

**DRAFT: December 21, 2023**

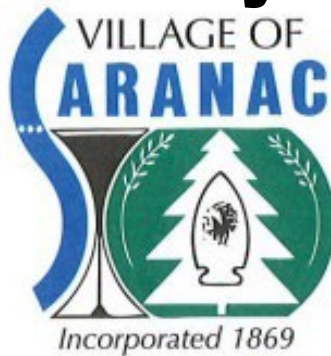
# *Village of Saranac*

## Five-Year Park and Recreation Plan 2024-2028

Adopted: (mo, day, yr)



### **“The Friendly Village”**



*Ionia County, Michigan*

Prepared for

# Village of Saranac

27 N Bridge Street  
Saranac, MI 48881

<https://www.villageofsaranacmi.org>

## Village Council Members

Sharon Darby, President  
Becky Straubel, Treasurer/Deputy Clerk  
Tony Koster, DPW Director/Fire Chief  
Norman Day, Trustee  
Adam Doll, Trustee  
Kevin Klutman, Trustee  
Brandon Mulnix, Trustee  
Mark Talcott, Trustee  
Jaye Whorley, Trustee

## Park & Recreation Committee

Brandon Mulnix, Chair  
Norman Day  
Mark Talcott  
Becky Straubel  
Tony Koster

*Plan prepared with assistance from:*



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# INTRODUCTION

The Village of Saranac Council has recognized a need for improving the community's parks and recreation options and promoting the Village as a quality, sustainable place to live and play. This stems from the growing trends in recreation and the desire to be active, healthy, and conscious of the environment regardless of age, abilities, or disabilities. A comprehensive and sustainable parks and recreation system is vital to a community's physical and mental health, social interaction, protection of natural resources, and economic growth.

As part of this effort, they have chosen to develop an updated Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan. This document is intended to serve as a planning tool over the next 5 years for Village Officials to make decisions related to future park and recreation amenities and improvements. It identifies attainable goals and objectives as well as an action plan that can then be used to focus on key areas for more specific design and budgetary purposes. It has been created under the guidelines established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Grants Management for Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. A Five-Year, MDNR-approved Recreation Plan is necessary for the government entities to pursue MDNR-administered grants and it can be a tool to aid in future funding of recreational projects.

This plan begins with a **community description** to better understand the demographics of the Village of Saranac. This is based on the population, age, ability, and density of the community. The **administrative structure** is then outlined which describes the governmental and jurisdictional methods by which future decisions will be made. This is followed by the existing **recreation inventory** which describes all existing Village owned parks as well as other regional recreation opportunities. Next is the **natural resource inventory** with any relevant landscape, water, and plant/animal information. Then a description of the **planning and public input process**, public notifications, and workshop which were used in determining where improvements are needed. A series of **goals and objectives** that were established using recommended planning methods are then presented. The **action program** describing recommended improvements and proposed projects in the form of narratives, charts, and maps is presented. And lastly, the **appendix** holds the support documentation of the public notices, and local adoption which includes minutes and resolutions by the approving bodies.

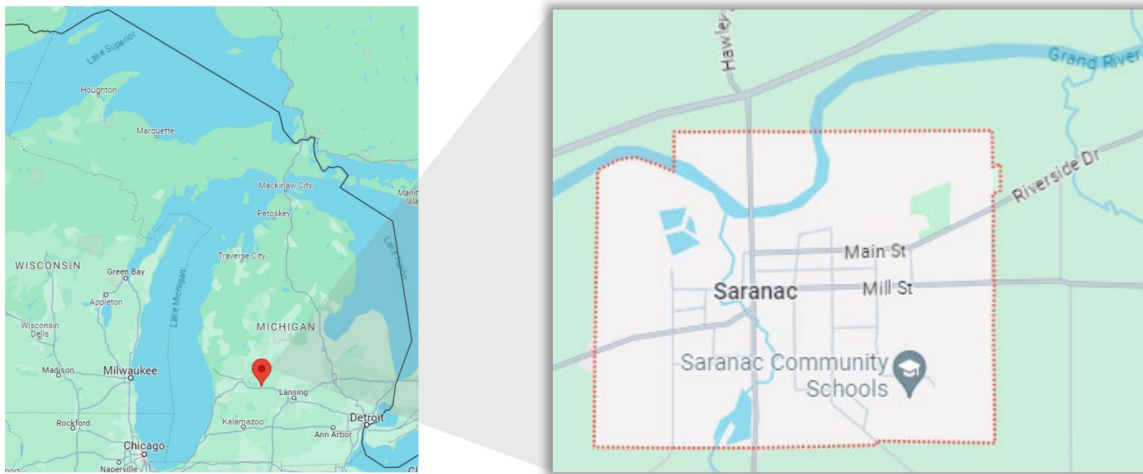
This master plan will be used to guide growth and development in the park system and was shaped by community input. The feedback received from the public helped guide the Village Council to prioritize where and how to make investments in the parks, facilities, and programs.



## Community Description

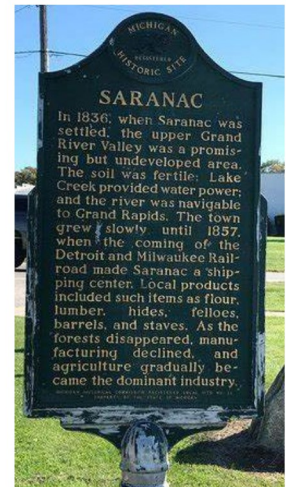
### Village Location & History

The Village of Saranac is located in Boston Township, in the County of Ionia. It occupies 1.2 square miles of which 1.15 square miles is land and 0.05 square miles is water. This equates to 642 total acres of area. The Grand River runs through the Village, which is located in Boston Township, Ionia County, Michigan. It is about 26 miles east of Grand Rapids, 45 miles north of Battle Creek, and 44 miles west of Lansing. It typifies small town values and sense of community.



*Figure 1.1 – Village of Saranac Location*

“In 1836, when Saranac was settled, the upper Grand River Valley was a promising but undeveloped area. The soil was fertile; Lake Creek provided waterpower; and the river was navigable to Grand Rapids. The town grew slowly until 1857, when the coming of the Detroit and Milwaukee Railroad made Saranac a shipping center. Local products included such items as flour, lumber, hides, felloes, barrels, and staves. As the forests disappeared, manufacturing declined, and agriculture gradually became the dominant industry. ”Today it serves as a retail and services hub for agricultural areas surrounding the village.



## Social Characteristics

### Population

The population of the Village of Saranac increased slightly by 51 persons to 1,376 between 2010 and 2020, or 3.85%. That puts the Village between the County and the State's rate of growth for that same time period, 4.5% and 2.0% respectively.

Table 1.1 – Village of Saranac Population, 2010-2020			
	2010	2020	% Change 2010-2020
<b>Village of Saranac</b>	<b>1,325</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>3.8%</b>
Ionia County	63,905	66,804	4.5%
Michigan	9,883,640	10,077,331	2.0%

Source: 2010 & 2020 US Census Data

### Median Age

While the overall population is the most important consideration, there are other characteristics to consider when planning for a community's recreation. The age distribution of a community influences the types of facilities and programs needed. Table 1.2 shows that the Village's median age (33.4) is younger than the County and State averages. This would indicate that the Village has a younger age base than the rest of the county due to a higher percentage of persons in the 18 and under age groups. Of course, the Village should not ignore the other age groups since they still comprise a substantial portion of the overall population. It's interesting that the median age for the Village and County rose at a rate quite a bit higher than that of the State in the eleven-year period reviewed.

Table 1.2 – Village of Saranac Median Age, 2010-2021			
	2010	2021	% Change 2010-2021
<b>Village of Saranac</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>33.4</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
Ionia County	35.9	41.3	15.0%
Michigan	39.0	40.3	3.3%

Source: 2010 & 2021 ACS 5-yr Estimates.

### Family Size

The size of families in the Village follows the Ionia County trend of slightly increasing. While the State's slightly decreased, following the national trend of smaller families. The general trend toward smaller family size may be due to many factors including end of the baby boomer generation, growth of single-parent households, widowed older persons and young people waiting longer to get married, and the drop in fertility.

Table 1.3 - Average Family Size in Village of Saranac, 2010-2021			
	2010	2021	% Change 2010-2021
<b>Village of Saranac</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
Ionia County	3.07	3.19	3.9%
Michigan	3.12	3.02	-3.2%

Source: 2010 & 2021 ACS 5-yr est.

### Income, Poverty and Employment

Village households had a median income of \$56,420 in 2021 estimates. This compares with \$75,865 for Ionia County and \$66,986 for the State of Michigan. The poverty level in Saranac was 13.5%, being relatively close to that of the State's at 13.1%, but higher than the County's at 11.5%. There were 3.1% of Village residents that



were without Health Insurance. This is below that of Ionia County (4.8%) and much below that at the state level (10.7%). The following Table 1.4 reflects these values.

Table 1.4 – Village of Saranac Income, Poverty and Employment, 2021				
	Median Household Income	Poverty Level Rate	Employment Rate	Without Health Insurance
<b>Village of Saranac</b>	<b>\$56,420</b>	<b>13.5%</b>	<b>65.1%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>
Ionia County	\$75,865	11.5%	54.6%	4.8%
State of Michigan	\$66,986	13.1%	48.5%	10.7%

Source: 2021 ACS 5-yr Estimates

### Physically Challenged

The disability status of a population may be especially significant when considering recreational needs for a community. With 13.7% of the total Village population affected by some form of disability, it is running comparable to the State level of 13.9% disabled. These individuals may have difficulty participating in recreational programs, accessing facilities, or even getting to designated public areas. Understanding the disability status of the Village's population may assist decision-makers in determining adequate programs and appropriate locations for recreational activities. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation became subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs.

Table 1.5 – Village of Saranac, Michigan, 2021						
Label	Total		With a Disability		% With Disability	
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
<b>Total Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population</b>	1,919	±410	322	±17	13.7%	±5.1
<b>Age</b>						
Under 5 Years	93	±50	0	±11	0.0%	±25.2
5 To 17 Years	339	±124	21	±18	6.2%	±5.4
18 To 34 Years	539	±187	57	±29	10.6%	±5.6
35 To 64 Years	706	±193	141	±56	20.0%	±8.8
65 To 74 Years	124	±58	47	±42	37.9%	±23.1
75 Years and Over	118	±50	56	±30	47.5%	±15.5
<b>Disability Type</b>						
With a hearing difficulty	(X)	(X)	109	±61	5.7%	±3.4
With a vision difficulty	(X)	(X)	65	±50	3.4%	±2.7
With a cognitive difficulty	(X)	(X)	158	±68	8.7%	±4.0
With an ambulatory difficulty	(X)	(X)	134	±62	7.3%	±3.8
With a self-care difficulty	(X)	(X)	59	±42	3.2%	±2.3
With an independent living difficulty	(X)	(X)	136	±58	9.1%	±4.0

Source: 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates



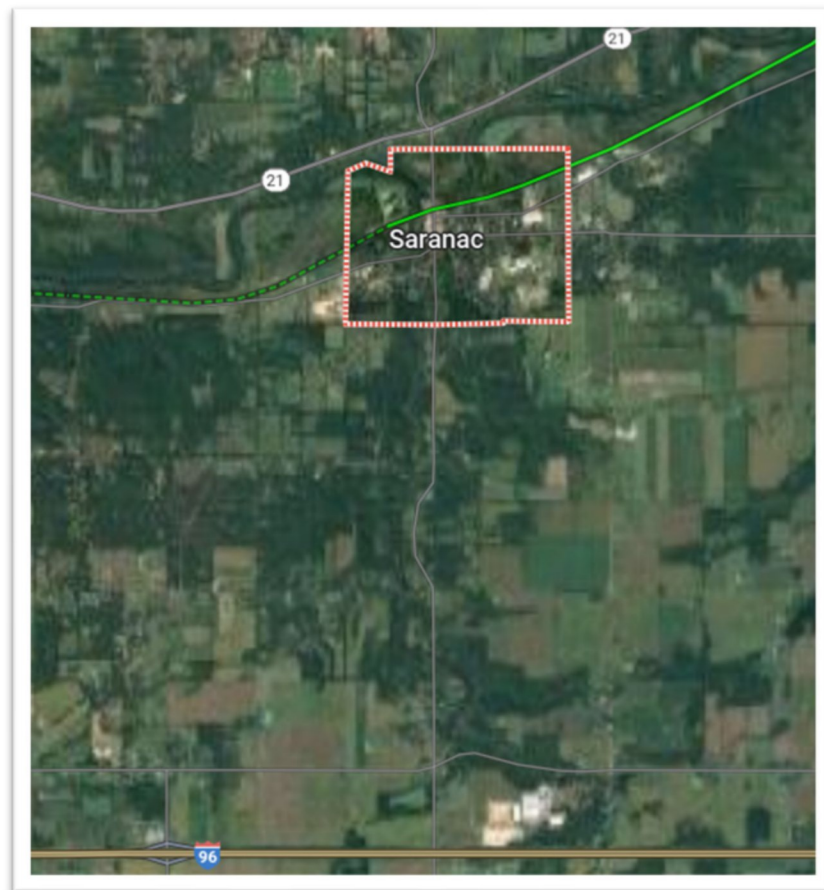


## Physical Characteristics

### Location & Transportation Network

Originally, the development of the Village of Saranac was tied to the historical role of the Grand River as the major transportation route during the region's settlement and the commercial exploitation of the region's resources, particularly timber and agricultural products. As the river's role diminished and other transportation routes dominated, the Village of Saranac became and remains a retail and service center for the surrounding agricultural areas. Development of the railroad approximately parallel to the river, as well as construction of M-21 north of the Village and I-96 approximately 3.5 miles to the south, have historically influenced the location of industrial and commercial land uses within the Village.

