

**NORA**   
**Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority**  
Recreation Plan



## Acknowledgements

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Craig Bessinger, Chairperson - City of Ferrysburg  
Mike Fritz, Vice Chairperson - City of Grand Haven  
Mary Jane Belter, Secretary - Grand Haven Township  
Dave Davis, Treasurer - Grand Haven Area Public Schools  
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Plan Adopted by NORA: September 30, 2010

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## Chapter One. Purpose and Planning Process

### Project Overview

This plan is the result of over two years of community-wide discussions and cooperative planning efforts in the greater Northwest Ottawa Community. While this plan focuses on recreation development, it is also representative of a continual effort to build a collaborative environment in the greater Northwest Ottawa Community. For the purpose of this plan, the “Northwest Ottawa Community” refers to four neighboring jurisdictions in the northwest area of Ottawa County - City of Grand Haven, Charter Township of Grand Haven, City of Ferrysburg and Robinson Township (please see Figure 1.1).

In addition, as used throughout this document, the “Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority” (hereafter, referred to as NORA) refers to all geographical areas within the City of Grand Haven, the Charter Township of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg and portions (precincts 1 and 2) of Robinson Township. However, for the purpose of this plan and future recreational planning and development efforts, NORA refers to one, larger cooperative community. It is important to note, the NORA is responsible for only the goals and objectives outlined in *this* plan. However, most of the existing parks and recreational resources discussed in this document are owned and administered separately by each participating municipality, the Grand Haven Area Public School District and other local/state agencies. Therefore, the primary purpose of NORA is to **organize and administer recreational programs**. In the future, NORA plans to explore opportunities to connect with and/or build upon existing recreation facilities and build new recreation facilities, where they are needed.

### Community Description - A Commitment to Cooperation

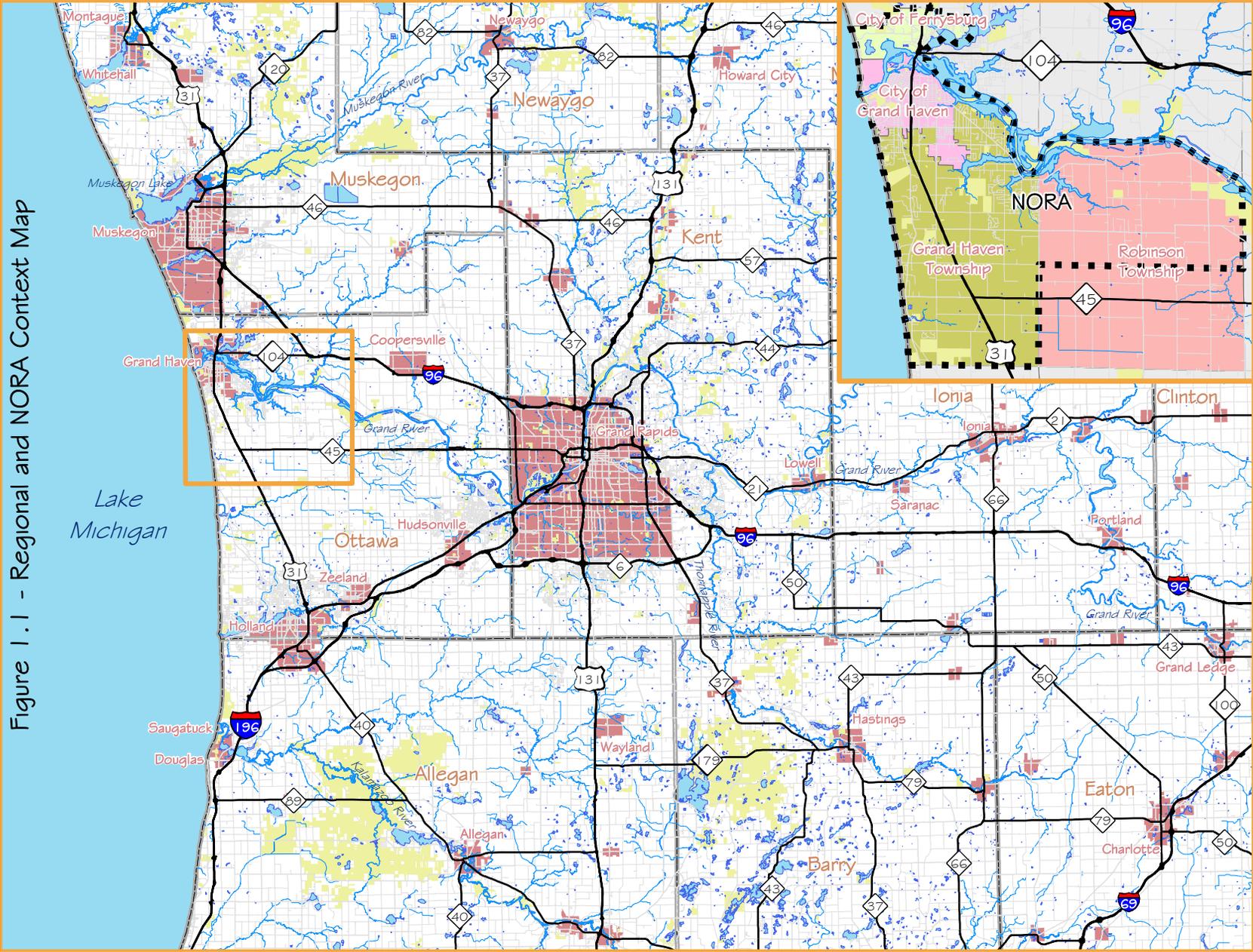
#### Establishing the Recreation Authority

In 1998, the City of Grand Haven, the Charter Township of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg, Robinson Township and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools entered into a formal agreement to establish the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP). Established under the Recreation and Playgrounds Act (Act 156 of 1917) and the Revised School Code (Act 451 of 1976), the new inter-governmental body was charged with providing extensive and varied recreational opportunities

“Leave all the afternoon to exercise and recreation, which are as necessary as reading. I will rather say more necessary because health is worth more than learning.”

- Thomas Jefferson

Figure 1.1 - Regional and NORA Context Map



(programming), promoting personal enrichment and satisfying the recreational needs of area residents. The creation of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP) developed from discussions between officials from the four jurisdictions and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools who recognized they must function as a single community and work together to adequately provide for recreational opportunities for the greater community.

Under the new arrangement, Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP) operated as part of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. Funding for staff, activities, equipment and program administration were provided by financial contributions from the four participating municipalities. In-kind contributions (e.g. administration, facilities, storage and office space) were provided by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. The Program was directed by a Recreation Coordinator and administered by a 10-member Advisory Board made up of one elected official and one non-elected representative from each participating jurisdiction.

In 2008, the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP) Advisory Board indicated a desire to explore new ways in which they could better fund the existing recreational activities, offer new and expanding recreational programming and construct, operate and maintain new and/or existing recreational facilities. In considering the best approach, the NORP Advisory Board examined a number of state statutes that authorize local governments to work together to provide for public recreation.

After carefully considering several options, the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP) Advisory Board determined to establish the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority (NORA) under the Recreational Authority under Public Act 321 of 2000 (MCL 123.1131 *et seq.*). Working through a lengthy but constructive development process that included legal-council and public hearings, the four jurisdictions adopted “Articles of Incorporation” (see *Appendix B.*) by an affirmative vote of the majority of the members serving on each legislative body. A printed copy of the Articles was then filed with the Secretary of State, Office of the Great Seal - becoming effective on October 30, 2009.

In December 2009, the Recreation Authority entered into a formal agreement with the Grand Haven Area Public Schools (see *Appendix C.*) to continue funding staff, equipment and recreational activities. Under the agreement, the Recreation Coordinator (in cooperation with each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools), facilitates recreation program activities on respective municipal/school sites and facilities. However, the participating municipalities and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools have first priority over the use of their own sites and facilities.

NORA Programming - In 2010, over 8,700 people participated in over 100 different NORA recreational programs (youth and adult).



Punt, Pass and Kick Contest  
Photo Provided by NORA

Funding the Authority - Until such time as an alternative funding source is determined, NORA will continue to be funded by financial contributions from the four participating jurisdictions. The amount of funding for each jurisdiction is based on a weighted formula that factors two criteria:

- The taxable value of real and personal property
- The percentage of participants (from each jurisdiction) in Recreation Programs.

Under the new arrangement, NORA continues to be directed by a Recreation Coordinator and is administered by a 9-member Board of Trustees made up of one elected official and one non-elected representative from each participating jurisdiction and one member appointed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. The Advisory Board has four appointed officers: Chair; Vice-Chair; Secretary; and Treasurer. The chairperson is the presiding officer of the Authority. Until such time as an alternative funding source is determined, the Authority is funded by *general fund* contributions from the four participating jurisdictions. The total NORA budget for the 2010 - 2011 fiscal year is \$304,800. A full budget report can be found in *Appendix D*.

### The Recreation Planning Process

In December 2009, the NORA Advisory Board and staff kicked off a four-step public planning process. Through a well publicized series of focus groups, public meetings and open dialogue, citizens and public officials have had many opportunities to shape a recreation plan that is reflective of the mission of the Recreation Authority.

*Step One.* In a continuation of several discussions conducted during the establishment of the Recreation Authority, the NORA Board Members and staff worked to identify a comprehensive asset inventory (*see Map 1*). Board Members and staff also worked to identify initial recreational needs for both programming and facilities. Finally, the board and staff worked to identify community stakeholders, determine a reasonable project schedule and identify potential planning challenges.

*Step Two.* In January and February 2010, NORA board members and staff engaged the public in an effort to formulate the basis of a community-wide recreation plan. First, NORA board members and staff conducted a focus group discussion with several key community/recreational stakeholders (e.g. tri-cities baseball, tri-cities youth soccer, etc...). Participants were led through a lengthy brainstorming activity in which they were asked to answer the following five questions:

- What current recreational programs should be expanded or improved?
- What types of recreational programs would you like to see that are not currently being offered?
- What recreation facilities should be expanded and/or improved?
- What types of recreation facilities would you like to see that are not currently being provided?
- Would you be willing to contribute money for new recreational facilities?

Step Two: Focus Group Discussions - Community stakeholders identify and discuss future recreational needs within the community.



NORA board members and staff also solicited public opinion at a large public meeting. Notice for the meeting was well publicized through advertisements, press releases and personnel invitations. Participants were led through a lengthy brainstorming activity that was similar to the focus group meeting. In addition, participants were asked to help prioritize recreational needs. A full list of the responses and comments received at the focus group meeting and public meeting and can be found in *Appendix E*. Following the public input processes, NORA Advisory Board members and staff worked together to review, discuss and identify gaps in the responses, identify additional recreational assets and discuss additional community needs and opportunities.

*Step Three.* Building on the collected public input and subsequent discussions, NORA board members and staff worked to develop a *draft* recreation plan for the community. Among other things, the plan outlines new objectives for programming, additional opportunities for collaboration, objectives for new facilities, and potential resources for funding and options/tools for implementation. Copies of the draft recreation plan were placed at each municipal office, the NORA office and the public library for public review and comment. A copy of the notice of availability of the draft plan can be found in *Appendix F*.

*Step Four.* Following the month long public comment period, the NORA Advisory Board conducted a formal public hearing (see notice in *Appendix G*). Following the public hearing and after additional consideration of the comments and suggestions received during the month long public comment period and public hearing, the Advisory Board formally adopted the *Plan* on September 30, 2010 (see *Appendix H*). Upon its formal adoption, the *Recreation Plan* was submitted to the Ottawa County Planning Department and the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (Regional Planning Agency) - see *Appendix I*. In addition, the *Recreation Plan* was submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) for acceptance and approval.

Step Two: Public Meeting - Citizens discuss and prioritize recreational needs for the community.



## **Purpose of the Plan**

The purpose of this plan is to provide the framework for future programming and park/facility development in the greater Northwest Ottawa Community. Therefore, the plan is designed to:

- Provide a tool-set that will enable NORA to plan for, fund and implement recreation programs.
- Establish a framework to manage, maintain and improve existing parks and develop new park and recreation facilities - that compliment and do not compete with or duplicate existing park and recreation facilities in each of the participating jurisdictions.
- Establish a framework for on-going communication between the participating jurisdictions, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, Ottawa County, local recreational/sports organizations (i.e. YMCA, youth sports) and neighboring jurisdictions.
- Establish a framework to support a high quality of life for area residents, increase economic activity and create new investments in response to the development of recreation programming and new park and recreation facilities.

In compliance with DNRE Guidelines, the implementation strategies expressed in this plan are identified for the next five years, at which time the plan will be updated. However, this plan is a *working document* and requires appropriate adjustments as conditions change and funding opportunities arise.

The subject matter and process used in developing this plan incorporate the minimum standard requirements of the DNRE for a community recreation plan with portions devoted to: community description; administrative structure; recreation inventory; description of the planning and public input process; goals and objectives and action program.

## **Community Vision**

This vision statement and the associated value statements were developed through a brief but comprehensive community planning process, involving citizens, public officials, regional trail advocates, and the NORA Board.

### **Vision Statement**

In 2025, the Northwest Ottawa Community is an exciting four-season center for individual and organized sports, fun and adventure, and simple relaxation. The Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority offers residents, families and visitors of all ages a wide variety of recreational programs and facilities.

### **Value Statements**

We are a community that values public access to recreational opportunities and programs that enhance the quality of life of area residents and support vigorous and healthy lifestyles for all abilities at all stages of life.

We are a community that values a variety of recreational facilities to support organized sports, individual recreation, and the exploration of nature.

We are a community that values intergovernmental cooperation in integrating and maintaining the recreational resources of the Northwest Ottawa Community.

We are a community that values a variety of recreation facilities to support tourism and new economic development opportunities.

We are a community that values a smart, fiscally responsible and common sense approach to planning for future recreation facilities.

## Chapter Two. Community Description

This chapter describes the community (recreation, physical and cultural) assets currently within the greater Northwest Ottawa Community. As previously mentioned, NORA does not own any park or recreation facilities in the Northwest Ottawa Community. However, NORA, in cooperation with each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, does oversee and facilitate recreation programming activities on several municipal and school sites. This inventory of the community assets has been compiled from discussions with the NORA Advisory Board and staff and the following resources/publications: City of Grand Haven Community Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2004 - 2009; Grand Haven Charter Township Community Recreation Plan, 2007 - 2010; City of Ferrysburg Recreation Plan, 2010 - 2015; Robinson Township Community Recreation Plan, 2006; Spring Lake Township Recreation Plan, 2008 - 2013; Ottawa County; and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. Recreational assets denoted with an \* indicate facilities used by NORA for programming. *Map 1* shows the location of each recreational asset.

### Recreational Assets - Parks

#### City of Grand Haven

##### Bolt Park

Bolt Park is a .95 acre park located on the corner of Pennoyer Avenue and Beechtree Street. One of the city's six mini-parks, park amenities include large trees, well-maintained lawn space, flower beds, a stone memorial, picnic benches and park benches.

##### Klaver Park

Klaver Park is a .23 acre park located on the corner of Pennoyer Avenue and South Seventh Street. Park amenities include picnic and park benches.

##### Klempel Park

Klempel Park is a .17 acre park located on the corner of Pennoyer Avenue and Grant Street (with water frontage). Park amenities include picnic and park benches.

Parks - Bolt Park



**Johnston Park**

Johnston Park is a .11 acre park located on the corner of Pennoyer Avenue and Sheldon Road. Park amenities include picnic and park benches.

**William Hatton Park**

William Hatton Park is a historic .88 acre park located on Jackson Street. Park amenities include picnic/park benches, walkways, and some play equipment.

**East Grand River Park**

East Grand River Park is a 5.5 acre park located at the end of Franklin Street and Eastern Avenue, next to the wetland area of the Grand River. Park amenities include picnic tables (and shelter), parking, benches, grills and a children’s play area. In addition, the *Scott Flahive Boat Launch* and a barrier-free boardwalk along the wetland areas are located within in the park.

**Mulligan’s Hollow Park\***

Mulligan’s Hollow Park is a large 80.5 acre park located off of Mulligan Drive adjacent to the YMCA. The park is used extensively for special community events and large family gatherings. Park facilities (including the YMCA) include parking, a lighted softball field, play structure, two basketball courts, four tennis courts, outdoor ice-skating and ski bowl(in winter), picnic areas and trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. About 45% of the park is a natural hardwood and dune area, with trails and scenic look-outs. In addition, a dog park and skate park are located within in the park.

**Central Park**

Central Park is a 2.42 acre park located on Washington Avenue in the center of downtown Grand Haven. Park amenities include picnic and park benches, walking paths and a small centrally located fountain.

**City Beach Park**

City Beach Park is a 19.6 acre park located on Harbor Avenue, just south of Grand Haven State Park on Lake Michigan. Park amenities include a swimming area marked with buoys, a handicap accessible beach mat from the parking area to the water edge. The park is home to a number of special events during the summer including amateur and professional volleyball events, sand sculpture competitions, sand soccer, and kite flying competitions.

**Parks - William Hatton Park**



**Parks - Mulligan’s Hollow**



**Parks - Central Park**



Duncan Park

Duncan Park is a 37.8 acre park/preserve located off Sheldon Road. Park amenities include picnic and park benches, grills, a sledding hill and hiking/cross-country skiing trails. Although considered a city park, the park is overseen by a separate Duncan Park Board.

Sluka Field\*

Sluka Field is a 5.5 acre park located on the corner of Waverly Avenue and Beechtree Street. Park amenities include parking, an interactive playground, ice-rink (in winter) and full-sized fields that can be used for both baseball and soccer. The playground in the park is considered “barrier free” with a handicap accessible digger in the sand box.

Chinook Pier Park

Chinook Pier Park is a 1 acre park located along Harbor Avenue on the Grand River channel. Park amenities include parking, a children’s play area, a small stage and the historic steam train Engine No. 1223 exhibit. In addition, there are a number of commercial enterprises located in the park including a boat dock, fish-cleaning station, restrooms, specialty shops, farmers market and miniature golf.

Harbor Island\*

Harbor Island is a 23 acre park located along the Grand River and South Channel on US-31 and Coho Drive. Park amenities include a boat launch, paved trails and barrier-free observation platforms and transfer dock facilities. The wide-open spaces within the park allow for community events and pickup sport activities like soccer and ultimate-frisbee.

Escanaba Park

Escanaba Park is a .92 acre park within the Lighthouse Connector Park on the Grand River Channel. The park is a designated historic site with a memorial to the men and women who have served in the U.S. Coast Guard. Park amenities include pathways, parking, and interpretive exhibits.

Musical Fountain

Musical Fountain is a 3.7 acre park located on Dewey Hill within the North Shore Dunes. The musical fountain (with specialized lighting system) plays during the summer months at dusk and attracts spectators from throughout the region.

Parks - Sluka Field



Parks - Chinook Pier Park



Parks - Escanaba Park



**Grand Haven Municipal Marina - Wharf**

The Grand Haven Municipal Marina is located on the Grand River, near the Chinook Pier. Marina amenities include a parking lot, public restrooms, picnic benches, benches and 54 boat slips.

**North Pier Fisherman’s Parking Lot**

The North Pier Fisherman’s parking lot is a 1.2 acre parking lot located along the Grand River channel on Main Street. Amenities within the parking lot include restrooms.

**Waterfront Stadium**

Waterfront Stadium is located on Harbor Drive in the downtown area. The stadium includes spectator bleachers for the musical fountain, restrooms and a waterfront pathway.

**Bicentennial Park**

Bicentennial Park is a special-use, urban green space/commercial park that includes walkways, benches and several tourist shops.

**Harbor Island Linear Park**

Harbor Island Linear Park is a 5.5 acre park along the Grand River South Channel. Park amenities include a picnic shelter, benches and a 252-foot bike path.

**Lighthouse Connector Park**

Lighthouse Connector Park is a 1,700 foot boardwalk along the Grand River Channel that connects Bicentennial Park with the Lake Michigan south pier. Benches, specialty shops, restaurants and parking are located along the boardwalk.

**Undeveloped Parks**

The City of Grand Haven Community Parks and Recreation Master Plan highlight several parks that are at this time undeveloped. The complete list of undeveloped parks is listed at right. The North Shore Dunes and the Hayes Road-end are registered with the *Nature Conservancy*.

**Parks - Bicentennial Park**



**Parks - Lighthouse Connector Park**



**Undeveloped Parks -**

- Friant St. and Pennoyer Ave.
- Grant St. Overlook
- Highland Park
- North Shore Dunes
- Hayes Road-end
- Rix Robinson Park

**Grand Haven Charter Township**

**Bignell Park**

Bignell Park is a .5 acre park located on the Millhouse Bayou of the Grand River. The park is largely undeveloped but has direct access to the Bayou. The park is currently used for viewing and ice-fishing in the winter.

**Hofma Park,\* Hofma Preserve and the Witteveen Property**

Hofma Park, the Hofma Preserve and the Witteveen Property encompass 411 acres along the Pottawattomie Bayou in the northeastern corner of the Township. Hofma Park amenities include a full-sized soccer field, softball field, picnic tables, pavilion, basketball court and restrooms. Hofma Preserve amenities include picnic tables, a pavilion, play equipment, a restroom facility and several miles of foot-trails. The 150-acre Witterveen Property has been placed in a trust and will become available for public recreation sometime between 2010 and 2003.

**Mercury Drive Park\***

Mercury Drive Park is a 7 acre park located on the corner of Mercury Drive and Kitchel Lane. Park amenities include parking, a softball diamond, in-line hockey rink, restroom facilities, play equipment and picnic tables.

**Pottawattomie Park\***

Pottawattomie Park is a 21 acre park located on the Pottawattomie Bayou of the Grand River. Park amenities include three large picnic pavilions, play equipment, sand volleyball, a small wading beach, a non-motorized pathway a boardwalk fishing pier, soccer field, restroom facilities and parking.

**Odawa Battle Point Boat Launch**

The Odawa Battle Point Boat Launch is a 2.5 acre park located on the Grand River. Amenities include two boat launches, vehicle/trailer parking and a restroom facility.

