

An essential task in the recreation planning process is to determine the needs of the community as a basis for an action plan. This task can be accomplished simply by asking people what they desire, either formally through a survey, or informally by discussions at public workshops. In addition, the Parks and Recreation Commission and staff can simply make observations of what is needed to improve the community's park system.

## ***Public Input***

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is being updated at the same time as the City's Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Plan. These plans rely on residents' participation and input as an essential element for formulating viable goals and strategies for the future.

As part of these plans and to gain public input in the planning process, the public was invited to attend a Vision Fair that took place on September 16, 2003, and two subsequent focus group sessions that took place on October 28 and December 9, 2003. While the first meeting was conducted to identify city-wide visions, the second and third meetings were designed to refine those visions, formulate strategies, and reach a consensus on the top priorities for action.

Approximately 200 people were in attendance at the Vision Fair and participants were encouraged to give their visions for the future. An exhaustive list of the comments gathered during that evening is included in the City's Strategic Plan. The following is a summary of the issues, concerns, and visions generated as they pertain to Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities.

- Increase the library size as well as the services
- Build a community recreation center and pool
- Support Broadway Theater
- Expand the trail system throughout the City
- Increase cooperation and coordination between the City and CMU and Tribe for both recreation facilities and programs
- Expand cultural and recreational programs

Following that event, the public was invited back to refine those visions into more focused and specific statements. At the first focus group session, participants were divided into small groups. Each group was monitored by a facilitator to generate discussion and a recorder to write statements.

Each group generated ideas and vision statements regarding specific topics such as Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities. At the end, participants were asked to vote on the issues using five dot stickers.

Following the voting exercise, the larger group reconvened and each group presented its top issues. The following table lists all the statements received for the groups that dealt with topics related to parks and recreation in Mt. Pleasant.

**Table 12. Focus Group Meeting Statements– October 28, 2003**

<b>Group 3: Public Facilities and Services</b>
<p><b>D. Parks and Recreation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide a direct connection from Downtown area to Island Park</li> <li>2. Develop a community center close to Downtown</li> <li>3. The City should focus on taking care of existing parks</li> <li>4. Volunteers should be utilized to pick up trash and other debris</li> <li>5. The river embankment should be considered for music festivals and/or a band stand area</li> </ol>
<b>Group 6: Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Activities</b>
<p><b>A. Public Library Improvements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improve the computer lab, education area, and quality of classes at the library</li> <li>2. More meeting space, both large and small, should be used</li> <li>3. Develop more parking around the library</li> </ol>
<p><b>B. New Recreation Facilities/Cultural Activities &amp; Existing Facilities Improvements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. More work with service groups, high risk kid programs, and others is necessary for prevention and the opportunities that such provide</li> <li>2. There is a need for an indoor/outdoor community pool</li> <li>3. Existing facilities at the CRC should be expanded and used by different groups</li> <li>4. Expand the sponsorship of programs at the CRC</li> <li>5. Provide additional "regulation size" gym space</li> <li>6. Consider a "hands on" children museum</li> <li>7. Access to and from the CRC must be improved for all users</li> <li>8. Additional meeting space is needed in the City</li> <li>9. Coordination with the County should occur for facility provision</li> </ol>
<p><b>C. Broadway Theatre Improvements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage local businesses to support the theatre and its renovation</li> <li>2. Greater awareness of the theatre should be made to the community</li> <li>3. Seeking historical status for the theatre would ensure its role as a cornerstone of the historic downtown</li> <li>4. Increase renovation of the theatre</li> <li>5. Utilize the theatre's role in drawing people downtown</li> </ol>

<p><b>D. Pedestrian / Bike Paths</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Investigate and develop a system of walkways and bike paths that link parks with key community facilities, schools, etc.</li> <li>2. Foster intergovernmental cooperation to achieve pedestrian goals</li> <li>3. Create a link between Mission Creek and all other trails</li> <li>4. More walking paths along Isabella Road are necessary to provide access to CRC</li> </ol>
<p><b>E. Cooperation &amp; Coordination</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a community-wide calendar for City, Tribe, CMU activities and events</li> <li>2. The City should reach out to CMU students, promoting community events to students, and should consider providing tickets for students at City Hall</li> <li>3. Tickets for events should be made available at Meijer, Wal-Mart, or other key community locations</li> <li>4. Develop more cooperation between public schools and community activities</li> </ol>
<p><b>F. Opportunities &amp; Programs</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase cultural awareness, services, and programs</li> <li>2. Develop family oriented cultural activities (i.e., music, museum, visual arts, dance, and theater)</li> <li>3. Create intergenerational programs and activities</li> <li>4. A teen center should be considered by the City</li> <li>5. An outdoor amphitheatre would be a good idea</li> <li>6. Senior Recreation Programs (water based activities, trained personnel) should be considered</li> </ol>

At the second session, on December 9, 2003, the statements were summarized and posted on large boards. Participants voted to set priorities by using 5 dot stickers. Approximately 40 people participated. Again, the statements that dealt with Mt. Pleasant parks and recreation are listed below.

