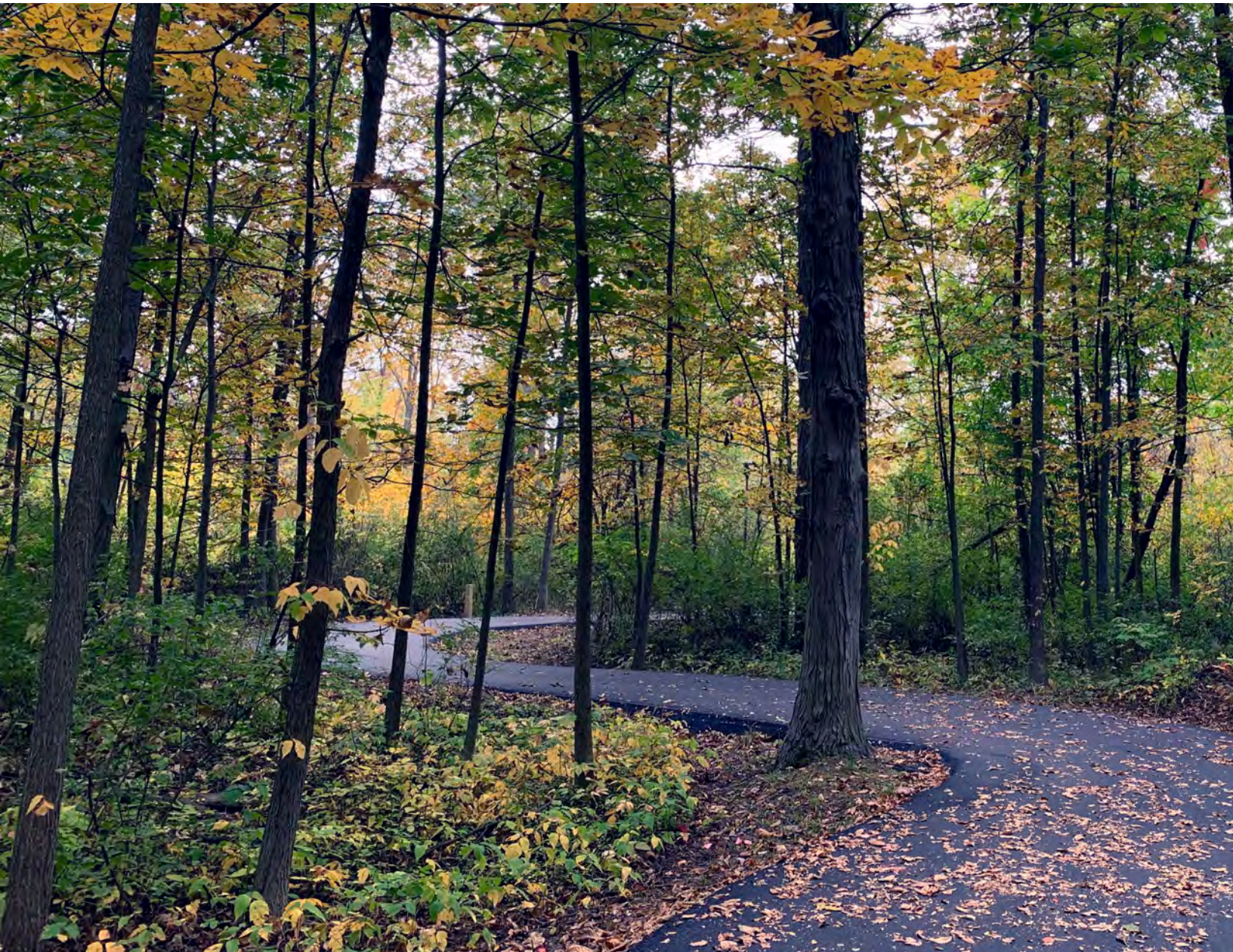


DEWITT AREA **PARKS & RECREATION**



2022-2026 PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

DRAFT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The 2022 – 2026 DeWitt Area Recreation Authority Parks and Recreation Plan was a cooperative effort of the City of DeWitt, DeWitt Charter Township, DeWitt Area Recreation Authority, and the citizens who expressed an interest in providing a high level of park and recreation services for the DeWitt community.

The first public hearing on the plan was held on [DATE] at the [REDACTED] meeting. At the conclusion of this meeting, following public comments, the [REDACTED] recommended that the [REDACTED] adopt the plan. The second public hearing was held on [DATE] at the [REDACTED] meeting. The [REDACTED] passed a resolution to adopt the recreation plan at the [REDACTED] meeting on [DATE].

This participation and cooperation of community leaders, residents, and members of civic organizations is greatly appreciated. In particular, we acknowledge the efforts of the following individuals:

DEWITT CITY COUNCIL

Dave Hunsaker, Mayor Pro-Tem
Matthew Cooper
Trevor VanDyke
Frank Waters
Jennifer Whitman
Denise Donohue

DEWITT PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

[REDACTED]

DEWITT TOWNSHIP BOARD

Rick Galardi, Supervisor
Adam Cramton, Clerk
Sandra K. Stump, Treasurer
David J. Fedewa
Brian Ross
David Seeger
Steven Smith

DARA

[REDACTED]



With assistance from Spicer Group, East Lansing, MI
www.spicergroup.com
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01

INTRODUCTION

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6 INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The communities of DeWitt Township and the City of DeWitt joined with the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) to write a 5-year recreation plan. Under the direction of DARA, professional planning consultant Spicer Group of Saginaw was hired to develop the plan according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans. This Plan is an update of the 2015 – 2019 DeWitt Area Recreation Plan.

An inventory was completed of the existing public parks and available recreational programming in DeWitt and DeWitt Township. The parks inventory included location maps, the facilities, and amenities available in each park, and an accessibility assessment. DeWitt Township has nine developed park facilities and two undeveloped parcels totaling 200 acres. The City of DeWitt has ten developed park facilities and one undeveloped parcel totaling 41 acres. General industry standards would suggest that this is more than enough park land for the current population.

Those who participated in the various forms of input were generally very pleased with the existing park facilities. Walking and biking paths were mentioned most often as an additional recreational need in the community. Other potential improvements that were frequently mentioned by the participants were pickleball courts, a splash park, and canoe/kayak launches.

Using the existing inventory, community input, and several existing planning documents that related to parks and recreation, the three entities reviewed and updated the existing recreational goals to guide the community for the next five years.

Goal 1: Provide quality leisure time activities with special consideration given to improving health and fitness.

Goal 2: Provide safe, broad community-based recreation opportunities that improve the overall quality-of-life for all DeWitt area residents.

Goal 3: Provide non-motorized pathways for recreational and transportation use.

Goal 4: Develop recreation opportunities that focus upon and take advantage of DeWitt area water resources.

Goal 5: Acquire and retain public land for future generations.

Goal 6: Create community awareness of DeWitt area recreational opportunities and promote them to citizens and visitors.

Goal 7: Continue to embrace and enhance regional collaboration for recreational programs and facilities.

Objectives were developed to further assist in carrying out the purpose of the various goals.

With goals and objectives in place, each community and DARA developed a prioritized action plan of tasks and improvements to help them work toward accomplishing the established goals. The projects with the highest priority for each of the entities are: (See pages xx-xx for the complete action plan lists.)

DeWitt Charter Township

- Repurpose the existing in-line hockey surface into pickleball courts.
- Expand outdoor seating near the future pickleball courts.

City of DeWitt

- Update playground equipment at Riverside Park, Sports Park, McGuire Park, River Trail Park, Millbrook Park, and Percy Caris Park.

DARA

- Explore the opportunity for recreational partnerships with neighboring townships.

Area Wide Initiatives

- Continue to work with Clinton County partners on the development and implantation of a non-motorized transportation plan.

A draft plan was developed and made available for public review for at least 30 days. Following the review period a public meeting was held to hear any additional comments. The plan was then adopted by DARA, the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township and it was submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for approval.

INTRODUCTION

A Joint Recreation Plan for the City of DeWitt, DeWitt Charter Township, and the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority

The Dewitt Community has developed the Parks and Recreation Plan to serve as a guide for future decision-making regarding recreation facilities improvements and development of new recreational opportunities. This document is the basis to guide policy for the implementation of improvements and new initiatives that will meet the recreational goals and interests of the DeWitt area community. The development of this plan was guided by input of citizens from the city of DeWitt and DeWitt Township, as well as input from DARA, city, and township staff.

Before any recreation plan is adopted and enacted, it is important to understand what the needs of the residents are, what recreational opportunities already exist, and what sort of projects and programs are relevant for residents based on age, ability, population, density, and the availability of recreational opportunities in neighboring communities. This plan has carefully considered input and suggestions via active communication from area residents, officials, and other community stakeholders. This input is a critical component to this plan, and together the voices of the DeWitt Community have united to develop a recreation plan to enhance the quality of life for everyone.

The foundation for the development of the DeWitt Area Recreation Plan was based on the following goals:

- Involve the community in the process to develop a five-year Recreation Plan,
- Inventory and map existing DeWitt recreational facilities,
- Build common ground among DeWitt area stakeholders in addressing the future recreational needs and priorities of the Community,
- Enable the City of DeWitt, DeWitt Township, and the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) to be eligible for financial assistance based upon the Recreation Plan,
- Facilitate interagency collaboration in establishing recreation goals, objectives, and actions,
- Continue to support and implement improvements for barrier-free, Universal Access to DeWitt area parks, and
- Consistency with and expansion upon goals and objectives set forth in existing planning documents that deal partially or wholly with recreation. Those documents include:
 - Clinton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan (2020 – 2024)
 - DeWitt Township Open Space Ad Hoc Committee Report (May 2007)
 - DeWitt Charter Township South Central Area Plan (March 2009)

- DeWitt Township Comprehensive Development Plan (2018)
- City of DeWitt Comprehensive Development Plan (2010 – 2020)
- Protecting and Restoring the Upper Looking Glass River: A Watershed Management Plan (February 2008)



02

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

02

IN THIS CHAPTER

9 ABOUT THE DEWITT AREA

11 DEMOGRAPHICS

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

About the DeWitt Area

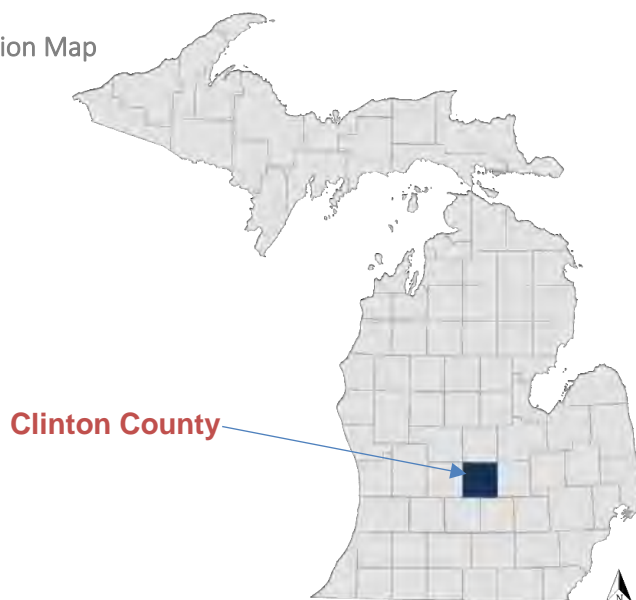
The City of DeWitt and DeWitt Charter Township are suburban communities located north of Lansing, in Clinton County. DeWitt Charter Township is approximately 31.5 square miles in size. The City of DeWitt is in the northwest corner of the township and is approximately 3 square miles. Both communities are part of the Tri-County Region comprised of Clinton, Ingham, and Eaton Counties. The rural-suburban environment of these communities makes them a desirable place to live for people employed in the greater Lansing area.

Two major expressways bisect DeWitt Township. I-69 carries traffic from east to west across the middle of the township, south of the city of DeWitt. US-127 carries traffic from north to south across Michigan, bisecting the eastern half of the Township. Another major transportation component in the area is the Capital Region International Airport, located in the extreme southwest corner of the Township.

Within the city there is a unique and vibrant character, accented by both historical and modern storefronts in the central business district. The small-town atmosphere makes DeWitt an increasingly popular place to live. At the same time, both the city and township offer convenient proximity to Lansing and the mid-Michigan educational, governmental, employment, medical, and cultural environments.

According to the 2005 DeWitt Charter Township Comprehensive Development Plan, the primary land uses in the township are for agricultural (38%) and residential purposes (22%). Approximately 34% of the township land is considered to be developed. According to the 2010-2020 City of DeWitt Comprehensive Development Plan, most of the land developed or planned for development is single family detached housing.

Map 1.0 County Location Map



Map 2.0 City and Township Location Map



Legend

-  City of DeWitt
-  DeWitt Township
-  Clinton County



Demographics

According to the 2020 U.S. census, the population of the city of DeWitt was 4,926 and the population of DeWitt Township was 15,608. Census estimates for 2007 show that the city population has increased by 9.3% and the township population has increased by 8.1%. Some important demographic statistics from the 2020 Census are shown in Table 1.0, below, providing a brief snapshot of the area.

Table 1.0 Summary of Census Data

Select Census Data for the DeWitt Area and Michigan			
	City of DeWitt	DeWitt Township	Michigan
Population- 2010 Census	4,507	14,342	9,883,640
<i>Population - 2019 estimate</i>	<i>4,926</i>	<i>15,608</i>	<i>9,986,857</i>
Percent of population 65 & older	14.0%	18.1%	14.6%
Percent of population under 19	25.9%	22.0%	25.9%
Median age	39.2	39.2	37.4
Percent with a bachelor's degree or higher	48.4%	34.1%	30%
Median household income	\$96,023	\$66,213	\$59,584
Average household size	2.63	2.49	2.47
Median housing value	\$294,374	\$176,600	\$169,600
Renter-occupied housing as % of total occupied units	23.9%	20.5%	28.8%
Percent of individuals below the poverty line	1.15%	7.6%	13%
*Data from the 2019 ACS and the 2020 Decennial Census.			

Based upon the analysis of social characteristics in the city and township, there are three special population groups who have distinct needs for recreational facilities and programming.

Senior Citizens: The senior citizens population is consistent across the jurisdictions in the chart above, but as the US population ages, this population will also grow. Seniors have different needs in recreation facilities than other age groups. They tend to prefer more passive recreation options such as pathways instead of playgrounds. Those on fixed incomes may also need low-cost recreational opportunities.

Residents in Multi-Family Housing, Apartments, and Renters in General: Residents in high-density housing have a greater need for open space and recreational facilities because they do not have large yards or open areas of their own.

Youth: The younger population makes up just under a quarter of the population on average in the city and township. Youth populations benefit from recreational options, and organized or unorganized athletic activities, which provides them with opportunities for exercise, community engagement, and education in a safe environment.

Finally, parks can create a multigenerational link between individuals in these three groups, and across all demographic groups. They provide gathering places, make exercise opportunities available, promote civic participation, and improve the quality of life in an area.



ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



IN THIS CHAPTER

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14 CITY OF DEWITT STRUCTURE

16 DEWITT TOWNSHIP STRUCTURE

17 DARA STRUCTURE

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

How Parks and Recreation Works in the DeWitt Area

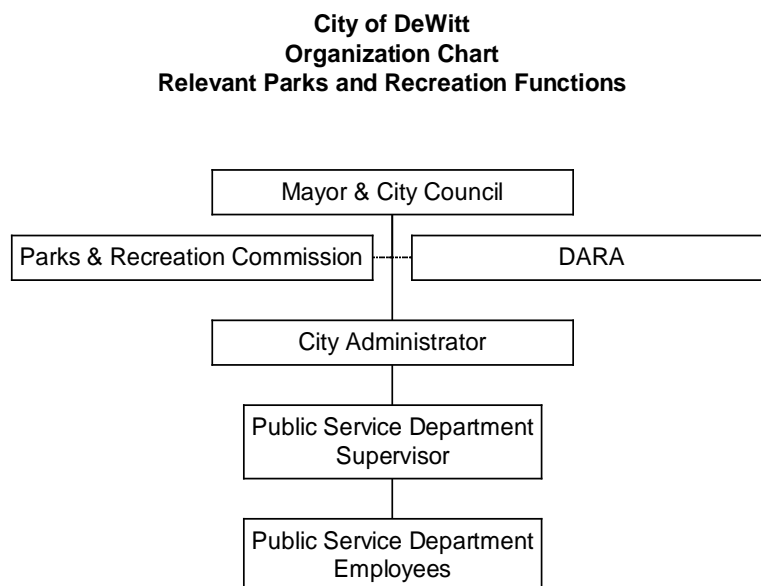
The City of DeWitt, DeWitt Charter Township (DeWitt Township), and the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority each have their own structure for parks and recreation functions while still working cooperatively in many areas. The details of each are described below.