**City of Ferrysburg**

**Coast Guard Park\***

Coast Guard Park is an 80 acre park located off North Shore Road. The land was formally used as a shooting range by the U.S. Coast Guard and was acquired by the City for park use in 1973. Park

**Parks - Hofma Park**



**Parks - Mercury Drive Park**



**Parks - Pottawattomie Park**



**Parks - Odawa Battle Point Boat Launch**



amenities include a softball field, barrier-free children’s playground, restroom facilities, four lighted basketball courts, two tennis courts, a soccer field, a picnic pavilion, three sand volleyball courts, a paved non-motorized pathway loop and a dog-park.

**Ferrysburg Nature Preserve**

The Ferrysburg Nature Preserve is 43 acre undeveloped park located on Dogwood Drive.

**William Ferry Park**

William Ferry Park is a small but highly visible park located just north of the M-104 off-ramp (city entryway) on Spring Lake. Park amenities include parking, paved pathways, barrier-free restrooms, a 400-foot barrier-free boardwalk, picnic shelter and a play space.

**Firebarn Park**

Firebarn Park is a 5 acre park located at the corner of 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue and North Shore Road. Park amenities include two tennis courts, a basketball court (which can be used for skating), playground equipment and one softball field.

**Kitchel-Lindquist Dunes Preserve**

Kitchel-Lindquist Dunes Preserve is a 112 acres natural dune area that is owned by the City of Ferrysburg but located east of North Shore Drive - within the Grand Haven City limits. The preserve is characterized by “primary dunes” undergoing active dune formation, “secondary dunes” covered with mature hardwoods and “interdunal areas” of rolling sand. A master plan has been prepared for the property, outlining measures for long-term protection and minimal improvements that allow for low-impact public use.

**Robinson Township**

**Robinson Township Park\***

Robinson Township Park is a 42 acre park in a beautiful rural setting located just south of the Township Administrative Center on Buchanan Street. Park amenities include parking, large trees for shaded picnic areas, grills, two pig-roasting stations, restrooms, benches, drinking fountain, softball field, soccer field, football field (w/scoreboard), tennis court (with a fence around it), a hopscotch/four-square court, covered picnic area (w/electricity), non-motorized trails, horse trails (w/lean-to) and playground.

**Parks - Coast Guard Park**



**Parks - Firebarn Park**



**Parks - Coast Guard Park**



## Recreational Assets - Grand Haven Area Public School District

### Ferry Elementary School\*

Ferry Elementary School is located on Pennoyer Avenue. Recreation facilities include a large soccer field, playground, two baseball fields and one gym (w/stage).

### The Voyagers School\*

The Voyagers School is located in Ferry Elementary on Pennoyer Avenue. Recreation facilities include a large multi-purpose field, playground, two baseball fields and one gym (w/stage).

### Griffin Elementary School\*

Griffin Elementary School is located on South Griffin. Recreation facilities include a large multi-purpose field, playground, one baseball field and one gym (w/stage).

### Lake Hills Elementary School\*

Lake Hills Elementary School is located on Dogwood Drive. Recreation facilities include a large-multi-purpose field (primarily for soccer and softball), playground, one baseball field and one gym.

### Mary A. White Elementary School\*

Mary A. White Elementary School is located on Wisconsin. Recreation facilities include a large-multi-purpose field (primarily for soccer and softball), playground, par course two baseball fields and one gym w/stage).

### Peach Plains Elementary School\*

Peach Plains Elementary School is located on Comstock. Recreation facilities include a playground, combined basketball/tennis courts, a large multi-purpose field, two softball fields and one gym w/stage).

### Robinson Elementary School\*

Robinson Elementary School is located on 120<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Recreation facilities include three basketball hoops, five swing-sets (with slides), one soccer field, two baseball fields (used for baseball and softball), a large multi-purpose field and one gym (w/stage).

### Rosy Mound Elementary School\*

Rosy Mound Elementary School is located on Lakeshore Avenue. Recreation facilities include a playground, par course, basketball courts, one softball field, two multi-purpose fields and one gym (w/stage).

### Schools - Ferry Elementary



**Lakeshore Middle School\***

Lakeshore Middle School is located on South Cutler. Recreation facilities include a football field (and stadium), two large multi-use practice fields, three tennis courts, a 6-lane track, auditorium, cafeteria and three gyms.

**White Pines Middle School\***

White Pines Middle School is located on South Griffin Street. Recreation facilities include one soccer field, one football field (with stadium), one baseball field, nine tennis courts, a track, a large multi-purpose field and two gyms.

**Central High School\***

Central High School is located on South 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Recreation facilities include one soccer field, a large multi-purpose field and one gym (w/stage).

**Grand Haven High School\***

Grand Haven High School is located on Ferris Street. Recreation facilities include two baseball fields, two softball fields, a football/lacrosse stadium (w/turf), two soccer fields, a soccer/lacrosse stadium (w/turf and two practice fields), twelve tennis courts, field house (and two gyms), auditorium and a cross-country running course. In addition, the school is home to the *Grand Haven Community Aquatics Center* which includes a competition size swimming pool with diving well, and an auxiliary pool designed for exercise and therapy.

Schools - Grand Haven High School:  
Buccaneer Stadium and Grand Haven  
Community Aquatics Center



**Recreational Assets - Non-Motorized Pathways**

**City of Grand Haven**

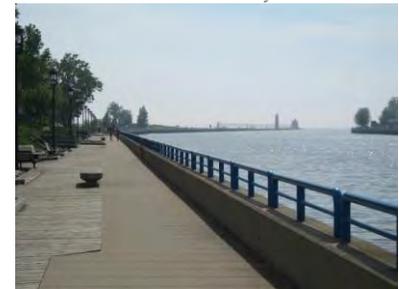
There are a number of non-motorized facilities within the City of Grand Haven, including:

**City Bike Path** - A 1,328 foot paved pathway, located along Beechree Avenue between Robbins and Waverly.

**The Harbor Island Bike Path** - Connects Linear Park and inner Harbor Island to Third Street.

**Lake Shore Connector Path** - A 20-mile paved pathway that connects the City of Grand Haven and Holland.

Non-Motorized Pathway - Bicentennial Park



### Grand Haven Charter Township

There are approximately 20-miles of paved pathways (separated from area roadways) throughout the Township. In addition, there are foot-trails between Hofma Park and the Hofma Preserve, including a boardwalk which traverses the Pottawattomie Bayou and wetlands.

### City of Ferrysburg

There are a number of non-motorized pathways in the form of *connector trails* and on-street bikeways located along several major streets within the City of Ferrysburg and along the Spring Lake waterfront.

William Ferry Park - A 400-foot long boardwalk is located along the Spring Lake Channel within the park.

### Adjacent Pathways

- Pine Street, from William Ferry Park, north to West Spring Lake Road
- Pine Street to 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Ridge Avenue Path)
- West Spring Lake Road, to the City limits where it connects with the Spring Lake Township path system
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, from Pine Street to 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- 174<sup>th</sup> Avenue, from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street north to VanWagoner Road where it connects with the Spring Lake Township path system

### Paved Bike Lanes

- Along North Shore Road and North Shore Drive, to the City Limits
- Portions of the continuous trail system that circles Spring Lake

### Multi-Jurisdictional

The *Tri-Cities Connector Path* connects the cities of Ferrysburg, Grand Haven and the Village of Spring Lake.

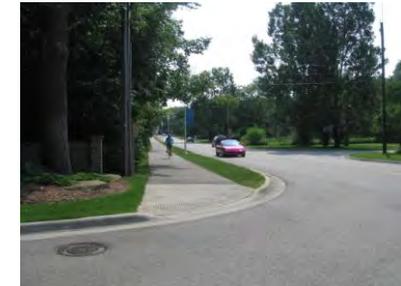
### Sidewalks

The City of Grand Haven, City of Ferrysburg, the Charter Township of Grand Haven each have an extensive sidewalk system throughout their respective communities.

Non-Motorized Pathways - Hofma Preserve



Non-Motorized Pathways - City of Ferrysburg



## **Recreational Assets - Other Public Sites Within the Northwest Ottawa Community**

### **Ottawa County**

#### Kirk Park - Grand Haven Charter Township

Ottawa County owns and manages the 68 acre park on Lake Michigan. Park amenities include the beach sand dunes (and wooded sand dunes), a picnic pavilion, playground, restrooms, indoor lodge, open picnic areas, and hiking trails.

#### Rosy Mound Natural Area - Grand Haven Charter Township

The Rosy Mound Natural Area is 276 acres of unique sand and wooded dunes with .65 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. Park amenities include an extensive walkway system within the dunes, picnic facilities, restrooms, and parking.

#### Hiawatha Forest - Grand Haven Charter Township

Hiawatha Forest is a 365 acre site. The site is flat and wooded with both hardwood stands and red pine plantations. The park operations center for Ottawa County occupies two acres in the southwest corner of the site. The site is flat and wooded, with both hardwood stands and red pine plantations.

#### North Beach Park - City of Ferrysburg

Ottawa County owns and manages this 20 acre park on Lake Michigan. Park amenities include beach access, a picnic area, shelter, bathhouse, foot trails and a unique dune climb and scenic overlook of Lake Michigan.

#### North Ottawa Dunes - City of Ferrysburg

The North Ottawa Dunes is a 500 acre property that lies just off the Lake Michigan shoreline, between the Grand River and the southern boundary of P.J. Hoffmaster State Park. One of the largest wooded dune areas in central West Michigan, amenities include a varied topography and ten miles of hiking trails (and cross-country skiing trails) that connect with other parks in the community.

#### Riverside Park - Robinson Township

Ottawa County owns and manages this 64 acre park on the Grand River, just east of 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Park amenities include four boat launches, an open shelter structure, pit toilets, grills, a barrier-free fishing pier and parking. Approximately 65% of the park is preserved in its natural state and receives limited use.

#### Connor Bayou - Robinson Township

Connor Bayou is a 142 acre property that includes about one mile of frontage along the Grand River. Despite the lack of designated trails, the property is open to hiking. Future development plans include the provision for trails, picnic areas a canoe/kayak launch and a family campground.

#### Robinson Forest - Robinson Township

Robinson Forest is an 80-acre open space area of mixed hardwoods, conifers and red pines.

### State of Michigan

#### Grand Haven State Park - City of Grand Haven

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment owns and manages the 52 acre park on Lake Michigan. Park amenities include the beach, improved camp sites, bath house, pavilion, 21 netted beach volley-ball courts, swing sets and picnic areas.

#### Public Boat Launch - Robinson Township

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources owns a public boat launch on the Grand River at the end of 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This 5-acre facility includes two boat launch ramps, parking for 60 cars and one primitive restroom facility. The facility is maintained by the Ottawa County Road Commission.

#### Clarence J. Olsen Roadside Park - Grand Haven Charter Township

Clarence J. Olsen Roadside Park is a 22 acre park owned and managed by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

**Parks - Grand Haven State Park**



**Other**

## Kieft Island and Suits Island - City of Grand Haven

Kieft Island and Suits Island includes 15 acres of protected nesting sites for several bird species. The site is owned by the Michigan Audubon Society and administered by a local committee.

## Franklin Street Open Play Area(East End Park) - City of Grand Haven

The Franklin Street Open Play Area is located next to the City wastewater treatment facility. Owned by the Grand Haven Sewer Authority and maintained by the City of Grand Haven, the park is available for public use and contains a softball field, basketball court, play equipment and open space that allows for soccer and other sports.

## Patomita Reserve - Grand Haven Charter Township

The West Michigan Land Conservancy owns and manages this large tract of wetlands adjacent to Lake Michigan. The *Reserve* is open for informal public use. However there are no public facilities or parking available.

## Johnson Street Wildlife Management Area - Robinson Township

The Wildlife Management area is a 50 acre parcel of natural woodlands located on the north side of Johnson Street.

## Robinson Forest - Robinson Township

There are 80 acres of mixed tree covered land located at the intersection of Sleeper Street and 104<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Approximately ½ of this parcel is located in a 40-50 year old pine forest managed by the Ottawa County Intermediate School District and monitored by Grand Valley State University as a red pine management demonstration area.

## Van Lopik/Limberlost Properties - Robinson Township

Robinson Township recently acquired 18 properties on Limberlost and Van Lopik. The properties were acquired through a HMGP/FMA Grant (Hazard Mitigation Grant).

## Recreational Assets - Private Parks & Facilities within the Northwest Ottawa Community

### Tri-Cities FamilyYMCA - City of Grand Haven

Tri-Cities YMCA is located within the City of Grand Haven and is open to the public for a membership fee. YMCA facilities include, two gyms, ACE-Place gym, a 25-meter indoor swimming pool, jogging track, 3 racquetball courts, weight lifting/exercise equipment, gym and locker rooms. In addition, the YMCA oversees a number of youth and adult recreational programs.

### Grand Haven Golf Club - Charter Township of Grand Haven

The “Pine Valley” of Michigan , the Grand Haven Golf Club is an 18-hole golf course located in the Charter Township of Grand Haven. During the winter the course is open for cross-country skiing. Designed by architect Bruce Matthews, this course has been rated among the top 50 public golf course in the United States by Golf Digest for ten years.

### Starlite Lanes Bowling Alley\*

Starlite Lanes bowling alley is located on South Beacon Boulevard in the City of Grand Haven. Open since the 1960’s the bowling alley has 30 lanes, 22 bumper alleys (for kids) and glow in the dark Bowling

### Evergreen Golf Course\*

Evergreen golf course is an 18-hole course located in Robinson Township. The course offers a covered bridge, winding creek and natural surroundings.

### North Ottawa Rod and Gun Club

The North Ottawa Rod and Gun Club is located on 160<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Grand Haven Township. The non-profit club has skeet and trap fields, an outdoor rifle range, 3-D archery course and an indoor pistol range. The public and members are invited to utilize these facilities based on club fees.

### West Michigan Academy of Arts & Academics

This charter school is located at 17350 Hazel Street in Ferrysburg. Recreation amenities include an athletic field, playground, basketball court, volleyball court, ball field and soccer field.

Facilities - Tri-Cities YMCA



## Recreational Assets - Public and Private Parks/Facilities within the Region

Prior to the development of NORA, local officials from the four participating jurisdictions and school district met with public officials from the Village of Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township to discuss their interest in participating in a new cooperative arrangement to better provide for recreation throughout the community - including the formation of a Recreation Authority.

This initial inquiry was brought forward because a large number of Spring Lake (Village/Township) and Crockery residents participated in NORP programs. In addition, the Village and Township (Spring Lake) share a common border with the City of Ferrysburg and all three jurisdictions share in the identity of the greater Tri-City community.

Although the three jurisdictions ultimately did not become members of the Recreation Authority, the recreational assets of each community are listed below, reflecting the larger region's capacity.

### Village of Spring Lake

#### Central Park

Central Park is an 8.2 acre park located in the Village of Spring Lake. Park amenities include one adult and one children's ballfield, a picnic shelter (with tables), playground facilities, basketball, volleyball and shuffle board courts, a 1-mile fitness course, restrooms and in- inline/ice skating and hockey rink.

#### Mill Point Park

Mill Point Park is located in the Village of Spring Lake. Park amenities include a picnic area, restrooms, a boat launch and fishing area along the Grand River.

#### Riverfront Trailer Park

Riverfront Trailer Park is located in the Village of Spring Lake. The Village leases space to individuals for long and short-term (up to six months) travel trailer parking. Water, sanitary sewer and electricity are available to campers.

#### Lakeside Trail Linear Park

Lakeside Trail Linear Park is located in the Village of Spring Lake. Park amenities include a beach, restrooms, bike racks, foot wash, pier and break-wall with fencing.

Schools within the Spring Lake Public School District (some schools in Crockery Township located in the Fruitport Area School District - not listed) -

- Holmes Elementary School
- Jeffers Elementary
- Spring Lake Intermediate School
- Spring Lake Middle School
- Spring Lake High School

#### Jackson Street Dock

The Jackson Street Dock is located on the south side of Spring Lake in the Village of Spring Lake. The dock is a landscaped street end with walks, benches, swimming and a dock for boat-tie-ups.

#### Linear Park

Linear Park is a 1.75 mile landscaped bike path that traverses from Fruitport Road to Cutler Street in the Village of Spring Lake.

#### Spring Lake Yacht Club

Located on the north shore of Spring Lake, the Club is owned by the Village of Spring Lake. Although the property is leased in part for private use to the local sailing club, there are a number of facilities that are available to the general public, including outdoor volleyball and basketball courts, swings, picnic areas, horseshoe pits, a banquet hall, parking and beach access.

#### Spring Lake Country Club

The Spring Lake County Club is located on North Fruitport Road. Facilities include a championship golf club, tennis courts, platform tennis court, fitness center w/indoor hitting bay, non-motorized trails, boat dock and aquatics center w /two pools.

### **Spring Lake Township**

#### Rycenga Park

Rycenga Park is a 100 acre park located along hemlock Road. Approximately half of the park is designated for passive activities and the other half is used for active recreation. Park amenities in the active portion of the park include a playground, soccer fields, baseball and softball fields, an 18-hole disc golf course, a picnic shelter and restrooms. A series of walking paths (and cross-country course) are located in the passive areas of the park.

#### Water Tower Park

Water Tower Park is a 7 acre park located at the intersection of Van Wagner Road and W. Spring Lake Road. Park amenities include a basketball hoop, two tennis courts, a small area for one soccer net and a picnic area.

### River Run Park

River Run Park is a 5.33 acre park located next to the River Run subdivision near the Grand River. Park amenities include a picnic shelter, large open space areas and a portion of the Leonard Road bike path.

### Lakeside Beach

Lakeside Beach is located at the southern border of Spring Lake, near the border between the Village of Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township. Beach amenities include 125-feet of beach, restrooms, bike racks, a footwash, pier and breakwall and lifeguard services.

### Spring Lake Township Community Park

Spring Lake Township Community Park is a vacant .5 acre parcel of land situated between the public library and the Township Hall. The parcel is used for art fairs and related events.

### Non-Motorized Trails

There are approximately 26-miles of non-motorized trails throughout the Village of Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township (see right). Township voters dedicated .5 mills for trails (for 10 years) in 1990 and for another 10 years in 2004.

## Public Facilities

### P.J. Hoffmaster State Park

P.J. Hoffmaster State Park is a 1,030 acre State Park located along the Lake Michigan shoreline, in Spring Lake Township. Park amenities include hiking trails, camping, and a large beach and picnic facility. In addition, the *E. Genevieve Gillette Sand Dune Interpretive Center* is located in the park, offering both static and changing exhibits featuring information on the unique sand dunes, plant life and wildlife.

### Holland State Park

Holland State Park is a 142 acre State Park located in Holland. Park amenities include a concession store, playground, picnic shelter, campground, boat launch, WiFi and one of the most photographed (and picturesque) lighthouses in Michigan.

### Grand Haven State Game Area

The Grand Haven State Game Area is an 883 acre site located on the Grand River in Crockery Township.

Non-Motorized within the Village of Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township -

- West Spring Lake Road, from City of Ferrysburg north to Hemlock Drive
- Fruitport Road, from Village of Fruitport south to the Village of Spring Lake
- Leonard Street from Village of Spring Lake east to 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- State Road, from 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue east to Township boundary
- 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue, from M-104 north to State Road
- 152<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, north from Leonard Street

#### Pigeon Creek Park

Pigeon Creek Park is a 282 acre site (with adjacent 130 acres of open space) located in Olive Township. Park amenities include over 10 miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing (including 3 miles of lighted cross-country ski trails for night use), designated trails for biking and equestrian use, a sledding hill, seasonal concessions, picnic tables, grills, restrooms a group camping area and the Pigeon Creek Lodge. The park is managed by Ottawa County.

#### Pigeon Lake Public Access

The Pigeon Lake Public Access is a 5 acre site located in Port Sheldon Township. The site is managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

#### Tunnel Park

Tunnel Park is a 17 acre park in located Port Sheldon Township.

#### Port Sheldon Township Park

Port Sheldon Township Park is an 80 acre park located in Port Sheldon Township.

#### West Olive Beach

West Olive Beach is a 40 acre park located in Port Sheldon Township.

#### Bass River Recreational Area

Bass River Recreation Area is a 1,665 acre site in central Ottawa County. The site consists of open meadows, open brush land, mature hardwoods, small ponds and Max Lake. The park is primarily used for boating, hiking, mountain-biking, horseback-riding and hunting.

#### Hemlock Crossing

Hemlock Crossing is a 239 acre site of woods and wetlands located on the Pigeon River. The site includes over 6 miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. In addition, a pedestrian bridge and numerous overlooks offer scenic views of the river corridor, wetlands, natural springs and woods. Amenities include two small picnic shelters, a kayak/canoe launch and over a mile of paved trails. Hemlock Crossing is also the site for a nature education center, which includes a trailhead, gift shop, exhibits and viewing areas.

#### Pine Bend

Pine Bend is a 239 acre site of woods and wetlands along the Pigeon River. The site includes over 6 miles of trails for hiking and cross-country skiing. Trails connect to Hemlock Crossing on the east side of the property. Pine Bend offers parking, a trailhead and access to the Weaver House, a restored home available for meetings and other activities.

#### Port Sheldon Natural Area

Port Sheldon Natural Area is a large 440 acre open space site. There are a number of unmarked trails throughout the property.

#### Pigeon River Greenway

The Pigeon River, a relatively cold and clean river, begins and ends in Ottawa County. Two large county parks provide over 600 acres of land with many miles of multi-purpose trails that access the river corridor.

### **Private Facilities**

#### Oak Ridge Golf Club

Oak Ridge Golf Club is an 18-hole golf course located on Pontaluna Road in the City of Norton Shores.

#### Terra Verde Golf Club

Terra Verde Golf Club is an 18-hole course located five miles east of Spring Lake. During the winter the course is open for cross-country skiing.

#### West Ottawa Golf Course\*

The West Ottawa Golf Course is a 27-hole course located in Port Sheldon Michigan. The course was designed by Jerry Matthew's and features well groomed and tree lined fairways.

#### Pigeon Creek Golf Course

The Pigeon Creek Golf Course is a 18-hole course located in West Olive Michigan.