**Table 13. Focus Group Meeting Statements – December 9, 2003**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Vote</b>
<b>Group 3: Public Facilities and Services</b>	
A. Improve the City sidewalk network and pedestrian/bicycle opportunities	17
D. Consider methods to further parks and recreation opportunities in the City	10

<b>Group 4: Recreational and Cultural Activities and Facilities</b>	
A. Examine ways to improve the public library	1
B. Consider constructing new recreation and cultural facilities and improving existing facilities	36
C. Determine existing concerns of the Broadway Theatre and begin improvements	11
D. Improve pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout the City	7
E. Further cooperation and coordination between the City and other communities and organizations	5
F. Consider other various opportunities that currently exist or that may become available in the future for improving the City's recreation and public facilities	6

## **Family Center Task Force**

The idea of a community center has been debated in Mt. Pleasant for almost 20 years. The Cultural and Recreation Commission (CRC) was formed in 1994 from a local collaboration. In 1997, the CRC built the Community Ice Facility including an indoor ice rink using private donations, state grant funds, and a grant from the Saginaw-Chippewa Indian Tribe.

In 2000, a proposal to levy a county-wide millage for building additional amenities at the Ice Facility was soundly defeated. More recently, however, interest has been revived and residents are, once again, lobbying for additional indoor recreational amenities. In 2003, a Family Recreation Center Task Force made up of City and County residents as well as staff was established to further investigate the feasibility of a family recreation center. A consultant was hired to assist in the development of the feasibility study.

Part of the Task Force's charge is to gather input from the community on the residents' desires to see a facility constructed and what elements to include in a center. A written survey was distributed during Vision Fair 2020 to begin the process of investigating what residents would like to see in a family center. Over 80 people responded and the top ranked elements are listed below.

- Leisure pool
- Lap pool
- Indoor walking track
- Teen center facilities
- Multi-use gym space
- Community meeting space
- Indoor jogging track
- Full service senior center
- Pool diving area
- Child care facilities

Most respondents to the survey expressed a willingness to support a levy of up to \$100 annually. Although most respondents indicated their residence in Mt. Pleasant, a significant number of people also resided in adjoining townships.

The Family Recreation Center Task Force is continuing its evaluation throughout the first half of 2004 and will publish its final recommendations to the Mt. Pleasant City Commission and Isabella County Board.

## Other Identified Needs

As part of the need identification process, Parks and Recreation staff and Commission were specifically asked for input regarding the needed improvements at each park. The following table lists those needs.

**Table 14. Needs Identified by Parks and Recreation Staff and Commission**

<b>Park Improvements</b>	
Chipp-A-Waters Park	Renovate main drive
	Build a new picnic shelter
	Develop a sand volleyball area
	Develop a sandbox for smaller kids
	Install permanent benches along the river
	Add more grills and picnic tables
	Incorporate more art sculptures such as a "Bouldering Sculpture"
Island Park	Renovate south drive
	Add a new bridge on south side (Oak St.) and enhance walking entrance
	Add a concession/storage/maintenance building between softball diamonds
	Install a new "Farmer's Market" shelter
	Add more tables and benches
	Incorporate more art sculptures
Pickens Field	Replace field fences
	Add landscaping
Mill Pond Park	Replace curb north of Adams St. parking lot
	Add a pole barn in vacant field at Leaton St. with an outdoor storage area for Parks Department equipment
	Replace playground equipment
	Enhance pond with native landscape plants and natural edge treatment
	Develop a hiking/mountain bike trail system
Mission Creek Woodland Park	Construct a new restroom
	Acquire property behind Mt. Pleasant Center to create additional trails
	Develop more winter park activities
	Maintain groomed cross-country ski trails
	Improve hiking trail surface and signage
	Develop a play structure