City of DeWitt Structure

The City of DeWitt is a home rule city that operates under a Mayor-Council form of government. The City Council consists of six members elected at-large with an elected Mayor. The City Administrator handles the day-to-day operations of the city.

In 1977, the City of DeWitt formed the Parks and Recreation Board to advise the City Council on parks and recreation related issues. In July of 1997, the city approved an ordinance establishing the five-member Parks, Recreation, and Cemetery Commission. The city also had a six-member Tree Commission. In 2012, the city amended its ordinance to combine the two bodies to form the Parks, Recreation, Cemetery and Tree Commission. According to the ordinance, the Commission “is established to serve in an advisory capacity to the mayor, the city council, the city administrator, and the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority for the development of parks, recreation and the cemetery of the city, and to propose rules and regulations governing their programs and facilities for adoption by the city council.” Members of the five-member body are appointed to three-year terms by the mayor subject to City Council confirmation. As part of the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority agreement, the city appoints three members to the DARA Board of Commissioners that serve on staggered 3-year terms.

Figure 1.0 DeWitt Organization Chart



The DeWitt Public Service Department takes care of maintenance for the park system. The department is staffed by a supervisor and four employees. Part-time employees are used on an as-needed basis.

Sources of funding for parks and recreation in the city of DeWitt include the general fund, park facility rentals (pavilions, gazebo, soccer field, softball field, etc.), and occasional donations. Budget information for the city of DeWitt is shown in Table 2.0 below.

Table 2.0 City of DeWitt Budget

City of DeWitt Parks and Recreation Budgets		
	Fiscal year ending 6/30/22	Fiscal year ending 6/30/23
Operations & Maintenance	\$88,032	\$89,792
Programming	\$ 36,829*	\$ 37,565*
Capital Expenditures	\$45,500	\$45,500
* Programming dollars are contributed to the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority		

DeWitt Charter Township Structure

DeWitt Charter Township operates under an elected seven-member Township Board form of government. The township manager is responsible for the day-to-day business operations of the township. As part of the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority agreement, the Township appoints three members to the DARA Board of Commissioners that serve on staggered 3-year terms. See Figure 2 on the following page.

The Maintenance Staff is responsible for maintaining the parks. This staff includes a supervisor and three staff workers. The majority of recreation programming in DeWitt Township is done by DARA. The township does sponsor an annual Meadows Celebration festival that is held in Granger Meadows Park.

Sources of funding for parks and recreation in DeWitt Township include the Township General Fund, park facility rentals, and occasional donations. Budget information for DeWitt Township is shown below. Budget information for DeWitt Township parks and recreation is shown in Table 3.0 below.

Table 3.0 DeWitt Township Budget

DeWitt Charter Township Parks and Recreation Budgets		
	Fiscal Year Ending xxxx, 2020	Fiscal Year Ending xxxx, 2021
Operations & Maintenance	\$138,260	\$125,835
Programming	\$ *	\$ *
Capital Expenditures	\$140,000	\$15,500
* Includes approximately \$_____ each year as a contribution to the DeWitt Area Recreation Authority		

DeWitt Area Recreation Authority (DARA) Structure

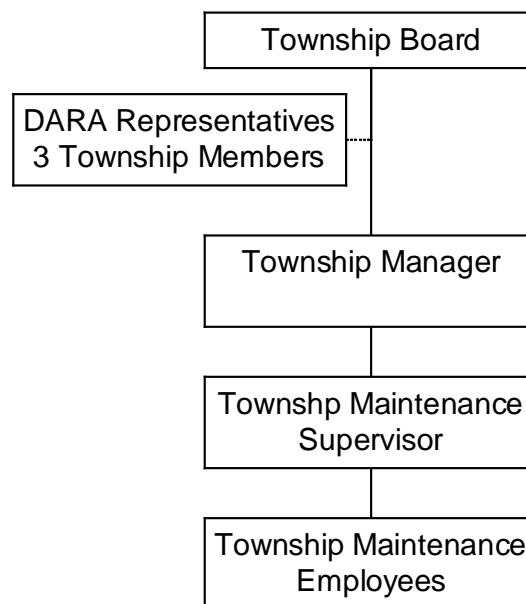
The DeWitt Area Recreation Authority was formed in July of 2003 by the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Charter Township. DARA was formed as an independent governmental organization to provide recreation programming for the city of DeWitt and DeWitt Township.

DARA is staffed by an executive director and two program coordinators who work out of the Valley Farms Community Center. They are governed by a Board of Commissioners comprised of three township representatives and three city representatives who are each appointed by their respective governmental units. Members serve in staggered three-year terms. DARA hires various part-time as needed employees to assist with programs and sports leagues. These include referees, umpires, day camp and program leaders.

DARA runs a wide variety of sports leagues, special events, and recreational classes for youths and adults. DARA relies heavily upon volunteers to coach and lead different activities. Approximately 350 volunteers assist each year with the numerous programs that DARA offers. A typical listing of programs offered is shown on the following below. They include sports leagues, sports camps, day camps, instructional activities, family activities, and one-day fun events.

Figure 2.0 DeWitt Township Organization Chart

DeWitt Charter Township Organization Chart Relevant Parks and Recreation Functions



DARA Recreation Programs

Adult

3v3 Men's Basketball	Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt
Adult Basketball Drop in	Floor Hockey
Adult Golf Lessons	Haunted Halloween Tour
Adult Volleyball Drop in	Holiday Fun Club
Cardio Drumming	Lacrosse Camp
Pickleball	Little Hoopsters
Zumba	Little Kickers
Zumba Gold	Miracle League of Mid-Michigan

Youth

1-2 Basketball	PREK Art
3-6 Basketball	PreK Cooking
9-12 Rec basketball	PreK Movement
Accessible Trick or Treat	Spirit Squad
After School Program	Sports Starter Fall
All Day DYKO	Sports Starter Spring
Basketball University	Sports Starter Winter
Birthday Bashes	Spring Break Fun Club
Counselor in Training	Summer Camps
Cupcakes & Canvases	Teddy Bear Tea
Dinner with Santa	Youth Baseball/Softball
Drop Your Kids Off	Youth Golf Lessons
Flag Football	Youth Soccer K-3
	Youth Volleyball

DARA works cooperatively with the city and township as well as the DeWitt School District for use of facilities to run their programs. For example in the city, DARA uses McGuire Park, Riverside Park, DeWitt Sports Park, and the City Hall area for soccer and softball fields. In the township, DARA uses Valley Farms Park, Granger Meadow Park, and the DeWitt Township Community center for soccer fields, football fields, softball fields, inline hockey rink, gymnasium, and activity rooms. Other groups that DARA cooperates with include the DeWitt Library and the DeWitt Lacrosse Club. The Michigan DNR assists with providing programming at youth camps..

The majority of DARA's funding comes from two sources. The first major source of funding is program fees. These comprise approximately 57% of the funding. The second source is a contribution from each of the municipalities (DeWitt and DeWitt Township). This comprises approximately 41% of the funding for DARA and it is divided based upon the number of program participants in each community. A third, minor source of funding is miscellaneous contributions and sponsorships. DARA budget data for 2021 and 2022 is shown in Table 4.0.

Table 4.0 DARA Budget

DeWitt Area Recreation Authority Budgets		
	Fiscal Year 2021	Fiscal Year 2022
Operations & Maintenance	\$332,422	\$348,476
Programming	\$ 56,647	\$ 57,256
Capital Expenditures	\$ 9,000	\$ 0.00

04

PARKS & RECREATION INVENTORY

04

IN THIS CHAPTER

- 21 NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY
- 23 INVENTORY OF RECREATION FACILITIES

NATURAL FEATURES INVENTORY

When studying parks and recreation resources in a community, it can be worthwhile to examine significant natural resources that may need conservation or protection. In the DeWitt area, the most significant natural resources would most likely be the water bodies, the woodlands, and the wetlands.

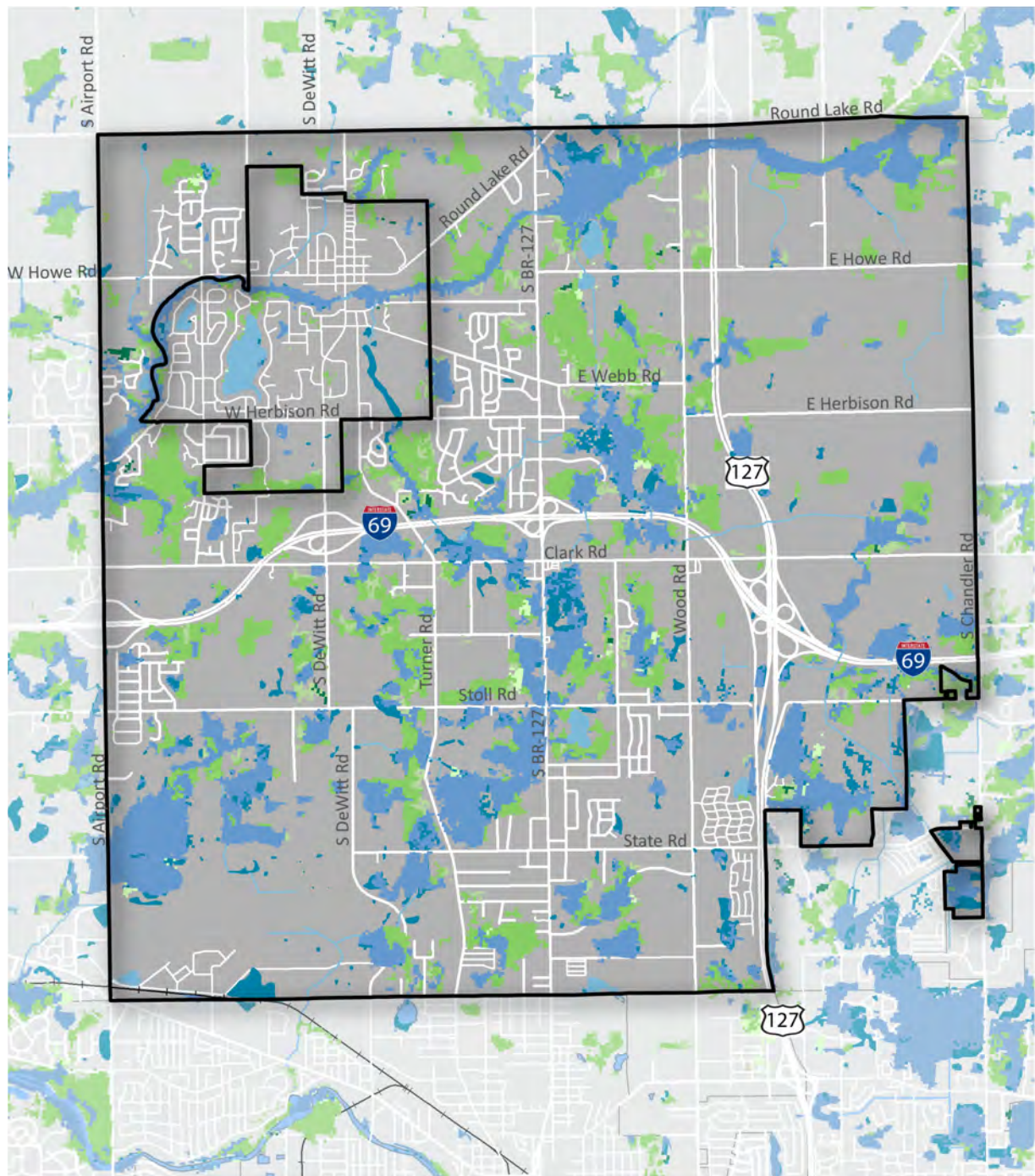
The Looking Glass River and Lake Geneva are important bodies of water in the area. The Looking Glass River is approximately 75-miles long, flowing east to west into the Grand River in Portland. The river has no dams and it borders many wetlands and woodlots. Lake Geneva is a private lake in DeWitt that is managed and maintained by the subdivisions that surround it. There are several other large ponds/small lakes in the community as well as small streams and county drains.

Woodlands and wetlands are scattered in small to medium sized tracts across the City and Township. A map showing waterways, woodlands and wetlands is shown at the end of this section.

It should be noted that DeWitt Township completed a valuable Open Space study and report in May of 2007. Open Space can also be considered a natural resource of a community. The study showed that approximately 30% of the land in DeWitt Township was public or private open space. The executive summary of that plan provided four recommendations for creating, maintaining, and preserving open space in the Township:

- Maintain current land holdings
- Strengthen open space techniques and incentives
- Support regional public and private space preservation efforts
- Develop a program for future land acquisition.

Map 3.0 DeWitt Area Natural Features



Legend

	DeWitt Township		Deciduous Forest		Emergent Herbaceous		Grassland
	City of DeWitt		Evergreen Forest		Woody Wetlands		Shrub/Scrub
	Water Feature		Mixed Forest				



INVENTORY OF RECREATION FACILITIES

The inventory of park amenities and facilities was updated by the planning consultant and verified by city staff in the summer of 2021. The text below includes descriptions of each of the city or township-owned and/or operated parks, park classifications, and ADA accessibility ratings. Tables 6.0 and 7.0 in this chapter show a summary of the city and township park facilities. This chapter also contains a brief discussion of other recreation facilities in the city and region.

Accessibility

Creating a park system that is safe, accessible, and usable to all individuals, including those with disabilities, is essential. The DNR has developed a grading system to identify parks and facilities which are most and least handicap accessible and useable, based on the American Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. The accessibility grading system uses a five-point system ranging from 1 to 5. See Table 5, below.

In the summer of 2021, the planning consultant updated the ADA compliance information with the update of this recreation plan. There are a few sites and undeveloped land that are not ADA accessible. However, the city and township recognize the importance of equal access for all citizens and is dedicated to improving accessibility at each of its parks when improvements are made. This includes parking, paths, restrooms, activity areas, amenities, and signage.

Table 5.0 DNR Accessibility Grading System

DNR Accessibility Grading System for Parks and Recreational Facilities	
Accessibility Grade	Definition
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 principles of universal design

Park Service Area and Classifications

A recreation inventory is the foundation for developing an understanding of the DeWitt area's recreation needs, deficiencies, and future plans. An inventory provides a snapshot of all the available facilities within a community along with detail about the types of activities and features. The following classification system is adapted from the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) guide. It recognizes types of parks based on size, service area, facilities and use groups. Each park in the city and township is classified as a neighborhood park, a community park, or a regional park. The NRPA classifies several other park types, but they are not all applicable to the parks in the DeWitt area.

Neighborhood Parks

Parks in this classification are the most basic park unit of a system and serves as the recreation and social focus of a neighborhood. Neighborhood parks are easily accessible to neighborhood populations and geographically centered within safe walking distance and bike access. Typically, neighborhood parks are 5 to 10 acres in size and can service a population of approximately 5,000 residents. The parks have a service location of $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile distance. National standards recommend 1.0 acre of neighborhood parks per 1,000 residents.

Three of the ten parks within DeWitt Charter Township meet the neighborhood park classification totaling 6.7 acres. Those parks include:

- Coleman Road Park
- Station House Park
- Valley-Turner Park

11 of the 12 parks within the city of DeWitt meet the neighborhood park classification totaling 26.5 acres. The neighborhood parks in the city of DeWitt are:

- Millbrook Park
- Wilson Park
- DeWitt City Hall Park
- River Trail Park
- All Kids Playground
- Riverside Park
- Memorial Park
- Elmwood Park
- City Park
- Percy Carris Park
- McGuire Park

Community Parks

Community parks are intended to serve several neighborhoods and usually serve a broad range of uses. The typical park size is 30 acres or more. The city one park that is classified as a community park, however, it is smaller the nationally recognized standard of 30 acres. It is included in this category because of the broad population base it serves and the facilities/intended use of the park. The national classification system recommends 5 acres per 1,000 residents.