### Cannonsburg Ski Area\*

The Cannonsburg Ski Area is located in Cannonsburg Michigan and features 11 runs, a half-pipe, a snowboard park, lodge and ski-shop.

## **Recreational Programming**

### Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority

As previously discussed, the North Ottawa Recreation Authority provides a wide variety of recreation programs throughout the Northwest Ottawa Community. In 2010, over 8,700 people participated in over 100 different NORA recreation programs. NORA programs are geared towards all age groups and interests and are operated on a year-round basis. The NORA board and staff consistently make efforts to bring new and innovative recreational opportunities to the community. Youth (boys and girls) sports and programs range from teams sports such as in-line hockey, basketball, football, volleyball, soccer, lacrosse, baseball, softball and cheerleading to individual sports such as golf, tennis, wrestling, skiing, tae-kwon-do, bowling, track, ballet/dance and gymnastics. Adult sports and programs include softball, basketball, dodge ball, kickball, volleyball, and golf. NORA also oversees a number of unique/special events like the mother/son dance, mother/daughter tea party, a pirate/princess party the Hershey track competition, cartooning and the punt, pass and kick contest.

### Other

There are several other recreation programs throughout the Northwest Ottawa Community that provide recreational opportunities to specific sports.

- Tri-Cities Kids Baseball League (TCKL) - Formed in 1952 to provide recreational T-ball, baseball and softball to area children. Tri-Cities utilizes several of the same fields as NORA and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools
- Tri-Cities Youth Football Organization (TCYFO)
- Tri-Cities Youth Soccer Organization (TCYSO) - Designed for girls and boys ages 12 – 17  
Tri-Cities Strikers Soccer
- Young Bucs Football
- Young Bucs Basketball
- Tri-Cities Family YMCA - Offers several youth and adult recreational programs
- Spread the Music Foundation/Arts Council - Music in the Park (in summer months)

## Natural Assets

### Water Resources

The Northwest Ottawa Community (and its neighboring jurisdictions) contains some of the most unique and beautiful waterways in Michigan. This portion of the Northwest Ottawa Community is part of the Lower Grand River Watershed. Covering approximately 3,020 square miles, the smaller rivers of the watershed all flow into the Grand River, which eventually flows into Lake Michigan at Grand Haven.

#### Lake Michigan

The City of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg and Grand Haven Charter Township each have frontage (about 10.5 miles collectively) on Lake Michigan - making it one of the most popular recreation ports in Michigan. One of the five big lakes that make up the *Great Lakes*, Lake Michigan supports a thriving sport-fishing and boating industry. In addition, the area has some of the most popular beaches in Michigan.

#### Spring Lake

Spring Lake is a 1.25 square-mile lake located along the banks of the City of Ferrysburg, the Village of Spring Lake and Spring Lake Township. The shore area of the lake is primarily lined with low-density residential development. Numerous public (and private) access facilities can be found in each of the three jurisdictions listed above.

#### Grand River

The City of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg and Robinson Township each have frontage (about 15.4 miles) on the Grand River. At 260 miles, the Grand River is the longest river in Michigan. The headwaters of the Grand River are located in Hillsdale County.

#### Bayous

There are a number of bayous along the Grand River, within the Northwest Ottawa Community. These waterways are popular areas for fishing, boating and other water-related activities. In addition, they are also home to a number of marinas and boat launches (see left). The following bayous provide a number of boat launch and popular fishing sites.

Natural Assets: Lake Michigan Coastline - Grand Haven State Park is Michigan's #1 state park, AAA's preferred beach in the state.

- Grand Haven Visitors Guide, 2010



Photo provided by Grand Haven Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

Natural Assets: Spring Lake



What is a Bayou? -

A *bayou* is a creek, secondary watercourse, or minor river that is a tributary to another body of water.

- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

**Smith’s Bayou**

Smith Bayou is one of the largest bayous on Spring Lake. Although no public boat launch facilities are located on the bayou, it is a popular fishing location.

**Bruce Bayou**

Bruce Bayou is one of the more popular fishing sites in the Spring Lake area. Currently there are two boat launch sites on the bayou. A MDNR-E launch facility, which is located in Crockery Township, provides a portable restroom facility and parking for 32 vehicles. The other launch is located at the mouth of the bayou, where it meets the Grand River.

**Petty Bayou**

Petty Bayou is another popular fishing spot in the area. The MDNR-E has two boat launches on the bayou. In addition, there are two privately owned facilities. Petty’s Bayou also has a public launch able to accommodate large boats.

**Lloyd’s Bayou**

Lloyds Bayou is a rustic, shallow water site for fishing. The MDNR-E launch offers one small launch, pit toilets and some limited space for parking. This bayou is a very popular site for winter ice fishing.

**Cornelius Bayou**

Cornelius Bayou is the smallest and least well known of the bayous in the area. It has one privately owned facility (Herm’s livery), which has a boat launch and 72 slips.

**Indian Channel**

Indian Channel is located on the southern portion of Spring Lake Township near the State Game Area. It has a boat launch, pit toilets and parking.

**Stearns Bayou**

Stearns Bayou is a small spring fed lake located seven miles southeast of the mouth of the river at Grand Haven (completely in Robinson Township). The bayou is a popular spot for fishing, boating and swimming.

Private boat launches/storage facilities -

Spring Lake	Slips
• Keenan Marina (Ferrysburg)	205
• Cutlers landing	52
• Barrett Boat Work, Inc.	150
Grand River	
• Grand Isle Marina	550+
• Grand Valley Marina	170
• Grand Valley II Marina	42
• Rycenga Marina	53
• Dick’s Landing	70
• GH Waterfront Holiday Inn	41
• The Warf Marina	157
• North Shore Marina	119
• Village Cove Marina	28
• Felix’s	40

## Sand Dunes

According to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Michigan’s sand dunes are the largest assemblage of fresh water dunes in the world. There are about 250,000 acres of sand dunes in Michigan of which about 70,000 acres are classified as critical sand dune formations. The Michigan Legislature has found that the critical dune areas of this state “are a unique, irreplaceable, and fragile resource that provide significant recreational, economic, scientific, geological, scenic, botanical, educational, agricultural, and ecological benefits to the people of this state and to people from other states and countries who visit this resource.” There are several hundred acres of “critical” dunes within the greater Northwest Ottawa Community, primarily in Grand Haven Charter Township and the City of Ferrysburg.

## Cultural Assets

### Grand Haven Area Public Schools

Approximately 6,000 students living within the Northwest Ottawa Community attend schools in the Grand Haven Area Public School District. The elementary schools are Griffin, Robinson, Peach Plains, Rosy Mound, Lake Hills, Ferry and Mary A. White, grades kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup>. The middle schools are Lakeshore and White Pines, grades 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup>. The high schools are Grand Haven and Central. There is also a pre-school program within the district.

### The Loutit District Library

The Loutit District Library is located on Columbus Avenue in the City of Grand Haven. The library serves the City of Grand Haven, Grand Haven Charter Township, the City of Ferrysburg, Robinson Township and Port Sheldon Township. The library is equipped with wireless internet access, several computers, fax machines, copy machines and meeting rooms. The library is open seven days a week and provides citizens opportunities to check out books, periodicals, DVD’s, video’s and audio books. The library also has a special local history/genealogy section.

### Tri-Cities Historical Museum

The Tri-Cities Historical Museum is located in the historic Akeley Building (1871) in downtown Grand Haven. The Museum features numerous historical artifacts, displays and exhibits relating the community’s Native American, maritime, fur-trading, tourism and lumbering past. A second museum, housed in an original 1870 Grand Truck Railroad Depot, features historical transportation exhibits. The Museum is open six days a week.

Critical Dunes - The “critical dunes” designation triggers a requirement for MDEQ approval for all development within 100 feet landward of dune crests, any significant dune grade or contour change, or potential erosion exacerbation resulting from new development.



Cultural Assets - Tri-Cities Historical Museum



**Downtown Grand Haven**

Downtown Grand Haven is a dynamic and active mix of small businesses, restaurants and retail establishments. The heart of downtown Grand Haven is Washington Avenue - a walkable street featuring several historical buildings and interesting features. Washington Street is often closed to vehicles for special community events. In 2004, the City developed a *Downtown Vision Plan*, outlining a number of physical improvements and new policies.

**The Waterfront**

As previously mentioned, there are 10.5 miles of Lake Michigan frontage and 15.4 miles of Grand River Frontage within the Northwest Ottawa Community. There are a number of popular beaches along Lake Michigan that attract thousands of tourists every year. The Grand River is home to several marina's, providing a safe port for boaters. In addition, there are a number of parks, restaurants and shops located along the river (boardwalk). The City of Ferrysburg lies on Spring Lake, a popular lake for fishing, boating on other water-related recreational activities.

**Neighborhoods**

There are a number of thriving neighborhoods throughout the Northwest Ottawa Community - providing a good mixture of older (some historic) and newer homes. In addition, there are a number of seasonal homes throughout the community. Some of these neighborhoods include pocket parks, which serve nearby residents.

**Regional Public Transportation**

Harbor Transit is a public demand-response transportation service that serves the City of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg and Village of Spring Lake. Harbor Transit also offers the Harbor Trolley, which runs seven days a week in the summer (Memorial Day - Labor Day) months and offers a historical narrative.

**North Ottawa County Council on Aging**

Part of a federal network emanating from the National Administration on Aging, the North Ottawa County Council on Aging (NOCCOA) is charged with promoting the physical well-being of older adults in the community and at home. With assistance from a millage and operational funding from twelve communities in the greater Grand Haven Area, NOCCOA oversees seven major programs areas, including *recreational and educational programming*. The NOCCOA Activity Center currently engages over 850 members in 30 different health and fitness programs a month.

Cultural Assets - Downtown Grand Haven



Cultural Assets - The Waterfront



Cultural Assets - City of Grand Haven Neighborhood



Cultural Assets - Harbor Transit



Photo provided by the Grand Haven Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

## Needs Assessment

A formal needs assessment of the Northwest Ottawa Community was conducted through several analytical activities over the course of the planning process. These activities included a comparison of the Northwest Ottawa Community recreation facilities with national recreation facility standards, a review of the social/economic trends of the community (see *Appendix A*), meetings with recreation stakeholders, a community-wide public meeting and NORA board/staff discussions. Information provided from the needs assessment was combined with the recreation inventory, public planning activities and conversations with the NORA Board and staff to help establish the objectives and action strategies of the plan.

## Recreation Standard Comparison

An initial comparison of the existing Northwest Ottawa recreation facilities with national standards was conducted in conjunction with the recreation inventory compiled for this plan. The comparison can be a useful tool in assessing the recreation deficiencies of a community. Table 2.1 illustrates the comparison of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) suggested standards to the current recreational facilities in the Northwest Ottawa Community. The numbers of suggested facilities is given for the Community's 2000 population of 33,074. Based on the 2000 population, there are no deficiencies within the community.

However, the recreation deficiencies based on national standards provide only an initial analysis of a community. NRPA standards were established in 1983 and do not necessarily represent current popular recreation activities such as skateboarding and disc-golf and they do not account for multi-purpose fields and/or open space that can be used for activities such as soccer and baseball but are not designated as full-time athletic fields for those purposes. In addition, NRPA<sup>1</sup> states, *facility standards are useful as guidelines, but that a community should determine what mix of facilities best meets its specific needs. The primary concern of park and recreation administrators is to see that there is enough park land, located in the right places, at the right time people are there to use it.* Furthermore, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment<sup>2</sup> highly recommends *that standards be used in conjunction with other methods to determine recreation deficiencies and priorities.*

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<sup>1</sup> Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, James D. Meretes., CLP and James R. Hall, CLP. A Publication of the National Recreation and Parks Association, 1995

<sup>2</sup> Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. Michigan Department of Natural Resources. 2009

**Table 2.1**

Facility	Standard/Population	Standard Based On Current Population(1)	Existing Facilities(2)	Deficiency/Surplus
<b>Basketball Court</b>	1 per 5,000	6	13	7
<b>Ice Hockey</b>	1 per 100,000	0	2(3)	2
<b>Tennis Court</b>	1 per 2,000	16	33	17
<b>Volleyball Court (outdoor)</b>	1 per 5,000	6	28	22
<b>Baseball Field</b>	1 per 5,000	6	13	7
<b>Softball Field</b>	1 per 5,000	6	11	5
<b>Football Field</b>	1 per 20,000	1	5	4
<b>Soccer Field</b>	1 per 10,000	3	19	16
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1 per 20,000	1	2	1
<b>Trails</b>	1 per Region	1	Several	Surplus

### Recreational Assets - Classification

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) established a recommended classification system for parks, recreation areas, and open spaces. This classification system has been established to assist local governments in the development of future park lands. At this time, NORA does not own any parks, recreation areas or open spaces. Therefore, NRPA classifications are not provided in this document. However, NRPA classifications for each park can be found in the individual Parks and Recreation Plans of each of the four participating jurisdictions. For future reference, Tables 2.2 and 2.3 provide the general description, local criteria and size criteria of each park and trail classification.

### Recreational Assets - Accessibility Score

An assessment of the accessibility of each park to people with disabilities is required under guidelines established under the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment. This assessment must consider the accessibility of both the facilities themselves (as appropriate), as well as the access routes to them. At this time, NORA does not own any parks, recreation areas or open spaces. Therefore, accessibility scores are not provided in this document. However, accessory scores for each park can be found in the individual Parks and Recreation Plans of each of the four participating jurisdictions. For future reference, the MDNR-E ranking guidelines are provided at right.

#### MDNR-E Accessibility Ranking Guidelines -

- 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 or renovated using the principles of universal design

**Table 2.2 Classification System for Local and Regional Recreation Trails**

Classification	General Description	Description of each type
<b>Park Trail</b>	Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreational value and harmony with natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclist/in-line skaters</li> <li>• Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters</li> <li>• Type III: Nature trails for pedestrians, may be hard or soft surfaced</li> </ul>
<b>Connector Trail</b>	Multipurpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type I: Separate/single-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclist/in-line skaters located in independent r.o.w (e.g. old railroad r.o.w</li> <li>• Type II: Multipurpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters typically located within r.o.w</li> </ul>
<b>On-Street Bikeways</b>	Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic	<p>Bike Route: Designated portions of the roadway for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists</p> <p>Bike Lane: Shared portions of the roadway that provide separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, such as paved shoulders</p>
<b>All-Terrain Bike Trail</b>	Off-road trail for all-terrain (mountain) bikes	Single-purpose loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas
<b>Cross-Country Ski Trail</b>	Trails developed for traditional and skate-style cross-country skiing	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas
<b>Equestrian Trail</b>	Trails developed for horseback riding	Loop trails usually located in larger parks and natural resource areas. Sometimes developed as multipurpose with hiking and all-terrain biking where conflicts can be controlled

**Table 2.3 Classification System for Local and Regional Recreation Parks**

Classification	General Description	Location Criteria	Size Criteria
Mini-Park	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs	Less than ¼ mile distance in residential setting	Between 2,500 sq. ft. and 1 acre in size
Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation	¼ to ½-mile distance and uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal
School-Park	Depending on circumstances, combining parks with school sites can fulfill the space requirements for other classes of parks, such as neighborhood, community, sport complex and special use	Determined by location of school district property	Variable-depends on function
Community Park	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves two or more neighborhoods and ½ to 3 mile distance	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres
Large Urban Park	Large urban parks serve a broader purpose than community parks and are used when community and neighborhood parks are not adequate to serve the needs of the community. Focus is on meeting community-based recreational needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces	Determined by the quality and suitability of the site. Usually serves the entire community	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually a minimum of 50 acres, with 75 or more acres being optimal
Natural Resource Areas	Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open spaces, and visual aesthetics/buffering	Resource availability and opportunity	Variable
Greenways	Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment	Resource availability and opportunity	Variable
Sport Complex	Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community	Strategically located community-wide facilities	Determined by projected demand. Usually a minimum of 25 acres, with 40 to 80 acres being optimal
Special Use	Covers a broad range of parks and recreational facilities oriented toward a single-purpose use	Variable-dependent on specific use	Variable
Private Park/Facility	Parks and recreation facilities that are privately owned yet contribute to the public park and recreational system	Variable-dependent on specific use	Variable

## Previous MDNR Grants in the Northwest Ottawa Community

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) provides financial assistance to local governments to purchase land for public recreation and /or protection and assists in the appropriate development of land for public outdoor recreation. In place since 1976, the MNRTF is supported by annual revenues from the development of state-owned mineral resources (primarily oil and gas). The program is administered by the MNRTF Board of Trustees and the Grants Management Office of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNR-E). As of January 2010, over \$800 million in MNRTF appropriations have been allocated for more than 1,200 state and local recreation projects.

To date, NORA has not received a MNRTF Grant (or any other state grants) from the DNR-E. However, the following state grants (MNRTF and others) have been awarded to each of the participating jurisdictions of the Recreation Authority <sup>3</sup>

### City of Grand Haven

Project Number: 26-00391

Project Year: 1973

Project Title: Grand River Boat Launch

Grant Amount: \$24,151.45

Grant Type: Acquisition - 3.25 acres

Acquisition/Development Status: Parcel remains in good condition and home to boat launch

Project Number: 26-01023 S

Project Year: 1977

Project Title: Eastern Park Development

Grant Amount: \$35,257.54

Grant Type: Development

Elements: Picnic area, walkways, picnic shelter w/benches, restroom facilities and playground w/play equipment.

Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

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<sup>3</sup> Full list was prepared by the MDNR-E on June 18, 2010

Project Number: 26-01438  
Project Year: 1985  
Project Title: Chinook Pier Park  
Grant Amount: \$64,095.39  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Site preparation/grading/removal, topsoil and seeding, play equipment, picnic shelters, irrigation system, site furniture/benches/drinking fountain/signs, street construction/curb work, paved walkway and landscaping.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: BF93-262  
Project Year: 1993  
Project Title: Mulligan's Hollow  
Grant Amount: \$110,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Clearing/removals/grading, parking area, ballfield improvements, resurface tennis courts, five mile hill overlook, signage, picnic tables, topsoil and seed and topographic survey.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: BF98-100  
Project Year: 1998  
Project Title: Harbor Island Observation Deck  
Grant Amount: \$26,680.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Site preparation, construction of natural trails, floating observation deck, site amenities, and signage, observation deck (ADA compliant), and connector paths.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: 26-01639  
Project Year: 2004  
Project Title: Mulligan's Hollow Skate Park  
Grant Amount: \$178,800.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Skatepark, site restoration and utilities.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: TF08-076  
Project Year: 2008  
Project Title: East Grand River Park Improvements  
Grant Amount: \$300,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Boardwalk replacement, fishing pier, playground upgrade, restoration of gazebo, irrigation, benches, drinking fountain, grills and tables, upgrade parking area, lighting and signage and permit fees.  
Acquisition/Development Status: Park development is 95% complete - recently submitted grant to develop a dog park in the same location.

Project Number: TF09-099  
Project Year: 2009  
Project Title: City Beach Improvements  
Grant Amount: \$115,200.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Unisex family restroom facility (2-stall), barrier-free walkway landing/paved multi-use area, ADA parking spaces, trash/recycling receptacles/bollards, drinking fountains, foot sprays and bike racks, benches, signage, security lighting utilities and permit fees.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

## City of Ferrysburg

Project Number: 26-00345

Project Year: 1972

Project Title: Municipal Park

Grant Amount: \$19,500.00

Grant Type: Development

Elements: One ball diamond, two tennis courts, parking, fencing, landscaping and site improvement.

Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: 26-01023 E1

Project Year: 1977

Acquisition/Development Status: Withdrawn

Project Number: BF93-291

Project Year: 1993

Project Title: Coast Guard Park Development

Grant Amount: \$150,000.00

Grant Type: Development

Elements: Boulevard entrance, site preparation/grading, parking loop drives/walk, ½ mile trail loop, basketball court, sand volleyball courts, picnic shelter, children's play area, site furniture, topsoil and seeding and landscaping.

Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: CM99-259

Project Year: 1999

Project Title: Coast Guard Park

Grant Amount: \$172,500.00

Grant Type: Development

Elements: Two tennis courts w/lights, three basketball courts w/lights, volleyball court w/lights, paved walkway w/lights, paved driveway/parking w/lights, site preparation, landscaping and topsoil/seeding.

Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

## Grand Haven Charter Township

Project Number: 26-00429  
Project Year: 1973  
Project Title: Mercury Drive Park  
Grant Amount: \$32,812.79  
Grant Type: Acquisition - 6.9 acres  
Acquisition/Development Status: Parcel remains in good condition.

Project Number: 26-00777  
Project Year: 1976  
Project Title: Hofma Nature Park  
Grant Amount: \$23,697.56  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Two restrooms, water well, parking, trails w/benches and LWCF sign  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: 26-01358  
Project Year: 1984  
Project Title: Hofma Trust Park Development  
Grant Amount: \$172,500.00  
Grant Type: Acquisition/Development - 100 acres  
Elements: Sleeper street parking, floating foot-bridge, gate/decks/overlooks, boardwalk, tables and grills, signs, fence, hiking trails and restroom building.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: BF89-483  
Project Year: 1989  
Project Title: Hofma Park Recreation  
Grant Amount: \$112,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Bituminous drive & paving, soccer field, basketball court, restroom building, play area, picnic shelter, picnic tables and grills and topographic survey.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: TF90-254  
Project Year: 1990  
Project Title: Pottawattomie Park Project  
Grant Amount: \$300,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Site pre/grading, bituminous drives/parking, entrance sign, site lighting, restroom building, group picnic area, play area, sand volleyball, floating fish/view dock, seeding, landscaping/irrigation, bituminous walkways, softball/soccer field grading and softball/soccer field seeding.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: TF94-258  
Project Year: 1994  
Project Title: Pottawattomie Park Project  
Grant Amount: \$100,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Soccer field, parking area for soccer, picnic area for waterfront, waterfront boardwalk, parking area for waterfront, hiking/biking/jogging trails, and topographic survey.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

Project Number: TF97-112  
Project Year: 1997  
Project Title: 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue Land Acquisition  
Grant Amount: \$100,000.00  
Grant Type: Acquisition - 1.58 acres  
Acquisition/Development Status: Parcel remains in good condition.