Nelson Park	Create an outdoor concert area
	Remove deer pen
	Add street lighting
	Install a small gazebo
Potter Park	Provide new playground equipment
	Add art sculptures
Sunnyside Park	Build a small gazebo closer to fields
	Develop a fitness path
	Provide more parking areas
Horizon Park	Develop skateboard/bike lanes
	Construct softball diamond
	Develop a basketball court
	Add picnic tables, benches and grills
Yost Field	Add a smaller park-style restroom
	Add landscaping
Riverside Cemetery	Acquire Elliot's property if available
	Acquire property north of cemetery and Harris St.
	Resurface dirt roads in asphalt
Other park improvements	Designate a dog walking and play area
	Develop a spray park
	Develop a band stand or amphitheater along the river for outdoor music festival
	Develop community gardens
	Develop more sports fields

## **Summary of Parks and Recreation Needs**

Several park and recreation issues have been identified from the preceding needs assessment data, including the public input, program participation data, and other identified needs. These issues begin to define the broad parks and recreation needs of Mt. Pleasant and establish the basis for the action plan. The main issues are: the development of a family recreation center, the development of a community-wide bike/hike path system, the maintenance, improvement, and development of parks, the maintenance and improvement of recreation programs, the development of partnerships with other recreation providers, and the coordination with other City issues.

### **1. Development of a Family Recreation Center**

One of the consistently strong themes identified as a major need for the Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation is the development of a family recreation center. Residents envisioned a facility that would meet their active recreation needs as well as one, which would provide a variety of social, cultural, and arts activities for all segments of the population.

Such a facility would be easily accessible, centrally located and ideally linked to the pedestrian path system.

### **2. Development of a Community-wide Bike/Hike Path System**

Another strong theme emerging from the public participation process is the desire for a multi-use pathway system linking parks, community facilities, schools, businesses, employment centers, and neighborhoods as well as the provision of connections in and outside the County.

Residents love the new riverwalk and wish to see this tremendous asset expanded throughout the community.

### **3. Park Development, Improvements, and Maintenance**

Mt. Pleasant parks have, in the last years, undergone extensive renaissance and the residents are very complimentary of the changes. The continued maintenance and update of these facilities as well as the development of the parks that are currently undeveloped is seen as important to the quality of the parks system in Mt. Pleasant. Specific needed improvements include the update of park equipment and facilities such as playground equipment, hard

pavement surfaces, and buildings/pavilions. In addition, acquisition of new parkland should be considered as opportunities arise.

#### **4. Recreation Program Maintenance and Improvements**

A variety of programs have been identified from public input. These programs are seen as essential to the fulfillment of the recreation needs of City residents. The suggested improvements involve the following areas: programs for teens and high-risk kids, water based programs for seniors, winter based programs, cultural and arts programs, and programs for people with special needs.

#### **5. Development of Partnerships with County, Townships, CMU, Schools, and Tribe**

The City Parks and Recreation Department has been developing and nurturing relationships with other public and private recreational agencies for many years. The City uses the indoor and outdoor facilities available through the schools and Central Michigan University. However, the City's opportunity to use these facilities are often limited to less desirable times, days, or dates when the other agencies are not using them. It would be more efficient and effective for the residents to have the variety, flexibility, convenience, and most importantly, the continuity of class and program scheduling that owning such facilities affords.

Nevertheless, an increased awareness and availability of CMU services and the development of a community wide event calendar combining City, County, Tribe, CMU, and school activities were ideas that residents feel are important.

#### **6. Coordination with Other City Issues**

Other issues facing the City and pertaining to recreation programming include community facilities such as the library, Broadway Theater, and other cultural facilities. New facilities suggested include a children science center, an historical museum, and an outdoor theater.

The action program identifies general plan goals and objectives that relate to the overall delivery of recreation services, describes steps to improve the community's parks and recreation system through a five-year capital improvement schedule and identifies potential implementation strategies.

## ***Plan Goals and Objectives***

The Mt. Pleasant Parks and Recreation Commission has established the following goals and objectives for the 2004-2009 planning period. These priorities were derived after considering the needs of the community as well as the observed deficiencies of the recreational resources.

### ***Development of a Family Recreation Center***

- Support the efforts of the Family Center Task Force in the development and implementation of the feasibility study currently underway

### ***Development of a City-wide Bike/Hike Path System***

- Develop a multi-use pathway system linking parks, community facilities, schools, businesses, employment centers, and neighborhoods as well as providing connections in and outside the City
- Continue the Riverwalk Trail linking Pickens Field to Mission Creek Woodland Park
- Specific priority connections to be accomplished:
  - Downtown to Island Park
  - To Mission Creek Park and Horizon Park
  - To the Community Ice Facility
  - Parks to schools

### ***Park Development, Improvements, and Maintenance***

- Continue to maintain and update park equipment and facilities as needed, especially playground equipment, hard pavement surfaces, and buildings/pavilions
- Acquire land that may be available as opportunities arise
- Work with the City Commission, adjacent Township Boards, and Planning Commissions to ensure open space and recreation are considered in new development and to encourage developers to set aside land for active recreation and neighborhood parks
- Expand and develop the following recreation facilities:
  - Community gardens
  - Sports fields