Seven parks in the township and one park in the city meet the Community Park classification. Those parks include:

- Granger Meadows
- Looking Glass Riverfront
- Ruthruff's Ridge Disc Golf Park
- Valley Farms Park
- Wood-Webb Park
- DeWitt Sports Park (City of DeWitt)

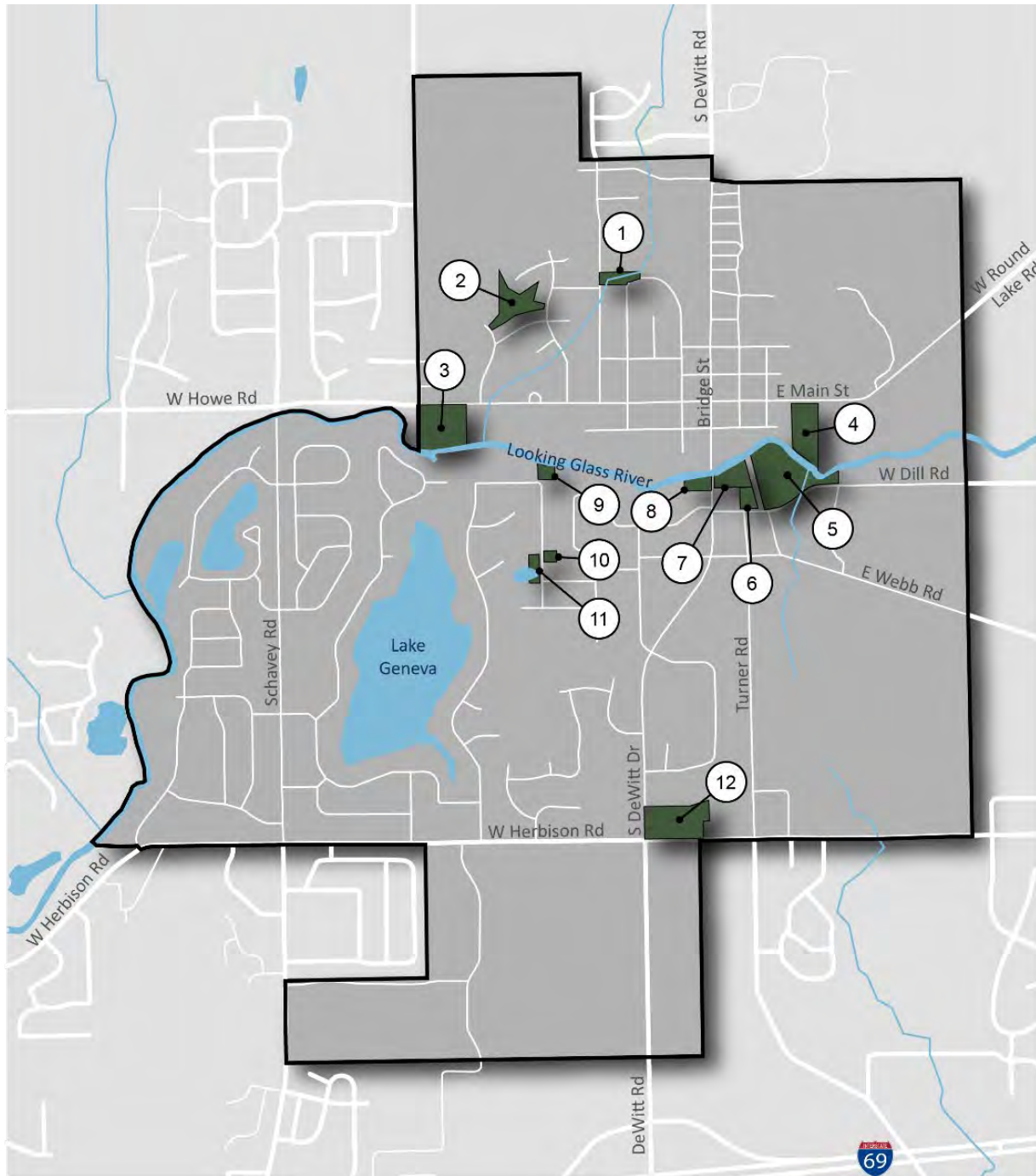
Natural Resource Areas

Dewitt Charter Township has two unique natural areas, Padgett Natural Area and Waters Edge Park. The Padgett Natural Area includes a fenced dog park and a network of trails - both paved and natural surface trails - that wind through a wooded 70 acres with public access from Herbison Road, Schavey Road, and Clark Road. Waters Edge Park is an undeveloped 11-acre parcel at the northeast corner of Wood and Round Lake Roads, offering access to the Looking Glass River.

See the appendix for the executive summary of the Open Space report.

DeWitt Township and City of DeWitt Park Facilities

Map 4.0 City of DeWitt Parks Map



Legend

	City of DeWitt
	DeWitt Township
	Water Feature
	Park Parcel

Park Names

1 Wilson Park	5 River Trail Park	9 Elmwood Park
2 Millbrook Park	6 All Kids Playground	10 Percy Carris Park
3 McGuire Park	7 Riverside Park	11 City Park
4 DeWitt City Hall	8 Memorial Park	12 DeWitt Sports Park



Table 6.0 Summary of City of DeWitt Park Facilities

	ALL KIDS PLAYGROUND	CITY PARK	ELMWOOD PARK	MCGUIRE PARK	MEMORIAL PARK	MILLBROOK MEADOWS PARK	PERCY CARRIS PARK	RIVERSIDE PARK	RIVER TRAIL PARK	SPORTS PARK	WILSON STREET PARK
PARK TYPE	CP	CP	NP	CP	NP	NP	NP	CP	CP	CP	NP
SERVICE AREA	DA	DA	NB	DA	NB	NB	NB	DA	DA	DA	NB
ACCESSIBILITY	5		1	2	2	1	2	3	5	3	1
ACRES	1	1	0.7	4	1.5	5.2	0.4	3	9	14.5	0.8
ACTIVITY ROOMS											
BALL DIAMOND										2	
BASKETBALL				X							
GAZEBO					X						
HORSESHOES			X								
MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD					X	X					X
PAVILION				X				X	X		
PICNIC AREA			X	X							
PLAYGROUND	X			X		X	X	X	X	X	
POND											
RESTROOM				X				X	X	X	
SAND VOLLEYBALL											
LACROSSE/SOCCER				X						X	
TRAILS				X	X				X		
WATERFRONT ACCESS				X	X			X	X		

PARK TYPE

NP = Neighborhood Park
CP = Community Park
NRA = Natural Resources Area

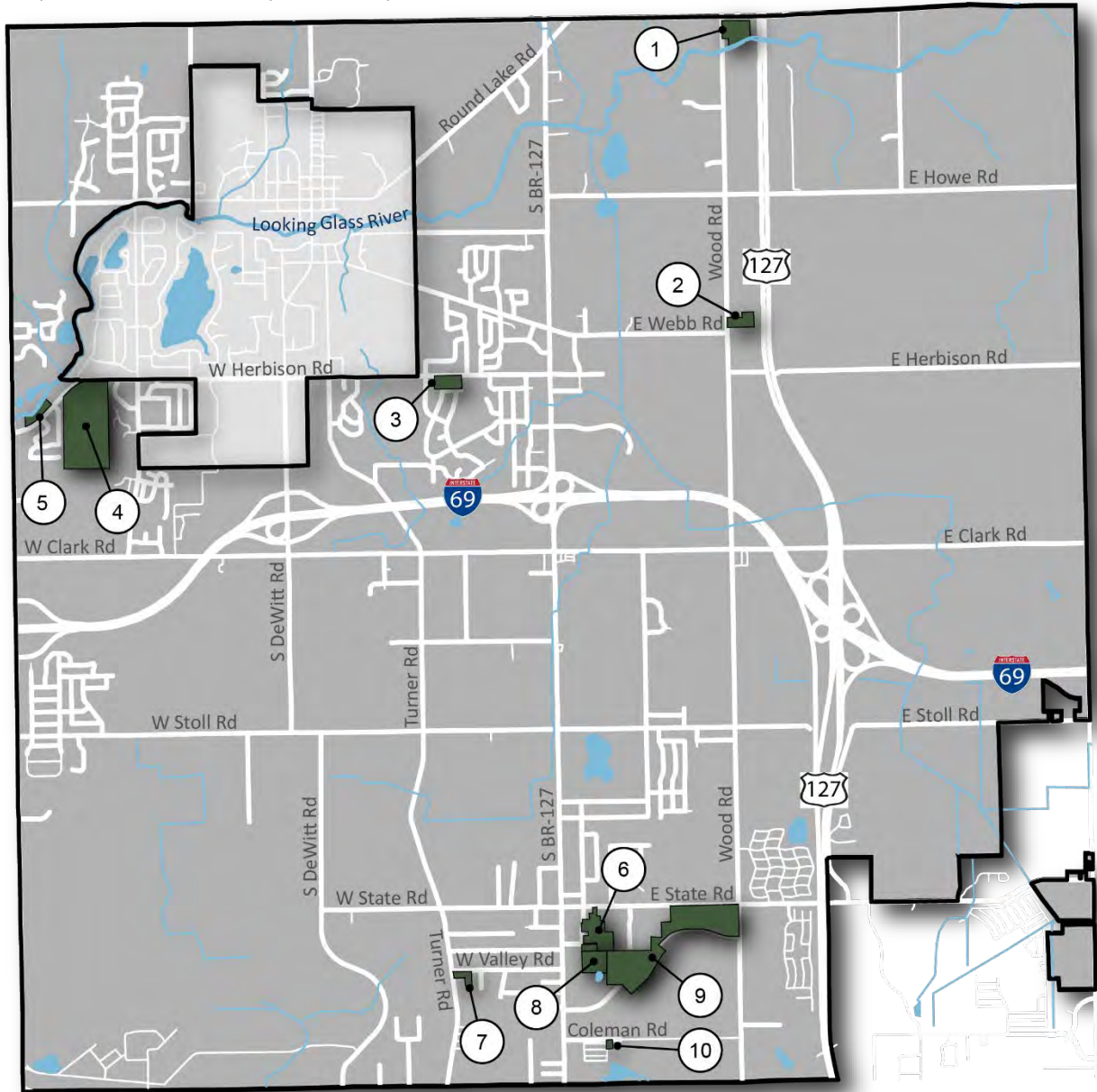
SERVICE AREA

NB = Neighborhood
DA = Entire DeWitt Area
NA = Not Applicable

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 principles of universal design

Map 5.0 DeWitt Township Parks Map



Legend

- DeWitt Township
- City of DeWitt
- Water Feature
- Park Parcel

Park Names

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Waters Edge Park | 6 Valley Farms Community Center
Valley Farms Park |
| 2 Wood Road Nature Area | 7 Valley Turner Park |
| 3 Station House Park
DeWitt Township Hall | 8 Ruthroff's Ridge Disc Golf Course |
| 4 Padgett Natural Area | 9 Granger Meadows Park |
| 5 Looking Glass River Park | 10 Coleman Road Park |



Table 7.0 Summary of DeWitt Charter Township Park Facilities

	COLEMAN ROAD	GRANGER MEADOWS	LOOKING GLASS RIVERFRONT	PADGET NATURAL AREA	RUTHRUFF'S RIDGE DISC GOLF	STATION HOUSE PARK	TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY CENTER	VALLEY FARMS PARK	VALLEY-TURNER PARK	WATERS EDGE	WOOD-WEBB
PARK TYPE	NP	CP	CP	NRA	CP	CP	-	CP	NP	NA	NA
SERVICE AREA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	-	DA	NB	DA	DA
ACCESSIBILITY	1	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	1	NA	NA
ACRES	1.3	75	5.2	69.4	11.6	2	0	13	3.4	11	7.6
ACTIVITY ROOMS							2				
BALL DIAMOND		1						3			
BASKETBALL	X	X						X			
CANOE LAUNCH			X								
DISC GOLF					X						
GRILLS		X	X	X				X			
GYMNASIUM							X				
HORSESHOES											
MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD								X			
PAVILION		X						X			
PICNIC AREA	X			X	X	X		X	X		
PLAYGROUND	X	X				X		X	X		
POND		X									
RESTROOM		X		X			X	X			
SAND VOLLEYBALL								X			
SLEDDING HILL		X									
TRAILS		2.6 miles		1.5 miles				.29 miles			
WATERFRONT ACCESS			X								

PARK TYPE

NP = Neighborhood Park
CP = Community Park
NRA = Natural Resources Area

SERVICE AREA

NB = Neighborhood
DA = Entire DeWitt Area
NA = Not Applicable

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 principles of universal design

Comparison to Standards

DARA has committed to taking a steady and consistent approach to developing park facilities that provide lifelong recreation options for the city and township residents. When considering level of service, it is important to note that DARA provides de facto recreation services and facilities to a population greater than its residential population. Therefore, it is important to consider this broader need in terms of demand and not just classification standards for park land per 1,000 residents.

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) has published typical recreation facility standards that specify facility service area, the number of facilities needed to service the population, and the land area needed. These standards can be used in conjunction with the acreage standards to further identify DARA's recreation needs. Table 8.0 provides a comparison of DARA's public recreation facilities against the NRPA's published recreation facility standards.

In general, the DeWitt area rates very well compared to the DNR's suggested facility development standards regarding the acreage of park land necessary for their population. The table only indicates excess parkland in Neighborhood Parks, Community Parks, and Regional Parks.

In addition to the standards outlined in the table below, more recent park guidelines indicate that officials must also consider the parks and recreation "Level of Service" desired by the residents of a community. If the resident's needs are met with the existing park land and facilities, then that amount is sufficient, regardless of the standards or acreage suggestions. This is why the community input portion of a recreation plan is so important. While it appears that the city and township have enough recreation land, the community input results indicated some deficiencies in parks such as restrooms, walking trails, natural spaces, and water access at the Looking Glass River. Residents are also concerned with improving the current facilities.

Table 8.0 Comparison to Standard

Comparison to Standard				
	Standard	Park Acreage	Standard Amount	Deficiency/Excess
Neighborhood Parks	1 acre/1,000 residents	33.2	20.5	+12.7
Community Parks	5 acres/1,000 residents	207.3	102.5	+104.8
Total		240.5	123	+117.5
*Table is based on the 2020 Census Population				

Other Recreational Facilities

Other public and semi-public park facilities in the DeWitt area include the recreational facilities located around the six buildings in the DeWitt Public School system. DARA works with the DeWitt Public Schools to use some of these facilities for its activities.

There are several private subdivision parks in DeWitt and DeWitt Township for use by the residents of those subdivisions. In DeWitt Township Arbor Meadows, Springbrook Hills, and Springbrook Hills East account for approximately 10 acres of park land. Recreational facilities in those parks include groomed lawn areas, fountains, picnic pavilions, and tennis courts. In DeWitt, there are also two small beachfront parks known as East and West Beaches on Lake Geneva. These parks are private and controlled by the Lake Geneva Homeowners Association. The East and West Beaches have sand beaches and swimming areas, picnic tables, benches, charcoal grills, bike racks, play equipment and handicapped restroom facilities. Sand volleyball is available at East Beach and horseshoes pits are available at West Beach.

The DeWitt Area has two public golf courses for their residents to enjoy. Prairie Creek Golf Course is an 18-hole public golf facility located on Webb Road in the City of DeWitt. In addition to the course, Prairie Creek also offers a banquet facility. Woodside Golf Course is located on Wood Road on the east side of the township. Woodside is unique in that it offers a challenging 12-hole course as well as a driving range.

Status Report for Grant Assisted Parks and Recreation Facilities

The MNRTF database lists two grants for the City of DeWitt and one for DeWitt Township.

TF97-140 Dill and Riverside Parks Development – City of DeWitt

TF89-139 Park Land Purchase – City of DeWitt

TF03-208 Water's Edge Park Acquisition – DeWitt Township

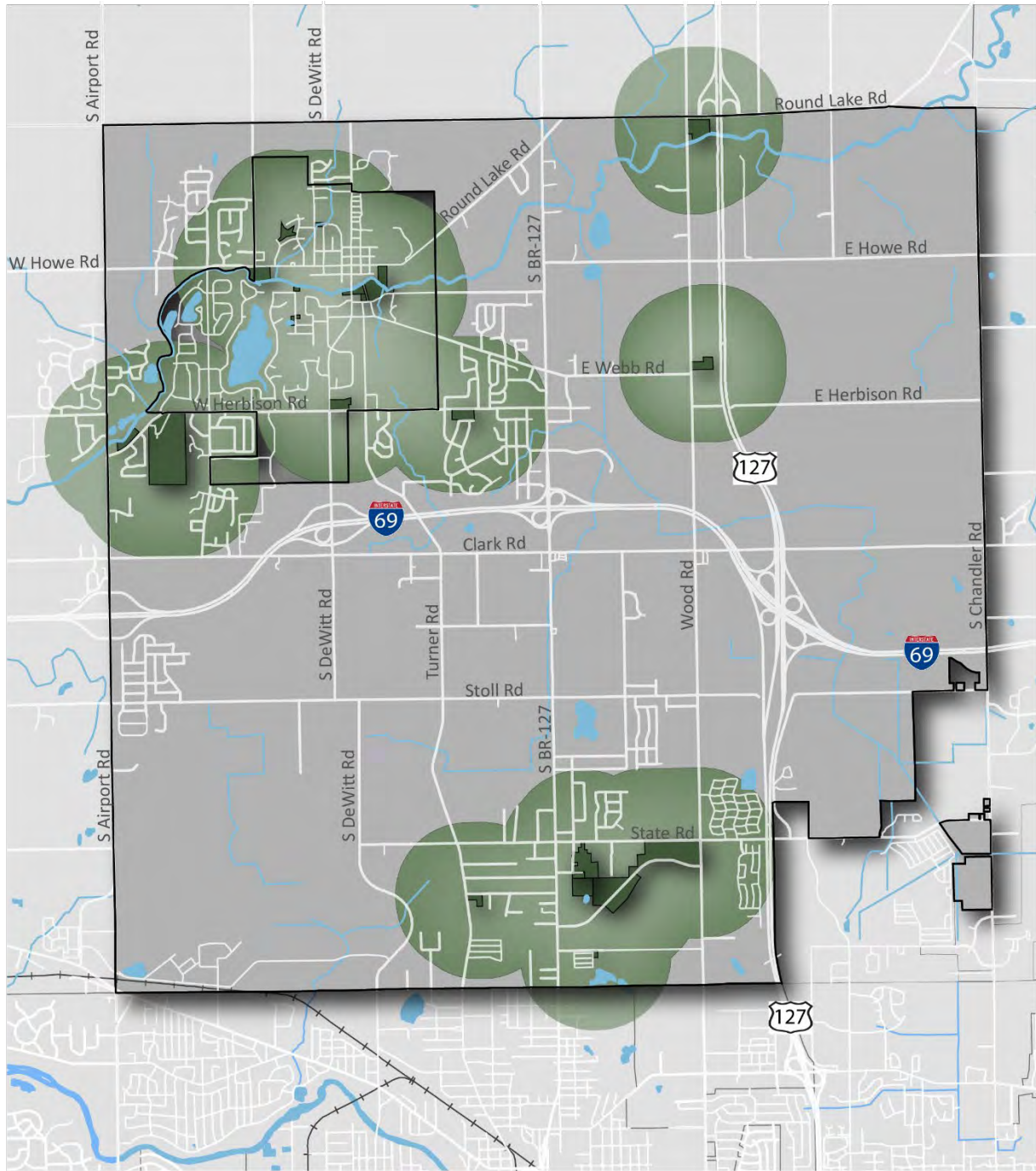
All properties are still maintained and functioning as public parks.