In addition to the historical role of the Grand River as the major transportation route of the past, the Village of Saranac is now served by several major highways. Interstate 96, connecting Detroit with Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Muskegon, has an interchange six miles southwest of the Village. Highway access via M-21, another important east-west statewide route, is located north of the Village just outside of the Village limits. The north-south connection from the Village to these east-west highways is provided by Morrison Lake Road in the south and Hawley Highway in the north. The once prominent east-west rail line is now part of the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Trail.



**Figure 1.2 – Location & Transportation Network**

### Climate

The Village of Saranac's weather, like all of West Michigan's, influences the recreational opportunities available throughout the year. The area can support a variety of activities throughout the four seasons in Michigan, from boating to cross-country skiing. Generally, January is the coldest month (17.2 F average low temperature) and has the highest snowfall (4.9 inches), with snow falling for an average of 14.3 days.

July is generally the warmest month in the Village (79.3 F average high temperature). May usually has the highest average precipitation (3.11 inches) and November generally has the lowest average (1.26 inches). July has the most sunshine of the year in the Village, with an average of 10.2 hours. Prevailing winds are from the west.

## Utilities Services

### Electric and Gas Company

The Village of Saranac is among the 6.7 million customers that Consumers Energy serves. To the Village, they provide both electric and gas. The area manager is Jessica Tramontana; 517.599.6749.

### Water Supply

The Village's water source is from 2 wells, No. 4 and 5, owned by the Village. The wells draw water from the glacial material of the Grand River Valley. The depth of the wells varies from 115 to 120 feet below the surface. Both wells are in regular service. The firm capacity is defined as the capacity delivered with the largest well out of service. The MDEQ recommends the firm capacity of any water supply system meet or exceed the maximum day demands placed in the system.

One 400,000-gallon elevated storage tank currently supplies water pressure and emergency storage to Village water customers. The storage tank is located south of the High School. The tank was constructed in 2001.

The Village of Saranac's water distribution system is composed of 80% Ductile Iron (DI) watermain and the remainder of the water distribution system is Cast Iron (CI), 20%.

The Village has developed a Wellhead Protection Program for the public water system. This protection is provided by determining the groundwater areas which contribute to the Village's existing wells. This area is called the wellhead protection area and represents that part of the aquifer that will supply water to the Village's wells in the future. The wellhead protection area is approximately 1 mile wide and runs south to the I-96 expressway. The perimeters of the wellhead protection area have been marked with signs along roadways stating, "Now Entering Saranac Drinking Water Wellhead Protection Area."

### Wastewater

The Village of Saranac owns and operates Wastewater Storage Lagoons (WWSL) and a wastewater collection system that provides sanitary sewer services to the Village. The WWSL is regulated by the MDEQ under Michigan's Wastewater Stabilization Lagoon General Permit.

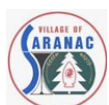
The WWSL was originally constructed as a facultative lagoon system with four lagoons. The 1993 Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements project provided the first upgrade for the facility which included the construction of an influent flow splitter structure, the construction of a generator building to house a new mobile generator, and rehabilitation work to the Influent Pump Station. The 2008 Wastewater System Improvements project raised the permitted capacity to its current capacity of 0.16 mgd.

## Community Services

### Police Department

The mission of the Ionia County Sheriff's Department is to provide a professional, ethical, and committed law enforcement service to all citizens of Ionia County while partnering with community leaders, citizens, businesses, and employees to decrease crime and encourage growth within our communities. The Village of Saranac partners with (by contract) the Ionia County Sheriff Department for day-to-day law enforcement.

**Non-Emergency: 616.527.0400; Emergencies: 911**





### Fire Department

The Saranac Community Fire Department serves the Village of Saranac, as well as parts of Boston, Berlin, Easton and Keene Townships. With 24 active volunteers, the department is dedicated to preserving public safety, health, welfare, and property from fire, natural disaster, hazardous conditions, medical emergencies, or other situations. **Non-Emergency: 616.642.6000; Emergencies: 911**

### Ambulance Department

One of the newest additions to the Life EMS Ambulance stations is located at 7071 Jordan Lake Rd. and Grand River Avenue. The station is in a prime location to quickly service the areas of Lake Odessa, Saranac and Clarksville. The Village partners with Life EMS (by contract) for ambulance services. **Emergencies: 911**

### Public Library

The Saranac Clarksville District Library exists to foster life-long learning by providing resources and technology to enhance our communities. There are two branches. The Saranac location is at 61 Bridge Street and has undergone many changes over the years. In 2013 an adjacent building was purchased and renovated that served as a tech room and meeting room. A 2023 project (still under construction) is adding another room off the southwest corner of the library. **616.642.9146**

In 1999, Ionia County passed a one-mill tax to support the libraries in the county. The millage is collected and distributed by the townships, in lieu of voluntary contributions. This millage allows the libraries to operate on a known amount of revenue.

### Post Office

Saranac's U.S Postal Service is located at 29 North Bridge St, Saranac; **616.642.9461**

### Historical Society

The Boston Saranac Historical Society is located at 138 N. Bridge Street, Saranac. The purpose of this organization is to preserve the Boston-Saranac area history and to inform residents of local historical facts so future generations will take pride and interest in the area's culture and roots. They maintain the Saranac Depot and take on many other projects. **616.693.2730.**

### Waste Services

The Village of Saranac contracts with Granger for residential Refuse & Recycling Services that are billed to the residents quarterly on their water/sewer bill. Call the Village Office at **616.642.6324** for rates and service change.

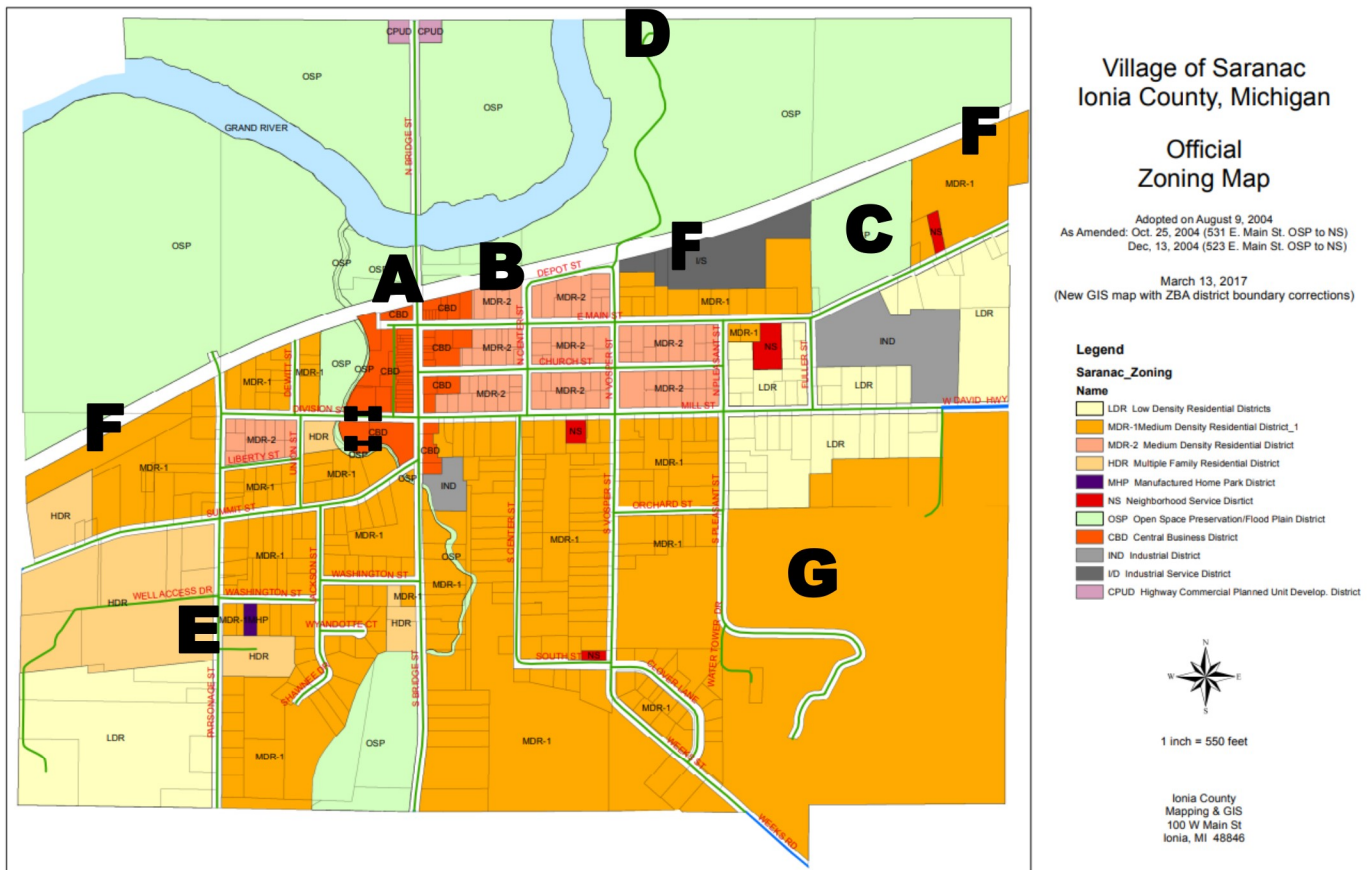
### Land Use

The Village of Saranac remains a retail and service center for the surrounding agricultural areas. Development of the railroad approximately parallel to the river, as well as construction of M-21 north of the Village and I-96 approximately 3.5 miles to the south, have historically influenced the location of industrial and commercial land uses within the Village.

The Village is comprised of 642 total acres. Residential land use accounts for over one-third of the total land in the Village, and Commercial and Industrial together comprise around 10%. In general, undeveloped lands (including those used for parks and agriculture) make up approximately 54% of the total land in the Village while developed lands account for 46%.

On the following page, you'll see the Village of Saranac Zoning Map reflecting the observations above. Also, located on this map are the various recreational facilities in the Village.





**Figure 1.3 – Village of Saranac Zoning Map with Recreation Locations**

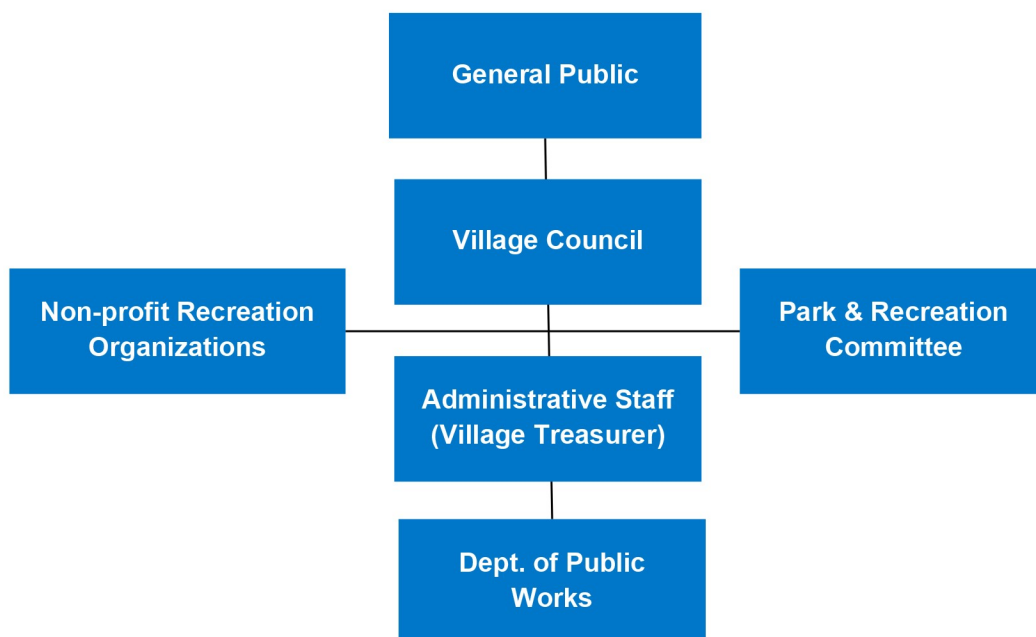
- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>A</b> Boat Launch Park & Trailhead | <b>E</b> Senior Center/walking trails              |
| <b>B</b> Riverwalk Park               | <b>F</b> Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail |
| <b>C</b> Scheid Park                  | <b>G</b> Saranac Community Schools                 |
| <b>D</b> Village Nature Park          | <b>H</b> Lake Creek Park                           |



## Administrative Structure

### Village Administration

The Village of Saranac is a General Law Village, with an elected Village Council comprised of a President and six Trustees, as well as an appointed Clerk and Treasurer. Regular meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month. From the membership of this Village Council, the Village President annually appoints a five-member Park & Recreation Committee. This Park & Recreation Committee meets monthly and serves in an advisory capacity to the Village Council. It makes recommendations to the Council regarding recreational policy, park management, and an annual budget for park operation and maintenance. The Village Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the disbursement of funds for these purposes.