- Spray park
- Play equipment development and restroom at Mission Creek Woodland Park
- Band stand/amphitheater along the river for outdoor music festival

## **Maintenance and Improvements of Recreation**

### **Programs**

- Continue to monitor program needs, participation, and interests as well as facilitate open dialogue
- Expand or develop programs related to:
  - Teens
  - High-risk kids
  - Seniors
    - Water-based with trained professionals
    - Senior transportation
  - Intergenerational programs
  - Family oriented cultural and art activities
    - Music
    - Visual arts
    - Dance
    - Theater
  - Programs for special needs population

## **Development of Partnerships with County, Townships, CMU, Schools, and Tribe**

- Foster intergovernmental cooperation to achieve better services
- Increase awareness and availability of CMU services as well as programs and special events targeting CMU students
- Continue to support after school and summer programs with public school's assistance
- Support the development of a community-wide event calendar combining City, County, Tribe, CMU, and school activities
- Support community events and programs coming from the downtown effort
- Foster partnerships with the business community and service clubs that provide additional community recreation leisure activities

***Coordination with Other City Issues***

- Encourage and support the renovation, use, or development of the following facilities:
  - Public Library
  - Children Science Center
  - Broadway Theater

## Capital Improvement Schedule

The following table presents the specific actions recommended for the five-year planning horizon as prioritized by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Individual projects are listed along with the specific task to be accomplished, the time frame for implementation, cost estimates, potential funding sources, and priority if a capital improvement expenditure.

**Table 15. Capital Improvement Schedule**

Year	Project Location	Task	Cost Estimates	Potential Funding Sources	Priority
2004	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$20,000	GF, Donations	High
	Chipp-A- Waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a new Picnic Shelter</li> </ul>	\$30,000	GF, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a sand volleyball area, a sandbox, permanent benches along the river, and add more grills and picnic tables</li> </ul>	Operational	GF	
	Pickens Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add landscaping</li> </ul>	Operational	GF	
	Potter Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurface hard surface, provide new backstop and basketball backboards</li> </ul>	Operational	GF	
	Horizon Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add picnic tables, benches, and grills</li> </ul>	Operational	GF	
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$50,000</b>		
2005	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$10,000	GF	High
	Island Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovate south drive and parking</li> </ul>	\$225,000	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add more tables and benches</li> </ul>	Operational	GF	
	Pickens Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct ADA restroom facility</li> </ul>	\$100,000	GF, Grants, Donations	High
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$445,000</b>		

GF: General Fund

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Potential Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2006	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$10,000	GF	High
	Chipp-A-Waters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovation of main drive</li> </ul>	\$200,000	GF, Grants	High
	Island Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a new Farmer's Market pavilion</li> </ul>	\$120,000	GF	High
	Pickens Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurface road and lower level parking with asphalt</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Mill Pond Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Nature Center</li> </ul>	Operational	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance pond with native plants and natural edge treatment and develop a hiking/mountain bike trail system</li> </ul>	Operational	GF, Grants, Donations	
	Mission Creek Woodland Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a play structure</li> </ul>	\$30,000	GF, Donations	Low
	Yost Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a smaller park-style restroom</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Donations, Grants	Medium
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$460,000</b>		

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Potential Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2007	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$10,000	GF	High
	Island Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a new bridge on south side (Oak St.) and enhance walking entrance</li> </ul>	\$75,000	GF, Donations, Grants	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a concession/storage/maintenance building between softball diamonds</li> </ul>	\$180,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Pickens Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovate existing concession and storage, and irrigate fields</li> </ul>	\$60,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Mill Pond Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace curb north of Adams St. parking lot and resurface</li> </ul>	\$60,000	GF, Donations, Grants	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Electric Expansion</li> </ul>	\$40,000	GF	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concession stand development</li> </ul>	\$40,000	Donations, GF	Low
	Mission Creek Woodland Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct ADA approved Restroom</li> </ul>	\$100,000	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve entrance road and parking</li> </ul>	\$175,000	GF, Grants	High
	Nelson Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an outdoor concert area and a sound garden</li> </ul>	\$40,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Sunnyside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide more parking areas</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Grants, Donations	High
	Horizon Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction of a sidewalk, completion of site work and play areas</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Yost Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovate fields, replace fence and dugouts</li> </ul>	\$35,000	GF, Donations, Grants	High
	<b>Total</b>			<b>\$915,000</b>	