Project Number: TF99-048  
Project Year: 1999  
Project Title: 144<sup>th</sup> Avenue Boat Launch  
Grant Amount: \$275,000.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Site preparation/building demolition, utilities, restroom building, paving/parking, signage/gates, wooden privacy fence, security camera, launch ramp/skid piers, landscaping/irrigation and lighting.  
Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

#### Robinson Township

Project Number: TF86-323  
Project Year: 1986  
Project Title: Robinson Township Central Park  
Grant Amount: \$49,000.00  
Grant Type: Acquisition - 45.97 acres  
Acquisition/Development Status: Parcel remains in good condition.

Project Number: CM99-107  
Project Year: 1999  
Project Title: Robinson Township Central Community Park  
Grant Amount: \$118,800.00  
Grant Type: Development  
Elements: Family/equestrian picnic area, play apparatus area w/cushion surfacing, porta-john enclosure with slab, softball/soccer/football fields, nature observation/walking trails, gravel/slag entry drive/parking, park identity/interpretive signs, and landscaping/seeding.

Acquisition/Development Status: All improvements have been installed and are functional in accordance with the grant.

## **Administrative Structure**

As mentioned in *Chapter One*, the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority (NORA) was established under the Recreational Authorities Act - Public Act 321 of 2000 (MCL 123.1131 *et seq.*). Working through a lengthy but constructive development process that included legal-council and public hearings, the four jurisdictions adopted “Articles of Incorporation” (see *Appendix B.*) by an affirmative vote of the majority of the legislative bodies of the four participating municipalities. A printed copy of the Articles was then filed with the Secretary of State, Office of the Great Seal - becoming effective on October 30, 2009.

In December 2009, the Recreation Authority entered into a formal agreement with the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to fund staff, equipment and recreational activities. Under the agreement, the Recreation Coordinator (in cooperation with each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools), facilitates recreation programming activities on respective municipal/school sites and facilities. However, the participating municipalities and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools have first priority over the use of their own sites and facilities.

Under this arrangement, NORA is directed by a Recreation Coordinator (and Recreation Assistant) and administered by a 9-member Board of Trustees made up of one elected official and one non-elected representative from each participating jurisdiction and one member appointed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. The Advisory Board has four appointed officers: Chair; Vice-Chair; Secretary; and Treasure. The chairperson is the presiding officer of the Authority. Until such time as an alternative funding source is secured, the Authority is funded by financial contributions (from their general fund) from the four participating jurisdictions. The total budget for the 2010 - 2011 fiscal year is \$304,800. A full budget report can be found in *Appendix D.*

## Chapter Three. Action Plan

This chapter outlines the goals, objectives and action strategies for the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority. The goals, objectives and action strategies outlined in this chapter were established by the NORA Advisory Board following considerable discussion concerning the most logical and practical way to achieve this plan's vision and value statements. In addition, many of the objectives and action strategies directly respond to discussions with community stakeholders and the public. The goals and objectives are organized under three distinct headings: (1) Funding and Administration; (2) Programming; and (3) Facilities.

### Goals and Objectives

#### Funding and Administration

##### Goal One. Develop new and continuing funding sources

Objective: Seek alternative sources for funding

##### Goal Two. Expand the scope of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority

Objective: Continue to discuss the feasibility of expanding the Recreation Authority in neighboring jurisdictions such as the Village of Spring Lake, Spring Lake Township, Crockery Township and Port Sheldon Township.

Objective: Continue to encourage cooperation and foster relationships between NORA and the five primary public entities of the Northwest Ottawa Community: City of Grand Haven, Charter Township of Grand Haven, City of Ferrysburg, Robinson Township and the Grand Haven Area Public School District

Objective: Explore opportunities for future collaborations and methods to reduce competition/redundancy of recreation programs with other local recreation providers such as the YMCA and other youth sport organizations.

##### Goal Three. Expand marketing, communications and education efforts

Objective: Utilize marketing and social-media tools to promote and publicize existing recreation programming opportunities and NORA.

Objective: Explore opportunities to work with local health-care providers and advocates to promote and support existing recreation programs and their connection with overall health and wellness.

**Goal Four. Provide sufficient recreation programs to serve the existing and future needs of area residents**

Objective: Conduct a comprehensive community survey to help determine the programming needs of the community.

Objective: Annually review the *Recreation Plan* - adding updates and revisions as necessary

Objective: Provide for year-round recreation programs that encourage participation by residents of all ages, income levels and abilities.

Objective: Work with the participating jurisdictions and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to provide for safe recreation programs in appropriately locations with appropriate conditions

Objective: Work with the participating jurisdictions and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to provide for barrier-free access to all facilities that support recreation programs.

Objective: Work with the participating jurisdictions and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and local recreation providers to eliminate scheduling conflicts.

**Goal Five. Expand the capacity of the NORA Advisory Board and staff**

Objective: Provide opportunities for the Advisory Board and staff to attend training/education classes and conferences.

Objective: Explore ways in which new equipment and/or technologies could be utilized by staff to increase efficiency.

Objective: Consider adding additional staff as future needs arise.

Objective: Explore opportunities for area students to assist in the operation of NORA programs.

**Programming****Goal One. Provide for a wide variety of recreation programs that enhance the quality of life of area residents and support vigorous and healthy lifestyles for all abilities at all stages of life**

Objective: Expand the following *existing* recreation programs:

Water Safety	Swimming Development
Indoor Soccer	Summer School Recreation Programs
In-line Hockey	

Objective: Provide for the following *new* recreation programs

Pickle-Ball	Disc-Golf
BMX Courses	Outdoor Activities/Geocaching
Flag Football	Floor Hockey
Gun Certification	Snow-Shoeing

**Facilities****Goal One. Provide for year-round recreation facilities that serve the existing and future needs of the community**

- Objective. Work with the participating jurisdictions and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to explore opportunities to expand upon or update existing recreation facilities.
- Objective. As new facilities are planned and developed, always consider a location that will ensure access (walkability), traffic generation and the proximity to neighborhoods and downtown Grand Haven.
- Objective. Commit to facility and location design that produces the lowest impacts on the surrounding landscape and environment and utilizes green building materials and technologies.
- Objective. Incorporate non-motorized pathways into the facility design of any new recreation facility - preferably connecting with existing non-motorized assets within the community.
- Objective. Establish clear parameters and funding sources for the maintenance of new recreation facilities
- Objective. Explore opportunities to develop a large multi-purpose facility that would include the following amenities:
  - a. Fitness Center
  - b. Pool w/Splash Park
  - c. Multiple Gyms (for basketball, volleyball, etc...)
  - d. Racquetball Courts
  - e. Multi-Purpose Rooms
  - f. Health Bar (for juices, smoothies, snacks, etc...)
- Objective. Explore opportunities to develop a disc-golf course.
- Objective. Explore opportunities to develop a large indoor/outdoor soccer complex capable of hosting tournaments.
- Objective. Explore opportunities to develop a large outdoor baseball/softball complex (w/lights) capable of hosting tournaments.

## **Strategic Action Plan**

The following section details the strategic actions to meet the goals and objectives of the Recreation Plan. This section provides a short description of the current condition or status of the proposed goal, a description of the basis for action and the recommended action(s). The recommended actions are organized under each of the previous listed goals under three distinct headings: (1) Funding and Administration; (2) Programming; and (3) Facilities.

### **Funding and Administration**

#### **Goal One. Develop new and continuing funding sources**

As previously discussed, funding for NORA staff, activities and equipment is provided by contributions from the four participating municipalities. Other contributions (e.g. administration, storage, and office space) are provided through a contract with the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. Due to a growing concern that current funding levels would not be able to keep up with the rising costs of providing for community-wide recreation programs, the former NORP Advisory Board began looking at ways in which they could better fund the existing recreational activities. At the same time, the NORP board began discussing how additional funding might be able to support the development and general maintenance of new and improved recreation facilities. Under the Recreational Authorities Act, recreation improvements, development and maintenance can be financed through several funding sources.

#### **Recommended Action(s)**

The Recreational Authority should work to evaluate all possible funding sources that could provide for NORA activities and future park development and maintenance functions. The following list provides a brief description of funding sources applicable under the *Recreational Authority*. A more detailed description of these funding options can be found in the Articles of Incorporation.

##### ***General Fund***

As demonstrated by the current agreement, funding can be provided by general fund appropriations from each of the participating entities.

##### ***Donations***

Businesses, corporations, private clubs, community organizations and individuals may contribute to recreation and other improvement programs to benefit the communities in which they are located.

Private sector contributions may be in the form of monetary contributions, the donation of land, the provision of volunteer services, or the contribution of equipment and/or facilities.

### ***Millage***

A Northwest Ottawa Community property tax millage could be used to finance park and recreation development initiatives for land acquisition, new facilities, and operation. The Recreational Authority Act 321 of 2000 authorizes a Recreational Authority to levy a tax of not more than 1 mill for a period of not more than 20 years on all of the taxable property within the territory of the authority.

### ***Lease and Fee-For-Service Arrangements***

NORA could negotiate a lease for the use of future parkland facilities by groups and organizations. A common method is to initiate lease agreements with local youth/parent sports organizations for use of parkland facilities. Concessions at these facilities may also generate small amounts of funding. Another method may be to lease underutilized park land for other uses such as cell towers.

### ***Bonds***

NORA could borrow funds to finance the development of park and recreation facilities. General Obligation Bonds can be issued for specific community projects but require repayment with interest by the issuing Authority. Repayment usually requires some form of tax such as a millage. A public vote of approval is required before issuing a General Obligation Bond. Revenue Bonds can also be issued to raise funds for construction of public projects. However, these bonds are tied to a revenue source created by the project such as concessions, lease agreements, and fees.

### ***Private and Community Foundations***

A foundation is a special form of non-profit corporation established as a federally approved mechanism through which land, cash and securities may be accumulated and “gifted” for specified non-profit activities. Therefore, foundation support could help with improving parks and recreation services.

### ***Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants***

The Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) provides funding assistance for state and local outdoor recreation needs, including land acquisition and development of recreation facilities. This assistance is directed at creating and improving outdoor recreational opportunities and providing protection to

valuable natural resources. Grant amounts range from \$15,000 to \$500,000, with a required minimum local match of 25%.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides grants to local units of government to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation. At least 50 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local government applicants. The DNR makes recommendations to the National Park Service (NPS) which grants final approval.

#### *Eligibility*

According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans*, a Regional Recreation Authority is eligible for MNRTF and LWCF funding upon the approval of a recreation plan by the DNR-E Grants Section.

In addition, the DNR-E provides several grant opportunities to support outdoor and recreation activities such as wildlife, fisheries, boating, forestry, trails, and law enforcement.

#### ***Michigan Trail-Way Fund***

In 1993, the State of Michigan enacted “trailways” legislation calling for a statewide system of smooth-surfaced trails passing through Michigan natural areas and communities. The legislation allows communities to formally designate existing trails as a “Michigan Trailway” through the DNR Natural Resources Commission. Trails under development can be considered for trailway designation and receive financial assistance from the Michigan Trailways Fund, if a master plan or other documentation that provides a basis for evaluation is presented for review.

#### ***Transportation Enhancement Act***

In 1992, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) established the *Transportation Enhancement Program* to improve the quality of life for Michigan citizens by providing funding and other assistance, creating and responding to opportunities to enhance Michigan’s transportation system. The program was the result of the *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991*. In 1998, the program was reauthorized in the *Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21)*.

Under past programs, activities eligible for funding included the provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles including new or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, wide paved shoulders and off-road trails, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, landscaping and other scenic beautification improvements including trails and waterfronts, and the preservation of abandoned railway corridors to acquire railroad rights-of-way, construct multi-use trails, and develop rail-with-trail projects. Federal law requires the applicant to provide a minimum match of 20% of the project cost.

Eligible agencies include MDOT, county road commissions, cities and villages, Native American Tribes, federal agencies, other state departments, metropolitan planning organizations and transit agencies. MDOT encourages organizations and agencies that are not eligible to apply for *Transportation Enhancement* funding to collaborate with an appropriate eligible applicant agency as partners in planning financing, developing, and implementing transportation enhancement projects.

### **Goal Two. Expand the scope of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority**

Prior to the development of the Recreation Authority, members of the NORP Advisory Board and staff met with public officials from the Village of Spring Lake, Spring Lake Township and Crockery Township to discuss their interest in participating in a new cooperative arrangement to better provide for recreation throughout the community - including the formation of a Recreation Authority. This initial inquiry was brought forward because a large number of Spring Lake (Village/Township) and Crockery Township residents participate in NORP programs. In addition, Spring Lake Village and Spring Lake Township share a border with the City of Ferrysburg; - and all sharing in the identity of the greater Tri-City Community. Although the three jurisdictions ultimately did not become members of the Recreation Authority, the Advisory Board has expressed a desire to continue to explore options for future collaboration and entry into the Recreation Authority.

Further, during the community planning process, several local recreation providers (e.g. youth soccer, basketball and baseball) expressed a desire to engage NORA in additional collaborations. In part, this desire stems from perceived scheduling conflicts between NORA and the other recreation providers for recreation facilities. Local recreation providers also use municipal and school facilities for their activities.

### **Recommended Action(s)**

At the end of its first fiscal year, NORA Advisory Board members and staff should schedule a meeting with public officials from Spring Lake (Village/Township) and Crockery Township to discuss their inclusion into the Recreation Authority. If the three jurisdictions continue to abstain from joining the

Recreation Authority, the NORA Advisory Board members and staff should continue to meet at least annually with public officials from the three jurisdictions to discuss other cooperative opportunities.

In addition, NORA staff should meet with local recreation providers to establish a clear, logical and fair system in which the scheduling of facilities for recreation activities is handled.

### **Goal Three. Expand Marketing, Communications and Education Efforts**

Having a good marketing and communications program in place is very important to the overall success of the Recreation Authority. Currently, the Recreation Authority does an outstanding job of marketing recreation programs, utilizing print media (e.g. brochures, magnets), a comprehensive website, social-media tools (*Facebook*) and positive word of mouth from the Advisory Board and staff. However, there are opportunities to expand upon and improve current marketing and communication efforts.

#### **Recommended Action(s)**

The NORA website is a highly effective communications tool, providing information about operations, fees, programs, leagues, schedules and other important information. However, the character of the website appears to look somewhat basic and outdated. In addition, when typing “Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority” into any search engine, the first link always reads Northwest Ottawa Recreation *Program*. The Recreation Authority should work with a web-site development consultant to develop a more attractive and informative website.

NORA staff should consistently develop and submit press releases to local news outlets that highlight successful events and/or other important programming news. It can also be helpful to become familiar with a specific reporter, someone who is familiar with the activities and goals of the Authority. In addition, it is important that media outlets have a consistent contact (name, phone number, email) within the Authority, someone who can clarify stories and supply quotes.

Recent trends show that local health care providers and organizations are becoming more involved in the recreational aspects of their community. Health care providers and organizations understand the links between physical and mental well-being and physical activity and recreation. Active recreation is also considered useful in preventive care. Health care providers and organizations can be tremendous advocates and supporters of recreation initiatives. The NORA Advisory Board and staff should meet with and explore opportunities to collaborate with the health care providers and organizations within the community.

**Goal Four. Provide sufficient recreation programs to serve the existing and future needs of area residents**

As previously stated, NORA wants to continue to provide year-round recreation programs that encourage participation by residents of all ages, income levels and abilities. Currently, new and/or expanded programs are offered in response to direct communication between existing program participants and the NORA staff. In addition, new and/or expanded programs are offered in response to research by the NORA Advisory Board and staff on new programming trends. However, NORA has not conducted a community-wide survey to learn more about what types of recreation programs residents want.

**Recommended Action(s)**

The Recreation Authority should work with a consultant to develop and administer a community-wide survey to better understand the recreational needs of the community. At the same time, NORA staff members should continue to talk with program participants and other targeted demographic groups (i.e. senior citizens, limited mobility) to learn about additional recreational needs.

It is important that area residents have easy access to the recreation programs hosted at local parks and recreation facilities. Currently, sidewalks and non-motorized pathways are provided and maintained by each of the participating jurisdictions. The Recreation Authority should work with the local jurisdictions to conduct a walkability audit of the community and parks where recreation programs are hosted.

**Goal Five. Expand the capacity of the NORA Advisory Board and Staff**

NORA is directed by a Recreation Coordinator, (with assistance from a Recreation Assistant and Recreation Programmer) and is administered by a 9-member Board of Trustees made up of one elected official and one non-elected representative from each participating jurisdiction and one member appointed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. Currently, the Recreation Coordinator attends training sessions and conferences to learn about new trends and issues associated with recreation.

**Recommended Action(s)**

The Recreation Authority should continue to fund opportunities for staff to attend training sessions and conferences such as the annual Michigan Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) Conference. The Recreation Authority should also consider funding additional participation in training sessions and conferences for Advisory Board members. In addition, the Recreation Authority should continue to explore the acquisition of new equipment and/or technologies (i.e. registration, scheduling, and budget software programs) that could increase staff efficiency and capacity.

## **Programming**

**Goal One. Provide for a wide variety of recreation programs that enhance the quality of life of area residents and support vigorous and healthy lifestyles for all abilities at all stages of life.**

As previously noted, the primary purpose of the Recreation Authority is to provide a wide variety of recreation programs to the citizens of the community. In 2010, over 8,700 people participated in over 100 different NORA programs (youth and adult).

### **Recommended Action(s)**

The Recreation Authority should continue to provide new recreation programs that meet the life-long needs of area residents. The Recreation Authority should also continue to experiment with providing new and “out-of-the-box” recreation programs - noting successes, failures and where improvements may be made. In the short term, the Recreation Authority should expand upon several existing programs and provide for new recreation programs (see right).

## **Facilities**

**Goal One. Provide for year-round recreation facilities that serve the existing and future needs of the community.**

As previously discussed, most of the existing parks and recreational resources discussed in this document are owned and administered separately by each participating municipality, the Grand Haven Area Public School District and other local/state agencies. In addition, the primary purpose of NORA is to organize and administer recreational programs. However, NORA Advisory Board has expressed interest in exploring opportunities to connect with and/or build upon existing recreation facilities and build new recreation facilities where they are needed.

### **Recommended Action(s)**

The Recreation Authority should continue to evaluate the need to improve upon and/or develop new recreation facilities. Future development discussions should consider, among other things, the source and appropriate level of funding, maintenance, staffing implications, market demand and location.

### Recommended Action(s) - Programming

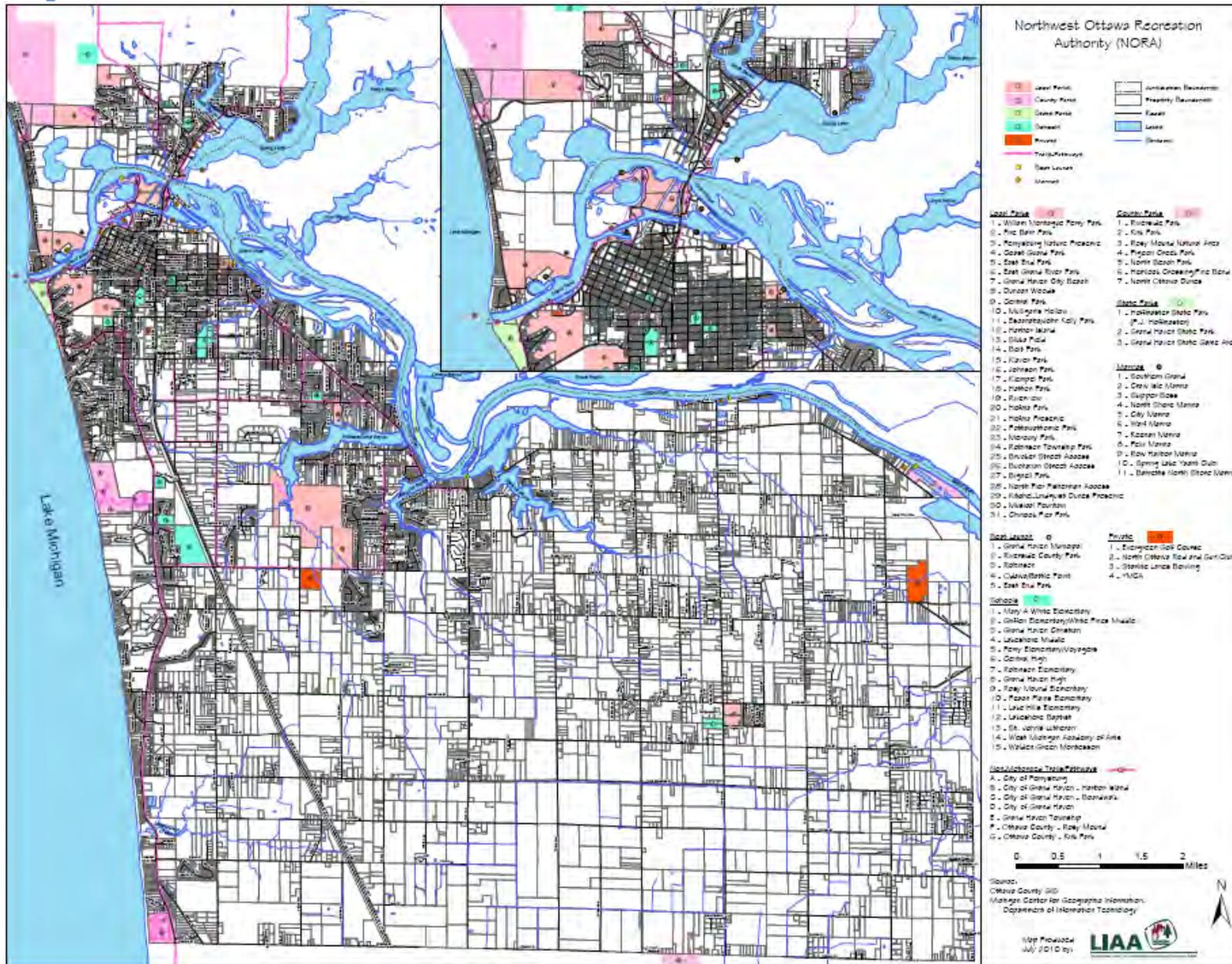
#### Existing Recreation Programs:

- Water Safety
- Swimming Development
- Indoor Soccer
- Summer School Recreation Programs
- In-line Hockey

#### New Recreation Programs:

- Pickle-Ball
- Disc Golf
- BMX Course
- Outdoor Activities (camping, hunting, etc.)
- Geocaching
- Flag Football
- Floor Hockey
- Gun Certification
- Snow-Shoeing

Map One.