Maintenance for park facilities is undertaken by a crew consisting of a Department of Public Works Director and three full-time general maintenance workers. Flexible part-time summer staff is used when the workload dictates. This crew also works on other Village projects in addition to the parks.

### Park & Recreation Budget

The percentage of the General Fund Expenditures committed to Arts, Culture and Recreation has increased from 9.6% in 2021, to 11.9% in 2022. The Village Council adopts the annual budget with recommendations made for the park & recreation budget by the Park and Recreation Committee. The expenditures below include maintenance of grounds and park facilities.

Table 2.1 – Recreation & Culture Budget for Three Fiscal Years (FY ending in February)				
	2021	2022	2023	2024 Projected
Expenditures	\$55,507	\$60,253	\$91,612	\$581,600
Income	\$2,735	\$3,675	\$2,175	\$300,500



## Collaborations

Active organizations and citizens play an important role in supplementing recreational activities and facilities. These organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Boston-Saranac Historical Society
- Saranac Community Schools
- Saranac Youth Baseball/Softball League
- Saranac Community Association – This organization hosts many annual activities and events for the Village residents each year.



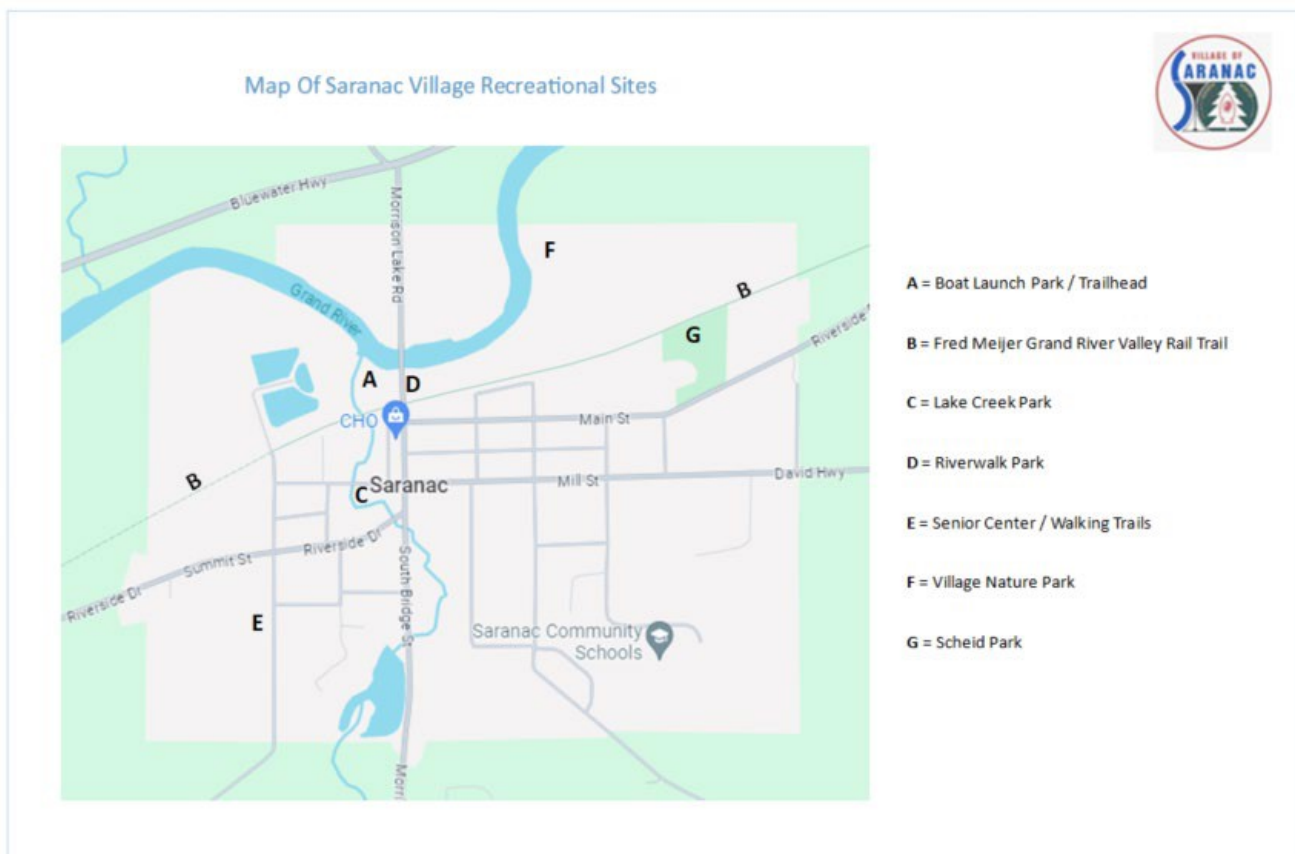
## Recreational Inventory

An essential element of a recreation plan is the inventory of local and regional, public, and private recreation facilities that are available to a community's residents. Such an inventory provides a basis from which a comparison can be made of existing recreation opportunities with the community's identified recreation needs. Involving advocate organizations and utilizing the knowledge of Village staff will help facilitate this element of the inventory process. Further, this facility inventory establishes the foundation from which a recreational improvement program can be developed and implemented.

## Village Recreational Facilities

The Village of Saranac has a mix of all types and sizes of park facilities ranging from mini parks to special use parks. There are parks with many active sports amenities such as playgrounds, ball diamonds, and outdoor basketball courts and there are nature and wooded parks that emphasis passive activities and protections of natural resources such as woodlands and the Grand River.

The Village of Saranac has (6) Village owned park facilities, and one regional trail going through the Village. Figure 3.1 is a map of all the facilities. Table 3.1 illustrates the facilities with all of their amenities and details. Accessibility is further discussed after the inventory.



**Figure 3.1 - Map of Recreational Facilities & Trails**

Table 3.1 – Village of Saranac Recreational Facilities & Trails

	Boat Launch Park and Trailhead	Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail	Lake Creek Park	Riverwalk Park	Senior Center / Walking Trails	Village Nature Park	Scheid Park
Park Type*	SU	TRA	MP	SU	SU	SU	NP
Service Area**	EA	EA	EA	EA	NB	EA	EA
Accessibility***	4	4	2	4	2	4	4
Acres/(Miles)	5.3	1.3 of the total 17.5	0.8	2.43		71.2	11
Bench Seating	X	X		X		X	X
Boat Launch	X	X		X			
Ball Diamond							3
Basketball							X
Concessions							UC^
Cross-country skiing		X		X		X	
Disc Golf							
Fishing Platform	X			X			
Football							
Grills							X
Parking Area	X			X	X	X	X
Pavilion	X			X	X		3
Picnic Area	X		X	X	X	X	X
Playground							X
Pond/River	X	X	X	X		X	
Restrooms	X	X		X		vault	UC^
Skate Park							X
Soccer Fields							
Tennis Courts							
Trails/Paths	X	X		X	X	X	X
Waterfront Access	X		X	X		X	

**Park Type\***

MP = Mini Park  
NP = Neighborhood Park  
CP = Community Park  
LP = Large Urban Park  
SU = Special Use Park  
TRA = Trailway  
NA = Not Applicable (undeveloped)

**Service Area\*\***

NB = Neighborhood (approx. ½ mile)  
EA = Entire Saranac Area  
NA = Not Applicable (undeveloped)

**Accessibility\*\*\***

1 = None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines  
2 = Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines  
3 = Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines  
4 = The entire park meets accessibility guidelines  
5 = The entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

^Under Construction





## Village Recreational Facilities – Expanded Descriptions

### Boat Launch Park / Trailhead

**Located along the Grand River, west of Bridge St.**

5.3 acres

This popular boat launch provides access for boaters and fishermen who use the Grand River. In addition to boaters, canoes and kayaks are popular. Trail connectivity to the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail is also provided here, with an underpass to the east.

Amenities include:

- Boat Launch
- Picnic area
- Fishing pier
- Restroom
- Pavilion
- Trailhead for Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail
- Bike Fix-it Station
- Rain garden
- Parking



**ADA Evaluation and rating:** Walks and trail connectors to the Riverwalk Trail and the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail are universally accessible. 4

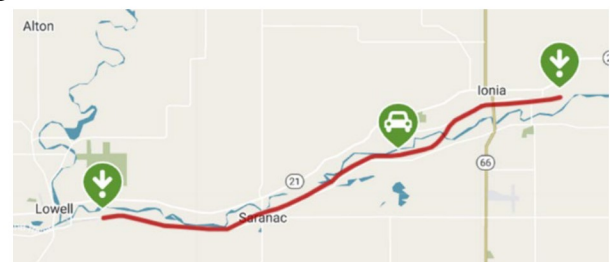
### Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail

(part of Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails System)

The trail is constructed on a former railroad corridor between Lowell and Ionia. It is a non-motorized multi-use recreational trail used by individuals, families, and organizations.

Trail end points: Riverside Dr and S Montcalm Ave (Lowell) and Prairie Creek Bridge (Ionia).

Total length: 15.5 miles; with 1.3 paved miles in the Village of Saranac, and 4.5 paved miles through the City of Ionia. The trail in between is surfaced with finely screened and compacted crushed limestone. The trail to the west of Saranac is surfaced with a finely crushed asphalt mix and is similar to the crushed limestone. It is



usable by just about any type of non-motorized use except horses. In Lowell, the trail will ultimately connect to the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail, which will whisk trail users north through Belding to Greenville.

Amenities from Saranac to Ionia include:

- Activities for trail: Biking, Mountain Biking, Walking, Cross-Country Skiing
- Beautiful scenery from Saranac to Ionia with views of 5 restored railroad bridges, including one towering bridge spanning 466 feet across the mighty Grand River. Viewing of a wide range of wildlife.

- The Depot in the Village of Saranac includes parking, a riverwalk trail, a pavilion with picnic area, and a historical museum, all situated beside the river. In downtown Ionia, public parking is available on Adams St, one block east of M-66 bridge.
- Stores and eating establishments located in Saranac and Ionia.
- Restrooms are located at trailhead buildings in Saranac and Ionia.
- In Ionia, the trail links with the Fred Meijer Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee (CIS) Rail-Trail, and heads east through St. Johns to Owosso.

#### ADA Evaluation and rating: 4



**Lake Creek Park**  
**South side of Division St on the east side of Lake Creek**  
0.8 acres  
Small mini park on Lake Creek.  
Amenities include:

- Picnic area
- Water access
- Parking close at Dollar General



#### ADA Evaluation and rating: 2





## **Riverwalk Park** **138 N Bridge St**

2.43 acres

The Village acquired land along the Grand River at it's own expense and subsequently developed this facility in 2006 with a MDNRTF grant. The property preserves about 1/3 of a mile of Grand River shoreline and connects the Nature Park to the downtown area and the Historical Depot Museum to other areas and serves as a natural resource area and connector trail park.

Amenities include:

- River overlook which provides direct access to the shoreline.
- 0.36 mile of paved pedestrian trails through scenic wooded wetlands, uplands and along the Grand River south bank.
- Connection trail to Saranac Village Nature Park
- Bench Seating
- Picnic area (Depot Museum shelter)
- Parking area for 16 automobiles – shared with the Depot Museum.



### **ADA Evaluation and rating: 4**



## Senior Center / Walking Trails 203 Parsonage Street

7 acres, + 3 acres west for Well #4

There continues to be an ongoing need to maintain outdoor amenities oriented toward the senior center population residing at the Senior Citizen Complex in Saranac. The Village DPW has been mowing pathways through the property that are used as walking trails. In addition, there is a paved roadway to existing wellhouse that is used for DPW access.

Because space is not abundant, it is suggested that land owned by the Village be utilized to support such uses as picnic areas, trails and benches and maintaining a park facility. It is the Village's intent to assist in the coordination of such improvements and to gain the financial support of local service organizations.



### ADA Evaluation and rating: 2



## Saranac Village Nature Park

N Vosper St – property is adjacent to the Riverwalk, and Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail  
71.2 acres

The Village acquired land along the Grand River and subsequently developed this as a natural resource area and park trail in 2003. Both acquisition and development grant through the MNRTF were used for the creation of this park. The acquired property possesses natural ascetics favorable to numerous outdoor activities. Phase I was constructed with grant assistance from the MDNR Trust Fund.

Amenities include:

- Picnic area
- River overlook which provides direct access for fishermen.
- One mile of paved pedestrian trails through scenic areas.
- Wetland educational opportunities.
- Vault Restroom
- Parking area for 40 automobiles.