Walkability







Map 6.0 below uses National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) service radii (a straight line from the center to the circumference of a circle) to determine what areas of the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township are within a 10-minute walk of a park. This map depicts walking distances only. A distance of a half-mile (approximately 10-minute walk) was used as a likely maximum distance the average park user would be expected to walk to visit a park for any purpose.

The map shows the half-mile radius around all the parks in the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township indicating that the vast majority of city residents (approximately 80%) and many township residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park. According to The Trust for Public Land, the national average is 55% of residents living within a 10-minute walk to a park. The gaps in the township indicate additional opportunity areas for future parks.

Map 6.0 Walkability Map



Legend

	DeWitt Township		Inside City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township - Half Mile Walkability Analysis
	City of DeWitt		Outside DeWitt Area - Half Mile Walkability Analysis
	Water Feature		
	Park Parcel		



OF COMMUNITY INPUT OF

IN THIS CHAPTER

35 COMMUNITY INPUT RESULTS

35 SURVEY RESULTS

COMMUNITY INPUT RESULTS

One of the most important aspects of a community's Recreation Plan is the inclusion of the park user's opinions about how they view the future of their parks and recreation system. DARA, the city of DeWitt, and DeWitt Charter Township created a community survey and held one public open house meeting to gather the information that would guide their parks and recreation program for the next five (5) years. The survey was a community-wide, online public input survey. The open house was a public meeting held at the city of DeWitt city hall community room. A complete tabulation of the results of the online survey is available for review in **Appendix X**. The text below describes significant results.

Residents had another opportunity to comment on the plan during the required public review period held December 10, 2021, through January 9, 2022, concluding with the public hearing at the DeWitt city council meeting and the DeWitt Charter Township board meeting, both on January 10, 2022.

Survey Results

The DeWitt Area Parks and Recreation Plan community-wide survey was available online, from November 2020 to January of 2021 under the website www.dewittrecreationssurvey.com. The community-wide survey received 492 responses. It was publicized with a variety of methods:

- Facebook post on DARA, DeWitt Township, and City of DeWitt pages and shared on the DeWitt Community Facebook page
- Link on city and township websites
- Email blasts from city and township staff to City Council and township boards/commissions
- Postcard mailings



Respondents – Community Wide Survey

There was a total of 492 respondents who participated in the survey. Respondents were not required to answer every question, therefore not all of the questions have a total of 608 answers. Figure 3.0 depicts a breakdown by municipality and splits the DeWitt area into three categories with the following responses:

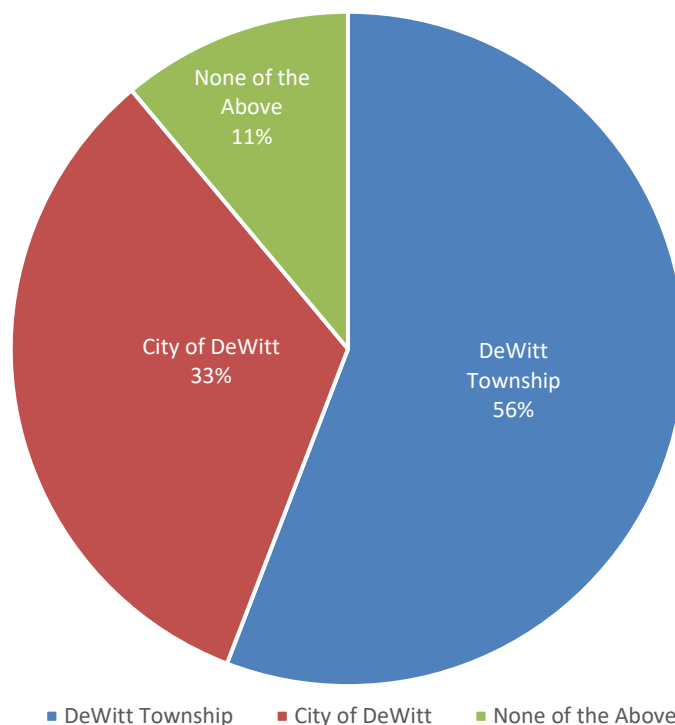
- DeWitt Charter Township – 56%
- City of DeWitt – 33%
- Other areas – 11%

The age breakdown of the community-wide survey results was comprehensive for all age groups over 18. Very few teenagers responded to the survey, while almost half of the respondents were over the age of 40. The community-wide respondent age group breakdown is shown in Table 9.0.

Table 9.0 Age of Respondents

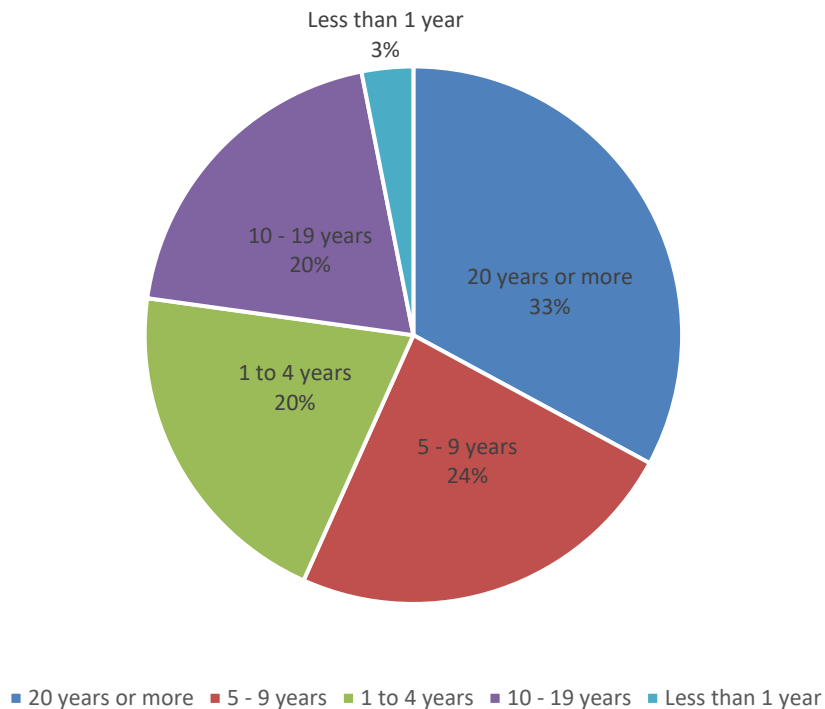
Age Group	Respondents
0-18	0.2%
18-29	6.4%
30-39	31.5%
40-49	26.1%
50-64	22.4%
65 and older	13.3%

Figure 3.0 Where Respondents Live by Municipality



Respondents were asked how long they have lived in the DeWitt area. Figure 4.0 shows that 33% of the respondents have lived in the area for more than 20 years. 20% have lived in the area for 10-19 years. This shows that both the township and city continue to be a desirable place to live and play.

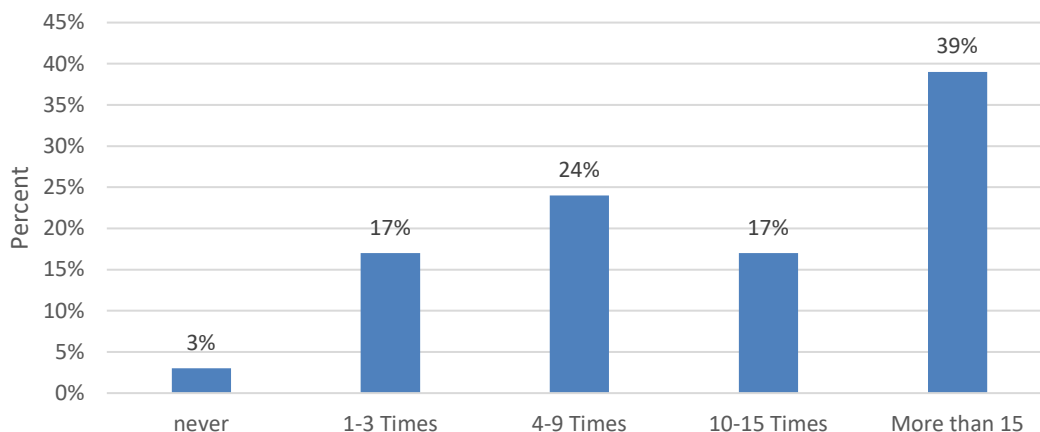
Figure 4.0 How Long Respondents Have Lived in the DeWitt Area



Park Visits in the Past Year

The first question focused on how often people visited a city or township park in the past year. Over 50% of the respondents visited a park on average at least once per month. Almost 40% of the respondents visited a park more than once per month.

Figure 5.0 Park Visits in the Past Year



The second question focused on what park people visited in the city or township. Each Park is listed below, with the corresponding results. In the city, Riverside, River Trail, and the Sports park were the top three parks visited. In the township Granger Meadows, Padgett Park, and Looking Glass Riverfront Park were the top three parks visited.

Figure 6.0 City of DeWitt Parks Visited Most in the Past Year

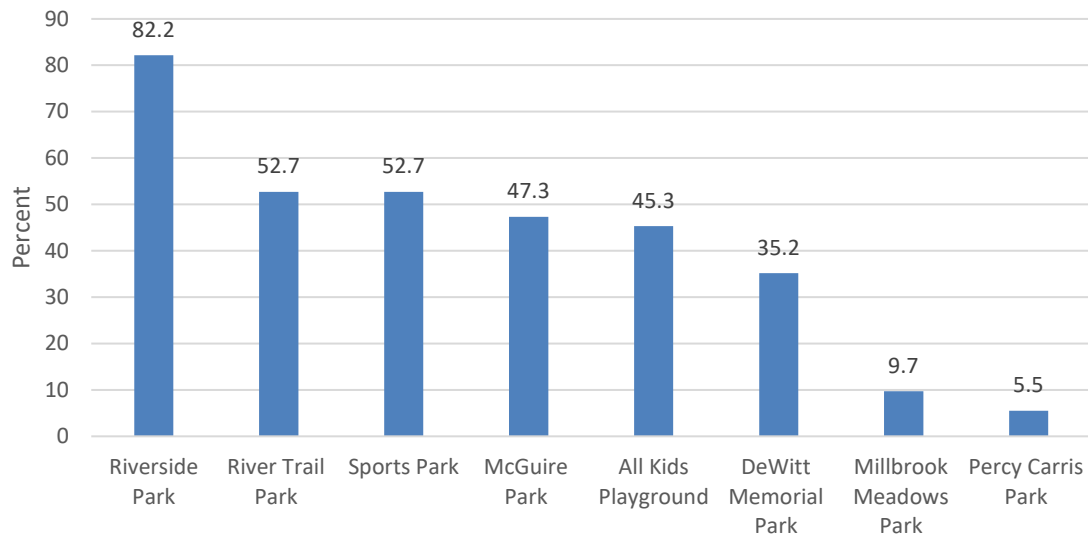
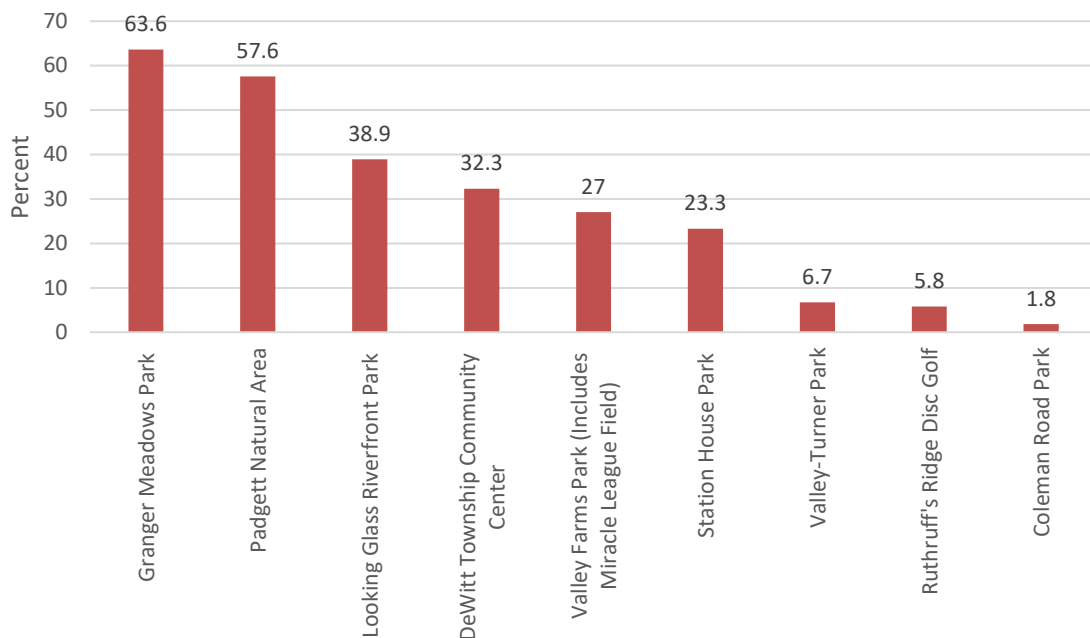


Figure 7.0 DeWitt Township Parks Visited Most in the Past Year



Parks and Program Experience

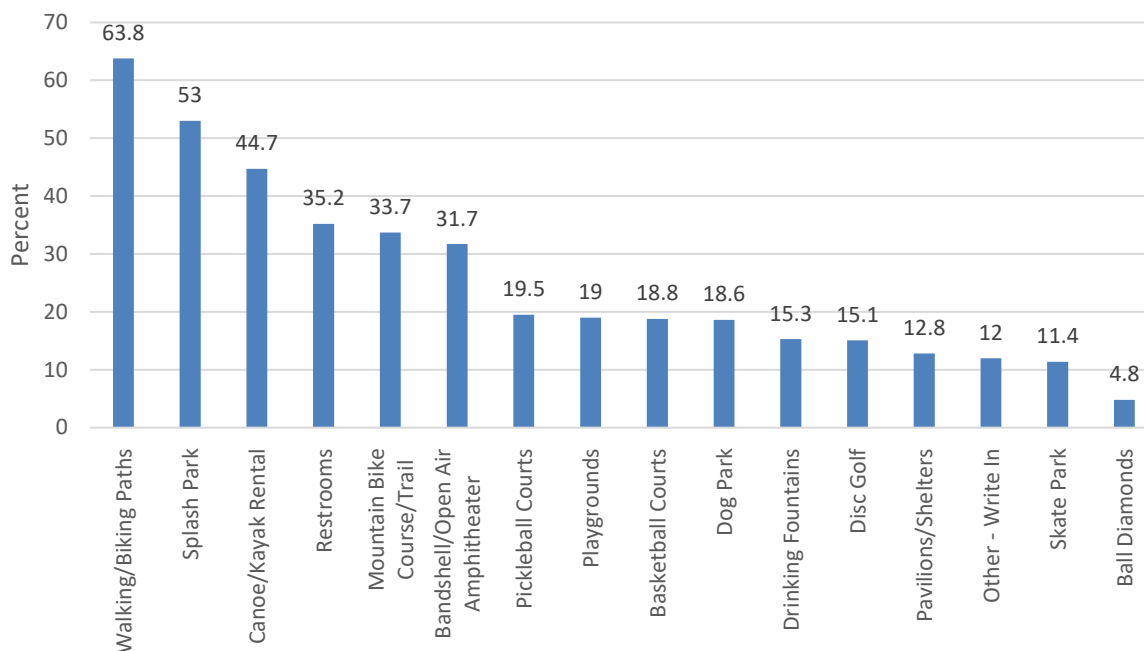
The survey also asked the respondents to rate their experiences at the parks, as well as the programs offered. Table 10.0 below shows how the residents feel about each.