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Proposed Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
2008	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$10,000	GF	High
	Pickens Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovate upper fields, fencing, and backstops</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Mission Creek Woodland Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop more winter park activities, develop groomed cross-country ski trails, improve hiking trail surface and signage</li> </ul>	\$50,000	GF, Grants	High
	Nelson Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add cold storage for equipment</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Donations, Grants	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install a small gazebo</li> </ul>	\$40,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Low
	Sunnyside Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a small gazebo closer to fields</li> </ul>	\$40,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	Horizon Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construct pavilion/team meeting area</li> </ul>	\$80,000	GF, Grants, Donations	High
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$270,000</b>		
2009	Park Partnership Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To be determined with partner</li> </ul>	\$10,000	GF	High
	Mill Pond Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a sensory awareness trail</li> </ul>	\$70,000	GF, Donations, Grants	Medium
	Riverside Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resurface dirt roads in asphalt</li> </ul>	\$250,000	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$330,000</b>		

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Proposed Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
	<b>Other Park Improvements</b>				
2004-2009	Nelson Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add street lighting</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Donations, Grants	Medium
	Locations to be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brass sculptures or others</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designate a dog walking/play area</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a spray park</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a band stand/amphitheater along the river for outdoor music festival</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop community gardens</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Low
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop more sports fields</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
	<b>Family Recreation Center</b>				
2004 - 2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement the recommendations of the Family Center Task Force</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations, Milleage	High

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Proposed Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
	<b>Pathway Improvements</b>				
2004 - 2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a community-wide plan for a path system connecting community facilities, parks, schools, neighborhoods, downtown, as well as connecting to adjacent communities</li> </ul>	\$20,000	GF, Grants	High
2006- 2007		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop pathway connection from downtown to Island Park</li> </ul>	\$250,000	GF, Donations, Grants	High
2007- 2008		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the Riverwalk Trail on new property south of Chipp-A-Waters</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop pedestrian/pathway connection to Horizon Park</li> </ul>			Medium
2008- 2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue riverwalk trail linking Pickens Field to Mission Creek</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	High

<b>Year</b>	<b>Project Location</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Cost Estimates</b>	<b>Proposed Funding Sources</b>	<b>Priority</b>
	<b>Land Acquisition</b>				
2004-2009		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire vacant land on south and west side of Mill Pond Park</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire property north of Mt. Pleasant Center to create additional trails in Mission Creek Woodland Park</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purchase additional land along the Chippewa River including wetland and contiguous to Chipp-A-Water Park</li> </ul>	\$250,000	Grants, GF, Donation	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire railroad property right of way within City limits</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	High
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire Elliot's property if available (Broadway Street near Cemetery)</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acquire property north of cemetery east of Harris Street</li> </ul>	To be determined	GF, Grants, Donations	Medium

## **Implementation Strategies**

In order to accomplish the recommended actions during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current parks budget provides \$10,000 for park facilities and equipment. This figure is well short of the projected expenses involved in the proposed project implementation. Therefore, the following strategies are recommended in order to proceed as planned:

- **Increase Revenues and Parks and Recreation Budget**

By taking a close look at the expenses involved in providing programs and facilities to the park users, the fee schedule could be revised in order to more accurately reflect actual costs.

- **Apply for State Funding or Other Grant Moneys**

There are a variety of funding sources available to local governments for park land acquisition and development. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources Recreation Division administers the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF – requires 50% local match) and the Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF – requires 25% local match).

Other funding may be available through other programs at the State and Federal levels, such as the Great Lakes Fishery Trust, the Inland Fisheries Grant Program, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the Detroit Edison Tree Planting. Federal funding through the National Parks Service is available under the Rivers & Trails Program and includes the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery.

In addition, transportation funding, TEA-21 has been re-authorized and is available for the development of non-motorized pathways within MDOT right-of-ways.

There are a variety of smaller grant programs available for the establishment of greenways or greenway related facilities such as Bikes Belong Coalition, Dalmac Fund Grant by the Tri County Bicycle Association, Michigander Grant Program by the Rails to Trail Conservancy, and the Conservation Fund by Kodak American Greenways Awards Program.

- ***Investigate Other Local Financial Opportunities***  
Support for a parks millage may be crucial in determining the level of services the City Parks and Recreation will be able to maintain in the future. A specific project millage could also be sought over a limited period of time for particular projects such as the development of a family recreation center.
- ***Seek Other Sources of Funding***  
The Parks and Recreation Department should continue to investigate additional sources of funding. Seeking donations, attracting sponsors, holding fund raising events, and seeking out other revenue sources are methods that have worked in other communities to raise funding for parks and park improvements.

## References

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