## Appendix A. Population Description

### Population Trends and Projections

The following section discusses some of the population, housing and economic characteristics and trends of the Northwest Ottawa Community. For the purpose of this plan, we have used figures provided by the U.S. Census Bureau and the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

### Population Trends

Based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau, there were an estimated 35,267 people living in the Northwest Ottawa Community in 2008. This is about a 63% increase over the population recorded in 1970 (13,687 people). Between 1970 and 2009, it is estimated the population in the City of Grand Haven decreased by approximately 14%, while the population of the remaining three jurisdictions increased dramatically - City of Ferrysburg (39%), Grand Haven Charter Township (189%) and Robinson Township (198%). U.S. Census Bureau statistics also show that the population of Ottawa County grew by over 100% from 1970 to 2009. In fact, according to data presented by the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, between 2000 and 2006 Ottawa County experienced the fifth highest population change in terms of people (18,149) and percentage (7.58%) in the state. Table A-1 presents the population trends from 1970 to 2009 for the Northwest Ottawa Community and Ottawa County.

**Table A-1. Population Trends 1970 - 2009**

Community	1970	1980	Percent Change 1970 - 1980	1990	Percent Change 1980 - 1990	2000	Percent Change 1990 - 2000	Estimate 2009	Percent Change 2000 - 2009	Total Percent Change 1970 - 2009
Grand Haven (c)	11,844	11,763	-0.7%	11,951	1.6%	11,168	-6.6%	10,173	-8.9%	-14.1%
City of Ferrysburg	2,196	2,440	11.1%	2,919	16.4%	3,040	4.1%	3,059	0.6%	39.3%
Grand Haven (Twp.)	5,489	7,238	31.9%	9,710	25.5%	13,278	36.7%	15,905	19.8%	189.8%
Robinson Twp.	2,051	3,018	47.1%	3,925	23.1%	5,588	42.4%	6,130	9.7%	198.9%
NORA Community	21,580	24,459	13.3%	28,505	14.2%	33,074	16.0%	35,267	6.6%	63.4%
Ottawa County	128,181	157,174	22.6%	187,768	16.3%	238,314	26.9%	261,957	9.9%	104.4%
Source: US Census Bureau: Compiled by West Michigan Regional Planning Commission										

## Population Projections

Recent trends suggest that a significant increase in the overall population of the Northwest Ottawa Community can be expected over the next several decades. Although there is no way to predict the total population growth with certainty, we can use projection methods to obtain useful estimates. Table A-2 presents the population projections for the Northwest Ottawa Community for the next 10 years. The projections are based on a straight-line projection based on the population change between 1990 and 2000. The population projections predict a population increase of 8% for the City of Ferrysburg, 53.7% for the Charter Township of Grand Haven and 59.5% for Robinson Township and a population decrease of 14% for the City of Grand Haven. If these predictions are correct, the resident population for the Northwest Ottawa Community would increase by 27.6%, to 42,212 people by 2020. Projections are also provided by the West Michigan Regional Planning Commission.

**Table A-2. Population Projections**

	1990	2000	2010	2020	Total Change 2000 - 2020	Percent Change 2000 - 2020
<b>City of Ferrysburg</b>	2,919	3,040				
Strait Line Projection			3,161	3,282	242	8.0%
WMRPC			3,309	3,597	557	18.3%
<b>City of Grand Haven</b>	11,951	11,168				
Strait Line Projection			10,385	9,602	- 1,566	-14.0%
WMRPC			10,748	10,338	-830	-7.4%
<b>Grand Haven Township</b>	9,710	13,278				
Strait Line Projection			16,846	20,414	7,136	53.7%
WMRPC			17,887	23,941	10,663	80.3%
<b>Robinson Township</b>	3,925	5,588				
Strait Line Projection			7,251	8,914	3,326	59.5%
WMRPC			7,763	10,752	5,164	92.4%
<b>NORP Community</b>	28,505	33,074				
Strait Line Projection			37,643	42,212	9,138	27.6%
WMRPC			39,707	48,628	15,554	47.0%
<b>Ottawa County</b>	187,768	238,314				
Strait Line Projection			288,860	339,406	101,092	42.4%
WMRPC			303,676	393,642	155,328	65.2%

Source: West Michigan Regional Planning Commission (WMRPC); US Census Bureau for 2000

**Age Distribution** - The age distribution of the Northwest Ottawa Community can be an important factor in identifying recreational needs. There are several identifiable stages that individuals go through during the span of a lifetime. Using U.S. Census Bureau statistics, this plan characterized, eight life-

stages, including: (1) Preschool; (2) Elementary; (3) Secondary; (4) College; (5) Young Family; (6) Established Family; (7) Mature Family; and (8) Retired. As detailed in Table A-3, in 2000 the Northwest Ottawa Community's largest population group falls within the *Established Family* group, ages 35 to 54 years old (10,694 people of 32% of the total population). This population group was the largest in 1990 as well. Also, in the Northwest Ottawa Community, between 1990 and 2000, the *Mature Family* (ages 55 to 64) and *Retired* (ages 65 and above) group experienced an increase. As the *Established Family* group continues to age, the *Mature Family* and *Retired* groups will continue to see significant increases. Because of improved health and fitness, people are participating in recreation activities at older ages. In addition, retired people tend to have relatively high disposable incomes. These age groups generally seek less active recreation activities (e.g. gold, walking, and gardening) and more mid-day recreation programs. From 1990 to 2000, the *Creative Class* group, ages 25 to 34, experienced a decline. Recent research suggests attracting this population group is vital to the economic sustainability and viability of the community. This age group generally seeks activities that allow for group participation and diverse experiences.

**Table A-3. Age Distribution**

Stage of Life	Age Range	City of Ferrysburg		City of Grand Haven		Grand Haven Township		Robinson Township		NORP Community		Ottawa County	
		1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Preschool	Under 5 Years	212	186	774	591	790	977	382	442	2,158	2,196	16,013	18,242
	Percent of Total	7.3%	6.1%	6.5%	5.3%	8.1%	7.4%	9.7%	7.9%	7.6%	6.6%	8.5%	7.7%
Elementary	5 to 14	421	378	1,613	1,205	1,643	2,373	725	1,027	4,402	4,983	31,032	38,910
	Percent of Total	14.4%	12.4%	13.5%	10.8%	16.9%	17.9%	18.5%	18.4%	15.4%	15.1%	16.5%	16.3%
Secondary	15 to 19	207	188	757	731	688	1,009	253	398	1,905	2,326	15,093	20,709
	Percent of Total	7.1%	6.2%	6.3%	6.5%	7.1%	7.6%	6.4%	7.1%	6.7%	7.0%	8.0%	8.7%
College	20 to 24	188	160	745	753	512	560	242	271	1,687	1,744	15,083	18,854
	Percent of Total	6.4%	5.3%	6.2%	6.7%	5.3%	4.2%	6.2%	4.8%	5.9%	5.3%	8.0%	7.9%
Young Family	25 to 34	480	360	1,852	1,525	1,548	1,483	838	844	4,718	4,212	32,143	31,828
	Percent of Total	16.4%	11.8%	15.5%	13.7%	15.9%	11.2%	21.4%	15.1%	16.6%	12.7%	17.1%	13.4%
Established Family	35 to 54	864	989	2,890	3,166	2,977	4,627	1,040	1,912	7,771	10,694	46,621	67,801
	Percent of Total	29.6%	32.5%	24.2%	28.3%	30.7%	34.8%	26.5%	34.2%	27.3%	32.3%	24.8%	28.5%
Mature Family	55 to 64	286	346	1,087	1,007	727	1,156	244	393	2,344	2,902	13,309	17,858
	Percent of Total	9.8%	11.4%	9.1%	9.0%	7.5%	8.7%	6.2%	7.0%	8.2%	8.8%	7.1%	7.5%
Retired	65+	261	433	2,233	2,190	825	1,093	201	301	3,520	4,017	18,474	24,112
	Percent of Total	8.9%	14.2%	18.7%	19.6%	8.5%	8.2%	5.1%	5.4%	12.3%	12.1%	9.8%	10.1%
<b>Total</b>		2,919	3,040	11,951	11,168	9,710	13,278	3,925	5,588	28,505	33,074	187,768	238,314
Creative Class*	20 to 34	668	520	2,597	2,278	2,060	2,043	1,080	1,115	6,405	5,956	47,226	50,682
	Percent of Total	22.9%	17.1%	21.7%	20.4%	21.2%	15.4%	27.5%	20.0%	22.5%	18.0%	25.2%	21.3%

\* "Creative Class" age range figures were collected from *Michigan Cool Cities Initiative: A Reinvestment Strategy* - Published by the Michigan Cool Cities Initiative

Source: U.S. Census for 2000

## Education Attainment

Table A-4 presents information on the educational attainment of people in the Northwest Ottawa Community as tallied by the U.S. Census Bureau in 1990 and 2000. In general, there has been an increase in the number of people who have at least some college experience in the Community. There has also been an increase in the number of people in the community who have a *Bachelors Degree*. In addition, the total percentage of people in the community with a bachelor's degree or higher (28.9%) is higher than Ottawa County and the State of Michigan. Numerous studies have shown that educational attainment is related to an individual's earning capacity. That is, people with higher levels of education tend to have higher total incomes over a lifetime. Therefore, the average educational attainment achievement of the citizens of a community can be an indicator of the economic capacity of that community. In general, people who have relatively high disposable incomes seek diverse recreation activities and experiences.

**Table A-4. Education Attainment**

Educational Attainment	City of Ferrysburg		City of Grand Haven		Grand Haven Township		Robinson Township		NORP Community		Ottawa County		State of Michigan	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less than High School	121	30	528	497	264	194	221	146	1,134	867	9,608	7,349	452,893	299,014
High School - No Diploma	184	161	1,072	728	614	547	329	382	2,199	1,818	12,793	11,622	903,866	765,119
High School - Graduate	569	428	2,526	2,268	1,817	2,083	999	1,119	5,911	5,898	37,611	44,106	1,887,449	2,010,861
Some College - No Degree	342	426	1,736	1,786	1,299	2,001	431	924	3,808	5,137	30,864	31,376	1,191,518	1,496,576
Associates Degree	208	194	605	511	555	807	113	301	1,481	1,813	9,127	10,583	392,869	448,112
Bachelor Degree	287	587	948	1,523	999	1,861	145	429	2,379	4,400	13,913	25,592	638,267	878,680
Graduate of professional Degree	180	259	662	606	498	936	66	121	1,406	1,922	6,821	11,242	375,780	517,579
<b>Total*</b>	1,891	2,085	8,077	7,919	6,046	8,429	2,304	3,422	20,308	21,855	110,737	141,870	5,842,642	6,415,941
High School Graduate or Higher	83.9%	90.8%	80.2%	84.5%	85.5%	91.2%	76.1%	84.6%	73.8%	87.7%	88.8%	86.6%	76.8%	83.4%
Bachelor Degree or Higher	24.7%	40.6%	19.9%	26.9%	24.8%	33.2%	9.2%	16.1%	18.6%	28.9%	18.7%	26.0%	17.4%	21.8%
* Population 25 years and over														
Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2000														

## Disability Status

Based on the figures provided by the 2000 U.S. Census, there are 4,481 people living in the Northwest Ottawa Community with a disability. The U.S. Census Bureau includes sensory, mental, or self-care disabilities in defining the disability status of the civilian non-institutionalized population. Table A-5 indicates that just over 13% of the Northwest Ottawa Community population is listed as having a disability. Future recreation programs and facilities should reflect the needs of this substantial population.

**Table A-5. Disability Status**

Population With Disability*	City of Ferrysburg		City of Grand Haven		Grand Haven Township		Robinson Township		NORP Community		Ottawa County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>5 to 20 Years Old</b>	45	7.2%	166	7.9%	175	4.8%	72	5.4%	458	10.2%	4,228	6.6%
<b>21 to 64 Years Old</b>	236	13.2%	959	15.6%	773	10.1%	611	17.6%	2,579	57.6%	16,202	12.3%
<b>65 and Over</b>	156	37.8%	807	39.1%	401	35.4%	80	34.2%	1,444	32.2%	8,561	37.9%
<b>Total</b>	437		1,932		1,349		763		4,481		28,991	
* Percent of population with disability derived from specific population identified												
Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2000												

## Employment

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2000, 66% of the Northwest Ottawa Community population was employed. This percentage is only slightly higher than the percentage of people employed in 1990. This percentage is slightly lower than Ottawa County (69.5%) but significantly higher than the State of Michigan (60.8%). Due to the economic recession Michigan has experienced over the last ten years, the number of unemployed people within the community may be higher. Additional research will be required to better understand the employment conditions in the greater Northwest Ottawa Community. Table A-6 shows the employment percentages for the Northwest Ottawa Community from 1990 to 2000.

**Table A-6. Employment**

Population*	City of Ferrysburg		City of Grand Haven		Grand Haven Township		Robinson Township		NORP Community		Ottawa County		State of Michigan	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
<b>Civilian Labor Force</b>	75.10%	70.30%	61.40%	63.50%	74.60%	73.50%	73.90%	78.70%	68.70%	70.30%	72.70%	72.40%	63.90%	64.50%
<b>Employed</b>	69.80%	67.70%	57.90%	60.40%	70.90%	71.10%	71.00%	71.80%	65.10%	66.90%	69.70%	69.50%	58.70%	60.80%
<b>Unemployed</b>	5.40%	2.60%	3.50%	3.10%	3.60%	2.40%	2.90%	6.90%	3.60%	3.30%	3.00%	2.90%	5.30%	3.70%
* For population 16 and over														
Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2000														

## Income by Household

Total household income is a key barometer of the economic condition of a community. Often, income can determine the amount of money voters may be willing to pay for specific recreational facilities. Table A-7 presents the median household and per capita income of the Northwest Ottawa Community from 1990 to 2000. The median household income in the community for 2000 was \$53,359. The median household income in the Northwest Ottawa Community is noticeably higher than Ottawa County and the State of Michigan,

**Table A-7. Income**

Household Income*	City of Ferrysburg		City of Grand Haven		Grand Haven Township		Robinson Township		NORP Community		Ottawa County		State of Michigan	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Less than \$10,000	8.6%	4.6%	15.5%	5.4%	4.50%	1.7%	6.5%	2.0%	10.1%	3.5%	8.1%	3.9%	15.6%	8.3%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	8.1%	4.0%	9.8%	6.4%	5.20%	3.1%	3.4%	3.4%	7.4%	4.5%	6.4%	3.9%	8.6%	5.8%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	15.0%	9.2%	18.1%	16.7%	13.90%	8.0%	13.6%	4.2%	15.8%	10.9%	14.7%	9.6%	16.4%	12.4%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	17.5%	13.3%	18.6%	16.4%	17.30%	8.9%	23.5%	9.1%	18.6%	12.3%	17.7%	11.2%	15.3%	12.4%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	18.2%	15.6%	19.8%	17.8%	25.00%	14.7%	26.0%	19.8%	21.9%	16.7%	25.2%	17.8%	18.7%	16.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.3%	21.0%	12.9%	20.8%	23.00%	26.1%	15.5%	40.8%	17.1%	25.6%	19.3%	26.6%	16.3%	20.6%
Above \$75,000	9.4%	32.0%	4.5%	16.4%	9.80%	37.4%	8.0%	20.5%	7.2%	26.2%	7.1%	26.9%	7.9%	24.1%
<b>Total Households**</b>	1,152	1,286	4,789	5,019	3,391	4,634	1,165	1,849	10,497	12,788	62,912	81,878	3,788,780	3,424,122
<b>Median Household Income***</b>	\$35,643	\$53,622	\$28,989	\$40,322	\$41,140	\$62,380	\$36,414	\$57,110	\$35,547	\$53,359	\$36,507	\$52,347	\$31,020	\$44,667
* 2000 income data is from 1999, 1990 income data is from 1989														
** Reflect total households for 1999 and 1989														
*** Reflected in 1999 dollars														
Source: U.S. Census Bureau for 2000														

## Appendix B. Articles of Incorporation

### *Articles of Incorporation Northwest Ottawa Recreational Authority*

#### ARTICLE I

##### **NAME & OFFICE**

The name of the Authority shall be and is the “Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority” (NORA), hereinafter referred to as the Authority. The principle office of the Authority shall be located at 1415 Beechtree Street, Grand Haven, Michigan or at such other location as may be designated by the Board of the Authority.

#### ARTICLE II

##### **DEFINITIONS**

1. Expressly Defined Terms: The terms “authority,” “board,” “participating municipality,” “park,” “recreational purposes,” “swimming pool” “and territory of the Authority” as used in these Articles of Incorporation shall be now or hereafter defined in Section 3 of the Michigan Public Act 321 of 2000, as amended hereafter referred to as “Act 321”, that being MCL 123.1131, *et seq.*
2. Other terms shall have such meaning as may be specified in the various provisions of these Articles of Incorporation, and shall otherwise have the meanings customarily ascribed to them, considering the context and subject matter of these Articles of Incorporation.

#### ARTICLE III

##### **PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITIES AND TERRITORY**

The participating and creating municipalities of the Authority are the City of Grand Haven, a Michigan Municipal Corporation, the City of Ferrysburg, a Michigan Municipal Corporation, the Charter Township of Grand Haven, a Michigan Municipal Corporation, and portions (containing precinct 1 and 2) of the Township of Robinson, a Michigan Municipal Corporation, all of which are contained in the County of Ottawa, Michigan and all of which are hereby designated and referred to in these Articles as the “participating municipalities.” The territory of the Authority shall include all of the combined property situated within the corporate boundaries of all of the participating municipalities as stated in this paragraph, as now constituted or hereafter changed through annexation, detachment, consolidation or change of municipal identity.

#### ARTICLE IV

##### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Authority shall be to acquire, construct, operate, maintain and/or improve:

1. New public parks,
2. Existing parks or other facilities as authorized by Section 5 of Act 321, as determined by the Board following consultation with the legislative bodies of each of the participating municipalities.

The Authority shall also provide for recreational services.

#### ARTICLE V

##### **POWERS**

The Authority shall possess all the powers specified in Act 321, subject to the limitations of the authority as provided by law and/or limitations as specified in these Articles of Incorporation, including the power to:

1. Acquire and hold, by purchase, lease with or without option to purchase, grant, gift, devise, land contract, installment purchase contract, bequest, or other legal means, real and personal property inside or outside the territory of the Authority. The property may include franchises, easements, or rights of way on, under, or above any property. The authority may pay for the property from, or pledge for the payment of the property revenue of the authority.
2. Apply for and accept grants or contributions from individuals, the federal government or any of its agencies, this state, a municipality, or other public or private agencies to be used for any of the purposes of the Authority.
3. Hire full-time or part-time employees and retain professional services.
4. Provide for the maintenance of all of the real and personal property of the Authority.
5. Assess and collect fees for services provided by and expenses incurred by the Authority.
6. Receive revenue as appropriated by the legislature of this state or a participating municipality.
7. Enter into contracts incidental to or necessary for the accomplishment of the purposes of the Authority.

#### ARTICLE VI

##### **TERM**

The Authority shall continue in existence perpetually or until dissolved by the majority vote of each of the then participating municipalities. A participating municipality shall not withdraw from the Authority during the period for which the Authority has been authorized to levy a tax by the electors of the Authority.

#### ARTICLE VII

##### **FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year of the Authority shall commence on the first day of July in each year and shall end on the last day of June of the subsequent year.

#### ARTICLE VIII

##### **GOVERNING BOARD**

The Authority shall be directed and governed by a (9) member Board of Trustees, known as the “Northwest Ottawa Recreational Authority Board” and hereinafter sometimes referred to as the “Board”.

1. Membership of Board: The Board shall be made up of:
  - a. Two members, one (1) elected official and one (1) non-elected representative, appointed by the legislative body of each participating municipality, each of whom shall be a registered voter of said participating municipality; and,
  - b. One member, appointed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools who is a registered voter in the Grand Haven Area School District and Ottawa County.
  - c. The term of each non-elected representative board member shall be three (3) years. The term of each elected official board member and board member appointed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall be the duration of their elected or appointed term, unless replaced by the governing body selecting such representatives.
2. Oath of Office: Each member of the Board shall qualify by taking the constitutional oath of office and filing it with the clerk of his or her respective participating municipality, or in the case of the member selected by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, with the secretary of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools Board of Education.
3. First Board; Organizational Meeting; Subsequent Board Members: The members of the *first* Board shall be selected within forty five (45) days after the effective date of the incorporation of this Authority. Within sixty (60) days after the effective date of the incorporation of the Authority, the members of the first Authority Board shall qualify by taking the constitutional oath of office and shall meet for the purpose of organization. At such organizational meeting, the Board shall select a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer each of whom may be a member of the Board. All of such officers shall serve until the organizational meeting of the following year, which shall be held each year in June or until their respective successors shall be selected and qualify.
4. No selection to the Authority and no selection of an officer shall be deemed to be invalid because it was not made within the times or at the time specified in these Articles. Any Board member may be removed at any time for cause or without cause by action of the governing body that selected such member.

#### ARTICLE IX

##### COMPENSATION

Pursuant to the requirements of Act 321, or until such time as authorized by Act 321, members of the Authority Board shall not be compensated for their service by the Authority. Each member of the Board shall, however, be entitled to reimbursement for all expenditures made by him or her in carrying out official duties as may be approved by the Board and to the extent authorized by the budget for the Authority for each fiscal year.