Table 10.0 Park and Program Experience

	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Quality of Programs	26.9%	47.3%	9.9%	2.7%	0.2%	13.0%
Quality/Friendliness of Staff	28.4%	31.9%	12.0%	1.0%	0.2%	26.5%
Variety of Facilities/Amenities	21.0%	55.8%	15.1%	4.8%	0.2%	3.1%
Maintenance and Appearance	31.0%	53.8%	12.3%	1.9%	%	1.0%
Safety and Security	31.9%	52.2%	11.0%	0.6%	0.2%	4.1%

Residents were also asked to comment on what additional park activities or programs they'd like to see added or see more of. Those results are below in Figure 8.0.

Figure 8.0 Additional Park Programs or Activities





GOALS & OBJECTIVES

IN THIS CHAPTER

41 PROVIDING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE DEWITT COMMUNITY

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Providing Recreational Opportunities for the DeWitt Community

The purpose of the Parks and Recreation Master plan is to identify effective and achievable goals and objectives as an important part of the parks and recreation planning process. DARA wants to provide high-quality recreation opportunities for the community. Goals and objectives are based on demographic characteristics of the population, the physical and environmental characteristics of the city and township, and community input.

The following goals are overarching ideas that the city would like to accomplish. Objectives are more detailed strategies to help carry out the goals. Finally, the action plan is more precise and identifies specific projects and programs the city and township would like to complete over the next five years. Action Plan items can include organizational, staffing, programming, public information, capital improvements, and operations and maintenance actions. The City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township formulated the following shared goals and objectives. The goals and objectives below are consistent with and reflective of several other planning documents from the community and region. Those include:

- Clinton County Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan: 2008-2012
- DeWitt Charter Township Comprehensive Development Plan – 2005 (2012 Update)
- City of DeWitt Comprehensive Development Plan: 2008 – 2018
- DeWitt Charter Township Open Space Ad Hoc Committee Report - May 2007
- Protecting and Restoring the Upper Looking Glass River: A Watershed Management Plan, February 2008



Goal 1: Provide quality leisure time activities with special consideration given to improving health and fitness.

A community's park system is a very visible and public reflection of how it values the environment and open space. Its recreational facilities and programs offer the community the opportunity to enjoy nature and take part in activities that will improve health and fitness. The DeWitt community realizes the importance of providing top quality park facilities and programs and it also wishes to continue to improve the health and fitness of its residents.

Objectives:

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

Goal 2: Provide safe, broad community-based recreation opportunities that improve the overall quality-of-life for all DeWitt area residents.

The various methods of community input have provided many suggestions for improvements in park facilities and programs. The City of DeWitt, DeWitt Township and DARA will use these suggestions to guide their planning processes in the future. The community has also become aware of the recreational needs of special needs populations and is taking steps to offer facilities that will be inclusive for all.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to add amenities to DeWitt park facilities based upon community input and need.
- b. Provide recreational opportunities for people with disabilities.
- c. Work towards providing improvements and upgrades to park facilities that meet ADA accessibility guidelines, where feasible.
- d. Continue program development for special needs populations, partnering with local and regional recreational providers, where feasible.
- e. Add recreation support facilities to improve the overall user experience for park visitors.

Goal 3: Provide non-motorized pathways for recreational and transportation use.

Currently, paths are a high priority for many communities. The DeWitt area already has many paths, most of which are centered around the river. Citizens have asked that more paths be added to the community and that existing paths be connected. The path system needs to focus upon connecting residential neighborhoods to parks and local destination points as well as connecting parks to other parks. Furthermore, there is a need to connect DeWitt's non-motorized paths to those of neighboring communities

Objectives:

- a. Evaluate potential corridors for new pathway opportunities.
- b. Expand the non-motorized pathways in the DeWitt area with a focus on connecting existing parks, neighborhoods, local destination points.
- c. Work with neighboring communities to connect DeWitt's pathways to the regional trail network.

Goal 4: Develop recreation opportunities that focus upon and take advantage of DeWitt-area water resources.

Many survey respondents commented on the natural beauty of the Looking Glass River. They also felt it was important to develop recreational opportunities that took advantage of what the river has to offer. This can be important for local residents as well as those interested in visiting the community. In the latter sense, the Looking Glass River recreational opportunities can be seen as an economic development tool.

Objectives:

- a. Develop opportunities, alone or in partnership with other agencies, to educate citizens about the area's natural resources.
- b. Enhance fishing, canoeing and kayaking opportunities on the Looking Glass River.

Goal 5: Acquire additional recreational land for park facilities.

As the DeWitt community continues to grow, local officials need to be conscious of the need for acquiring additional parkland. They also should look to local planning and zoning tools and cooperative arrangements to take advantage of alternate and additional uses for existing public space.

Objectives:

- a. Identify open space and vacant parcels for potential future park land.
- b. If desired, acquire property as it becomes available.
- c. If possible, acquire spaces that are high in natural resource value.
- d. Encourage the use of drainage courses and utility easements for recreational purposes.
- e. Preserve floodplains and wetlands for recreation use wherever possible.

Goal 6: Create community awareness of DeWitt area recreational opportunities and promote them to citizens and visitors.

Several respondents to the survey commented that they were not aware of all the parks in the DeWitt area. Some also mentioned not knowing about recreational programs. The DeWitt communities could also capitalize on the opportunity to promote its facilities to visitors, as well.

Objectives:

- a. Continue promoting the active and passive use of park facilities for a variety of organizations (athletic, social, business community, civic, service clubs, etc.).
- b. Enhance internal wayfinding and mile markers in park trail systems, and maps.
- c. Install monument signs at visitor entrance to parks.
- d. Enhance website and use a variety of advertising and social media tools for promotion of events and programs.
- e. Explore use of park facilities by vendors for short and long-term contracts to widen programs and services offered without a direct burden on staffing.
- f. Work with schools, government entities, and non-profit organizations to share information regarding DeWitt Area parks and recreation opportunities.

Goal 7: Continue to embrace and enhance regional collaboration for recreational programs and facilities.

As Michigan struggles through the economic impacts of a global recession, it is important to take advantage of regional collaboration and other cost-effective ways of offering recreational programs in the community. DARA is a wonderful example of the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Township working together to offer programs to the entire community. Further such collaboration with other neighboring communities, the county, and recreation related organizations will most likely prove to be an important component in continuing to provide quality recreation in the DeWitt community.

Objectives:

- a. Continue to work with existing recreation partners in the community to provide programs, leagues, and special events.
- b. Explore options for new and expanded partnerships to provide additional recreational opportunities.

07 ACTION PLAN

IN THIS CHAPTER

46 POTENTIAL PROJECTS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

ACTION PLAN

Potential Projects for the Next Five Years

With goals and objectives in place, DARA, DeWitt Township, and the City of DeWitt each were able to develop 5-year action programs to work toward accomplishing the goals and objectives. The action plan details the direction the three entities wish to take over the next five years in order to maintain and improve the quality and diversity of area park and recreation opportunities.

Each action item was assigned a priority level of 1 through 5 with 1 being the highest priority. Each action item relates to one or more of the numbered goals from the previous section entitled “Goals and Objectives”. Potential capital improvements described in this plan have been established not only to provide a framework for decision makers but also to enable the city and township to apply for grant funding for those proposed projects.

The project list is not a fixed element, nor is it exhaustive. It reflects the results of the input received from the city and township staff, the open house, and the online survey. Future circumstances, especially availability of funding, may influence the order in which the projects are completed.

Table 11.0 DeWitt Area-Wide Initiatives

DeWitt Area Recreation Plan Action Items 2022-2026		
AREA WIDE INITIATIVES		
Project	Priority	Relates to Goal #
Identify public lands to acquire for new park assets	4	1, 2
Identify an area or current park to build a splash pad	4	1, 2
Continue to work with Clinton County partners on the development and implementation of a non-motorized transportation plan	1	1, 2, 3, 7
Work with Clinton County to develop county wide parks in the southern tier of Clinton County	2	1, 2, 7
Purchase property or acquire easements along the Looking Glass River for increased access and viewing	3	4
Create canoe livery rentals to take advantage of the Looking Glass River in the DeWitt area	4	1, 2, 6
Expand biking and trail system to link to existing parks	2	1, 2, 3
Work with churches and other property owners with sufficient land and parking to install additional playing fields to accommodate user group needs (soccer, lacrosse)	2	1, 2, 7

Table 12.0 City of DeWitt Action Plan

DeWitt Area Recreation Plan Action Items 2022-2026			
CITY OF DEWITT			
Park	Project	Priority	Relates to Goal #
All Kids Playground	Add a variety of accessible play stations to the park	3	1, 2
Elmwood Park	Install river viewing/fishing platform	3	1, 2, 4
Millbrook Meadows	Install/Replace playground equipment as needed	4	1, 2
Percy Carris Park	Install playground equipment as needed	3	1, 2
Riverside Park	Install playground equipment as needed and expand parking	1	2
Riverside Park	Construct bandshell	3	2
McGuire Park	Construct a pedestrian bridge crossing over the Looking Glass River	3	1, 2, 3
Sports Park	Repave parking lot, purchase grounds equipment	2	2
McGuire Park	Add pickleball courts, expand river viewing platform	1	1, 2, 4
Riverside Park	Construct bandshell	3	2
Riverside Park	Acquire two remaining parcels next to park	3	5
TBD	Continue to add property to the park system as land becomes available	3	5
Various Parks	Install cameras, sensor lights, or other vandalism prevention devices to parks	3	1, 2

Table 13.0 DeWitt Charter Township Action Plan

DeWitt Area Recreation Plan Action Items 2022-2026			
DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP			
Park	Project	Priority	Relates to Goal #
Granger Meadows Park	Add exercise stations along trail	2	1, 2
Granger Meadows Park	Install rock climbing wall	4	1, 2
Granger Meadows Park	Install lights for softball field	3	2
Granger Meadows Park	Install irrigation system for softball field	3	2
Granger Meadows Park	Convert outdoor inline rink to pickleball courts	1	1, 2
Granger Meadows Park	Install a stage and seating area	4	1, 2
Looking Glass River Park	Construct a new pavilion	4	2
Padgett Park	Construct a new pavilion	4	2
Valley Farms Park	Add interpretive signage	3	2, 6
Valley Farms Park	Install lights for softball field	4	2
Valley Farms Park	Expand disc golf to 18 holes	3	1, 2
Waters Edge Park	Install new playground equipment	5	1, 2
Waters Edge Park	Construct parking lot	1	2
Waters Edge Park	Install canoe/kayak launch	2	1, 2, 4
Waters Edge Park	Construct fishing/viewing platform	2	1, 2, 4

Table 14.0 DARA Action Plan

DeWitt Area Recreation Plan Action Items 2022-2026		
DARA		
Project	Priority	Relates to Goal #
Expand programming for pre-teens, youth councils, and special events	2	1, 2
Expand active and passive recreational programs for senior citizens	2	1, 2
Expand programs for children and adults with physical or mental disabilities	2	1, 2
Expand and see opportunities for partnering with local organizations and community groups	2	1, 2, 7
Explore the opportunity for recreational partnerships with neighboring townships	1	1, 2, 7

NO PLANNING PROCESS UU

IN THIS CHAPTER

51 REVIEW AND ADOPTION

PLANNING PROCESS

To provide quality recreation opportunities for its citizens, the city of DeWitt and DeWitt Charter Township has developed this Parks and Recreation Master Plan as a tool to guide the development of recreation facilities over the next five years. This plan represents an ongoing commitment by the DeWitt area to establish recreational goals and objectives for the community. The plan will also provide the city and township eligibility for grants from the Department of Natural Resources to assist both in reaching its recreational goals.

DARA contracted with the Spicer Group of Saginaw to assist the Parks and Recreation Board, the city, and the township with the completion of this plan. Spicer Group consultants met with city and township staff and the Parks and Recreation Commission during 2021 while working on the plan.

Data was collected about the DeWitt area, including demographics and an inventory of the parks and facilities owned and operated by the city and township. This data was gathered from numerous resources including city and township staff, the 2015 DeWitt Area Recreation Master Plan, the Parks and Recreation boards, research of aerial images provided by Google Earth, and through field visits by Spicer Group.

Two opportunities for input and participation were provided during the development of this plan, the results of which were described in an earlier section of this plan. Based upon the existing information and the public input, DARA, the city, and the township developed goals for parks and recreation in the DeWitt area. They also created an action program to accomplish the goals of the plan.

Spicer Group completed a draft recreation plan which was subsequently available for review at the DARA office, DeWitt City Hall, DeWitt Charter Township offices, and on their respective website. The review period from December 10, 2021 through January 10, 2022, was publicized on the city and township websites and Facebook pages. The final opportunities for community input occurred at the advertised public hearings held prior to the adoption of the plan, at the DeWitt Charter Township board meeting on January 10, 2022, and at the city council meeting on January 10, 2022. At the two January 10, 2022 public hearings, the respective governing bodies passed motions recommending adoption of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The DeWitt City Council and the DeWitt Township Board both passed resolutions to adopt the recreation plan at their January 10, 2022 meetings. Copies of the recreation plan were transmitted to Clinton County and the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission. The Plan was uploaded to the DNR for approval in **MONTH of 2022**. Copies of the notification advertisements, the public hearing minutes, and the resolution are included in Appendix E.

00 APPENDIX 09

IN THIS CHAPTER

APPENDIX A - COMMUNITY INPUT SURVEY

APPENDIX B - OPEN SPACE REPORT

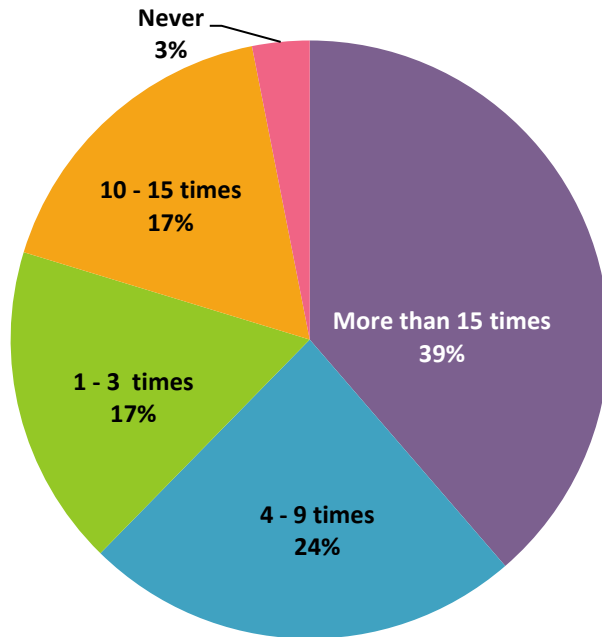
APPENDIX C - ADOPTION DOCUMENTS

Report for DeWitt Area Recreation Plan Survey

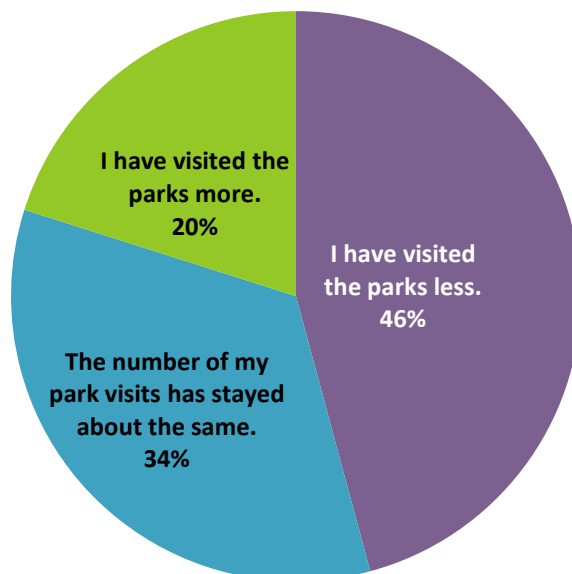
Survey Available 11-19-2020 to 1-3-2021

492 Responses

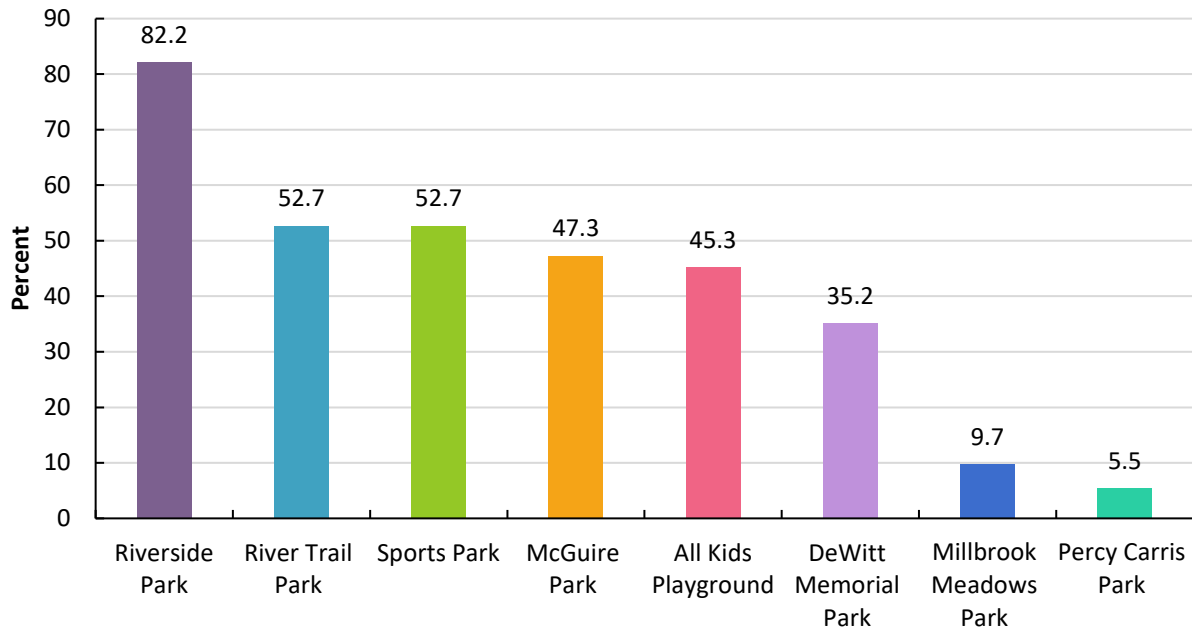
1. How many times did you visit a DeWitt Area park in the past year?



