adoption of the Recreation Plan;

**AND, NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT:** The City Council of the City of Carson City hereby adopts the Recreation Plan as proposed as an appropriate guideline for improving recreation for residents of the City of Carson City;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT: The Mayor and Comptroller shall have the authority to execute all documents necessary for the adoption of the five year City Parks and Recreation Plan.

Motion by Cusack, seconded by Grinnell, to adopt the above Resolution No. 03-10, with the following vote: ( 6 ) Ayes; ( 0 ) Naves; ( 0 ) Abstaining; and ( 0 ) Absent.

Bonnie Schafer  
Bonnie Schafer, Comptroller

CERTIFICATION OF RESOLUTION NO. 03-10

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution No. 03-10, and the attachments thereto was duly adopted by the City Council of the City of Carson City with a quorum being present at a special meeting of the City Council on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2010, by a vote of six ( 6 ) for; zero ( 0 ) against; zero ( 0 ) abstaining; and zero ( 0 ) being absent.

Bruce Tasker  
Bruce Tasker, Mayor

Bonnie Schafer  
Bonnie Schafer, Comptroller

**Special Public Meeting**

Minutes of a special public meeting held Monday, March 29, 2010, 7:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Members present at roll call: Brune, Cusack, Grinnell, Kapustka, Miller, Stanton, and Tasker.

Mayor Tasker presided and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Tasker presented Resolution #03-2010 to adopt the City's Parks and Recreation Plan for approval. No public comments were noted. Motion by Cusack, seconded by Grinnell to accept Resolution #03-2010. Motion carried.

The C2AE recreation plan, provided by Parks Committee members Kapustka and Grinnell, was reviewed by council. Councilman Brune questioned the future grants requiring matching funds by the city. 25% of the connector path project proposed for year #1 would be matched with City Recreation funds. Other updates included refurbishing the dam and sun screens over west park. Councilman Brune also commented that this action plan does not lock the city into anything by year or in the order presented. Kapustka added that the recreation plan can be amended. Councilman Stanton commented on a letter written by a blind citizen regarding the possible M-57 walkway to the parks be cemented for convenience of handicap access. No public comments were noted. Motion by Stanton, seconded by Brune to accept the C2AE recreation plan.

Motion to adjourn by Kapustka, seconded by Miller at 7:40 p.m. Motion carried.



Bruce N. Tasker  
Mayor



Bonnie Schafer  
Comptroller

**APPENDIX B**



# APPENDIX H. COMMUNITY PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAY PLAN CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST



Michigan Department of Natural Resources-Grants Management

## COMMUNITY PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND GREENWAY PLAN CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST

*By Authority of Parts 19, 703 and 716 of Act 451, P.A. 1994, as amended, submission of this information is required for eligibility to apply for grants*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete, obtain certification signatures and submit this checklist with a locally adopted recreation plan.

All recreation plans are required to meet the content and local approval standards listed in this checklist and as outlined in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans* provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). To be eligible for grant consideration, plans must be submitted to the DNR prior to the grant application deadline with a completed checklist that has been signed by an authorized official(s) of the local unit of government(s) submitting the plan.

Name of Plan: 2010 - 2014 Recreation Plan, City of Carson City, Michigan, March 2010		
List the community names (including school districts) covered by the plan	County	Month and year plan adopted by the community's governing body
City of Carson City	Montcalm	March / 2010

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please check each box to certify that the listed information is included in the final plan.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>1. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>2. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roles of Commission(s) or Advisory Board(s) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Department, Authority and/or Staff Description and Organizational Chart Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, Capital Improvements and Recreation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programming <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Current Funding Sources <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Role of Volunteers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relationship(s) with School Districts, Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations <b>Regional Authorities or Trailway Commissions Only</b> Description of the Relationship between the Authority or Commission and the Recreation Departments of <input type="checkbox"/> Participating Communities <input type="checkbox"/> Articles of Incorporation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>3. RECREATION INVENTORY</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Description of Methods Used to Conduct the Inventory <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inventory of all Community Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location Maps (site development plans recommended but not required) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Accessibility Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Status Report for all Grant-Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>4. RESOURCE INVENTORY (OPTIONAL)</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>5. DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING PROCESS</b>

6. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Description of the Method(s) Used to Solicit Public Input Before or During Preparation of the Plan, Including a Copy of the Survey or Meeting Agenda and a Summary of the Responses Received