### ADA Evaluation and rating: 4



## Scheid Park

455 Main St

11 acres

Scheid Park serves as the focal point for summertime activity in the Village of Saranac. While records for transient park use are not kept, in 2017 a total of 40 reservations were recorded for the use of the three picnic facilities during the summer months. These reservations represented family, corporate, and organization activities during the period of May through September.

Amenities include:

- 3 picnic shelters
- Picnic tables and grills (BF)
- Animal character springs
- Play structure
- Tot swing set
- 4 seat swings (poor condition)
- 3 Little league baseball fields with spectator seating (2 in poor condition)
- A T-ball field and a pony league field were recently added also.
- 1 Half-court Basketball Court (BF)
- Paved Paths (BF)
- Skate Park (BF)
- Concessions (under construction)
- Restrooms (new, under construction)
- Parking
- Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Trail runs adjacent to the park on the north side.



**ADA Evaluation and rating: BF stated above means Barrier Free; 4**



## School Recreational Facilities

Saranac Community Schools has two school facilities within the southeastern part of the Village. They are Saranac Elementary School and Saranac Junior/Senior High School. Descriptions of each facility are as follows.

### **Saranac Elementary School** **250 S. Pleasant St.**

Amenities include:

- Playgrounds
- Soccer field
- Indoor gym
- Parking



### **Saranac Junior/Senior High School** **150 S. Pleasant St.**

Amenities include:

- Football field/track
- Practice football field
- Baseball field
- Softball field
- Indoor Gym
- Parking



*Figure 3.2 - Map of Saranac Elementary & Saranac Junior/Senior High School*



## Local & Regional Private Recreational Facilities

There are several private facilities in and around Saranac which include recreation amenities. While they do not provide public access, they are important in providing recreation opportunities. Some of these facilities are listed below.

**Alice Springs RV Park & Resort** – 5087 Alice Ct, Ionia; located off M-66; [alicespringsrvpark.com](http://alicespringsrvpark.com). Family owned and operated. Amenities include a 5-acre lake perfect for kayaking and fishing; RV sites and tent sites ranging from full hook-up to rustic, cozy cabins; pool & hot tub; playground, camp store, basketball, shuffleboard, horseshoes, and activities for the whole family.

**Arrowhead Golf Course** – 2170 Alden Nash Ave NE, Lowell; [www.golfarrowheadnow.com](http://www.golfarrowheadnow.com). This 18-hole course has a one-of-a-kind layout that challenges golfers of all skill levels. Membership opportunities that are shared with sister course Morrison Lake Golf Club.

**I-96 Speedway** – 3823 Portland Rd, Lake Odessa. Seasonal dirt track venue offers motorcycle & auto races, plus rock concerts & on-site food/drink.

**Ionia Skateland** – 820 Jefferson Rd, Ionia. Indoor roller-skating rink.

**Life Adventures Camp** – 2315 S Lee Rd, Saranac; [www.hipcamp.com](http://www.hipcamp.com). 43 acres featuring campsites, picnic shelter, full restrooms, and few small cabins for rent. Activities there or nearby: Biking, boating, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, paddling, swimming & wildlife watching.

**Michigan Horse Driving School** (nonprofit) – 6325 Rickert Rd, Saranac; [mihorsedrivingsschool.org](http://mihorsedrivingsschool.org). They offer Summer Camps, Horse Clubs, Private Lessons, and Wild Mustang Masters Group.

**Morrison Lake Golf Club** – 6425 Portland Rd, Saranac; [golfmorrisonlake.com](http://golfmorrisonlake.com). This 18-hole, full service Public Golf Course offers the following amenities: leagues, tings, membership opportunities that are shared with sister course Arrowhead Golf Course.

**Qua-Ke-Zik Sportman's Club** – 8731 Riverside Dr, Saranac; [quakezik.com](http://quakezik.com). Shooting Range. To use the rifle and pistol ranges you have to be a member. The skeet and trap ranges are open to the public at special times.

**Riverbend Campground** – 8293 Bluewater Hwy, Saranac. Temporarily closed.

**Western Michigan Rifle & Pistol Club** – 2116 W Lincoln Ave, Ionia; [wmrpc.com](http://wmrpc.com). Membership gun club.

## Regional Recreational Facilities

**Bertha Brock County Park** – located on Bertha Brock Dr off of M-21, Ionia; [ioniacounty.org](http://ioniacounty.org). Amenities include a cabin for rent, rustic campsites, picnic shelter, picnic tables, tennis courts, rock bridge, trout stream, ice skating, sledding hill, play structures, baseball, developed trails and foot trails, dogs allowed and hunting.

**Fallasburg County Park** – 1124 Fallasburg Park Dr NE, Lowell; [kentcountyparks.org](http://kentcountyparks.org)

The historic shelter offers a covered, wrap-around porch and romantic, barn-like atmosphere that is often rented for weddings, showers and other events. It has a full kitchen with attached restroom facilities. Wooden tables and historic wicker benches & chairs to accommodate 150 people max. Dogs allowed in park. Other amenities include covered bridge across the Flat River, baseball & softball, picnic areas, 3 playgrounds, 1-hole disc golf, parking & hiking trails. Includes a segment of 4,600-mile North Country National Scenic Trail stretching from New York to North Dakota.

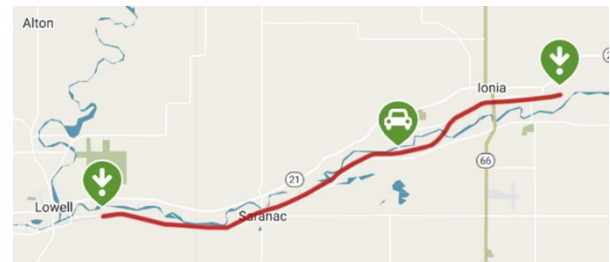
**Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail Trail**

(part of Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails System)

Although this was mentioned in the Village Facilities/Trails, it is worth noting again due to its regional coverage. The trail is constructed on a former railroad corridor between Lowell and Ionia. It is a non-motorized multi-use recreational trail used by individuals, families, and organizations.

Trail end points: Riverside Dr and S Montcalm Ave (Lowell) and Prairie Creek Bridge (Ionia).

Total length: 15.5 miles; with 1.3 paved miles in the Village of Saranac, and 4.5 paved miles through the City of Ionia. The trail in between is surfaced with finely screened and compacted crushed limestone. The trail to the west of Saranac is surfaced with a finely crushed asphalt mix and is similar to the crushed limestone. It is



usable by just about any type of non-motorized use except horses. In Lowell, the trail will ultimately connect to the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Rail Trail, which will whisk trail users north through Belding to Greenville.

Amenities from Saranac to Ionia include:

- Activities for trail: Biking, Mountain Biking, Walking, Cross-Country Skiing
- Beautiful scenery from Saranac to Ionia with views of 5 restored railroad bridges, including one towering bridge spanning 466 feet across the mighty Grand River. Viewing of a wide range of wildlife.
- Saranac Depot serves as the trailhead in Saranac and includes parking, a nature trail, picnic area, and a historical museum, all situated beside the river. In downtown Ionia, public parking is available on Adams St, one block east of M-66 bridge.
- Stores and eating establishments located in Saranac and Ionia.
- Restrooms are located at trailhead buildings in Saranac and Ionia.
- In Ionia, the trail links with the Fred Meijer Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee (CIS) Rail-Trail, and heads east through St. Johns to Owosso.

**Grand River Riverfront Park** – located on Grand River Dr SE, in Lowell.

Amenities include a Showboat; boat launch and an ADA-accessible canoe/kayak launch for the Flat River. Benches, gazebo, picnic tables, playground, soccer fields, concession stand, bridge river crossing, natural areas, a lacrosse field, wetlands education area, fishing area/dock, trails, accessible frontage along the

Grand River, canoe/kayak launch, paved walkways, parking, and a new bathroom building completed in 2021. It's a popular spot for festivals.

**Ionia State Recreation Area** – 2880 West David Hwy, Ionia; [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov).

This 4,500-acre park offers the following amenities: Beach house, boat launch, boat rental, swimming, canoeing/kayaking, cabins & lodges, dog trail area, a variety of campgrounds, horseback riding trails, mountain bike trails, hiking, fishing pier, picnic area, playgrounds, disc golf, water access, hunting, modern restrooms, vault toilets, sanitation station, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling.

**Saranac – Lowell State Game Area** – parcels straddling Montcalm Ave into Kent and Ionia Counties; [www.michigan.gov](http://www.michigan.gov).

These 1,863 acres have been dedicated for wildlife conservation and management by the DNR Wildlife Division. Public hunting, target shooting, hiking, parking.

## Non-profit Recreational Facilities

**Walter RC Park** (non-profit) – 8548 Morrison Lake Rd, Saranac; [walterrcpark.com](http://walterrcpark.com).

Home of Ionia County Model Club (non-profit). Radio Control Park with the following amenities: 600 ft grass runway, 300 ft fabric runway, offroad and oval track, rock crawler obstacle course, Sugar Bush Trails, Heli site, open areas for gliders and sailplanes, food/water available, portable rest areas, primitive and rustic camping.

## Barrier Free Evaluation & Universal Design

The ultimate goal is to provide recreation opportunities that include everyone. With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation are subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs. This planning process should include methods to ensure that the Village park and recreation system is accessible to persons with disabilities. The accessibility evaluations for the Village of Saranac have been conducted as part of the recreation planning process. As a general rule, Village park facilities lack ADA accessible parking, walkways to link park facilities to parking, accessible seating/tables and access to the water. A statement can be made that the Village parks are an average ranking of 3.4.

## Accessibility Assessment

The evaluations were based loosely on the United States Access Board's Section 15 – Recreation Facilities, the Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities, Americans with Disabilities Act, and used the ranking criteria suggested by MDNR's Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (2016). These criteria are based on the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

The criteria are as follows: ADA Ranking System Rank Interpretation

1. None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines.
2. Some of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
3. Most of the facilities/parks meet accessibility guidelines.
4. All the facilities/park meet accessibility guidelines.
5. The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design.

When looking to determine an area's accessibility to all people, start by asking these simple questions:

*Can a person who has a sight or hearing disability, uses a wheelchair, uses a walking aid such as crutches or braces, has a mental disability that affects learning and understanding, safely and independently:*

1. *get from the arrival place to the activity area?*
2. *do what others do in the area?*
3. *move around the area?*
4. *How can barriers be removed?*
5. *What is getting in the way?*

Common components that need to be looked at to answer these basic questions include parking, paths of travel from parking, street or sidewalk to activity areas, the activity areas themselves, signage, support facilities such as restrooms, surfacing, and communications required for recreation programs and general use of a facility or area. The goal of full accessibility is stated as a primary goal in the action plan outlined by the Village.

### Universal Access

Another often overlooked category is Universal Access. This practice goes way beyond typical Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations to practice “common and equal experiences for all.” The goal of universal access is, throughout concept and design phases, to incorporate technology, materials and other considerations that promote equal opportunities for people of varied abilities. These concepts should be kept in the forefront as a prime consideration in the 5-year Master Plan and individual parks or projects as they develop and progress.

Table 3.2 – Universal Access	
Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
<b>Archery range</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All stations.</li> <li>▪ Route to retrieval area for each target.</li> <li>▪ Targets also usable with cross bows.</li> <li>▪ Arrow back stop to limit retrieval distance.</li> <li>▪ Larger maneuvering spaces to accommodate archers with shooting assistants.</li> </ul>
<b>Beach</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Routes over the beach and into the water, can be portable/temporary matting if it needs to be taken in and out for beach cleaning/dragging or in the off season.</li> <li>▪ Wide enough for side-by-side walking/passing.</li> <li>▪ At beach route end have an accessible area at the water's edge large enough to park multiple chairs while the owners are in the water.</li> <li>▪ With a transfer system at the water's edge so people can get down to the ground level and into the water.</li> </ul>
<b>Boardwalk wetland and water access</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 6 feet minimum width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass.</li> <li>▪ Edge treatment to prevent roll/step off.</li> <li>▪ If side rails are used, <b>more than 25%</b> must be lowered for easy viewing in various places along the boardwalk .</li> <li>▪ Interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Campgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All sites and amenities.</li> <li>▪ Accessible surface on all sites, including rustic sites.</li> <li>▪ Larger spaces to accommodate side lifts on campers and vehicles.</li> </ul>