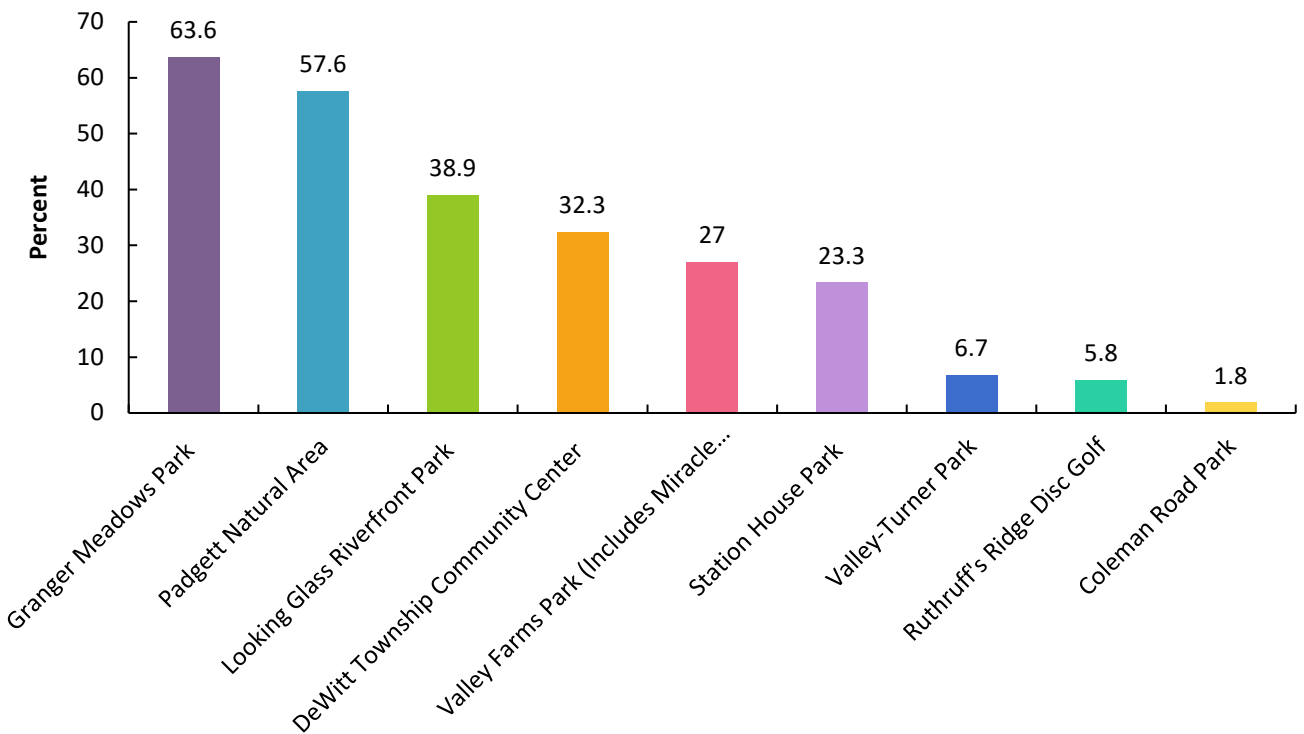
2. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your DeWitt area park visits in the past year?



3. Which of the following parks or facilities in the City of DeWitt did you visit in the past year?



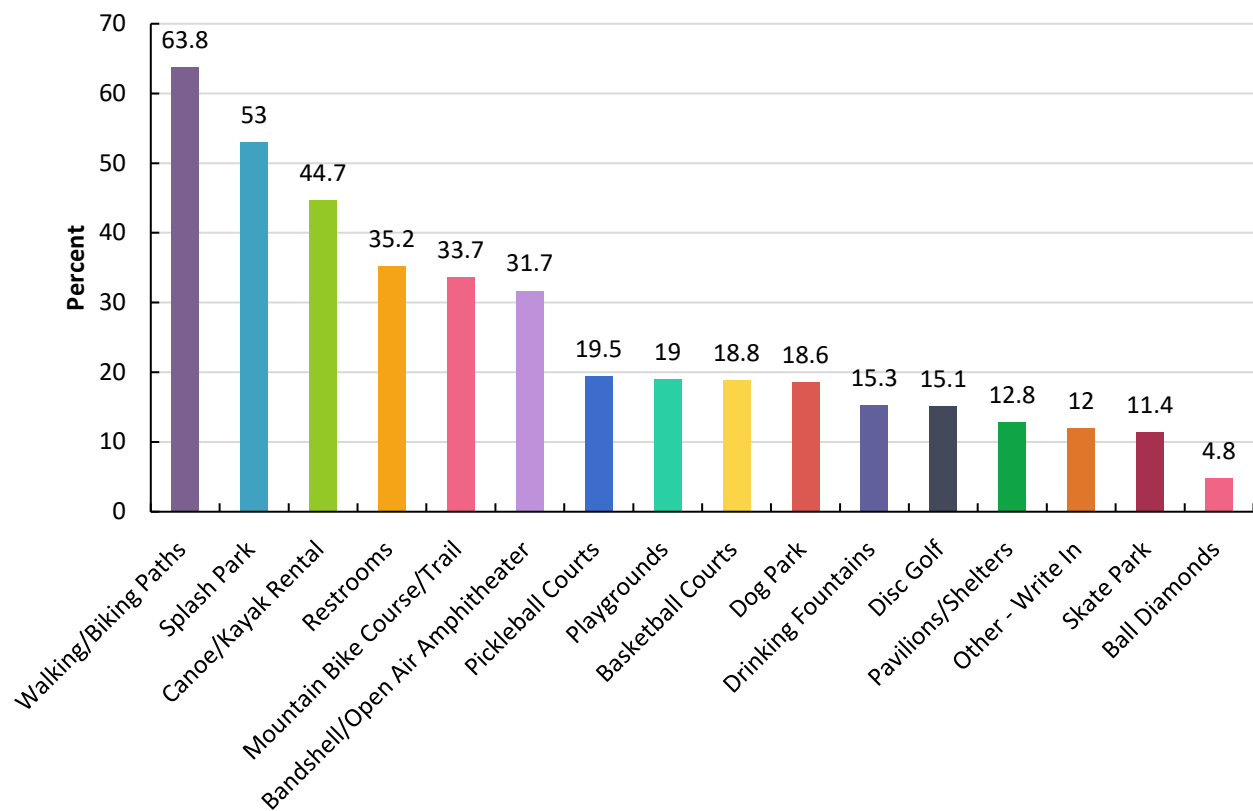
4. Which of the following DeWitt Township parks have you visited in the past year?



5. Please evaluate the following general aspects of parks and recreation in the DeWitt Area.

	Very Good	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Quality of Programs	26.9%	47.3%	9.9%	2.7%	0.2%	13.0%
Quality/Friendliness of Staff	28.4%	31.9%	12.0%	1.0%	0.2%	26.5%
Variety of Facilities/Amenities	21.0%	55.8%	15.1%	4.8%	0.2%	3.1%
Maintenance and Appearance	31.0%	53.8%	12.3%	1.9%	%	1.0%
Safety and Security	31.9%	52.2%	11.0%	0.6%	0.2%	4.1%

6. What additional facilities would you like to see add to the DeWitt area parks system?



Other - Write In	Count
Pool/community pool/outdoor pool/swimming pool with adult lap swim	9
Ice hockey rink for winter/Ice Rink/Ice Skating	6
Tennis Courts	4
Canoe/kayak launch	3
Sand Volleyball Courts/Volleyball Courts	3
Clearing out fallen trees in the Looking glass river	2
Amphitheater with good parking.	1
Beach, Sandy area, swimming	1
Curling Rink	1
dirt bike park	1
Extended river trail.	1
Gaga Pit	1
History	1
I already filled in this survey. But I have to say that there are several poorly worded or vague questions and/or undefined terms.	1
I would love a simple fountain near the Gazebo that is nice looking but kids can safely get wet! Something similar to fountain in front of Cooley Law Stadium! Also a couple nice sand volleyball courts! Maybe in that empty lot by riverside park, with high quality sand!	1
Key Fob for dog park maintained better	1
More handicap accessible equipment.	1
More natural areas like Padgett Park which is very crowded with too many uses for one small park. Skiers, walkers, bikes, dogs.	1
More park locations	1
Natural Areas	1
Natural playgrounds/playscapes AND more nature trails AND sand volleyball	1
One direction walk paths, so dogs & pedestrians don't have to pass one another. Eg. Clockwise on M,W,F, Sat and counterclockwise on Sun,T,Th	1
Outdoor Pool for everyone to use; not 2nd class citizens like at the schools!	1
Pathway over the freeway to connect the south side of the Dewitt Public Schools children to the rest of the community.	1

please finish side walks on Dill and webb to Lousts very dangerous area	1
restoration of Gunnisonville School on the corner of Clark and Wood Roads	1
running trails	1
Soccer fields	1
Soccer/football fields - spring flooding creates challenges	1
Some wing dams for fishing, clear the downed trees	1
Special floral or arboretum	1
Storywalk back at Valley Farms	1
Updated playground equipment at the Downtown Dewitt Firestation - MCJuire Park	1
Walkinga/biking paths that connect to other communities	1
Winter stuff, ice rink etc	1
water/pop machines by bathrooms	1

7. Please address the adequacy of the following recreational programs in the DeWitt area.

	Excellent	Good	Marginal	Inadequate	Don't Know/No Opinion
Youth Sports Leagues	17.4%	36.6%	6.2%	2.1%	37.8%
Adult Sports Leagues	3.7%	15.4%	13.5%	6.0%	61.4%
Special Events (Easter Egg Hunt, Flashlight Pumpkin Hunt, Birthday Bashes, etc.)	11.7%	33.0%	10.9%	1.7%	42.8%
Instructional Classes	6.6%	20.5%	13.0%	2.7%	57.1%
Health and Fitness Classes	5.0%	18.0%	13.7%	3.5%	59.8%
Day Camps for Youth	10.6%	19.3%	7.7%	2.1%	60.5%
Senior Citizen Activities	1.7%	5.6%	8.1%	7.9%	76.9%
Teen Programs	1.9%	6.6%	8.1%	6.4%	77.0%
Adaptive Recreation (Recreation programs for adults and youths with cognitive or physical disabilities)	2.5%	6.4%	4.5%	5.0%	81.6%

8. Please list any specific types of recreation PROGRAMS that are not available in the DeWitt area you would like to see offered here.

1. Younger youth sports programs, older youth classes and programs like cooking, art, stem, etc.
2. anything for our youth
3. I never know what is offered because communication is so minimal.
4. I would love to see a community pool or water park offered, like East Lansing. There is no open swim offered to the public.
5. More indoor basketball facilities and more teen programs.
6. Volleyball, Pound Fitness Class, Sewing Class, Cooking Class, Meal Bingo, Poker.
7. Pickelball Pickelball Pickelball Pickelball Pickelball
8. Seasonal arts and crafts activities (ie: kite making in the spring) and the open gym time for littles during the day more often and adding time for big kids in the evening.
9. Swim classes, more art or hobby classes like the Hannah Community Center, kids dance class
10. Adult Coed sports leagues (softball, kickball, soccer, volleyball)
11. Bike paths. Not share the road
12. Youth girls softball
13. Swim lessons
14. Would like to see more teen programs
15. Crafting, sporting tournaments, swimming.
16. Exercise classes or yoga for seniors.
17. More senior citizen activities
18. Teen programs. It feels like once kids are out of 5th grade, there's nothing available, sports, art, e.t.c.
19. Snowshoe/cross country ski trails
20. More activities for kids 6 and under
21. We have LOVED all that DARA has offered our children. As they get older (14, 12, 9) it seems there aren't as many opportunities, likely because there are so many offerings elsewhere. I would love more recreational teen type offerings. Teen volleyball night, or a dance, or lock in type thing.
22. Pickleball league
23. Cross country skiing More boot camp
24. Theater, swimming instructions
25. Would like to see Jr Chef classes for kids ages 8 , true ninja classes/courses for kids 8 .
26. More programs for children beginning at age 3 instead of 4.
27. Pickleball courts...growing sport. Consider converting skate park in Granger Meadows to 6 Pickleball courts.
28. Would love to see teen cooking classes or one evening painting class, poetry reading, or pottery class.
29. Aquatics
30. More partnerships with the schools for recreation and instructional classes. Or maybe with the library to support teens after school
31. Dog Park with a small dog side!
32. Cooking class for a variety of ages. Larger variety of exercise classes.
33. guided nature hikes outdoor social activities

34. 50 and over adult softball league
35. I have no idea what programs are offered. If there are, they should be better advertised to the community.
36. Splash park would be nice. Grandkids love the one in saint Johns
37. We need additional, affordable summer programming for kids up to age 13.
38. Winter sports programs. Outdoor rinks for the kids to skate
39. Splash park or pools in the city of dewitt
40. Floor hockey for kids 6th grade and older.
41. Tennis classes, swim classes
42. Swimming/diving, archery/shooting
43. Would love to see more paved biking/walking paths.
44. Swim programs, ie open swim, youth swim league.
45. Enjoying recent improvements. Continue to fine tune. Enjoying the trails. Seating at beginning or end of trails. Enjoying dog park, add a little equipment there. Dogs need a platform, a place where dog gets a time out. Add agility, small dog/ puppy area. The new Sidewalk s great addition
46. Sports Equipment Rentals - or workshops on cross country skiing or using snowshoes along the trails. Outdoor winter activity highlights. Have the community center develop a rental program for sleds and skates, balls, tennis equipment
47. Kids' golf, kids' tennis, girls' elementary age volleyball
48. horseback riding trails
49. Outdoor fitness classes; yoga, etc. in park setting
50. Pickle ball
51. would like to see dog park opened through the winter. Perhaps closing it from mid-March thru mid-April during thaw and early spring. Would be not to go 4 months with it closed.
52. Miss group exercise classes due to virus!!
53. Community weight loss program Loose 1,000 pounds Community garden spaces Walking mileage contest 10,000 miles
54. Are there over 60 softball leagues?
55. I would like to see additional outdoor tennis courts.
56. A drama club for late elementary/early middle school age would be of interest.
57. Swimming lessons on regular basis to children.
58. Historical-educational program at a restored Gunnisonville School on the corner of Clark and Wood Roads.
59. Community pool would be great.
60. More areas to explore nature, both wooded and prairie.
61. Mountain bike trails
62. Skate park for younger people. Biking Kayaking
63. Access to more fishing opportunities
64. Pickle ball
65. Senior athletic league: pickleball, as example.
66. More river activities such as kayaking or canoeing
67. Art camps/classes
68. Nature and history programs
69. I wish I could walk my dog in Granger Park.