Copy of the Notice of the Availability of the Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment

Date of the Notice February 24, 2010

Type of Notice Carson City Gazette / Daily News - Local Newspaper

Plan Location Carson City Library, Carson City City Hall

Duration of Draft Plan Public Review Period (Must be at Least 30 Days) 30 Days

Copy of the Notice for the Public Meeting Held after the One Month Public Review Period and Before the Plan's Adoption by the Governing Body(ies)

Date of Notice March 15, 2010 and March 22, 2010

Name of Newspaper Carson City Gazette

Date of Meeting March 25, 2010

Copy of the Minutes from the Public Meeting

7. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

8. ACTION PROGRAM

Plans must be adopted by the highest level *governing body* (i.e., city council, county commission, township board). If planning is the responsibility of a Planning Commission, Park and Recreation Commission, Recreation Advisory Board or other local Board or Commission, the plan should also include a resolution from the Board or Commission recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body.

The local unit of government must submit the final plan to both the County and Regional Planning Agency for their information. Documentation that this was done must be submitted with the plan to the DNR.

Items 1, 3 and 4 below are required and must be included in the plan.

**APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, each local unit of government must pass a resolution adopting the plan. Prepare and attach a separate page for each unit of government included in the plan.

- 1. Official resolution of adoption by the governing body dated: March 29, 2010
- 2. Official resolution of the \_\_\_\_\_ Commission or Board, recommending adoption of the plan by the governing body, dated: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to County Planning Agency dated: March 30, 2010
- 4. Copy of letter transmitting adopted plan to Regional Planning Agency dated: March 30, 2010

**NOTE:** For multi-jurisdictional plans, Overall Certification must include the signature of each local unit of government. Prepare and attach a separate signature page for each unit of government included in the plan.

*I hereby certify that the recreation plan for*

City of Carson City \_\_\_\_\_ *includes the required content, as indicated*

(Local Unit of Government)

*above and as set forth by the DNR.*

 Mark J. Berden 3/30/10  
Authorized Official for the Local Unit of Government Date

This completed checklist must be signed and submitted with a locally adopted recreation plan to:

**GRANTS MANAGEMENT  
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
PO BOX 30425  
LANSING, MI 48909-7925**

The recreation plan is approved by the DNR and the community (ies) covered by the plan, as listed on page 1 of this checklist is/are eligible to apply for recreation grants through

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Grants Management Date



Lansing • Grand Rapids  
Gaylord • Escanaba

725 Prudden Street  
Lansing, MI 48906

P: 517.371.1200  
F: 517.371.2013

info@c2ae.com  
www.c2ae.com

March 30, 2010

Montcalm County Planning Commission  
211 West Main Street  
P.O. Box 368  
Stanton, Michigan 48888

Re: 2010-2014 Recreation Plan  
City of Carson City, Montcalm County, Michigan

Dear Sir/Madame:

On behalf of the City of Carson City and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (Rev. 2/5/2009), we are submitting, for your information, a copy of the 2010-2014 Recreation Plan, which was adopted on March 29, 2010 by the City Council. Thank you.

Sincerely,

C2AE

Maureen L. Wegener, P.E.  
Project Manager

MLW/090178.01

Cc: Mr. Mark Borden, City Administrator, Carson City

ARCHITECTURE  
ENGINEERING  
PLANNING

IT'S THE PEOPLE



Lansing • Grand Rapids  
Gaylord • Escanaba

725 Prudden Street  
Lansing, MI 48906

P: 517.371.1200  
F: 517.371.2013

info@c2ae.com  
www.c2ae.com

March 30, 2010

West Michigan Regional Planning Commission  
820 Monroe Avenue, NW, Suite 214  
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503

Re: 2010-2014 Recreation Plan  
City of Carson City, Montcalm County, Michigan

Dear Sir/Madame:

On behalf of the City of Carson City and in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (Rev. 2/5/2009), we are submitting, for your information, a copy of the 2010-2014 Recreation Plan, which was adopted on March 29, 2010 by the City Council. Thank you.

Sincerely,

C2AE

Maureen L. Wegener, P.E.  
Project Manager

MLW/090178.01

Cc: Mr. Mark Borden, City Administrator, Carson City

ARCHITECTURE  
ENGINEERING  
PLANNING

IT'S THE PEOPLE