#### ARTICLE X

##### VACANCY

In the event of a vacancy on the Board, the governing body selecting such representative shall fill the vacancy within forty-five (45) days of the vacancy.

#### ARTICLE XI

##### MEETINGS

Meetings of the Authority shall be held bi-monthly, or as otherwise deemed necessary by the Board at such time and place as shall be prescribed by resolution of the Board. Each member of the Board shall have one vote. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chairperson, or any two (2) members thereof, by written notice at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the time of such meeting.

The business that the Authority may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the Authority held in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.275. Public notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting shall be given in the manner required by the Open meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275. Any member may waive notice of any special meeting either before or after the holding thereof.

A majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum, which shall be required in order to conduct a meeting of the Board. The Board shall act by motion or resolution. A vote of the majority of the members of the Board who are present at any meeting, at which a quorum is present, shall be sufficient for passage of any motion or resolution. However, any decision regarding the annual budget, capital expenditures, projected revenues, projected expenditures, budget and budget amendments, must be supported by a vote of the majority of the members of the Board and not the majority which would otherwise constitute a quorum.

The Board shall adopt Robert's Rules of Order to govern its procedures, when not in conflict with the terms of any statute of the State of Michigan or of these Articles of Incorporation. The Board shall keep a record of its proceedings, which record shall be signed by the Secretary and open to the public. All votes shall be "Yes," "No" or "Abstain," provided where the vote is unanimous, it shall only be necessary to so state.

A writing prepared, owned, used, in possession, or retained by the Authority in the performance of an official function shall be made available in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

#### ARTICLE XII

##### DUTIES OF BOARD AND OFFICERS

The Chairperson of the Board shall be the presiding officer thereof, and shall be permitted, with the consent of the Board, to appoint committees of the Board as necessary. Except as herein otherwise provided, the Chairperson and Board Members shall not have any executive or administrative functions other than as a member of the Board. In the absence or disability of the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson shall perform the duties of the Chairperson. The Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall hold office for one (1) year or until a successor is elected, but in no event beyond the term of their appointment to the Authority Board.

The Secretary shall be the recording officer for the Board. If a person other than an active member of the board is to serve as Secretary, the Board may establish qualifications for such



office, such as the capability of carrying out the duties of office, including, without limitation, compliance with the Freedom of Information Act and other state laws relating to record keeping and management.

The Treasurer shall be the custodian of the funds of the Authority and shall give to it a bond conditioned upon the faithful performance of the duties of his or her office. All money shall be deposited in a bank, or banks, to be designated by the Board, and all checks or other forms of withdrawal there from shall be signed by two (2) persons, which shall be the Secretary, the Treasurer or their respective written designees. All authorized signatories shall give a bond conditioned upon the faithful performance of the prescribed duties. The Authority shall pay the cost of the bonds. If a person other than an active member of the Board is to serve as Treasurer for the Board, the Board may establish qualifications for such office, including the capability of carrying out the duties of office as provided by law and these Articles of Incorporation.

#### ARTICLE XIII

#### REVENUE SOURCES, BUDGETING, AND FINANCING THE AUTHORITY

##### Revenue Sources

The Authority shall have the power to raise revenue in the manner authorized by Act 321 which includes the ability to appropriate money annually for Authority purposes and to lay and collect taxes in a sum not to exceed one (1) mill provided that it is approved by each participating municipality by a vote of the electorate, and to raise revenue by any other levy or bond issuance authorized by Act 321. The term of the bond, note, land contract, installment purchase contract or other borrowed money shall not extend beyond the last day of the fiscal year of a property tax authorized under Article XIII.

##### Financing the Authority

##### A. Financial Contribution From Each Participating Municipality Until Millage Election

For the period consisting of the remainder of Fiscal Year ("FY") 2009 - 10, or until such time a millage is approved, the participating municipalities will fund the Authority via the remainder of their already budgeted contributions to the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program. For the FY 2010 - 11, or until such time a millage is approved, the participating municipalities will continue to fund the Authority in an amount necessary to carry out the Authority's operation's, as agreed upon by the legislative bodies of the participating municipalities. The contribution from each jurisdiction will be determined by the funding formula prescribed in Appendix A (attached to and by this reference incorporated in and made part of these articles) which considers each participating municipality's percent of participation in the Recreation Programs of the Authority and its total taxable valuation for real and personal property. The taxable valuation includes full taxable value of any commercial or industrial tax abated properties. After anticipated fees are deducted from the Recreation Authority's annual budget, the funding percentage figure is then applied to the remaining amount.

##### B. Property Tax Levy

As an alternative to the financial contribution formula in subsection A of this section, and in years following FY 2009 - 10, the Authority may levy a tax on all taxable property within the territory of the Authority as authorized by Section 11 of Act 321. For so long as the Authority is funded by a levy as authorized by Section 11 of Act 321, the imposition of such a levy shall preclude the Authority from requiring any further financial contributions from each participating municipality or some in-kind contributions. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as preventing a participating municipality or any other entity, from providing additional contributions to the Authority, for either general or a specific use.

Prior to making a final determination to levy a tax, as provided above, the Board shall seek the input of the legislative bodies of the participating municipalities and the governing board of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools.

##### C. Rollover Funding During Initial Operations

In addition to the above sources, the Authority may, during its first year of operations and additionally until the approval of a Property Tax Levy, be funded in part or in whole via allocation of funds or in-kind services already designated for recreational activities by one or more of the participating municipalities, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and/or the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Program (NORP). Any funds or in-kind contributions allocated directly from any participating municipality or other organization under this paragraph shall be credited toward that participating municipality's share under any budgetary computations under paragraph A for the first year or part thereof of operations of the Authority. During the start-up period of the Authority, and until the commencement of the Property Tax Levy, the Authority's funds shall be administered by the Treasurer. Prior to commencement of the Property Tax Levy, the Authority may determine whether the Authority shall, internally or by contract, make other arrangements for the management and accounting of the Authority's finances.

##### *Budgeting*

##### D. Budget Process During Periods Not Funded by Property Tax Levy

For so long as the Authority is not financed by a Property Tax Levy as provided in Section 11 of Act 321 and Article XIII (B) of these articles, the mandates of this paragraph shall apply to the Authority's budgeting process. The Board shall prepare a proposed annual operating and capital budget reflecting the projected revenues and projected expenditures of the Authority for the next fiscal year beginning July 1. The Board shall adopt the proposed budget by a majority vote of the members of the Board in such a manner as to assure submission of the adopted tentative budget to the participating municipalities no later than July 1 of each year. The proposed budget shall provide for contributions from the member municipalities which are not greater than those which would be arrived at using the formula utilized in Appendix A. After the approval of the proposed budget by the governing bodies of a three-fourths majority of the participating municipalities, the

Board shall give final approval to the Authority budget for the next fiscal year. The budget may be amended from time to time upon the approval by the governing bodies of a two-thirds majority of the participating municipalities.

**E. Budget Process During Periods Funded by Property Tax Levy**

During any period in which the Authority is financed by a Property Tax Levy as provided in Section 11 of Act 321 and Article XIII (B) of these Articles, the mandates of this paragraph shall apply to the Authority's budgeting process, and shall supersede the mandates of paragraph (D) of this Article. The Board shall prepare a proposed annual operating and capital budget reflecting the projected revenues and projected expenditures of the Authority for the next fiscal year beginning July 1. The Board shall adopt the proposed budget by a majority vote of the members of the Board in such a manner as to assure that said budget is approved prior to July 1 of the year it is to commence. The Board's approval by majority vote shall be the final approval required for the budget. The budget may be amended from time to time upon approval of a majority of the Board. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require a participating municipality to fund the Authority with any general fund monies without the approval of said funding by that participating municipality's governing body, which shall retain the discretion to approve or deny general fund monies to the Authority during the time periods to which this subsection applies. During any period in which the Authority shall cease to be funded by a Property Tax Levy as provided in Section 11 of Act 321 and Article XIII (B) of these Articles, the budget procedure followed shall be that found in Paragraph (D) of this Article, which shall supersede this Paragraph during all such times.

**F. Accounting and Budgeting Practices**

The accounting and budgeting practices of the Authority shall conform with standard accounting practices, the Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, Act 2, Public Acts of Michigan, 1968, as amended, and all other applicable provisions of law.

**ARTICLE XIV**

**PARTICIPATING MUNICIPALITY WITHDRAWAL**

A participating municipality shall not withdraw from the Authority during the period that a tax is authorized to be levied by the electors of the Authority.

A participating municipality may withdraw from the Authority, subject to the limitation in the first paragraph of this Article, by resolution of the participating municipality's legislative body approving the withdrawal. A certified copy of the resolution shall be provided to the Board at least twelve (12) months prior to the beginning of a new fiscal year for the Authority. Such new fiscal year shall serve as the effective date for the withdrawal. Notwithstanding these requirements, any withdrawal occurring pursuant to subsection A of Article XIII shall be deemed to be effective on the last day of FY 2009 – 10, with the only notice requirement being the Authority's receipt of a resolution of withdrawal enacted by the withdrawing member's governing body on or before 30 days prior to the last day of FY 2009-10.

A participating municipality that withdraws from the Authority shall remain liable for a proportion of the debts and liabilities of the Authority incurred while the participating municipality was a part of the Authority. The proportion of the Authority's debts for which a participating municipality remains liable as a result of this withdrawal from the Authority shall be determined according to the Formula in Article XIII, paragraph A. Any property owned by the Authority, which is in the possession of the withdrawing municipality or in the possession of personnel who will no longer remain with the Authority as a result of the participating municipality's withdrawal from the Authority, shall be returned to the Authority before the effective date of the withdrawal. The withdrawing municipality shall not be entitled to the return of any credit for any property or money it transferred to or paid to the Authority prior to the withdrawal.

**ARTICLE XV**

**DISSOLUTION OF AUTHORITY**

The Authority may be dissolved by the concurring resolution of the governing body of each of the then participating municipality of the Authority at the time of such dissolution. Prior to dissolution of the Authority any outstanding indebtedness of the Authority, including any bonds issued under Section 21 and/or Section 23 of Act 321 shall be paid. Any assets of the Authority remaining after the payment of any such outstanding indebtedness shall be distributed to the participating municipalities of the Authority at the time of the dissolution based upon each participating municipality's most recent financial contribution to the Authority. Any land, buildings, and/or facilities that were contributed to the Authority by a participating municipality and is maintained, owned, or operated by the Authority shall revert back to the originating municipality. Any land purchased by the authority or donated shall be sold and the proceeds distributed according to the formula in Article XIII, paragraph A, if the participating municipalities, at the time of dissolution, are directly funding the Authority's budget. In all instances, the participating municipality in which said real estate is located shall be given the right of first refusal on the purchase of said real estate. In the event of a dissolution following a period of property tax levy by the Authority, any funds obtained via levy, and/or property purchased by such funds, which are subsequently distributed to the participating municipalities pursuant to this Article shall be assigned by the participating municipalities to public purposes consistent with the purposes approved by the electorate for the original levy.

Notwithstanding the above paragraph, in the event that, at the time of dissolution, the Authority is in possession of lands acquired with, or developed with, in whole or in part, grant funds from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (hereinafter the "MNRTF"), the following procedure shall control the disposition of said lands. All lands purchased or developed with MNRTF funds, in whole or in part, must be maintained as public outdoor recreation land in perpetuity, unless said lands are replaced with land of equivalent fair market value and recreational usefulness, unless said lands, instead of being purchased, are leased for a period of at least twenty (20) years with the assistance of MNRTF funds. Accordingly, to comply with MNRTF mandates in the event of dissolution, the participating municipality in which the lands acquired or developed with MNRTF funds are located shall assume title and control of said lands, and shall be required to maintain said lands as public outdoor recreation land in perpetuity, or until the expiration of any lease of the lands from any party to the Authority or its successors whose original period was

twenty (20) years or longer, whichever is greater, unless said lands are replaced with land of equivalent fair market value and recreational usefulness. Said lands shall be transferred to the participating municipality in which the lands are located, and said transfer shall not be credited, set-off, or computed against any other allocation under this Article's dissolution procedure, nor shall any credit, computation, or set-off be made in recognition of any maintenance costs associated with said lands.

#### ARTICLE XVI

##### **EMPLOYEES**

The Board may employ and contract for services such personnel and employees as it may consider desirable. The Board may retain from time to time or contract with another agency or organization, the services of attorneys, accountants, and other consultants, as the Board considers necessary to carry out the purpose of the Authority.

#### ARTICLE XVII

##### **AUDIT**

The Board shall procure an annual audit, consistent with the requirements of Section 27 of Act 321, to be made of the books, records and financial transactions of the Authority by a certified public accountant. Three copies of the audit report prepared by the certified public accountant shall be furnished to each participating municipality. The books and records of the Authority shall be open for inspection by any participating municipality at all reasonable times.

#### ARTICLE XVIII

##### **STATE, FEDERAL AND PRIVATE GRANTS**

The Authority shall have the power to apply for and accept grants, loans or contributions from the United States of America or any agency or instrumentality thereof, the State of Michigan or other public or private organizations or foundations; and to do any and all requirements necessary or desirable to secure such financial or other aid or cooperation in carrying out any of the purposes of Act 321. In the event that any grant, loan or contribution shall require a long term obligation as to the use, maintenance, or operation of a specific piece of property, the approval of the governing body of the participating municipality in which such property is located shall be required prior to the acceptance of the grant, loan, or contribution by the Authority.

#### ARTICLE XIX

##### **INVESTMENT**

The Treasurer of the Authority when authorized by a resolution of the Board may invest general funds of the Authority. The board must approve the treasurer's investment policy. Such investment by the Treasurer shall be made in compliance with the laws of the State of Michigan.

#### ARTICLE XX

##### **EXEMPTION FROM TAXATION**

The property of the Authority shall be exempt from all taxation and assessments and no writ of attachment or writ of execution shall be levied upon the property of the Authority.

#### ARTICLE XXI

##### **PUBLICATION**

These Articles of Incorporation shall be published not less than once in a newspaper generally circulated within the participating municipalities, before they are adopted. The adoption of these Articles of Incorporation by a participating municipality shall be evidenced by an endorsement on these Articles by the clerk of such participating municipality. Upon adoption of these Articles of Incorporation by each of these participating municipalities, a printed copy thereof shall be filed with the Secretary of State by the Municipal Clerk of the last participating municipality to adopt the Articles.

#### ARTICLE XXII

##### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

The Authority shall become effective upon the filing of certified copies of these Articles with the Secretary of State, as provided in the preceding Article.

#### ARTICLE XXIII

##### **AMENDMENTS**

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended at any time so as to permit any county, city, village or township to become a participating municipality of the Authority, if such amendment to the Articles of Incorporation are adopted by the legislative body of such county, city, village or township proposing to become a member, and if such amendment is adopted by the legislative body of each participating municipality of which the Authority is composed. Other amendments may be made to these Articles of Incorporation at any time if adopted by the legislative body of each participating municipality of which the Authority is composed. This requirement shall apply to all amendments to the articles, including those which would otherwise be exempted by paragraph (4) of Section 5 of Act 321. Any such amendment shall be published, endorsed, and certified and printed copies thereof filed in the same manner as the original Articles of Incorporation.

#### ARTICLE XXIV

##### **REVERSION OF LEASES OF EXISTING PARK LAND**

In the event that any land leased to the Authority shall, during the Authority's stewardship and lease of said lands, be improved or developed, in whole or in part, with the assistance of Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund ("MNRTF") and/or Land and Water Conservation Fund ("LWCF") monies, the Authority shall, throughout the Authority's stewardship and lease of the lands, be responsible for maintaining said lands in accordance with all grant requirements

attendant to funding under the MNRTF and/or LWCF requirements. In the event of the dissolution of the Authority, or any other termination of the Authority’s lease for any reason, the participating municipality which holds title to the lands shall maintain said lands in accordance with all grant requirements attendant to funding under the MNRTF and/or LWCF requirements, in perpetuity for those obligations occurring pursuant to LWCF requirements, and for the entire period of the grant or original lease of the property, whichever is longer, for those obligations occurring under the MNRTF. The requirements of this paragraph shall not be utilized in any way in determining any calculations, credits, or set-offs in regards to any dissolution arrangements under Article XV of these Articles.

ARTICLE XXV

EXISTING PARKLANDS

Each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public School District shall have first priority over the use of their own municipal/school sites and facilities. The Authority shall have second priority over the use of municipal/school sites and facilities, subject to an agreement with each participating municipality or an outside agency.

ARTICLE XXVI

MISCELLANEOUS

These Articles of Incorporation may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument. The captions in these Articles of Incorporation are for convenience only and shall not be considered as part of these Articles of Incorporation or in any way limiting or amplifying the terms and provisions hereof.

These Articles have been adopted by the governing bodies of the City of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg, the Charter Township of Grand Haven, and the Township of Robinson, as set forth in the following endorsements, and in witness whereof the Mayor and City Clerk of the City of Grand Haven, Mayor and City Clerk of the City of Ferrysburg, Supervisor, Township Clerk of the Charter Township of Grand Haven, and the Supervisor and Township Clerk of the Township of Robinson, have endorsed thereon the statement of such adoption.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, City of Grand Haven

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, City of Grand Haven

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the City Council of the City of Grand Haven, Ottawa County, Michigan, at a meeting duly held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, City of Ferrysburg

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, City of Ferrysburg

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the City Council of the City of Ferrysburg, Ottawa County, Michigan, at a meeting duly held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor, Charter Township of Grand Haven

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, Charter Township of Grand Haven

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the Township Board of the Charter Township of Grand Haven, Ottawa County, Michigan, at a meeting duly held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor, Township of Robinson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, Township of Robinson

The foregoing Articles of Incorporation were adopted by the Township Board of the Township of Robinson, Ottawa County, Michigan, at a meeting duly held on the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

**Appendix A**  
**2009 -2010**  
**FUNDING FORMULA**

The formula averages two (2) criteria to determine percentage of funding for each participating party except Grand Haven Area Public Schools (GHAPS).

1. Taxable Valuation % - Taxable valuation of real and personal property in each participating party for the previous calendar year, excluding GHAPS, with no reduction of any tax abatements given to commercial or industrial property.
2. Participation % - The percentage of participants in the recreation program during the previous year who came from each participating party, excluding GHAPS.

<b>I. Participation (1)</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>2007-2008</b>	
		<b>%</b>	
City of Grand Haven	1,839	26.82	
Grand Haven Township	3,881	56.60	
City of Ferrysburg	245	3.57	
Robinson Township	<u>892</u>	<u>13.01</u>	
	6,857	100%	

<b>II. Taxable Valuation (2 &amp; 3)</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Abated</b>	<b>2008</b>
	<b>Taxable Value</b>	<b>Taxable Value</b>	<b>%</b>
City of Grand Haven	561,603,485	19,812,350	581,415,835
Grand Haven Township	686,685,079	16,298,700	702,983,779
City of Ferrysburg	156,607,539	80,500	156,688,039
Robinson Township	171,603,810	-0-	<u>171,603,810</u>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>1,612,691,463</b>
			<b>100%</b>

**III. Example of 2006-07 Funding Formula Percentages**

	<b>Participation</b>	<b>Taxable</b>	<b>Funding</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>Valuation</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Grand Haven City	26.82	36.05	31.44
Grand Haven Township	56.60	43.59	50.09
City of Ferrysburg	3.57	9.72	6.64
Robinson Township	<u>13.01</u>	<u>10.64</u>	<u>11.82</u>
	100%	100%	100%

**IV. Example of calculation of amount to be funded.**

After projected participant fees and other revenue are deducted from total projected expenditures, the funding percentages are then applied to the remaining amount:

Total anticipated expenditures	\$270,017
Projected fees and other revenue	<u>(175,443)</u>
Amount to which funding is applied	\$ 94,574

**V. Example of application of funding percentages (4)**

	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>\$94,574.00 (3.8% Cost of Living)</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Grand Haven City	31.44	29,730
Grand Haven Township	50.09	47,377
City of Ferrysburg	6.64	6,284
Robinson Township	<u>11.82</u>	<u>11,183</u>
	100%	\$94,574

1. Source: 2007-08 Participation.
2. Source: 2008 Ottawa County Equalization Report.
3. Grand Haven Area Schools only - 2008 Ottawa County Equalization Report.
4. Source of Cost of Living: National City Report - Economics & Interest Rate Forecast: ?

wirec/budget/fundingformula 2009-10 Revised 6/1/2009

## Appendix C. NORA/GHAPS Agreement

### Professional Services Agreement

This agreement, dated \_\_\_\_\_, 2009 is made and entered into by and between the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority (hereinafter referred to as "NORA" and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, a Michigan Public School District, whose address is 1415 Beechtree St., Grand Haven, MI 49417.

#### Witnesseth

**Whereas**, NORA on behalf of the City of Grand Haven, the City of Ferrysburg, the Charter Township of Grand Haven, and the Township of Robinson desires to engage the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to render certain professional services to NORA; and

**Whereas**, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools desires to provide said professional services to NORA and agrees to do so for compensation based upon services rendered and expenses incurred pursuant to the terms and conditions in this Agreement; and

**Whereas**, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools desires to provide additional "in-kind" services and agrees to do so to support the recreational programming needs of area residents pursuant to the terms and conditions in this Agreement; and

**Whereas**, NORA intends to acquire, construct, operate, maintain and/or improve new public parks and existing parks or other such facilities as authorized by the Recreational Authorities Act [Michigan Public Act 321 of 2000, as amended; MCL 123.1131 et seq.], as determined by the Recreation Authority Board following consultation with the legislative bodies of each of the municipalities participating in the Authority; and

**Whereas**, NORA intends to provide for recreation programming in order to provide extensive and varied recreational opportunities, to promote personal enrichment, and to satisfy the leisure and recreational needs of area residents; and

**Whereas**, the activities and services provided pursuant to this Agreement shall include, but are not limited to, recreational and enrichment activities for all ages, youth and adult sports programs (non-competitive and competitive), and activities for special populations.