70. Soccer activities
71. Clean up the river so you can use it to kayak More bike trails in the area
72. Beach Volleyball league
73. Adult coed softball league used to field many teams now not so much. Maybe lower fee to get teams to come back
74. Kayak boat ramps needed
75. Swimming pool and swimming lessons, squash courts, indoor basketball courts for adults, adult athletes with young children options (daycare by the hour at sports or workout facilities).
76. Ice hockey Volleyball
77. Dog training classes
78. Adult lap swim
79. More activities at the Riverside Park.
80. Swim lessons
81. Soccer and game fields. Big complex to have gr and Detroit meet here to play
82. Spanish classes Adult sports Adult Swimming
83. No a program. Having kayak pads to get on and off easier.
84. Just more Disc Golf Courses
85. Canoe and kayak rentals
86. Fishing, kayaking or canoeing...outdoorsman type activities for teens.
87. Hiking;
88. Pickelball more places. More bathrooms
89. Splash Park for the kids... Also a swimming pool outdoors...
90. A kayak shuttle service would be helpfully make the river more useable
91. Outside yoga, outside pickle ball,
92. Summer programs for kids and programs for seniors
93. Outdoor fitness groups/boot camps
94. Aqua aerobics, swim lessons for both adults and children. Canoe & kayak rentals. Adult fitness programs, the area fitness centers available are not affordable for many to join.
95. need to market/communicate better what IS offered. Antiquated services. would like adult softball and volleyball leagues. Cornhole leagues or open competitions for adults.
96. Kayak rentals would be outstanding, we hike in the park off of Shavey Road probably 2x a week. Also would be interested in some sort of art classes.
97. Don't know - haven't looked into the programs available, particularly in the past year.
98. Regular Zumba.
99. Pickle ball beginners
100. Pound workout Adult team sports- like delta township Walking/ running groups Virtual/ on demand video of an orientation of each park, location, & offerings Adult classes ftf/virtual ie estate planning, stocks/bonds/ world languages/ cultures... Celebrate publicly the kindness in our community Celebrate our public servants, maybe a couple per month Give more detailed description of classes offered, sometimes it's missing details- look at how Delta township communicates classes.
101. Senior activities and programs
102. A dog park that separates small and large dogs.
103. Small dog area at the dog park. Current park is unsafe.
104. Adult co-ed sports teams, such as softball, kick ball, etc.

105. Masters swim team
106. More trails or parks like Fenner. I drive there most days for nature trails without tons of people like Padgett. Even if they made the trails wider. With COVID it is hard to safely distance as they currently exist.
107. Adult basketball and volleyball
108. Amphitheater, splash pad
109. Bicycle education
110. Youth programming: Dance, art, culinary, more sports (other than tball/baseball, basketball, soccer), swimming lessons Adult programming: group fitness, volleyball, art, culinary *It's possible, I've overlooked some offerings, I haven't seen every season's catalog

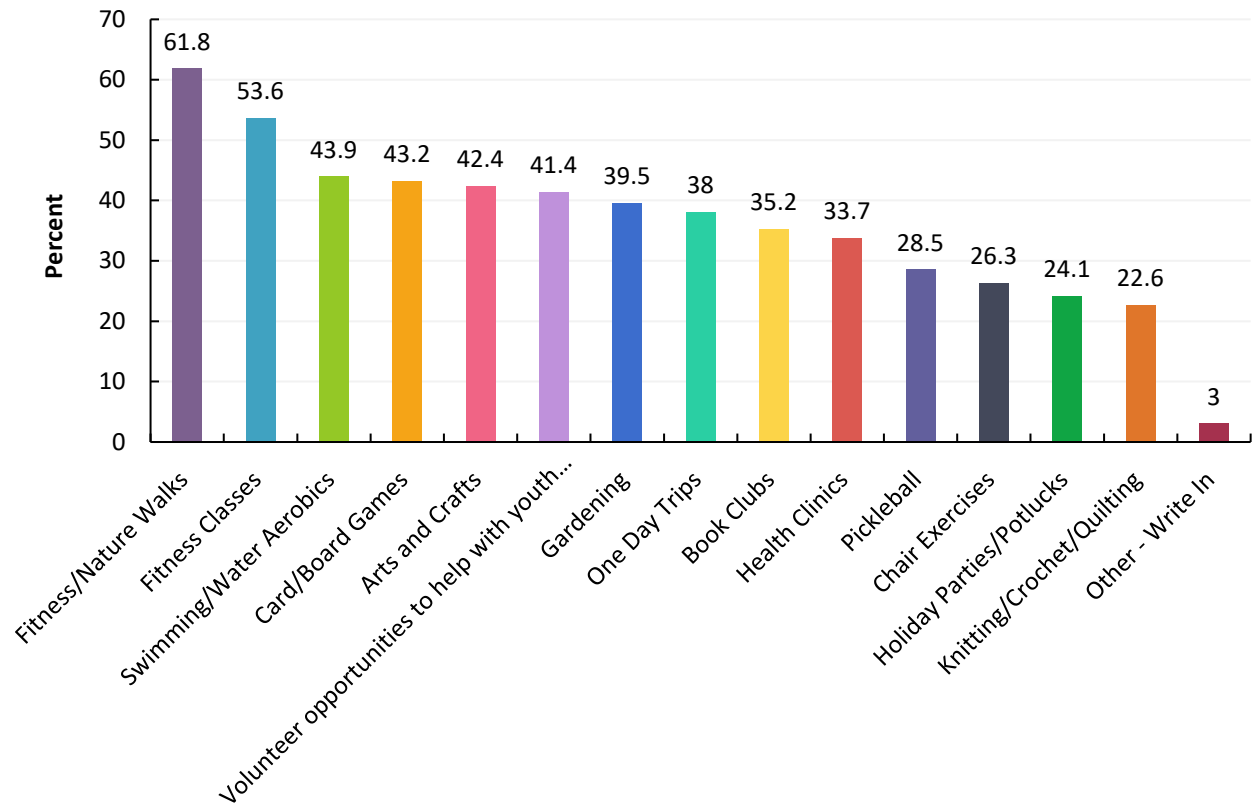
9. Please rate your feelings regarding the following statements concerning land acquisition for parks and recreation in the DeWitt Area.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral/No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The City of DeWitt needs more park land.	17.7%	30.7%	44.1%	6.3%	1.3%
DeWitt Township needs more park land.	18.3%	35.0%	39.6%	6.0%	1.0%
DeWitt and DeWitt Township should partner with other organizations and groups to preserve agricultural lands and environmentally sensitive open space.	40.6%	37.7%	18.8%	1.9%	1.0%

10. DeWitt Township owns an undeveloped parcel of land on the Looking Glass River at Round Lake and Wood Roads that will be developed into Waters Edge Park. Please rank the following potential amenities that could be added there in order of importance.

Item	Overall Rank	Score	Total Respondents
Walking Trails	1	2,806	456
Canoe Launch	2	2,208	430
Picnic Areas	3	1,841	418
Shore Fishing	4	1,585	398
Nature Center	5	1,410	373
Nature Signs and Displays	6	1,240	372
Community Garden Lots	7	847	352

11. Which of the following activities would you like to see offered in DeWitt for our growing senior citizen population?



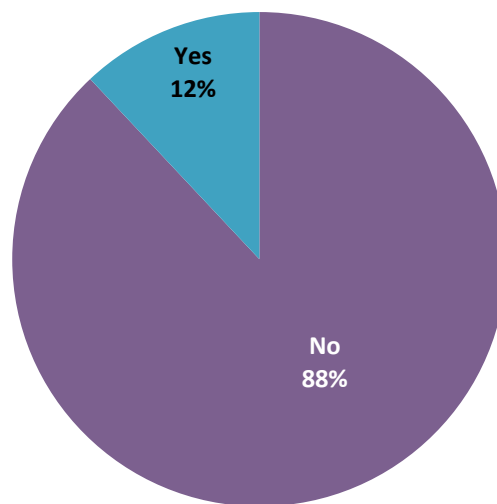
Other – Write In

1. Adopt a Senior Instead/Meals and conversation
2. Bingo
3. Curling
4. Dance
5. More visibility to get community involved
6. We are not anywhere near seniors, so while we highly support senior activities, we are not in a position to state what they should be.
7. Would like ANYTHING to begin with
8. informal social gatherings
9. tai chi

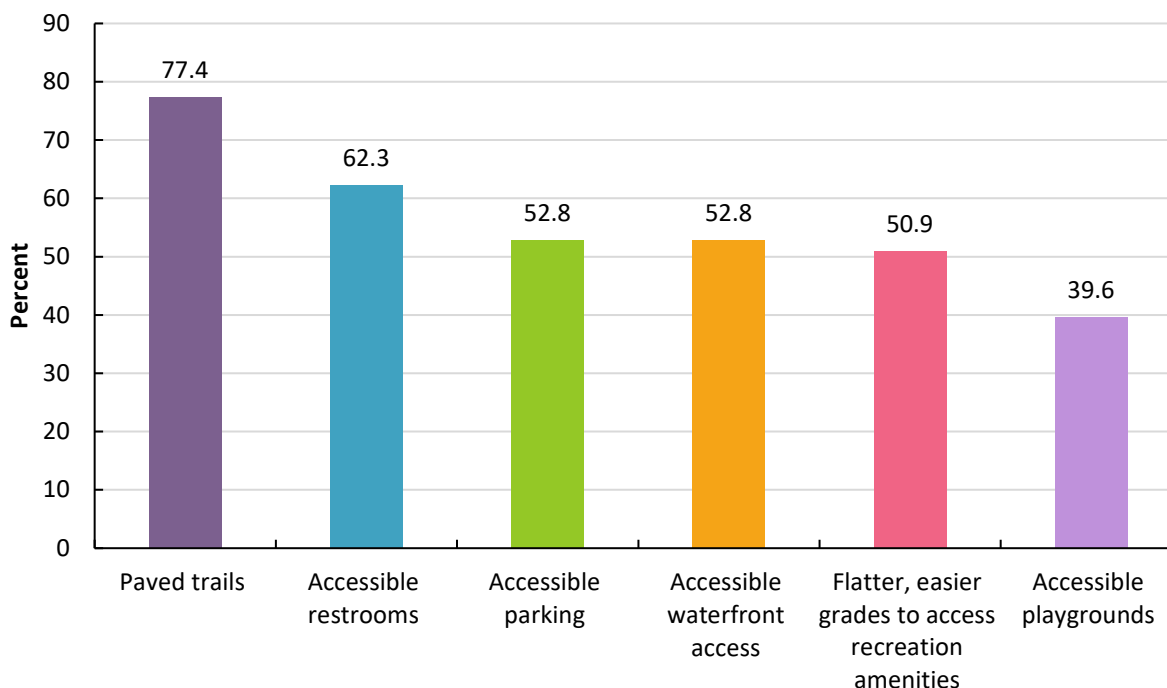
12. Please rate your feelings regarding pathways in the DeWitt area.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral/No opinion	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Shared use pathways for non-motorized transportation have a positive effect on the quality of life for DeWitt residents.	65.2%	27.0%	6.6%	0.8%	0.4%
It's important to provide shared use pathways for non-motorized transportation to connect community destinations and places.	64.3%	28.5%	6.0%	0.8%	0.4%
Shared-use pathways should include on and off road locations.	45.6%	33.2%	16.3%	3.9%	1.0%

13. Do you or anyone in your family have a disability?



14. **What types of improvements are important to add to our parks for people with disabilities? Please check all that apply.** (This question was only offered to those who answered yes to Question 13.)



15. What do you like best about parks and recreation in DeWitt?

1. Clean
2. Sports fields
3. I love the amount of space there is for being outdoors
4. affordability of programs, well-kept parks, kind staff
5. There are a lot of them and different age groups and abilities are accounted for.
6. Big parks with trails and playgrounds
7. Great place to spend quality time with family, get exercise and enjoy nature.
8. Location
9. The variety
10. Walking paths in nature are my favorite.
11. The staff is great and the activities offered for special events (ie: dinner with Santa) are fun!
12. Playground equipment
13. Parks are all quite clean/well maintained and very safe. We enjoy the youth sports programs for our children, and holiday activities like the Easter egg hunt, etc
14. Variety of park structures
15. They are clean !!
16. We feel that the system in place encourages an active lifestyle, and appreciate the continued improvements that allow for expanded opportunities to do so.

17. We enjoy the preserved natural areas with maintained paths that we can walk along as well as the various playgrounds.
18. With small kids right now, the paths and playgrounds are what we utilize the most.
19. Proximity
20. Manicured and marked trails,
21. I love the friendly staff, and it's nice to have multiple parks.
22. They are easily accessible, clean, well maintained and I feel generally safe when exercising alone.
23. We love the parks and trails. We also taken part in a youth basketball class that was really well done.
24. We like different things about different parks. Padget we love biking on the trails. We enjoy walking and fishing at Riverside. We have family photos taken there as well. The gazebo at Riverside is helpful for Girl Scout events.
25. Clean, safe, easily accessible
26. You do a great job with preschool and early elementary programming. Would like to see more opportunities for older kids and teens. One of the events my kids really enjoyed is the haunted house/maze tour. Also, would like to see more things offered for adults and seniors.
27. Well groomed. Restrooms. Safe feeling.
28. Playground facilities are adequate
29. Always feel safe
30. I like there there are year-round options
31. Variety of parks. Wish there was more equipment for little kids
32. It gives my kids a place to play and they love the parks.
33. Don't use much. Go to Delta Township for pickleball and 39er programs.
34. That we have parks. Just wish there were more space, amenities, and more accessible equipment at all playgrounds.
35. Love to walk the trails and enjoy the kayak launches.
36. Close enough to walk to
37. I love having walking and bike trails available in our community to allow for safe exercise.
38. The variety of parks, the restrooms, well maintained
39. Programs
40. Love the parks and special community events.
41. They are in good condition. The basics are there for some of the parks.
42. So many options to choose from. Truly a family friendly town.
43. DeWitt has been blessed with beautiful green spaces. Chad Stevens from DARA is amazing. He is such an asset for our community!
44. Dog park is great, just need a small dog side
45. Playgrounds
46. Variety of programming at DARA for youth & we love visiting the many parks in the area.
47. Playgrounds and walking trails
48. It's availability. Cleanliness. Natural beauty.

49. Proximity
50. There is always one near by and they are relatively clean.
51. Trees and trails!
52. Open to all Sports are friendly and focus on learning and fun Getting to be outside in a nice environment in suburban setting where most houses don't have much property
53. Youth programs
54. Walking path
55. I love the increase in walkways and pathways, especially the paved trail connecting Clark to schavey.
56. clean, close to home, safe, free
57. Connection of parks to community through accessible walking paths like sidewalks and paved pathways
58. The community participation in events is good
59. Exercise I'm a natural environment
60. Walking trails, good maintenance.
61. I like the scenery and walking trails. I also like bringing my dog.
62. Clean and safe
63. I love the dedicated bike lanes.
64. Enjoying nature
65. Many opportunities for all ages within my family.
66. Variety of options
67. Convenience, close, play areas for grandkids
68. They have many locations and places to run and walk dogs
69. Walking paths
70. I love that they are easily accessible. I love that they give an opportunity for our residents to spend time being active outside in nature all year round! Thank you.
71. Variety of playgrounds
72. The sidewalk and path improvements. Geneva needs safe walking. Cars too close to pedestrians. A few years ago the street width was reduced by 6 inches to save 'costs.'
73. Our kids have aged out of the summer camps, but they were invaluable. The walking trails.
74. There are many options, and the parks are decent. Also love DARA and the programs for kids.
75. Fun areas to take kids
76. Walking trails, natural aspects (water, trees, etc), clean
77. Lots of opportunities
78. The number of parks available for visits and exploration - bringing variety and change to kids visits. The number of different equipment. Nature!! Natural trails for family walks! Sooo many things!
79. They are abundant. We utilize them frequently for walking, and taking our two little ones out.
80. Peaceful and undisturbed
81. The programming is fantastic, and the parks are well cared for!