Type of Recreation Facility	<b>Table 3.2 – Universal Access</b> <b>Universal Access Design Considerations</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessible tables, grills (15" minimum, 34" maximum height), and fire rings on all sites.</li> <li>▪ Centrally located restrooms on easy routes from each site.</li> </ul>
<b>Camping Cabins and Yurts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Larger clear space and maneuvering spaces in between all furnishings, including when all are in use (beds, tables/chairs with people seated at the table, shelves within lowered reach ranges, lowered wall hooks, etc.).</li> <li>▪ Larger clear space thoughtfully located for typical portable items such as coolers, luggage, equipment/food bins/tubs, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Canoe/kayak/boat launch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Wider route so someone can hand wheel boat on dolly to launch pulling boat next to them if they are in a wheelchair or two person carry down.</li> <li>▪ Accessible surface to water's edge and into water at launch.</li> <li>▪ More gentle slopes for easier entry and exit when hand wheeling a boat.</li> <li>▪ Some type of "rack" to stabilize boat at a transferable height then some type of mechanism/roller system to move, while seated in the boat, into the water Some means of transfer assistance such as overhead bars.</li> <li>▪ Some type of wench system to help pull boat out of water back into the rack to exit/transfer out.</li> <li>▪ If there is a dock provide a transfer system on the dock so a person can be seated on the dock to transfer over to a boat in the water that is in some type of a stabilizer rack.</li> <li>▪ Adaptive kayaks available for use.</li> <li>▪ Shore station with a platform (instead of "V" rack) with a transfer system on the deck of the shore station, located next to a dock so someone could roll/get on the platform and lower it to the right level to transfer into a boat.</li> </ul>
<b>Fishing dock/pier and observation/viewing decks:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More than 25% of the rails are lowered in various locations or no rails at all with only an edge treatment to prevent roll off.</li> <li>▪ Sitting benches (all with backs and arm rests) scattered about so anglers can choose to sit or stand to fish.</li> <li>▪ Tackle box stands next to one bench end (not both) leaving one end clear space for sitting side by side with someone in a wheelchair.</li> <li>▪ A variety of fish landing cutaways strategically placed.</li> <li>▪ Variety of accessible opportunities—over-water fishing, shore fishing, in-water fishing, etc.</li> <li>▪ Transition plates between access route and deck/pier.</li> </ul>
<b>Nature center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All interpretive information in a variety of alternative formats such as auditory, large print, Braille, pictures, etc.</li> <li>▪ Creative use of technology such as mp3 players for auditory descriptions (this gives the info. directly to the individual) closed loop assistive listening devices and closed-circuit captioning of all interpretive presentations.</li> </ul>

Type of Recreation Facility	<b>Table 3.2 – Universal Access</b> <b>Universal Access Design Considerations</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All displays at lowered heights for sitting or standing viewing.</li> <li>▪ All operating mechanisms that are operable with one hand and do not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate.</li> </ul>
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More than minimum number of accessible spots.</li> <li>▪ Each connected directly to an accessible route to the park elements and NOT into the traffic flow.</li> <li>▪ Thoughtfully located nearest the activity entrance, which might require multiple lots (some near the beach, some near the playground, some near the bathhouse, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>Picnic areas and elements: Pavilions, picnic tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All located on accessible routes.</li> <li>▪ all tables, grills, fire rings, water pumps, etc. accessible.</li> <li>▪ Level routes onto pavilions with no changes of level from path to pavilion surface.</li> <li>▪ Wider routes and clear space with firm surface around all elements so someone with mobility limits can easily move around the element (table, grill, etc.).</li> <li>▪ A variety of table styles, some with clear sitting space on the side, some with extended tabletops on the end.</li> <li>▪ Some fixed tables to ensure they remain accessible (not moved off into a grassy or sandy area, etc.).</li> <li>▪ Clear space all around each element so people can approach and use the grill, fire ring, etc. from the front, back and either side.</li> <li>▪ Grills you can lower/raise the cooking surface with one hand.</li> <li>▪ Raised fire building surfaces so you can place wood without leaning too far over from a standing or seated position.</li> </ul>
<b>Playgrounds</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ramps and transfers.</li> <li>▪ Has both ramp and transfer access to all play components.</li> <li>▪ Ramps to every “getting on spot” or “sit/stand &amp; do it spot” of every play component.</li> <li>▪ Transfer system from the ground up to the main deck located near the exits of slides and climbers furthest from the ramp onto the structure.</li> <li>▪ Only unitary safety surface such as poured-in-place or rubber tiles NOT any loose fill materials like shredded rubber, wood chips, engineered wood fiber, or any other non-unitary surface material.</li> <li>▪ On deck transfer platform at the entry point of every slide.</li> <li>▪ On deck transfer platform with one open transfer side and one side with transfer steps to every entry/exit point of every climber, so kids climbing up can get down to the deck to move to another component, as they may have left an assistive device at the ground.</li> <li>▪ A good variety of things to manipulate that make noise or music, have high contrast/bright colors, games that two kids can play (to foster social interaction), Braille and sign language panels to teach awareness, easy to operate with just one hand with a whole fist (does not require tight/pinch/grasp/wrist twist to operate).</li> </ul>



Type of Recreation Facility	<b>Table 3.2 – Universal Access</b> <b>Universal Access Design Considerations</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Different high contrast colors for decks versus transfers so kids with low vision can perceive a change in level.</li> <li>▪ Play panels are located at heights so they can be used from a seated position or standing.</li> </ul>
<b>Restrooms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More than the minimum number of accessible units.</li> <li>▪ Multiple unisex/single user toilet rooms/units so opposite sex care givers can assist; also good for parents of young children of the opposite sex so kids aren't sent alone into the multi-user restroom.</li> <li>▪ Thoughtfully located near areas of activity such as play areas, beaches, fishing piers, etc.</li> <li>▪ Accessible door pulls and water faucet handles - all accessible port-a-johns, again big enough for individual use or care giver/parental assistance.</li> </ul>
<b>Skiing/sledding hill</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Accessible route to top (no steps), possibly using a "magic carpet" lift.</li> <li>▪ Level surface for sled mounting at hilltop.</li> <li>▪ If staffed, provide ATV transport, or have policy that allows personal ATV use.</li> <li>▪ Transfer at hill bottom to help transfer.</li> </ul>
<b>Sports fields/courts</b>  <b>Fields: soccer, football, baseball, etc.</b> <b>Courts: tennis, basketball, bocce, horseshoes, etc.</b> <b>Other: skate parks, frisbee golf</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Routes to both sides of all fields and courts, not just end zones.</li> <li>▪ Accessible seating spaces both ground level and elevated if risers/bleachers are provided.</li> <li>▪ Accessible seating spaces scattered throughout all viewing areas and levels with companion seating on both sides of the space.</li> <li>▪ All lowered service windows at all concession areas.</li> <li>▪ Wider gate openings into court areas (tennis, bocce, basketball) and skate parks to accommodate wider sports wheelchairs.</li> <li>▪ Routes to both horseshoe pits and along both sides of the route between pits.</li> <li>▪ Level routes onto bocce courts with sitting benches at both ends.</li> </ul>
<b>Trail: nature trail, walkway, pathway, etc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Multi-use trail - 8 feet, with slopes under 2%, wider width so two people can walk side by side or people can pass .</li> <li>▪ Walkways within a site – at least 6 feet wide and have slopes under 2%.</li> <li>▪ Regional trail system - at least 10 feet wide, with 1-foot buffers on either side, with slopes under 2%.</li> <li>▪ Unitary surface like concrete, boardwalk or asphalt, crushed aggregate/screenings that have been "stabilized" or natural soils enhanced with soil stabilizers.</li> <li>▪ Transition plates between trail and pedestrian bridges, decks, etc.</li> <li>▪ Contrasting color treatment of the surface and textured surface treatments such as brushed concrete at intersections or interpretive stations to cue people who have vision impairments that there is something to pay attention to at that spot.</li> <li>▪ Close to level cross slopes (side to side) and very gentle running slopes, no steep sections, larger (greater than 60" X 60") level areas at all turns and intersections.</li> </ul>

Table 3.2 – Universal Access	
Type of Recreation Facility	Universal Access Design Considerations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Thoughtfully laid out on the site to maximize the experience with minimal difficulty.</li> <li>▪ Accessible amenities such as benches, restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.</li> </ul>

## Recreational Programs/Activities/Events

Saranac Community Association, in cooperation with the Village, host a multitude of annual activities and events. They are as follows.

- Saranac Community Fundraising Dinner
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Plant Sale
- Summer Movie Series
- Tunes at the Trailhead
- Bridge Festival – 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday in August
- Girls Night Out
- Saranac Community Market (Farmers Market)
- Harvest Festival
- Buck Pole
- Thanksgiving Meal
- Christmas Tree Lighting

## Past Grant Status

Following is a Grant Inventory and breakdown of these projects and the grant and local funds expended over and above those itemized and discussed above.

Acquisition – Grand River Boat and Canoe Launch	
Project No.	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Grant No. TF89-024
Project Year	1989
Cost	\$10,400 grant from DNR Trust Fund; \$3,654 match
Status	Grant Closed
To acquire one lot with 465 feet of frontage on the Grand River.	

Scheid Park Improvements	
Project No.	Michigan Recreation Bond Fund – Grant No. BF89-345
Project Year	1989
Cost	\$125,000 grant from Recreation Bond Fund; \$50,182 match
Status	Grant Closed
Improvements include ballfields, shelter, horseshoe pits, parking facilities, paving, lights, landscape, storm drain and grading; along with playground equipment, and 2 basketball courts.	

Grand River Boat and Canoe Launch Construction	
<b>Project No.</b>	MDNR Waterways Commission & Federal Dingell-Johnson (LWCF Funds) – Grant No. 116-89
<b>Project Year</b>	
<b>Cost</b>	\$14,440 grant; \$45,918 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed

Scheid Park Expansion (renamed Saranac Village Nature Park)	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Recreation Bond Fund – Grant No. TF98-074
<b>Project Year</b>	1998
<b>Cost</b>	\$36,000 grant; \$24,000 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed
Acquisition in fee simple terms of 63 acres with 2,800 feet of Grand River frontage for a community park with picnic and play areas, and pedestrian paths with scenic overlooks.	

Saranac Village Nature Park – Phase I	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Recreation Bond Fund – Grant No. TF 01-092
<b>Project Year</b>	2001
<b>Cost</b>	\$165,470 grant from DNR Trust Fund; \$102,723 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed
Develop recreational facilities along the Grand River and extensive wetlands including trails, access drive, open play area and fishing platform.	

5-acre Riverfront (future Riverwalk Park – see next one)	
<b>Project No.</b>	
<b>Project Year</b>	
<b>Cost</b>	\$0 grant; \$22,000 match
<b>Status</b>	N/A
Land acquisition of the entire park area.	

Riverwalk Park Development	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Recreation Bond Fund – Grant No. TF04-059
<b>Project Year</b>	2004
<b>Cost</b>	\$59,500 grant from Recreation Bond Fund; \$46,393 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed
Development of a 1,900-foot, 10-foot-wide bituminous trail which will provide 1,450 feet of access to the Grand River as well as a picnic shelter and site amenities.	

Scheid Park – Skate Park Facility	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
<b>Project Year</b>	
<b>Cost</b>	\$0 grant; \$105,838 match; additional equipment in 2009 \$52,000.
<b>Status</b>	N/A

Boat Launch – 1.6 Acre Acquisition	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – TF12-079
<b>Project Year</b>	2012
<b>Cost</b>	\$74,000 grant; \$26,000 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed
Acquisition of approximately 1.8 acres of property that will connect the Boat Launch Park to the new Fred Meijer Rail-Trail system.	

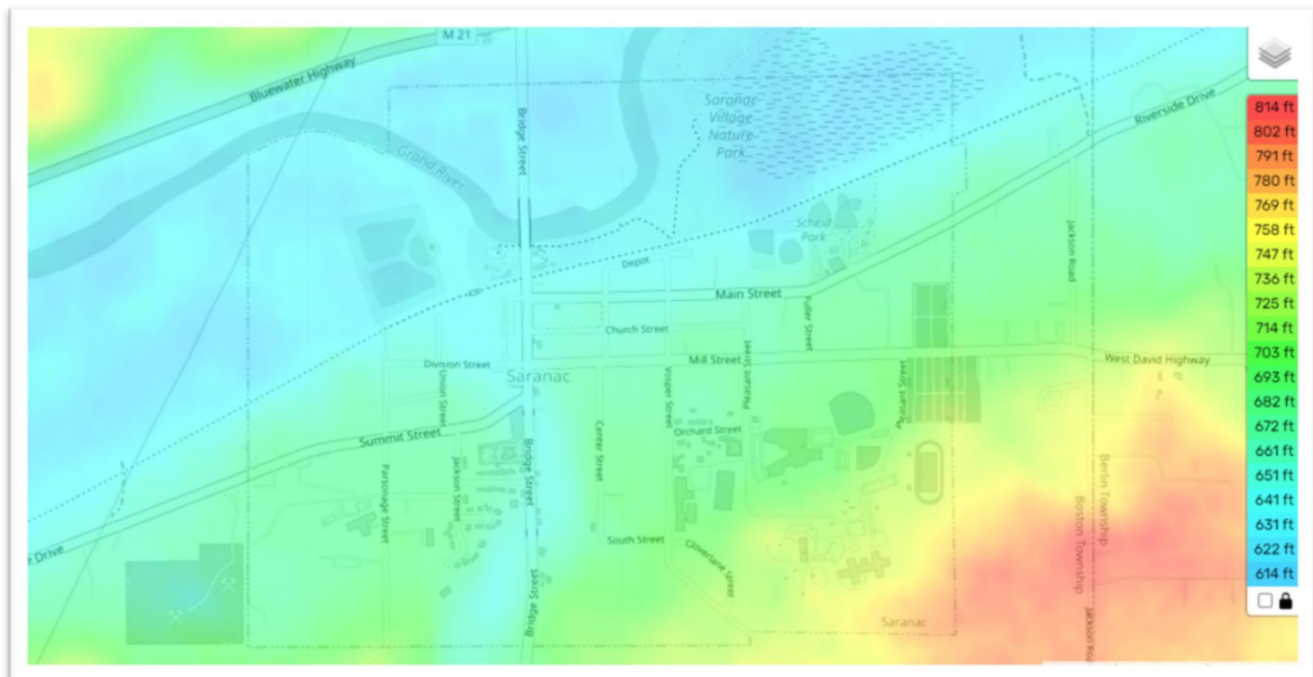
Boat Launch Park Improvements	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Grant No. TF16-0182
<b>Project Year</b>	2016
<b>Cost</b>	\$181,500 grant from DNR Trust Fund; \$78,000 match
<b>Status</b>	Grant Closed
Development to construct a trailhead parking area for use as a trailhead staging area, construction of a restroom/pavilion building, universal access parking and walks, universally accessible fishing/overlook pier, educational displays, universally accessible trail connection to the existing Riverwalk Trail and the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail.	