**Now, therefore**, NORA and the Grand Haven Area Public Area Schools for and in consideration of their mutual covenants, agree as follows:

#### SCOPE OF SERVICES

The Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall provide the following "in-kind" and related support and contributions:

- A. Reasonable office space and office furnishings for the NORA Recreation Coordinator, Secretary, Assistant and any other personnel; and
- B. Reasonable storage space for NORA materials, supplies and equipment; and
- C. Administrative, supervisory, business and accounting services to the extent such services are provided by Grand Haven Area Public Schools, administrative and business office personnel whose employment is not primarily for the purpose of working for NORA.

The Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall also serve as fiscal agent for NORA and shall, through its staff (including the NORA Recreation Coordinator) perform financial management responsibilities with respect to NORA. Notwithstanding, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools' assumption (pursuant to this agreement) of financial management responsibilities with respect to NORA, it is understood and agreed that the Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall have no duty or obligation to provide any funding for NORA except for its "in-kind" support of and contribution to NORA. Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as preventing the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, by action of its governing body, from providing additional financial support to NORA, for either general or a specific use.

NORA, via funding contributions from each participating municipality, or other funding sources authorized under Act 321, shall pay for the full cost (direct and indirect) of:

- A. The Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority (NORA) Recreation Coordinator; and
- B. Such other personnel as are employed for the purpose of working in NORA (such as secretaries, assistants, etc., requested or approved by the NORA Recreation Coordinator or in the NORA Recreation Coordinator's absence by the Superintendent or his/her designee); and
- C. Such material, supplies and equipment as are purchased or otherwise acquired for use by NORA; and
- D. Such facility, utility and/or other costs as may be incurred in connection with NORA's utilization of facilities; and
- E. For the purposes of this paragraph, "indirect" costs shall include but not be limited to any and all costs of employee benefits, including but not limited to unemployment benefits paid to a terminated employee who was employed for the purposes of working in NORA.

#### CHANGES IN THE SCOPE OF SERVICES

There will be no change in the scope of services as defined in this Agreement unless the change is reflected in a written amendment to the Agreement signed by NORA and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools.

#### TIME OF PERFORMANCE

Performances of the services described in this agreement shall commence upon receipt by NORA of a properly executed copy of this agreement, which shall be considered approval of such commencement by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools. Thereupon, the *Time of Performance* shall extend thirty-six (36) months from that date. The *Time of Performance* may be adjusted by mutual agreement of the two parties.

#### GRAND HAVEN AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL COMPENSATION

NORA agrees to pay the Grand Haven Area Public School, pursuant to the direct and indirect costs listed above (A through E).

To assist the NORA Recreation Coordinator and the NORA Board in their development of an annual budget, the Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall annually provide the NORA Recreation Coordinator and/or the NORA Board with budget information (e.g. staff salary, wage, direct and indirect benefit costs, and other expenses) to be paid by NORA to the Grand Haven Area Public Schools as may be reasonably necessary to enable preparation of an appropriate NORA budget.

**PERSONNEL**

A NORA Recreation Coordinator shall be employed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools for the purpose of developing and administering NORA in accordance with the terms and conditions of this Agreement. The NORA Recreation Coordinator shall, at all times, be an "at will" employee of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and, as such, shall directly report to and work under the supervision of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools' Superintendent or his/her designee. A Recreation Coordinator to be employed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools for the purpose of working in NORA shall only be employed after reasonable determinations and recommendations of the NORA Board and approval by the Superintendent of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools or his/her designee.

Any other personnel to be employed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools for the purpose of working in NORA (e.g. as assistants, secretaries, instructors, game officials, event supervisors, etc.) shall also be "at will" employees and shall only be employed after reasonable determinations and recommendations of the NORA Board and approval by the NORA Coordinator or (in the NORA Coordinator's absence) by the Superintendent of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools or his/her designee.

The Grand Haven Area Public School's Board of Education and administrative staff (including the NORA Recreation Coordinator) shall defer to and comply with the reasonable determinations and recommendations of the NORA Board to the extent such deferral and compliance is both legally appropriate and consistent with the Grand Haven Area Public Schools' established policies, procedures and contractual obligations.

**SITES AND FACILITIES**

The NORA Recreation Coordinator, in cooperation with each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, shall provide or arrange for sites and facilities for recreation program activities.

The participating municipalities and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall have first priority over the use of their own respective municipal/school sites and facilities. Recreation programming activities shall have a second priority. Coordination and calendaring of site and facilities shall be handled by the NORA Recreation Coordinator, in cooperation with each participating municipality and the Grand Haven Area Public School's Facility Scheduler.

**TERMINATION**

Either party, upon twelve (12) months written notice to the other, may terminate this agreement in whole or in part at any time with or without cause.

**INSURANCE**

- A. The Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall secure and maintain all necessary insurance to cover the operations of the NORA agreement, and each of the personnel employed by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and assigned to NORA.
- B. The cost of such insurance shall be paid by NORA as part of the annual budget.
- C. Proof of such insurance shall be furnished to the NORA Recreation Coordinator, the NORA Board, and/or any participating municipality.

**APPLICABLE LAW AND NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The NORA Board, the NORA Recreation Coordinator and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools shall, throughout the term of this Agreement and with respect to all programming activities, fully comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, regulations, grant donations, and contract provisions (including but not limited to the provisions of this Agreement).

**SEVERABILITY**

Should any section, part or provision of this contract be held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, illegal, unconstitutional, or otherwise unenforceable, such holding shall not be construed as invalidating the remaining sections, parts, or provisions of this Agreement.

**FUNDS AND ACCOUNTING**

All NORA funds, whether received from the participating jurisdictions, via NORA, from gifts or grants, from activity fees, or from other sources shall be deposited in a segregated Recreation Authority account to be maintained by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and shall be separately accounted for by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools in accordance with its fund accounting procedures and requirements.

If and to the extent legally permitted, however, NORA funds may be co-mingled with other funds of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools solely for investment purposes; provided, however, that NORA funds shall not be so invested if such investment would preclude NORA from meeting its operating costs and expenses as and when incurred; and provided further that, if so invested, the investment earnings attributable to the NORA funds shall be allocated to NORA on a pro-rata basis.

NORA funds to be paid to the Grand Haven Area Public Schools pursuant to this Agreement (e.g. for compensation and benefit costs attributable to the NORA Recreation Coordinator, etc.) shall be transferred to the Grand Haven Area Public Schools and shall be clearly shown on the books and records of the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, including the NORA accounts(s). Such transfers shall be made on a regularly scheduled basis (e.g. monthly, quarterly, etc.).

Other costs and/or expenses incurred by NORA and authorized by the NORA Recreation Coordinator shall be paid by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools from NORA's segregated accounts(s). Any costs or expense over \$1,000 requires NORA Board authorization.

The Grand Haven Area Public Schools' books and records pertaining to NORA and any segregated NORA accounts shall be made available to the NORA Recreation Coordinator, to the NORA Board, and/or to the Participating Municipalities, upon reasonable request. A written statement of all NORA fund activity, including receipts, disbursements, earnings, transfers and balances, shall be provided by the Grand Haven Area Public Schools to the NORA Recreation Coordinator on a monthly basis.

An annual financial audit (reviewed financial statement) of NORA shall be provided by the School District, the cost of which shall be part of NORA's annual budget.

**ENTIRE CONTRACT**

This contract represents the entire agreement between NORA and the Grand Haven Area Public Schools with respect to the recreational programming of NORA. As such, it supersedes and replaces any and all prior understandings and agreements, whether verbal or written, between said parties.

**In Witness Whereof**, the parties hereto have made and executed this Agreement.

**Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority, Ottawa County, Michigan:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name, Chairperson

**Grand Haven Area Public Schools**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

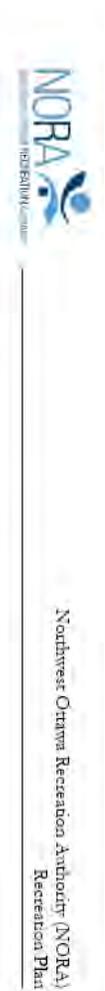
## Appendix D. Budget Report

### NORTHWEST OTTAWA RECREATION AUTHORITY

	2009-2010 Proposed 2nd Revision	2009-10 April 30, 2010 Year to Date	Budget to Actual %	2008-09 April 30, 2009 Year to Date	2010-11 Proposed Budget
<b>Revenues</b>					
Municipality	\$ 95,574	\$ 94,574	98.95%	\$ 91,112	\$ 95,574
Fees	181,000	158,105	87.35%	130,884	181,000
Other	1,900	2,060	108.40%	8,045	2,550
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>278,474</b>	<b>254,739</b>	<b>91.48%</b>	<b>230,041</b>	<b>279,124</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>					
Wages & Benefits	178,617	134,768	75.45%	129,370	184,479
Professional Services	60,221	47,508	78.89%	42,979	60,200
Program Supplies	16,380	12,385	75.61%	11,800	16,000
Other	24,568	19,671	80.07%	13,155	44,121
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>279,786</b>	<b>214,332</b>	<b>76.61%</b>	<b>197,304</b>	<b>304,800</b>
<b>Net Profit (Loss)</b>	<b>(1,312)</b>	<b>40,407</b>		<b>32,737</b>	<b>(25,676)</b>
<b>Fund Balance at Beginning of Year</b>	<b>66,115</b>	<b>\$ 66,115</b>		<b>\$ 66,553</b>	<b>64,803</b>
<b>Fund Balance Year to date</b>	<b>\$ 64,803</b>	<b>\$ 106,522 *</b>		<b>\$ 99,290</b>	<b>\$ 39,127</b>

\*Fund Balance Year to Date Note: Revenue is recorded for programs in which all the expenditures have not been incurred. This makes the net profit higher than it really is. We only defer revenue at the end of the year. The percentage of municipality revenue that has been received will also affect fund balance

## Appendix E. Stakeholder Meeting & Public Meeting Results



### Stakeholder Focus Group Meeting Grand Haven Community Center

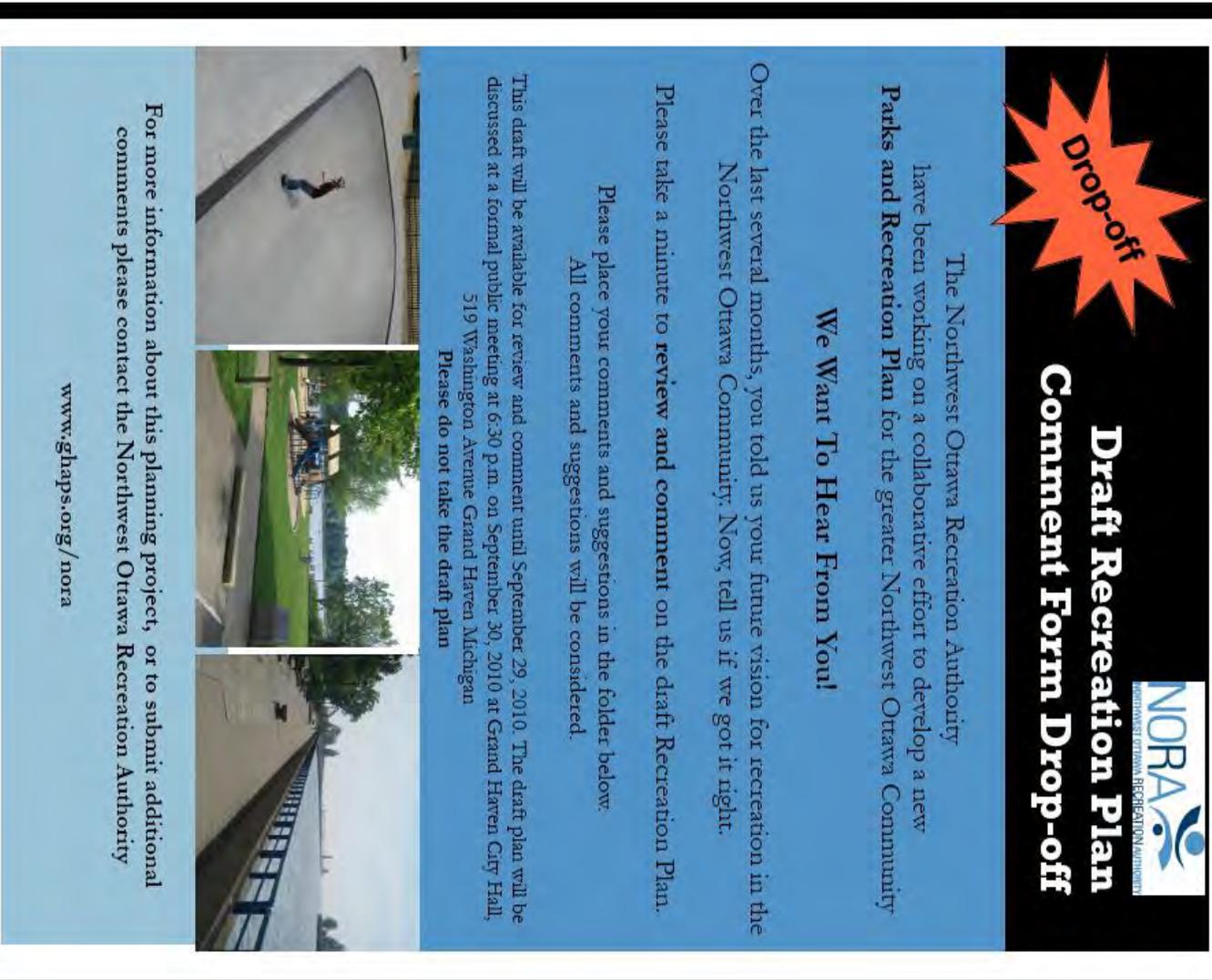
Thursday, February 25, 2010

#### Meeting Notes

1. What current recreational programs should be expanded or improved?
  - Soccer - including the quality of the facilities
  - Soccer, baseball and lacrosse – all share fields creating problems for field quality and actual time on the field
  - Need another full-sized soccer field
  - Middle school baseball fields are limited
  - There are problems of programs being bumped (sometimes with little notice) by school activities
  - Establish a rational system to plan for and schedule events ahead of time
  - Maybe optimize prioritize space on fields and time - define what is a successful program
  - Kids from Spring Lake use the facilities - perhaps there is an opportunity to include them in the Authority
  
2. What types of recreational programs would you like to see that are not currently being offered or are limited?
  - Water safety
  - Swimming development
  - Swimming recreation
  - Curling
  - Bocce-ball
  - Disk Golf
  - Flag-football
  - Competitive baseball
  - Floor hockey
  - BMX/Mountain courses
  - Large soccer complex for tournaments - attract tourism
  - Fishing, camping, and hunting
  
3. What types of recreation facilities should be expanded or improved?
  - Pool at Middle School
  - Expanded fitness center (with weight room)
  - Baseball complex - for competitive leagues (including well designed dugouts, fields and infrastructure)
  
4. What types of recreation facilities would you like to see that are not currently being provided?
  - Indoor soccer fields (w/ appropriate sized fields)
  - Multi-purpose facility (wellness center for families)
  - Large Aquatic Center
  - BMX bike trails
  - Soccer complex



## Appendix F. Notice of Availability of Plan for Review and Comment & Received Comments



The poster features a blue background with white and orange text. At the top right is the NORPA logo, which includes the text 'NORPA' in large blue letters and 'NORTHWEST OTTAWA RECREATION AUTHORITY' in smaller blue letters below it. To the left of the logo is a red starburst graphic with the words 'Drop-off' written in white. Below the starburst, the text 'Draft Recreation Plan Comment Form Drop-off' is written in large, bold, white letters. The main body of the poster contains white text on a blue background, followed by three small photographs of recreational facilities: a person on a skateboard ramp, a playground with a blue structure, and a long wooden bridge over water.

**Drop-off**

**Draft Recreation Plan  
Comment Form Drop-off**

The Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority  
have been working on a collaborative effort to develop a new  
**Parks and Recreation Plan** for the greater Northwest Ottawa Community.

**We Want To Hear From You!**

Over the last several months, you told us your future vision for recreation in the Northwest Ottawa Community. Now, tell us if we got it right.

Please take a minute to **review and comment** on the draft Recreation Plan.

Please place your comments and suggestions in the folder below.  
All comments and suggestions will be considered.

This draft will be available for review and comment until September 29, 2010. The draft plan will be discussed at a formal public meeting at 6:30 p.m. on September 30, 2010 at Grand Haven City Hall,  
519 Washington Avenue Grand Haven Michigan  
**Please do not take the draft plan**

For more information about this planning project, or to submit additional comments please contact the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority

[www.ghaps.org/nora](http://www.ghaps.org/nora)

**JOSEPH C. LEGATZ**  
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TELEPHONE: (616) 846-8860 HOME TELEPHONE: (616) 842-9471 FAX: (616) 846-4593

September 15, 2010

Jill Vander Stel  
NORA Recreational Coordinator  
1415 Beechtree Street  
Grand Haven, MI 49417

**Re: Recreation Plan---Pickleball**

Dear Ms. Vander Stel,

I have read the draft Recreation Plan. It is a well thought out and well constructed document. I write only to offer some thoughts on how to improve the Plan even more by including the sport of Pickleball in a more detailed and specific way. This sport is ready to explode in popularity in our community, and will absolutely do so once we have dedicated Pickleball courts available for play. This has been the pattern across the country, and there is no reason to believe our area will be any different.

Pickleball fits perfectly into the key goals expressed in the Plan. One of those key goals is to bring new, innovative recreational opportunities to the community. Pickleball is exactly that. It is both an outdoor and indoor sport that is easy to learn, inexpensive to play, and results in physical fitness while having fun, with strong emphasis on "fun".

Dove tailing with the goal of new recreational opportunities is the Plan's highly laudable goal of encouraging lifetime participation in sports that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages. Again, Pickleball fits the need better than any other sport. For example, recently, in one afternoon, I taught my 7 and 10 year old granddaughters to play Pickleball. This happened a few days after I played a Pickleball match against an 85 year old gentleman. In other words, here is a family oriented sport that can be played and enjoyed by almost everyone. The Plan should recognize this fact.

Pickleball also fills the need for sports for seniors. Most of what is currently offered, except in rare cases, appeals only to younger adults who can still play vigorous sports such as softball, basketball, volleyball, and the like. One-third of the NORA community is age 65 or older. Not much is available to that population except expensive sports (e.g. golf) or hard to learn sports (e.g. tennis). Pickleball, on the other hand, is tailor made for seniors. The Plan needs to recognize this fact.

I am asking that the Plan be modified to include Pickleball in the Programing section and to express a clear call for dedicated Pickleball courts, both outdoor and indoor, in the Facilities section of the Plan. In this regard, it obvious from the Plan that we are over supplied with tennis courts in our community (twice as many as are needed for our population). It is time to turn some of those under-used tennis courts into Pickleball courts. I have attached a schematic showing how two (2) tennis courts can become eight (8) Pickleball courts. This type of conversion has been done successfully in many communities across our country, and uniformly those communities have seen highly positive results from the conversion.

In the near future I expect to form a non-profit Pickleball association for our area. The primary goals of the organization will be:

1. Obtain and maintain dedicated Pickleball courts.
2. Teach Pickleball without cost to young and old alike, with a special emphasis on seniors and school age children.
3. Encourage the growth of Pickleball in our area through publicity, tournaments, and other special activities.

I fully expect this new organization will partner with NORA, the North Ottawa County Council On Aging (NOCCOA), the Grand Haven Area Public Schools, the YMCA, and others to put the Grand Haven area on the national Pickleball map. I ask that the proposed five year Plan recognize the bright future for Pickleball in our community.

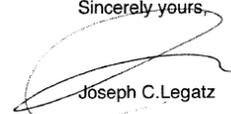
I apologize for not appearing in person at the public meeting set for September 30th. My wife and I, with all of six weeks of Pickleball experience, will be in Rochester, New York playing in a national Pickleball tournament being conducted by the National Senior Games Association. I do expect others to appear at the meeting to speak about the need to support the growth of Pickleball in our community.

Finally, for anyone who wants to know more about Pickleball, there is no better source than the website of the USAPA (United States of America Pickleball Association), the one and only national Pickleball organization. The website is: [www.usapa.org](http://www.usapa.org).

On that website are videos showing how the sport is played, together with many other resources. Also, I am available to show how the sport is played to anyone who would

like to try it (at least until the snow covers the tennis courts we are currently using for Pickleball). I can be reached most evenings, after 6 PM, at 616-842-9471 or by email at: [attylegatz@ameritech.net](mailto:attylegatz@ameritech.net).

Sincerely yours,



Joseph C. Legatz

USAPA Pickleball - Tennis Court Conversion

9/15/10 12:01 PM



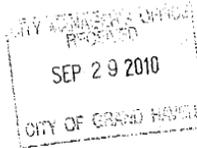
### Tennis Courts

This diagram shows 2 tennis courts that are permanently converted to 8 pickleball courts. If a single tennis court is converted, just refer to half of the diagram. Angled corners are squared off if necessary. If the tennis court is a standard dimension of 60'x120', that only allows 5 feet between the pickleball sidelines and the fences. That should be considered the minimum dimension. If space and budget allow, add some additional overall width. That will give the more active players more room and also give room for seating on the courts.

[Click for larger diagram.](#) To save an image to your computer, right click on the image and click "Save Picture As...".

09-29-'10 12:37 FROM-

T-271 P001/002 F-290

Nora Recreation Plan

Dear Ms. Nora Vander Stel,

My letter is written because I feel further recreational development in Grand Haven is unnecessary. If you were to go door to door in the north west and north east areas of Grand Haven you would find too many citizens on too tight finances to afford millage for your proposed projects. People living in the above mentioned area are on Social Security, disability or are unemployed and many are in bankruptcy. I can even show you many people who are in financial problems. The YMCA and other parks which we have sufficient of are enough.

My concern is for the increase poverty level and homeless because there are many. The proposed homeless shelter should be considered first and the needs to feed the hungry.

Our economy is not at a boom time - just look around and see empty houses.