Scheid Park Improvements	
<b>Project No.</b>	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Grant No. TF21-0126
<b>Project Year</b>	2021
<b>Cost</b>	\$300,000 grant from DNR Trust Fund; \$120,000 match
<b>Status</b>	Active
New Restroom and Concession facilities; updated universally accessible parking and routes to ballfields.	

## Natural Resource Inventory

### Topography & Landforms

The Village of Saranac lies along the Grand River Valley which at this point, in its lengthy course across the State, occupies the deeply cut channel of an old glacial drainage way. Within the Village, Lake Creek has cut a steep stream bank as it flows northward towards the Grand River. The emptying of Mill Pond on the southwest edge of the Village limits, after the dam was removed, has left a depression. The southern part of the Village is high compared to its northern portion, with the highest being the southeastern portion over 800 feet above sea level.



**Figure 4.1 Saranac Village Topographic Map**

The slope of land plays an important role in determining the suitable use and development of property. Moderate slopes (10% - 25%) and areas of extreme slope (25% or more) may limit higher density developments from occurring. These limitations include a heightened risk of erosion. However, areas consisting of moderate and extreme slopes are very sparse within the area. The remaining region consists of fairly level terrain which presents little to no restrictions for future development.

### Wetlands

The wetlands in the Village are similar to the County in that wetlands with associated woodlands that existed during the time of large expanses of pre-settlement wetlands have been reduced to small, scattered upland areas or wetlands associated with floodway/floodplain areas. Upland wetlands have been reduced due to filling, subsurface drainage and drain construction undertaken to improve agriculture. Most upland wetlands are forested and are less than 20 acres in size. Both upland and shoreline wetlands provide opportunities such as hiking, nature viewing, hunting, and environmental education.

The wetland map shows wetland areas that serve to provide wildlife habitat, stormwater storage, water quality improvement, natural scenery, and other benefits. Most of the wetlands are located along the various waterbodies such as rivers, creeks, streams, drainage ditches and other water bodies.

Hydric soils are also identified. These are soils that have formed in the presence of water for sustained periods. They can be used to help locate wetlands, especially those that have been disturbed or altered by fill or excavation. Hydric soils may be unsuitable for certain types of development and can be an indicator of high groundwater levels.

Because they occur where the dry land meets the water, wetlands play a critical role in the management of our water-based resources. Acre for acre, wetlands produce more wildlife and plants than any other Michigan habitat type. Wetland species also comprise a critically important segment of these species.

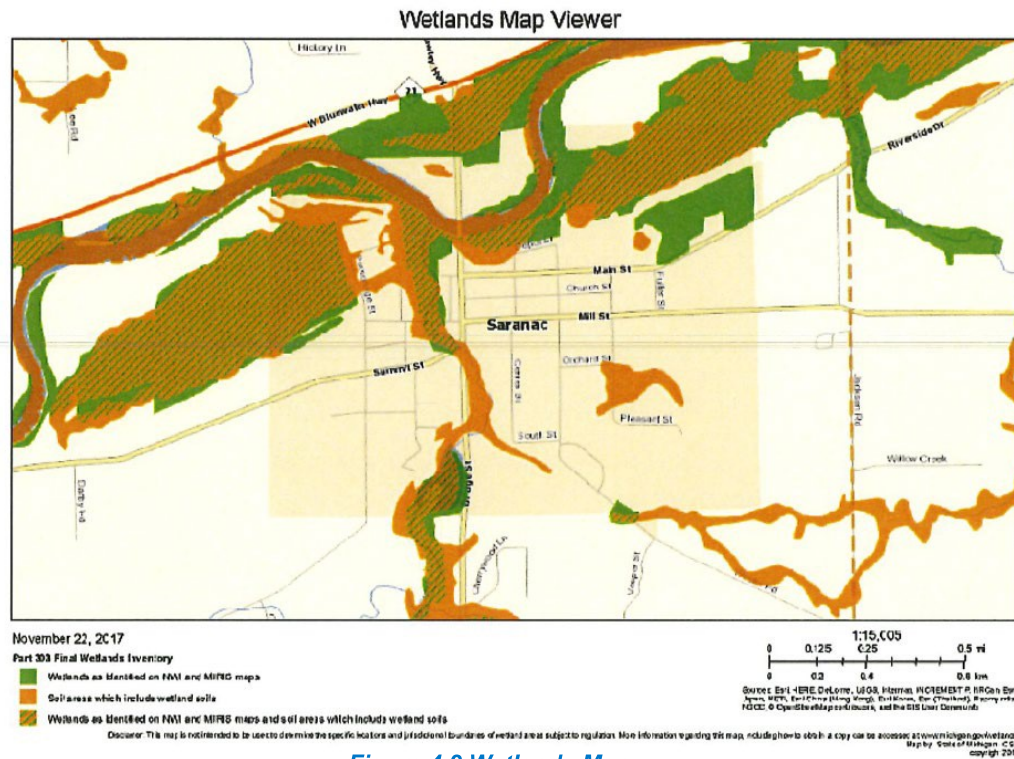
Benefits of wetlands are many. Wetlands help:

- Reduce flooding by absorbing runoff from rain and melting snow and slowly releasing excess water into rivers and lakes – a one acre swamp when flooded to a depth of one foot contains 330,000 gallons of water.
- Filter pollutants from surface runoff, trapping fertilizers, pesticides, sediments, and other contaminants and helping to break some of them down into less harmful substances, improving water clarity and quality.
- Help recharge groundwater supplies when connected to underground aquifers.
- Contribute to natural nutrient and water cycles, and produce vital atmospheric gases, including oxygen.
- Provide commercial or recreational value to our human economy, by producing plants, game birds (ducks, geese) and fur bearing mammals – many fish are directly connected to wetlands, requiring shallow water areas for breeding, feeding, and escaping from predators.
- When wetland occur adjacent to inland lakes or streams, they serve as nutrient traps that then enrich the larger body of water of which they are a part.

The last century has seen a greatly increased rate of wetland loss due to filling and drainage by man. Prior to World War II, drainage to expand agricultural lands accounted for most of this loss. Recently, much wetland destruction has been caused by commercial, industrial, and residential expansion. The estimated 11 million acres of Michigan wetlands existing in pre-settlement times has now been reduced to less than 3 million acres. Recent legislation has slowed the loss rate somewhat but threats to these habitats, particularly the smaller wetlands, continue in many areas.

Prior to park & recreation development, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) should be consulted to review the results of a wetlands determination. The impacts of development within wetland areas should be carefully considered, and a permit from the MDNR should always be obtained if regulated wetlands are to be impacted.



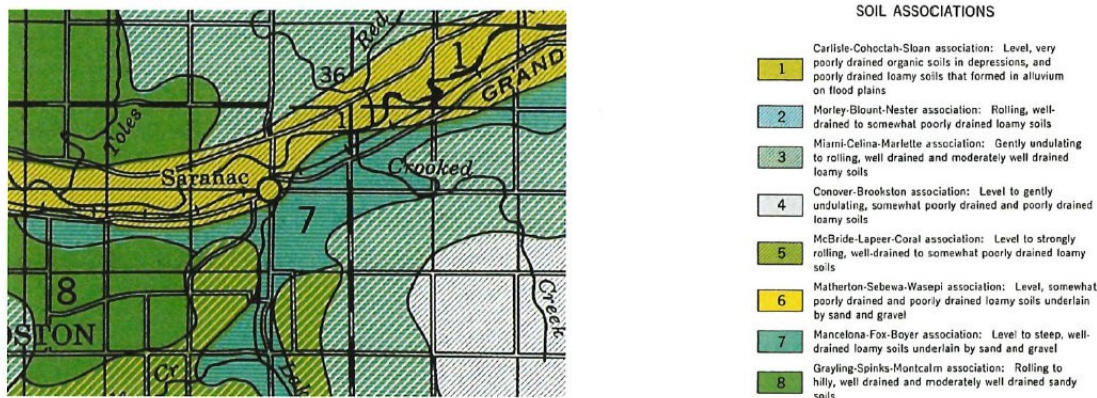


**Figure 4.2 Wetlands Map**

## Soils

The predominant soil in the Village of Saranac is the Mancelona-Fox-Boyer Association (#7). It's described as being associated with the loping river terrace (level to steep), well drained loamy soils, underlain by sand and gravel. Major limitations to developing these soils include susceptibility to erosion (depending on degree of slope), stoniness, and drought; yet are generally suitable for development. Soils found within the floodplain of the Grand River are represented by level, or nearly level, poorly drained organic soils that are subject to excessive wetness (Carlisle-Choctah-Sloan Association, #1).

Generally, well-drained, coarse-textured soils provide the most suitable foundations. Poor soil stability occurs with soils containing large concentrations of organic material, such as muck, silt, and clay. The areas of poor soil stability are concentrated in low-lying and poorly drained areas adjacent to rivers and creeks. In these low-lying areas, the presence of water in and near the surface contributes to frost heave, compression, shrinkage, and swelling.



**Figure 4.3 Soils Map**

## Water Resources & Drainage

The most notable natural feature within the Village is the Grand River which flows into the Village from the northeast and forms a loop as it exists in the northwest. This river loop represents nearly two miles of river frontage within the Village (including both sides of the river). Another predominant natural feature within the Village is Lake Creek which flows through the center of the Village from the south and enters the Grand River within the northwest corner of the Village. Generally, land drainage is east and west to Lake Creek, except nearer to the Grand River where it flows south and north.

Lake Creek flows from Morrison Lake which is five miles directly south of the Village. The 325-acre Morrison Lake is the nearest inland lake to the Village of Saranac and does have a public access site.

## Floodplains

The floodplains associated with the Grand River occupy a significant area within the Village. Part of the Central Business District lies on the southern edge of the floodplain. It is important to maintain the integrity of the floodplain and its ability to handle the overflow of the flooding rivers. When a portion of the floodplain is built on or filled in to accommodate development, it forces waters onto other properties.