09-29-'10 12:38 FROM-

T-271 P002/002 F-290

- 2 -

I am unable to attend your Thursday evening meeting but can be called at home next week. Phone number is 616-842-6743. Evenings are best time to call

Very Sincerely

Bobby Cleveringa

Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority- Recreation Plan  
Comment Form



General: Thank you for the  
Comment: opportunity to comment on  
the NOEA Plan. As a new  
resident, I was shocked to see  
the omission of Spring Lake Village  
Township! On page 7 you state  
'a community that values intergovernmental

General: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

General: cooperation" - I  
Comment: small local politics at work &  
suggest you start over & do  
"Area" planning in it's true sense.  
M. Redick

General: \_\_\_\_\_  
Comment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix G. Notice for Public Hearing and Public Hearing Minutes



### Public meeting Thursday on NORA recreation plan

BY KYLE MORONEY

[kmoroney@grandhaventribune.com](mailto:kmoroney@grandhaventribune.com)

The public will have an opportunity to voice their opinions Thursday on a proposed recreation plan from the newly formed Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority.

NORA officials have been drafting the proposed multi-section plan for more than a year, incorporating input from area residents during public meetings held last spring.

"The public felt that we have these great programs — but if you want to expand, we need more facilities," NORA Recreation Coordinator Jill Vander Stel said.

In its last step to becoming an official "authority" organization, the NORA Board needs to sign off on its drafted five-year recreation plan before sending it off to state officials.

The NORA Board plans to meet at 5:30 p.m. Thursday at Grand Haven City Hall, 519 Washington Ave., but will begin its discussion on the proposed recreation plan at 6:30 p.m. The public will have a chance to give input and suggestions during the meeting.

Since becoming an authority in 2009, NORA can now seek alternative funding sources, such as grants and a possible millage — which the organization wasn't able to do under its former setup as the North Ottawa Recreation Program, Vander Stel said.

"We've reached our max," she said. "If we

See NORA on page 3

### NORA

Continued from page 1

want to grow and expand, we aren't able to do that because of the lack of funding. Once the recreation plan is submitted (to the state), that will open doors to possible (Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Quality) grants and help out with municipality parks — that is key to becoming an authority."

The recreation plan, put together by Land Information Access Association of Traverse City, will go through 2015.

It includes an action plan that outlines several possibilities in improving recreational activities in the Tri-Cities.

Some ideas the public has suggested are building new year-round facilities — such as a large multipurpose facility with a fitness center, pool with a splash park, multiple gyms, racquetball courts and a health bar, a large indoor/outdoor soccer

complex and a large outdoor/indoor baseball and softball complex — all capable of holding tournaments.

"A lot of different things were thrown at us at these meetings," Vander Stel said of the previous public hearings.

Other suggestions include expanding existing programs — such as water safety, indoor soccer, in-line hockey, swimming development and summer school recreation programs, and add new programs like pickle ball, BMX courses, flag football, disc-golf, outdoor activities, floor hockey, snow-shoeing and gun certification.

While building a multipurpose recreation facility is on NORA's radar, authority officials are currently concentrating on funding opportunities.

"It's a working document, it's in a draft form," Vander Stel said of the recreation plan. "Once we get community input (and) approve it, then we'll send it in to the state."

PRINTED COPY



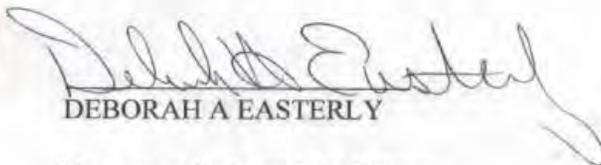
AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
COUNTY OF OTTAWA

**ROBERT FRANCIS**, being first duly sworn, says that he is the **ADVERTISING MANAGER** of the Grand Haven Tribune, a newspaper published in the English language for the dissemination of local or transmitted news and intelligence of a general character and legal news, which is a duly qualified newspaper. And that annexed thereto is a copy of a certain order taken from said newspaper, in which the order was published.

  
SEPTEMBER 04, 18, 2010

scribed and sworn before me on  
the 18TH day of SEPTEMBER 2010

  
DEBORAH A EASTERLY

Notary public in and for Ottawa  
County State of Michigan  
My commission expires  
DECEMBER 22, 2014

## NORTHWEST OTTAWA RECREATION AUTHORITY

### Grand Haven Area Public Schools

1415 Beechtree Street, Grand Haven, MI 49417

Phone: 616.850.5125 Fax: 616.850.5127 [www.ghaps.org/nora](http://www.ghaps.org/nora)

### NORA ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Date:** September 30, 2010    **Time:** 5:30 P.M.    **Location:** GH City Hall, 519 Washington

1. Call to order: Chairperson Bessinger: 5:30pm
2. Present:     Laurie Larsen, Grand Haven Twp.    Mary Jane Belter, Grand Haven Twp.  
                  John Kuyers, Robinson Twp.            Kathy Kuck, Robinson Twp.  
                  Mike Fritz, Grand Haven                    Sam Janson, Grand Haven  
                  John Stafford, Ferrysburg                Craig Bessinger, Ferrysburg  
                  Dave Davis, GHAPS
- Absent:        None
- Also in attendance: Jill Vander Stel, Recreation Coordinator  
                              Liza Dora, Recreation Assistant  
                              Jentry Soule, Recreation Programmer
3. Approval of Meeting Agenda. Motion by Kuck, second by Fritz, approved unanimously.
4. Approval of Consent Agenda. Vander Stel noted that June year-end shows a larger than projected deficit due to added funds spent for LIAA that will come from the fund balance. Also, deficit reflects total scholarships awarded of \$12,000 but was only budgeted for \$8,000. August deficit in approved budget for 10-11 reflects the upgraded software program of \$18,500. The software purchase was tabled until after Rec. Plan approval. Board agreed to put purchase for consideration on the December agenda. Motion to approve Consent Agenda by Fritz, second by Stafford, approved unanimously.
  - A. Approval of Board Meeting minutes of July 22, 2010 as printed.
  - B. Financial Reports
    1. June 30, 2010 NORA Financial Report
    2. June 30, 2010 Activity Fund Balance Report
    3. August 31, 2010 NORA Financial Reports
    4. August 31, 2010 Activity Fund Balance Reports
    5. June 30, 2010 Chris Christiansen Financial Report- not available
5. Old Business
  - A. Recreation Summer School Update – Vander Stel introduced Jentry Soule, Recreation Programmer. Soule took over the supervisory role of the Recreation Summer School program and did a great job keeping the students active and involved in the community throughout the summer. Soule and Vander Stel will be making presentations to the Rotary Club on both Nov. 1 and 2. The Rotary Club made a donation to Recreation Summer School this year and wanted to see what their funds supported. Fritz thanked Soule for all her hard work. Bessinger commented that he had heard several good comments on this year's program.

- B. Scholarships – Vander Stel reiterated that scholarship requests increased from \$8,000 to over \$12,000 this year. It is more important than ever for the board to make those key contacts to solicit donations for the scholarship fund so we can receive the matching funds from the JSJ Grant for a total of \$8,000. Fritz asked if the original list of donors were sent a letter this year asking for donations. Vander Stel stated that they were not. Janson suggested that NORA make a presentation to Kiwanis Club. Vander Stel stated that she has been in contact with Tracy Mulligan from their board and is setting up to make a presentation at their next meeting. Vander Stel reminded the board that the reason that it was asked that the board approach area businesses is because of their community connections. Fritz also recommended that NORA make a presentation to the Eagles FOE 625 board. He suggested Dave Fritz, board president be contacted. Stafford asked if NORA addresses special needs students. Vander Stel stated that we have had many different types of special needs students participate in our programs (autism, wheel chair students, etc.). He also asked that as a Knights of Columbus member, he would like the board to draft a letter for him to present to them for the scholarship fund. Vander Stel stated that the Bob Bareham Memorial Softball Tournament raised nearly \$1,000 to be added to the scholarship fund to help defer the deficit. She announced that the journey was a nice tribute to his family and a great fund raising opportunity for our scholarship fund.

#### 6. New Business

- A. 10-11 Ski Club Proposed Budget – Vander Stel handed out a proposed budget and apologized for not being able to email this proposed budget with other information emailed to the board ahead of the meeting. Cannonsburg has changed owners and they just today, presented NORA with their pricing structure for 10-11 season. She announced that they have raised their prices slightly so it will reflect in our pricing as an increase of only \$13.00. This change will need board approval. Larsen asked if there are better packages available elsewhere. Vander Stel stated that we have the biggest club attending at Cannonsburg and have not found anyone else offering a better package. She stated our package includes transportation to and from Cannonsburg. Motion was made by Belter to approve budget, second by Davis, approved unanimously.
- B. Pickle Ball – Vander Stel handed out information collected regarding area pickle ball events, programs offered here as well as other surrounding communities. Vander Stel has asked the City of Grand Haven to possibly upgrade the tennis courts at Mulligan Hollow and Janson offered that it might be a possibility upon completion of the cities Water Plant renovations, which would be 2012 at the earliest. She stated that there are grants available for tennis court resurfacing. She stated that pickle ball and tennis could coexist just as basketball and volleyball do. Fritz agreed that we are seeing more and more multi-use facilities and fields and that it is very necessary to keep moving in that direction. He mentioned that we seem to do more for children and it would be great to be able to offer more for active older adults. Davis asked if it would be appropriate for the chair to submit a letter to the interested groups to make sure that we all know what we want. Stafford noticed that we do list pickle ball in our Rec. Plan. Janson suggested that we brainstorm to see how we could offer this program and not step on the toes of the Tri-Cities Family YMCA and NOCCOA. We don't want overlapping programs so we need to combine with these other entities. Vander Stel talked about the overview of this area as it could incorporate tennis, pickle ball, corn hole, etc. Corn hole could be played while waiting for courts. She did state that this area is very rustic and in need of major repair at this time. Bessinger stated that the board would like to see how we could move forward with these groups. Bessinger asked if the public would like to speak at this time and Jimmy O'Hearn stepped up. He gave an overview of the classes he is teaching for pickle ball, with 65 students. He stated he would deeply appreciate any help NORA can give to help with this, that not only equipment but also space is a real issue. He stated he is

- working with Ted Rescorla, Operations Director GHAPS for gym space but it is very difficult. He stated his specialty is working with physically and mentally challenged people. He currently has 3 in his classes and would encourage anyone to join. Then Pete Walters stepped up and stated it is the fastest growing sport and the US right now. He stated he can't speak enough for this great sport and there are not enough opportunities for 50 and over adults.
  - C. Walkable Grand Haven – Vander Stel made a presentation to the board on overheads for the Walkable Grand Haven initiative. She stated that NORA did a very similar program this summer for the Recreation Summer School students to keep them active. They were having fun and didn't even know they were exercising. NORA is always looking for ways to incorporate fitness into this program.
7. Advisory Board Comments or Suggestions – Belter thanked Soule for sitting in the rain at the Salmon Festival. It was very nice to see NORA presence. Vander Stel mentioned we've been at the Salmon Festival; Earth Day; Labor Day Third Street Walk; East End Bayou Picnic; Punt, Pass & Kick and numerous open houses including Give & Take at GHAPS. Fritz talked about the City of Grand Haven officials participating in the Mayor Exchange Day with the City of Alpena. He stated it is quite a city. They attended a combat training facility and were able to participate. It is recreation at it's fullest. Janson mentioned that Alpena has Thunder Bay Rec. Facility and they have 2 ice rinks with a 1/8-mile track around one of them. They have indoor courts, pool and family services. Fritz mentioned that it was quite amazing that such a small community would have such a nice facility. Only 13,000 residents in the city and 30,000 in the county. Janson announced that the East Grand River Park rededication is this Saturday. Stafford stated Ferrysburg received a grant for \$4,000 from the North Bank Communities Fund for Sunnyside Park. He stated that they are getting a lot of feedback on the utility improvements and some improvements at the new City Hall. Stafford stated that Ferrysburg is making good use of their new gym facility with Basketball Basics utilizing a lot of the gym space for their classes. Vander Stel stated that NORA has worked with Basketball Basics to offer classes right after school at GHAPS gyms and will continue to collaborate. He really appreciated the article that appeared in the Grand Haven Tribune about the meeting tonight. Davis announced that Eastown Fallfest starts at 8am this Sat. with the 5K run. Vander Stel reminded everyone that the Monster Bash in Ferrysburg is October 29 with costume judging and lots of fun for the kids. It's a great alternative to Trick or Treating. She mentioned that Stafford has great GHAPS school spirit because he brought his trumpet to the Rockford game and lead the fans in the Buccaneer fight song.

Bessinger called a short recess before the public comment session begins to discuss the Rec. Plan.

8. 6:30pm- Public Hearing Recreation Authority: Discussion of Recreation Plan – Began at 6:35pm. Bessinger recapped a brief history of NORA. He stated that working with area communities, it has been difficult in today's economy to continue to keep NORA financially sound, so the board got together to see what options were available to make more funding available. NORA met with Land Information Access Association, LIAA, to formulate a plan and had several community meetings so that the area public could see what the NORA vision was and get public input as to what NORA could be. This brings us to where we are tonight to hear any final comments and then adopt the NORA Rec. Plan and send it into the proper authorities and be able to move forward with additional funding to allow NORA to grow to better serve these communities as well as other communities in the future.
9. Public Comments –
- A. Brigit Lewis, Executive Director, North Ottawa County Council on Aging, NOCCOA,

Lewis started by mentioning the Statement she submitted for the board. (Insert Statement) She recapped statement. Vander Stel stated she would have board review full statement at a later date. Lewis stated 85% of their budget is funded by millage and 15% comes from private donations and smaller grants. They have 850 members and offer 30 programs a month to its residents. They offer workshops, fitness and recreations programs. She expressed that NOCCOA is very much interested in collaboration with NORA to partnership. She asked that an addendum be made to the Rec. Plan to include NOCCOA under Recreational Programming, Other; just as the Tri-Cities Family YMCA is listed.

Bessinger took this opportunity to remind everyone that tonight's meeting is not to ask for funds, it is to put NORA in the position to possibly apply for grants that were not available to us before we became an authority and submitted our plan.

- B. Tim Patrick, lives in Grand Haven Township. He stated that the article in the Grand Haven Tribune stated that NORA purpose of this plan is to build a large recreation facility. He stated that he is against it. He stated there are more than enough facilities available in the area and it would be a waste of taxpayers' dollars. Even grant money comes from the taxpayers. It is not justified to build a multi-million dollar facility.
- C. Pete Walters, lives in City of Grand Haven. He wanted to talk about the Walkable Grand Haven initiative. If you walk the City of Grand Haven you will find that it is not walkable due to all the low hanging trees between the sidewalks and the roads that have not been trimmed. Bushes along the sidewalks are overgrown. Also, the sprinklers that spray over the sidewalks and cause people to have to go out to the road to avoid them. The third problem is the sidewalks in disrepair. It used to be that the city would inspect the sidewalks and leave notices on doors of homes where the sidewalks needed to be replaced with a time limit and if it wasn't done, the City did it and added it to your tax assessment. Since that was stopped the sidewalks have gone out of control. It is dangerous and Grand Haven is just looking for a lawsuit. He then wanted to express his feelings for the need of a facility like other communities. Why pay \$1,000 a year to be a member of the Y when for a small millage we could have a beautiful facility.
- D. Dean Buntley, Executive Director, Tri-Cities Family YMCA and resident of Grand Haven Township. Tri-Cities Family YMCA wants to partnership with NORA to offer programs that don't overlap or compete. He announced that this YMCA has 3 times the numbers of other similar YMCAs across the country. He announced that this YMCA awarded over \$400,000.00 in scholarships through the Community Pricing over the years. He asked what is the focus for NORA. He said he didn't think a new rec. center is not the right thing to do. He was concerned with the Spring Lake Aquatics Center, the Tri-Cities Family YMCA, Norton Pines and NORA programs that there are already duplication of services. This YMCA covers the 49417 and 49460 area very well. Vander Stel asked Buntley if the YMCA had been looking for a second site in this area. Buntley stated that a study had been done and it was found that a second site was not necessary. He said that in the NORA Rec. Plan it states on page 45 that it intends to build a multi-use facility. The board reiterated that this is not the plan at this time and not the purpose of this meeting tonight.
- E. 6:50pm. No other public comments. The board then reviewed 3 written comments submitted prior to the meeting. (Insert written comments)
- F. Stafford stated that he wanted to underscore that it is the NORA dream to have a new facility but it is nothing that we're trying to do at this time. We want the public to know what we would like to someday but we want to emphasize that we want to expand programming to meet the needs of the community. Becoming an authority will allow us to apply for grants from the MDNRE that we could not ask for in our previous form.

- G. Belter reiterated that we are not trying to do all things in the plan right away but would like to have the ability to do these things sometime in the future. She stated that we have tried to talk other communities and groups to be included in NORA but they have chosen not to at this time. Page 43 of the plan continues to discuss ways to include other entities and communities.
- H. Fritz agrees that we should add NOCCOA to the plan. Board agreed without objection. Fritz reiterated that the NORA dream is to build but we don't have a plan to do it right now. We want to expand and include everyone and every area entity.
- I. Stafford recommends that we amend the plan to include pickle ball as an expanded facility per the written comments from Joe Legatz.

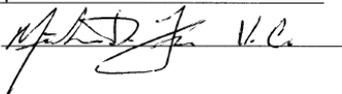
10. Adoption of Recreation Plan - Resolution on the table to include NOCCOA to the Rec. Plan and adopt plan with amendments. Motion by Larsen, second by Kuck and passed unanimously, 9-Yeas, 0-Nays.

11. Next Scheduled Meeting: December 2, 2010, 5:30 P.M. at the ESC.

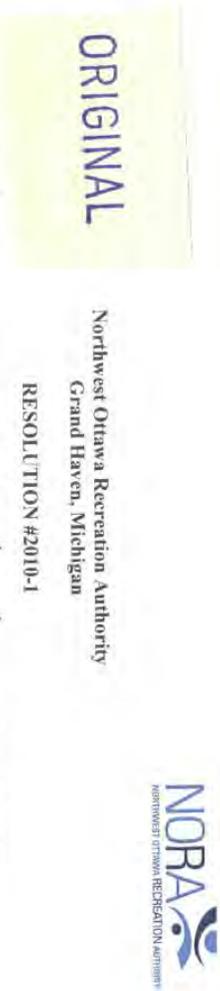
12. Adjournment – 7:05pm

Prepared by: Liza Dora, Recreation Assistant  
Jill Vander Stel, Recreation Coordinator

Approval of board minutes date: 12/2/10

NORA Board of Trustee Secretary Signature: 

# Appendix H. Resolution of Adoption



Trustee Larson, supported by Trustee Kuck, moved to adopt the following resolution:

**Resolution to Adopt the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority Recreation Plan**

**Whereas**, the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority has undertaken a Five Year Recreation Plan which describes the physical features, existing recreation facilities and the desired actions to be taken to improve and maintain recreation programming and facilities during the period between 2010 and 2015;

**Whereas**, the primary purpose of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority is to provide for recreational programming;

**Whereas**, the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority and the *Recreation Plan* is designed to coexist with and compliment the Recreation Plans of the City of Grand Haven, City of Ferrysburg, Charter Township of Grand Haven and Robinson Township;

**Whereas**, the Recreation Authority has developed the *Recreation Plan* for the benefit of the entire community and as a document to assist in meeting the recreation needs of the community;

**Whereas**, the *Recreation Plan* was developed with extensive public participation and reflects the goals and wishes of the community residents;

**Whereas**, the formal public comment session was held on September 30, 2010 at Grand Haven City Hall, 519 Washington Street to provide an opportunity for citizens to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the *Recreation Plan*;

**Whereas**, after the public meeting, the Recreation Authority voted to adopt said *Recreation Plan*;

**Whereas**, the Recreation Authority plans to submit the *Recreation Plan* to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

**NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED**, that the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority adopts the *Recreation Plan* as a guideline for improving programming and recreation for the residents of the Northwest Ottawa Community.

Yeas: 9 Nays: 0 Abstain: 0 Absent: 0

Resolution adopted by the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority on September 30, 2010.

Mary Jane Belter  
Mary Jane Belter - Secretary

## Appendix I. Letters to Regional Planning Agency & County Planning Commission

September 30, 2010

Sandeep Dey, Executive Director  
West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission  
PO Box 387  
316 Morris Ave., Suite 340  
Muskegon, MI 49443

Dear Mr. Dey,

On behalf of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority I am submitting the *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, our Regional Planning Agency.

The primary objective of the *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* is to coordinate and guide future efforts and investments and to provide improved programming and recreational facilities for the greater Northwest Ottawa Community and their guests. The *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* does not replace the individual recreation plans for each of the four participating municipalities of the Authority: City of Grand Haven; City of Ferrysburg; Charter Township of Grand Haven; and Robinson Township. Rather, the Plan is designed to coexist with and compliment the individual Recreation Plans.

Through the implementation of this Plan, we hope to continue to provide for community-wide recreation programs and explore the development of new and/or improved recreation facilities.

The plan was formally adopted by the Recreation Authority on September 30, 2010. The plan was developed through a comprehensive public planning process that encouraged citizen participation and open dialogue.

This Plan has been sent to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment for their approval and certification.

Please direct any comments to:

Jill Vander Stel  
Recreation Coordinator  
Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority (NORA)  
1415 Beechtree Street  
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Sincerely,



Craig Bessinger  
Chairperson - Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority

September 30, 2010

Ottawa County Planning Commission  
Ottawa County Administrative Offices  
12220 Filmore Street  
West Olive, MI 49460

Attention: Mark Knudson, Director

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of the Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority I am submitting the *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* to the Ottawa County Planning Commission.

The primary objective of the *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* is to coordinate and guide future efforts and investments and to provide improved programming and recreational facilities for the greater Northwest Ottawa Community and their guests. The *Northwest Ottawa Recreation Plan* does not replace the individual recreation plans for each of the four participating municipalities of the Authority: City of Grand Haven; City of Ferrysburg; Charter Township of Grand Haven; and Robinson Township. Rather, the Plan is designed to coexist with and compliment the individual Recreation Plans.

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Craig Bessinger  
Chairperson - Northwest Ottawa Recreation Authority