### National Flood Hazard Layer FIRMette

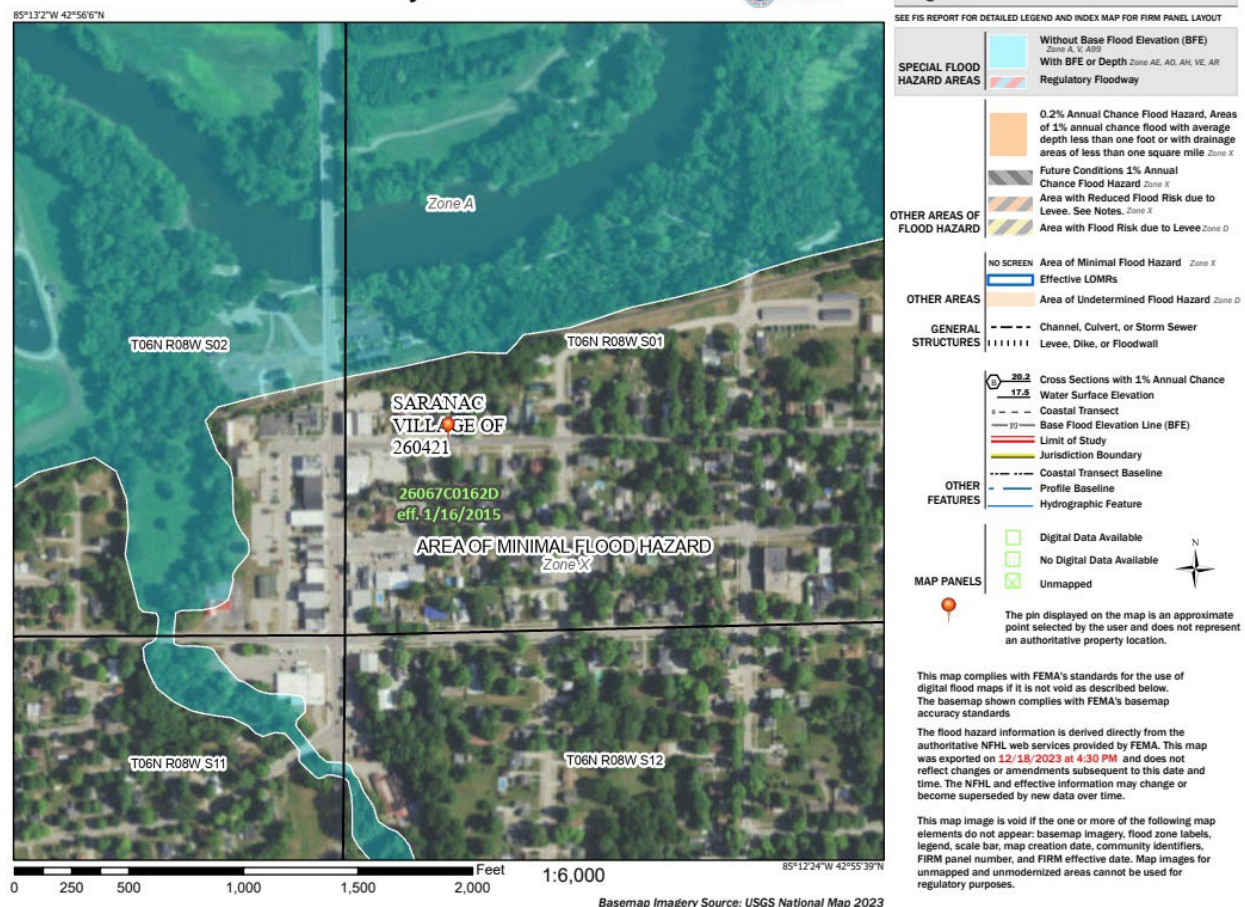


Figure 4.4 Floodplain Map

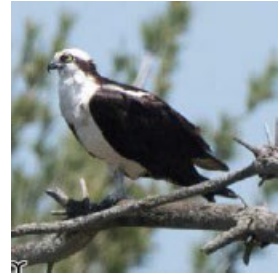


## Woodlands

Vegetation varies from open greenways to dense woods. These woods consist of mature stands of hardwoods, mainly along the Grand River basin to softwood areas. Extensive flood plains and wetlands exist also, north, and south of the Grand River basin.

## Fish and Wildlife

The area's wildlife is typical of that found in most of lower Michigan. Common wildlife includes deer, raccoons, opossums, rabbits, muskrats, beavers, squirrels, rodents and other small mammals. The area is home to a variety of birds including owls, wild turkeys, pheasants and many others. The Park users often spot an eagle who has chosen to reside near the Village Nature Park. The area is also a seasonal home to many migratory birds including ducks and Canadian Geese.





## Description of Planning & Public Input Process

### Planning Methods

Community recreational facilities cannot be effectively provided without some basis from which the type, quantity, location, need, and priority for that facility has been determined. Several methods for determining a community's recreation needs and priorities have been identified. These include observed use levels for existing facilities, comparisons of recreational facilities between similar communities, unique opportunities for certain types of facilities, guidelines or standards based on quantity per population, and projected population growth, to identify a few methods.

Existing recreation opportunities can be compared to recreation standards to determine deficiencies. However, great care must be taken to apply common sense and knowledge of the community. These standards will be used only in conjunction with other methods to determine recreation deficiencies and priorities.

The foundation for the development of the Village of Saranac Park and Recreation Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the community in the process to develop a Five-Year Park & Recreation Plan.
- Inventory and map existing Village of Saranac recreational facilities.
- Build a strong foundation of Village of Saranac area stakeholders in addressing the future recreational needs and priorities of the Community.
- Enable the Village to be eligible for financial assistance based upon the Five-Year Park & Recreation Plan.
- Facilitate interagency collaboration in establishing recreation goals objectives and actions.
- Continue to support and implement improvements for barrier-free Universal Access to Village of Saranac area parks.
- Consistency with and expansion upon goals and objectives set forth in existing planning documents that deal partially or wholly with recreation.

### Public Input

The purpose of the strategic planning process was to receive direct input from key individuals within the community, relative to the identification and ranking of the community's current recreation needs. The issues and needs were identified and discussed at a Village of Saranac Park & Recreation Committee Meeting on November 28, 2023. Then a Public Input Workshop was held on December 5, 2023, from 7 pm – 9 pm. A notice was placed on the Village of Saranac website, for the public Park and Recreation Committee Meeting along with the location and time for the public workshop. There were also emails sent out to recreation affiliated groups to try and encourage participation at the workshop. The workshop was interactive. The participants selected their top three choices for different elements of a recreational facility. There were also comment cards that were filled out. In addition, a lot of casual conversation was had discussing people's opinions and suggestions. The feedback from these meetings was used to develop a draft plan and are incorporated into this document.

The 30-day public notice was posted in the Ionia Sentinel on December 22, 2023, to explain the public review period. Notice was also posted on the Village's website, FaceBook page and on (3) bulletin boards



around town. The draft plan was posted on the Village's website and available upon request by contacting the Village Office. Written comments were accepted by the Village. The feedback was used to finalize the 5-Year Park & Recreation Plan and presented at a public hearing on January 22, 2024. The hearing date was published at the same time/same article as the review period. At the hearing, the Village of Saranac 5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan was adopted. A copy of the public notice, the minutes and the resolution are included in the appendix of this plan.



## Goals and Objectives

In defining the action program, the formulation of community goals and objectives for the provision of recreation is a vital component. The goals and objectives represent the purposes for a community's role in providing recreation to its residents as well as outlining the direction that the community's effort should take in the long term. Goals are the general targets for which a community aims while objectives are the specific steps that can be taken towards that goal. A recreation plan identifies those actions that can be undertaken to implement the objectives and fulfill the community's goals. The goals and objectives for the Village in meeting the recreation needs of residents are outlined below.

### Goal 1

**Provide comprehensive community-based recreation opportunities that improve the overall quality of life for Saranac Village residents, and for residents of neighboring areas.**

#### Objectives

The various input received from the community during this planning process has provided many suggestions for improvements in our park facilities and recreational programs. The Village of Saranac will continue to use these suggestions to guide their planning for the future.

#### Potential Actions

- Continue to add amenities and support facilities to the current Village park facilities based upon community input and current needs of the community.
- Provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities.
- Ensure that improvements and upgrades to existing park facilities are handicap accessible, where feasible.
- Construct restroom facilities, play areas, ADA parking, picnic facilities and other recreational facilities as priority items identified in community workshops.
- Promote low water and native planting restoration whenever practical especially in the addition of bioswales, rain gardens and stabilization plantings in areas of erosion.
- Look at options for improving educational and interpretive signage in all the parks including signs for persons of various disabilities.

### Goal 2

**Provide quality leisure time activities with special consideration given to improving health and fitness.**

#### Objectives

The Village's recreational facilities and programs offer the community an opportunity to enjoy nature and take part in activities that will improve health and fitness. The Saranac Village Council realizes the importance of providing top quality park facilities and programs and would like to continue to provide its residents with resources to improve their health and fitness.





### Potential Actions

- Provide both passive and active programming for a variety of ages and abilities of the population.
- Add recreational facilities based upon recreation trends and input from the community.

## Goal 3

### **Provide additional non-motorized trails for recreational and transportation use.**

#### Objectives

Providing the community with a trail system which is a “safe highway” across the community connecting schools, parks and the downtown district, is a high priority!

#### Potential Actions

- Expand the accessible trail system in the Village with a focus on continuing to connect our existing parks, neighborhoods, and destination points.
- Connect Saranac’s trail system to neighboring communities.
- Explore cooperative efforts with surrounding communities to promote, manage, oversee, plan, and seek joint funding for trails in the regional area and to avoid duplication of efforts and to enhance the connect-ability of the trails and ensure the best regional outcomes.
- Develop system of wayfinding signage to aid users in navigating and utilizing park facilities.
- Utilizing & expanding the Frederick Meijer Trail system to be part of the equation.

## Goal 4

### **Provide recreation opportunities that focus and take advantage of Village of Saranac water resources.**

#### Objectives

Many residents have commented on the natural beauty of our trails and parks in the Village which utilize the Grand River as a focal point. They also responded that they felt it was important to develop recreational opportunities that take advantage of what our river has to offer. This can be very important to residents as well as those interested in visiting the community. The Grand River recreational opportunities can be seen as an economic development tool.

#### Potential Actions

- Develop opportunities with other agencies in our community to educate our residents about our local natural resources.
- Enhance fishing, canoeing and kayaking opportunities on the Grand River.
- Enhance and expand our use of our natural resources for festivals and special events.



- Promote stormwater run-off quality control measures to improve water habitat for fish.
- Install educational signage in different parks in the Village to educate users on the wildlife and history of the Village.

## Goal 5

### **Acquire and retain public land for future generations.**

#### **Objectives**

As the Village of Saranac plans for the future, our local officials need to be conscious of the need for acquiring additional park land as it becomes available.

#### **Potential Actions**

- Retain existing parkland and acquire new public lands to meet the future recreational needs of the Village.
- Preserve and protect open space and other important natural features in the Village.
- Develop programs for evaluating future land acquisition.
- Preserve floodplains and wetlands for recreation purposes whenever possible.
- Acquire property adjacent to existing park properties whenever possible to allow for the greatest flexibility and offer economy of sharing infrastructure when expanding or adding recreation activities to existing dedicated parks.
- Apply for DNR land acquisition grants to assist in the acquiring of new property for recreational value.

## Goal 6

### **Create community awareness of Village of Saranac recreational opportunities and promote them to our local citizens as well as to visitors of the community.**

#### **Objectives**

Several respondents indicated in the past that they were not aware of all the parks that are available in our local community. They also indicated that they were not aware of all the adult and youth recreational programs that we offered in our local recreation department.

#### **Potential Actions**

- Develop additional print and web-based media to describe existing recreational opportunities available to the residents of our service area.
- Develop additional print and web-based media to describe and highlight our existing park facilities.
- Update existing Village website to enhance and convey all the opportunities available in the Village.



## Goal 7

**Develop a system of park facilities that promote four seasons use.**

### Objectives

Provide residents with opportunities for recreation that span multiple seasons of use within the Village and the respective park facilities.

### Potential Actions

- Construct compatible yet diverse uses within the parks that promote spring, summer, fall, and winter uses.
- Explore options for all-season facilities such as warming shelters, and outdoor fireplaces.
- Review options for winter ice skating area.
- Explore options for community pool with Saranac Community Schools.
- Look at using Fredrick Meijer Trail system for cross country skiing.

## Goal 8

**Continue the improvement and development of universal design concepts at all Village park locations in accordance with the park's development master plan.**

### Objectives

Develop new and expanded facilities and programs at the park including river walk opportunities, picnic facilities, paved parking, walking paths, new play equipment and lighting.

### Potential Actions

- Provide other restroom facility opportunities in Village parks that have a need for them.
- Provide for universally accessible play areas, picnic facilities and shelters.
- Provide for paved parking areas and trails to provide barrier-free access to all areas.
- Provide additional non-motorized trails to better connect Village destinations and areas.
- Improve signage for any visually or physically impaired park users.
- Provide new river access points for all users and areas for ADA kayak launch points.

## Goal 9

**To enhance the quality of life in the Village by providing multi-generational, fully accessible, and safe recreational facilities that are responsive to the needs of all residents with high quality recreational facilities that efficiently utilize available resources.**



## Objectives

Preserve natural resources as well as develop educational opportunities to better appreciate and aid the natural community.

## Potential Actions

- Develop a variety of recreational facilities that reflect the changing and diverse needs of the Village residents.
- Improve existing recreational facilities to fulfill the needs of Village residents more effectively and to encourage regular use of these facilities.
- Develop certain recreational facilities as identified by public input and establish priorities for their development.
- Utilize design, construction, and maintenance practices that maximize the benefits provided for the resources expended.
- Plan improvements that offer both active and passive recreation opportunities.
- Develop unique recreational opportunities for elderly and physically challenged citizens. Every recreational opportunity should be fully accessible to all individuals whenever possible.
- Provide play areas that are in conformance with the “Playground Equipment Safety Act”.

## Goal 10

**Create new partnerships and collaboration.**

## Objectives

As Michigan continues to struggle it is important to take advantage of collaborations and partnerships as a cost-effective way to offer recreational programs in the community.

## Potential Actions

- Coordinate existing recreational projects and programs with Saranac Community Schools, Ionia County, Keene Township, Boston Township, City of Ionia, MDOT, and volunteer groups and look for ways to utilize existing facilities as well as expanding recreational programs as new facilities are developed.
- Encourage the cooperation and participation of adjacent communities in the formation of a regional recreational advisory board to combine resources and avoid duplication of facilities and services.
- Utilize public and private sector cooperation in the promotion of recreation and the improvement of recreational opportunities.
- Encourage the participation of volunteers in the development of recreational facilities.



## Goal 11

**To provide recreational opportunities that preserve and protect the natural and historical features within the Village.**

### Objectives

Reduce adverse impacts from invasive species to the community's biodiversity, economy, and recreational assets.

### Potential Actions

- Identify and inventory those natural and historical features that reflect the unique character of the Village.
- Minimize the impact of recreational activities on the integrity of the Village's natural and historical resources.
- Take advantage of the extensive Grand River frontage for recreational development.
- Purchase waterfront or green space properties as opportunities arise.

## Goal 12

**To continually improve the quality of and the opportunities for recreation in the Village by reassessing community recreation needs, trends, and characteristics.**

### Objectives

To continually be striving to update the plans and parks that the Village has and to keep looking to upgrade facilities, when possible, to keep with trends and needs for all users.

### Potential Actions

- Periodically update this Recreation Plan.
- Develop an expanded survey to ensure public needs and desires are heard in the area of parks & recreation.
- Expand and develop community park advocates through the ongoing efforts of the existing Park & Recreation Committee.
- Provide opportunities for the involvement of Village residents in the identification, selection, and development of recreational facilities.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Village's efforts in fulfilling identified goals and objectives by providing opportunities for Village residents to evaluate the progress of recreational development.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Village's efforts in providing fully accessible opportunities for Village residents.
- Facilitate regular meetings of the Park & Recreation Committee.





## Action Program

### Recommended Actions

A variety of factors, including Village characteristics, population trends, existing recreation facilities, and identified recreation needs, contribute to the formulation of specific recommendations for plan implementation. These specific recommendations represent the actions that can be undertaken to achieve the objectives that have been directed towards a community's recreation goals. These recommended actions also represent the substance and purpose of a recreation plan - the development of a strategy for effectively closing the gap between existing recreation opportunities and recreation needs.

The public input from the workshop provided a variety of ideas for facilities and programming. The suggestions covered the following:

- Pickleball, disc golf, basketball court updates, and play equipment updates.
- Lighting on trail and other park areas
- Improvements to Nature Park, Scheid Park baseball dugouts and parking
- Areas for Farmers Market and music at Trailhead
- Improved Interpretive/Educational signs/trails, including wetland conservation.
- Recreational programming
- Annual 5K Event for fundraiser for parks, also public art, and bathrooms open year-round.

Putting those suggestions into the proposed projects, the following actions are suggested.

- Improving ADA accessible routes & adding Pickleball Courts
- Improving Playground Structures for 2-5 / 5-12 age groups @ Scheid Park
- Additional paved pathways at the Village Nature Park
- Improving existing pathways at Village Nature Park
- Provide improved observation/ fishing platforms along the Grand River
- Kayak Launch and seating areas along the Grand River

The following recommendation and capital improvement schedule outlines and assign relative priorities to activities and projects that can be implemented in both the short-term and long-range future to improve recreational opportunities in the Village. Those activities and projects that can be undertaken during the five-year planning period (2024-2028) have been summarized in a Capital Improvement Schedule (Table 8-1). This schedule includes cost estimates as well as possible funding sources for each suggested project.

While these projects are recommended for implementation during the planning period, they are highly dependent upon financial and administrative feasibility. It is also suggested that the Village take advantage of any unscheduled opportunities that may arise. Such opportunities can be evaluated and included in this plan as an amendment to the schedule.

**Please note:** The capital improvements are listed in no particular order. The matrix provides a target year, the project location, a description, an estimated range of likely costs, revenue sources, and goals. It is intended to be used as a guideline for planning.

## Capital Improvement Schedule

Table 8.1 - Capital Improvement Schedule				
Year	Project	Est. Cost	Justification	Funding Source
2024	Pickleball Courts & ADA improvements – Scheid Park	\$600,000	Goal 1	\$300,000 MNRTF Grant \$150,000 Donor \$150,000 Village match
2026	Nature Park Improvements	\$300,000	Goal 2	\$300,000 MNRTF Grant \$150,000 Village match
2028	Kayak Launch & Fishing Opportunities	\$300,000	Goal 3	\$300,000 MNRTF Grant \$150,000 Village match
2028	Recreation Plan Update	\$7,500	Goal 3	\$7,500 Local

### Abbreviations

MDNR - Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
LWCF - Land and Water Conservation Fund  
TAP - Transportation Alternatives Program

MDOT – Michigan Department of Transportation  
MNRTF- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund  
Waterways - Michigan Department of Natural Resources Waterways Program

## Financing Mechanisms

The following paragraphs briefly outline existing sources of funds for financing the future recreational improvements in the Village.

### 1. General Funds

The Village's general fund has been the primary source of funds for operating and maintaining its current facilities. Future site improvements, acquisition, and development will remain dependent on these tax-supported funds, as will the continued operation and maintenance of these facilities. Consequently, recreation planning has to be coordinated with the yearly budgeting process for the Village's general fund.

### 2. Donations and Gifts

The availability of donated land, labor, equipment, and funds from individuals and organizations is an attractive and effective way to improve recreational opportunities in the Village. Over the past few years, several groups and individuals have contributed significantly. Such support should be encouraged to continue.

### 3. Non-Local Financial Assistance

Many communities seek outside sources of funds to supplement their local sources when providing recreational improvements. There are several programs administered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) that can provide some financial assistance to local recreation projects. Funding amounts available to communities vary from year to year depending on Federal support and State legislative agendas.

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a competitive grant program administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation that funds projects such as nonmotorized paths, streetscapes, and historic preservation of transportation facilities that enhance Michigan's intermodal transportation system and provide safe alternative transportation options. These investments support place-based economic development by offering transportation choices, promoting walkability and improving the quality of life. The program uses Federal Transportation Funds designated by Congress for these types of activities. Some key information on the TA program is as follows:

- Funding will be reduced from the current \$23 million a year to \$14-16 million a year. Project funding will be more competitive than previously with the average per capita award in the \$44-50 per person range.
- Minimum match is still 20%, however historic average is 34% and the 2011 average was 44% local match to grant. Any project request for over \$2,000,000 total project cost must be 50%-50%. The most favorable grant request will likely be in the \$500,000 range.
- Regional Trails will still be a priority, as will urban area streetscapes. Museums and historic preservation projects will be phased out for funding consideration.
- Preliminary grant application review with regional staff is encouraged to determine competitive nature of project and gather suggestions from TE staff. Project narratives should focus on intermodal transportation opportunities as they relate to the larger picture in the community, traffic calming, improving safety and improving water quality through best management practices.

The **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)** is administered by the MDNR. The MNRTF program utilizes the royalties from oil, gas, and other mineral developments on state-owned lands to help finance the acquisition and the development of outdoor recreation facilities. The CMI program is the result of the passage of Proposal C of 1998.

Any unit of government, including school districts, may apply for grants to develop or acquire land(s) for public recreation or resource protection purposes. Application forms are available on February 1 of each year. The application deadlines are April 1 and September 1, of each year. The MDNR submits a list of recommended projects to the legislature the following January and funds are available after legislative appropriation, usually the following fall.

All local units of government must provide a local match of at least 25 percent of total project costs. For **MNRTF** development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000, and the maximum is \$300,000. Proposals must be for outdoor recreation or resource protection purposes. Outdoor recreation support buildings and other facilities are eligible for development funding, as is the renovation of existing recreation facilities.

All applicants must have a current DNR-approved Five-Year Park & Recreation Plan, documenting the need for project proposal.

In addition, any private individual may nominate land for public acquisition under this program. All nominations are reviewed by the MDNR for possible acquisition and the landowner is not required to be the person nominating a parcel of land for public acquisition. Nomination forms are available at any time from the DNR Recreation Division and may be submitted to the Department year-round.

The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (**LWCF**) program makes money available to the States for land acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities. From 1965 to 1996, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) received over \$100 million in LWCF assistance for more than 1,500 projects,

over 1,100 of which have been grants to local governments. The objective is to provide grants to local units of government and to the State to acquire and develop land for outdoor recreation.

Applications are evaluated on established criteria including project need, capability of applicant, and site and project quality. At least 50 percent match on either acquisition or development projects is required from local government applicants with a \$30,000 minimum and \$100,000 maximum funding limit. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) makes recommendations to the National Park Service (NPS), which grants final approval. Criteria are spelled out in the "Recreation Grants Selection Process" booklet given to all applicants.

PA 32 of 2010 created the Local Public Recreation Facilities Fund to be used for the development of public recreation facilities for local units of government. Money for this fund is derived from the sale of the **Recreation Passport** which replaces the resident Motor Vehicle Permit (MVP) — or window sticker — for state park entrance. The passport will be required for entry to state parks, recreation areas and boating access sites. Ten percent of the remaining revenue will be used to fund the **Recreation Passport local grant program**. A 25% minimum local match is required for the Passport grant program with a maximum grant amount of \$150,000 and a minimum of \$7,500.

The grant program may only be used for local development projects. The program is focused on renovating and improving existing parks, but the development of new parks is eligible. In addition, projects must fulfill the following requirements in order to be eligible:

- Current annual capital improvement plan (CIP) plan must include the proposed project. If your community does not have a CIP, you must have a current approved recreation plan on file with the DNR.

Organizations with an interest in developing fishing conditions in their areas may be able to get financial assistance from a program established through the **State Game and Fish Protection Fund**.

This fishing development grant is offered through the MDNR and can be as much as \$200,000 annually, in cash or in-kind services. Projects eligible for funding include culvert modifications for improved stream flow; livestock or sheet erosion control projects; the development of spawning riffles, fish cover structures, or spawning reefs; and the construction of fishing piers and rough fish barriers.

The MDNR accepts grant proposals from organized fishing groups and local units of government. In all cases, projects are able to approach other sources such as the federal government for additional matching funds.

The **Historic Preservation Grant Program** is administered by the Department of State with funds made available through the National Park Service of the Department of Interior. The intent of the program is to conduct surveys of architectural, engineering, archaeological, and historic resources, to identify and nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places, and to plan for the protection of those cultural/recreational resources.

The funds for this program are apportioned by the National Park Service directly to the State, which, in turn, allocates funds on a project-by-project basis to local governments, organizations, and individuals.

In Michigan the Historic Preservation Grant program is administered by the Michigan Department of State. The amount of assistance is up to 50% of the project expenses. Grantees are reimbursed at the completion





of the project for work done within the days of a contract between the Department of State and the grantee. EXPENSES INCURRED PRIOR TO THE EXECUTION OF A CONTRACT ARE NOT ALLOWABLE PROJECT COSTS AND WILL NOT BE REIMBURSED.

The **Inland Fisheries Grant Program** offers grants up to \$30,000 for projects that enhance the state's aquatic resources. This program may be applicable to the scenic overlook fishing platforms and educational kiosks.

The Village is committed to reviewing all available funding sources and preparing the necessary plans, reports, cost estimates, and funding applications, to achieve the goals of this recreation plan.

**Waterways Program Grants** are funded through the Michigan State Waterways Fund from state marine fuel tax and watercraft registrations. By law, administration of the Waterways Program is through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and overseen by the Department's Parks and Recreation Division.

Grants provide funding assistance for design/engineering and construction of public recreational harbor/marina and boating access site/launch facilities throughout the state. Only local units of government (city, township, or county) and public universities are eligible. Applicants may cooperate with community/sports organizations in the implementation of projects. On-site investigation by DNR, Parks and Recreation Division staff may be required to determine the suitability of proposed work. Applicants may also be required to document area boating demand. Greater priority may be given to projects for which a local applicant documents match capabilities equal to or greater than the percentage of project cost they are required to provide. The local match can include in-kind expenses as long as they are well-documented.

Applications, and all required information, must be received by 5:00 p.m., **April 1st**. If April 1st falls on a weekend, the deadline would be the last State working day prior to April 1st. The application review and funding process for projects is from April 1st until an appropriation is approved by the Legislature. This can take up to 18 to 24 months. Notification of approval for engineering and smaller sized construction projects may occur within six months after completed application form and proper documentation are received. Funding for construction is not released until permits are secured.

Communities, non-profits, and municipalities can submit projects by applying for a **Patronicity crowd granting campaign**. Crowd granting is the effort of leveraging broad based crowdfunding against a sponsor's matching grant to improve communities.

Public Spaces Community Places projects include:

- *Public Plaza & Green Space Development*
- *Access to Public Amenities*
- *Farmer's Markets, Community Kitchens, Pop-Up Retail/Incubator Space*
- *Alley Rehabilitation*
- *Any other place based (or public space improvement) project.*

The Public Spaces, Community Places program is a public placemaking initiative created by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Projects that meet the program's parameters and successfully crowdfund their goal will receive a matching grant from the MEDC of up to \$50,000.



#### 4. Millage

In an effort to raise matching funds or fund projects with local money, many community leaders have placed ballot proposals before their residents for a dedicated increase in their existing mill property tax to fund park maintenance and repair, including care for new parks and newly acquired parks, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as safety and security improvements. Establishment of a Park Improvement/Development, Maintenance and Repair Millage will assure that parks and facilities will be maintained at the level of quality expected by park users and that new parkland will have adequate amenities.



## Appendix A

### Public Input

## **Appendix B**

### **Public Notices/Articles**



## **Appendix C**

### **Resolution of Plan Adoption**

## Appendix D

### Meeting Minutes

## **Appendix E**

### **Post Grant Completion Reports**

## **Appendix F**

### **Transmittals of Plan to County and Regional Planning Agencies**