82. Improved pathways.
83. Accessibility to sidewalks/paths
84. safety and ease of access to most park areas
85. Green space with walking trails.
86. There are good places to bike and walk and lots of playgrounds for kids.
87. The trails and paths are wonderful! Such a great community amenity. Padgett Park is a gem of a park and hopefully will always remain in a natural state. The addition of the canoe/kayak launches really helped encourage a better kayak experience. We are overall very happy with the parks and recreational opportunities in DeWitt.
88. Many to choose from in fairly close proximity.
89. The ability to use and enjoy the natural beauty
90. Grandchildren have participated in summer day camp and really enjoyed the trips
91. Well maintained.
92. There are numerous wonderful and well-kept playgrounds that my children enjoy.
93. Options of kid playgrounds
94. Easy access, well maintained.
95. They are close to home and easily accessible.
96. Walking trails
97. They're well kept
98. accessibility / variety
99. The sidewalks are wonderful and keep the community safe. Parks are always well kept, I am proud to take visitors to our parks.
100. I love the shared use pathways and how they connect the parks.
101. There are multiple parks to visit (instead of always going to the same 1-2) and they're well maintained.
102. Number of recreational areas. And sports leagues for smaller kids. Lansing offers none of these programs.
103. Plenty of calm areas to walk, see nature, and say hello to other community neighbors.
104. I like the fact that so many parks are within five minutes from my house.
105. The opportunity to exercise and be in nature
106. The variety of trail types within the multiple parks.
107. They are safe places to recreate
108. Peace and Quietness
109. they are clean and very well put together
110. Close to home within walking distance
111. Nearby
112. Beautiful surroundings and integration of natural and man made amenities
113. Ability for our kids to have safe activities to do.
114. Cleanliness and availability

115. The variety of parks and facilities.
116. access
117. Location, ease of access and use
118. We've recently moved to dewitt and loved our walk at the Padgett (I think that's the one) area. I loved the signage about the different trees and would love more educational signage about the flora and fauna in the area. Environmental education and preservation is very important to me and I hope to see more land focusing on teaching people to respect and enjoy the environment. I also am very excited about the dog park near here.
119. We can walk out our door and walk nearby paved and non-paved walking paths. We don't have to drive (car) to get to a walking path.
120. They want to expand their parks
121. Access to the looking glass.
122. They give our family an environment to get exercise together and feel safe.
123. Kayak launches, hiking trails, restrooms, water fountains, dog park
124. The cleanliness, availability, and walking paths. I also like the different kinds of playground equipment available.
125. I enjoy spending time outdoors, fishing, hiking, and enjoying natural areas mostly.
126. Do a good job with what they have. Love the parks!
127. Clean, well maintained, safe for kids to play, good places to walk
128. Variety of parks to attend. Padgett nature trails!
129. Super nice Thank you for providing
130. Access. Design. Maintenance Location
131. Availability, cleanliness, social meeting place outdoors
132. Lots of sidewalks and more coming
133. Walking paths
134. The natural beauty
135. Family friendly Clean
136. Peaceful area to get away from Lansing & walk the dogs in nature. Love the kayak/canoe launches!
137. Kayaking on the Looking Glass with easy in/out
138. Plenty of opportunities
139. The paved walking/biking trails in natural settings are awesome.
140. Cleanliness
141. Fishing spots
142. Clean and Safe well maintained
143. Storywalk
144. Cleanliness
145. The extension of sidewalks is most appreciated.
146. Close to home
147. We love having several parks within walking distance from our house.

148. Availability of programming for young children.
149. I love the accessibility of the pathways and free parks. I do hope there is a program, maybe youth driven, to help keep these areas clean and preserved! I know in other Lansing area bike paths I have felt unsafe. If it does not already exist, will you consider having the parks and pathways monitor/patrolled by law enforcement?
150. The ability to enjoy quiet and nature. The beauty and visual opportunity to use land and not destroy habitats any further.
151. The continued expansion of Greater Lansing parks systems will enhance outdoor recreation and the increase health benefits for the surrounding communities.
152. It's close to home!
153. Clean, safe, connected by sidewalks (mostly), different parks for different age levels
154. The parks along the Looking Glass River.
155. Canoe launches
156. Very clean and well maintained. There are many parks to choose from that offer a variety of activities.
157. Safety
158. Clean and well cared for
159. Cleanliness
160. The kayak launches. Also, they are always clean and safe!
161. Clean playgrounds
162. Playgrounds and river access
163. Clean and well maintained
164. The boat launches and river access.
165. Walking trails, playgrounds, and picnic areas
166. They are generally well kept and nice facilities and a great place to gather as a community under non-Covid circumstances.
167. The river, how my child can be safe in a park that's more open and not hidden in the back. How the feeling of feeling safe when my child plays.
168. We have a lot of parks for a small city.
169. Disc Golf
170. The combination of great play grounds for the kids and access to the looking glass. I wish I would have discovered how amazing exploring the looking glass river was when I was much younger. It should be boldly emphasized that the looking glass river is a canoeing and kayaking paradise. Especially with more and more people visiting our parks since covid canceled everything.
171. There are many options as far as locations go (including walking paths and playgrounds).
172. The many options we have
173. We have easy access to the parks. Well maintained.
174. Kayak/ walking by the river
175. Trails for walking and Biking
176. The variety of activities that can be participated in. The proximity to parks. The programs are reasonably priced and enjoyable.

177. We love to walk and bike in DeWitt. The people who do so in DeWitt has hugely multiplied.
178. Nice pathways to walk and see nature.
179. Ease of use
180. well maintained
181. Easily accessible and great sizes.
182. I really use the bathrooms the most, I walk and run around DeWitt
183. Spread out in the area
184. The number of options available.
185. Convenience
186. Walking trails
187. Safety and user friendly
188. Natural use of space. Walking in nature. Exercise.
189. They are clean and have a wide variety of options for different age kids
190. that we have some.
191. Availability, well connected by trails and sidewalks. I feel that I can easily walk or bike from my home to many of the recreation facilities.
192. We appreciate the variety of playground options. Although, a few of the locations are showing quite a bit of wear (Valley farms & DeWitt fire station specifically).
193. River and playgrounds
194. all the sidewalks are starting to tie everything together
195. The community events; Easter egg hunt, flashlight pumpkins hunt. The amount of playgrounds in town.
196. Walking trails with restrooms
197. lots of choices on where to go clean facilities (usually) kayak ramps activities
198. Trails and river views/access
199. Differed locations, they are maintained very well, & I'm able to access them easily.
200. There are a few different opyions
201. The total amount of walking trails. Well kept play areas.
202. Clean
203. Kayaking and nature trails.
204. Lots of options close to home
205. I don't use any parks in Dewitt, only Padgett Park in the township. I also use the private parks on Lake Geneva for residents only which are very well kept. I appreciated the township meeting with some of us nature lovers when they put in the path to join the Quarry area to the nature trails that runs partially from the park. We were able to save some old and rare trees in the park as they moved the trail to accommodate them.
206. We love the dog park but it needs to remain open year round
207. I just love DeWitt.
208. Clean & well kept up.

- 209. They're clean and well kept. I love that their are restrooms at many of them. We walk and visit playgrounds all the time!
- 210. Location and connected
- 211. Open area
- 212. Variety of programs/events. Many parks with playgrounds, sports fields. Would like to see more basketball courts.
- 213. Community health aspect
- 214. Free
- 215. The number of available locations to choose from.
- 216. Parks are clean and maintained. Well located to my home.

16.What one thing would you do to improve parks and recreation in the DeWitt area?

- 1. Splash Pad, activities for teens at parks, like sport equipment
- 2. Update the playground equipment, add outdoor fitness equipment
- 3. I would love to see some of the playgrounds remodeled. Some are in poor condition/outdated
- 4. I really would love more opportunities to get my kiddo (7yo) into classes, sports, etc, but I never know when things are happening.
- 5. A splash pad in the summer and an ice rink in the winter.
- 6. More indoor facilities and activities since we live in a largely winter environment
- 7. To come together more as a community
- 8. Splash park
- 9. Spray Padgett Park for mosquitos so we can enjoy the trails.
- 10. More Pickelball courts
- 11. Parking!
- 12. Please don't give kids a shirt for every sport, try the reversible jerseys like Delta Twp. Parks and Rec.
- 13. Create more vegetation buffer at parks along the Looking Glass River. Stop mowing and trimming along the entire bank. This leads to poor water quality and the increase of plant and algae due to nutrients. The Riverside Park is a prime example where downstream of the bridge on Bridge Street it has no tree canopy and grass to the waters edge. The river would benefit from trees and longer grasses along the river edge.
- 14. Update playground equipment, other parks in Lansing have "cooler" playgrounds. Increase the amount of adult sports leagues- there are many young families/parents that I think would enjoy an outlet for socializing and meeting new people.
- 15. More activities. Bonfires, s'mores, bands, more community events. Community pool. Off road biking trails. Golf lessons
- 16. Add Splashpad
- 17. You need rules at the dog park!!
- 18. Better play equipment for younger kids and community courts for basketball, pickle ball, and tennis.

19. I wish there was a bigger variety for kids (more playground equipment and a splash park)
20. Add a splash park or community pool.
21. Having a pool available for the community.
22. Canoe launch at Wood Rd. Alos please continue adding multi use paths and sidewalks, these are great additions.
23. Add a splash pad
24. Better maintenance and availability of the dog park. Improved signage for walking paths.
25. More walking trails and easy to find information on their locations
 - a. Pricing. Years ago it was a viable option for a family on a budget, but prices have risen so much for most activities that it's actually cheaper to go elsewhere. Even volunteering to coach doesn't give any sort of price break. 2) The organization of the sports leagues has always been disappointing. It's all very last minute despite having applications in a month in advance. Coaching gets the training session notification the day of (the day before if lucky). Even coaches don't know what days/times practices will be until the week of. 3) Teen activities. As I said, it seems things drop off by 5th grade and don't pick up until adulthood. 4) A splash pad would be great (and more cost effective than a pool).
26. Fix the flooding at riverside park downtown. The trails are often water or ice covered and not accessible for use/accessible for safe use.
27. I would love more trails to places in the community so we can walk from our house off airport road.
28. More summer activities and availability to get out within the city such as splash pad and or community pool.
29. An additional walking/biking trail. A fishing spot also.
30. Walking trails.
31. More bike trails
32. More at one with nature parks and trails
33. Pickle ball courts - Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in the US and can be played by all ages (youth to seniors). Access to both outdoor and indoor courts would be a great addition to the community. We currently have to drive to Delta Mills to play outdoors and don't have a indoor location (without paying) to play.
34. Restrooms open throughout the year. Lighting.
35. Connect subdivisions on south side of 69 via walk/bike trails to the many paths on the north side of the highway
36. Baseball facilities are severely lacking
37. A splash pad!
38. Would love a Splashpad at Granger Meadows or at the Sports Park
39. Increased variety of activities
40. More variety for kids
41. More pavilions and or picnic tables at parks. Playground equipment for younger and older kids at the same park. A splash pad would be so nice to have during the summer.
42. Add more activities for younger children. Most activities are for 4 .
43. More senior programming
44. More handicap assessable playground equipment.

45. Cut grass more in Padgett Park trail. Currently only cut about twice a season.
46. More connected bike trails would be a nice option for safely getting around the area.
47. Better lighting in Riverside park bathrooms.
48. Upgrade Facilities
49. I would love to see some aquatic options. Splash pad and/or pool (indoor and out) would be amazing.
50. The DeWitt area needs a community pool
51. Expand coordination with organizations (outside DARA) to use the parks more for activities for kids ages 8 to 14. The parks are not being used enough by those age brackets.
52. Some of the equipment needs updating. so more parks could use walking trails (pending space)
53. Communication - don't assume everyone knows where everything is. Not everyone is from Dewitt. When a location is posted, include an actual address.
54. More "to do" in the parks. Kayak launches/rentals, bike/hiking trails. More potential activities. More groups that meet for fitness or some type of activity.
55. Add a small dog side to the dog park. Them little dogs have a hard time with the big dogs.
56. Skate park
57. We have really struggled recently with the youth sports programs. It is very apparent that parent coaches are hand-picking their sports teams (started seeing this in grade 2, very apparent in grade 3 sports). For youth that are not on these elite teams, the entire sports season is incredibly discouraging as the teams are stacked and they have zero chance of winning. My family will no longer participate in DARA sports as a result of this. I can't risk losing my children's enthusiasm for sports because DARA doesn't appropriately allocate youth among different teams.
58. Move Dara closer to dewitt. Parks are fine, need more classes
59. Lighting
60. make them more interactive
61. Cant think of a thing right now.
62. Increase program offerings
63. Add mountain bike trail. Splash park.
64. More playground equipment please.
65. Add pickleball courts. It's the fastest growing sport in the world and for all ages and abilities. Look at the Glen Arbor courts, they added social areas and made it a community space!
66. Add pickleball courts and mountain biking More non-motorized pathways that don't share the road with cars Another story walk
67. Include more outdoor activities for teens. Sports programs typically end by 3rd grade. Playgrounds are too young for them.
68. Cleanliness
69. Not sure
70. the girls cheer program is not good. Soccer is great! football looks good
71. Extend walking/biking paths to DeWitt Township residents off of Airport/Stoll road
72. More residential sidewalk connections to parks--particularly in the city. Cannot believe the number of subdivisions in the city without sidewalks

73. Add winter sports
74. Update and upkeep
75. Map of all opportunities
76. The Valley Farms building is small and old. Also, I don't like the location of Valley Farms building - it is too far from the center/heart of the Dewitt Community. I would love to see a new building.
77. A fenced in toddler playground similar to McCormick Park in Williamston.
78. More developed trails.
79. Adult & Senior programs,
80. I would love to see a new recreation center closer to the City of Dewitt.
81. Larger playscapes with more to do
82. Splash pad area
83. Due to the large amount of families in the area I believe a splash pad would be a great addition to the parks and would be very popular.
84. Connect paths to more outlying areas. They have been adding sidewalks and that is so exciting! Keep it up! Connecting neighborhoods is important to keep people active.
85. More walking/biking trails that connect community spaces
86. Add pickle ball courts
87. Bike trails/walking trails
88. More dog friendly areas.
89. Kayaking Do you have a list of items that could be done for Girl Scout and Boy Scout Awards, Volunteer Hours, Bath High Schools Spring Unity in the Community Day.
90. Continue adding safe sidewalks. Move DARA closer to city center.
91. Increase playgrounds and connect neighborhoods south of 69 to the trail systems
92. Would love a safe walkway or bridge to connect the township to the city (lack of sidewalk on Airport especially over the highway make it dangerous for walking or biking so always have to drive to the parks).
93. add horseback riding trails
94. More natural areas (e.g. Padgett Park)
95. Splash pad for kids would be amazing!
96. We have had negative experiences with unsupervised kids (ages 8-12) but I'm not sure what could be done with that...
97. Add bird feeders for bird watching
98. It is terrific!
99. I would allow pets to use the paved walkways. I cannot enjoy the Granger Park walk path because dogs are not allowed. The dog trail in Granger Park is very small and would need to be walked about 10 times to get a good workout. My dogs are more well behaved than most children and it is a shame we cannot use the paved pathways.
100. Cultural activities, concerts
101. create a pathway between the business area north of the Old-27 bridge and the existing non-motorized path near Granger Meadows so that there is a safe way to walk/run/bike rather than drive

from the residential community to the park (the bike lane along Turner Rd that helps connect DeWitt to the Lansing River Trail is a good example of this kind of access)

102. Allow our pets to use more of the parks.
103. Clean up debris and grind up dead and fallen trees. The riverside park downtown is a mess.
104. Continue to pursue trail/ pathway connections.
105. Nature programs
106. Don't believe "school of choice" students should pay more to participate in activities. I pay DeWitt Twp taxes and have 2 grandchildren in DeWitt schools and their parents also graduated from DeWitt.
107. Promote fun ways to use the parks.
108. I would create more nature paths.
109. Add a splash pad
110. More dog friendly parks with bags and trash receptacles available. The dog area at Granger Meadows is in the bug infested woods and you're not allowed to walk on the sidewalks with your dog so I don't go there.
111. Advertise what is available. I realized as I was filling out this survey that I don't know much about any of the parks & recreation programs except for the one that our exchange student was involved with (basketball).
112. Repair and level the cooking grills
113. Not sure right now
114. Add hiking trails somewhere
115. better kept - at times....
116. I would like to see activities adults would like to do such as shore fishing, increased walking trails, additional canoe access, biking trails and or tennis courts.
117. None of the parks have a "wow" factor that's a strong draw -- like the "castle" park in Wacousta.
118. Enforce the no dog ordinance. We have confronted several people walking large dogs and they look at us and say everyone does it. How do we enforce the ordinance? I have a Ranger and am a senior. I would be happy to patrol Granger Meadows park. Just educating the violators would solve many of these situations...I believe.
119. Keep them plowed in the winter and mowed in the summer (weeds cover up the sidewalk and have ticks if not mowed regularly)
120. A bike and walking path that is less hilly than the one through the woods between Clark and Schavey Roads, yet still avoids the risk of motorized vehicles.
121. Add more programs that include persons with disabilities and our growing senior population.
122. Basket Ball Court Tennis court
123. I think we need a splash pad here my reason supporting this is the weather in Michigan gets hot and I think we should have somewhere where we could cool off when it gets into the hotter months of the year.
124. Restroom
125. See above suggestions regarding the Gunnisonville School on the corner of Clark and Wood Roads.
126. Upgrade and or add to the toys in the parks.

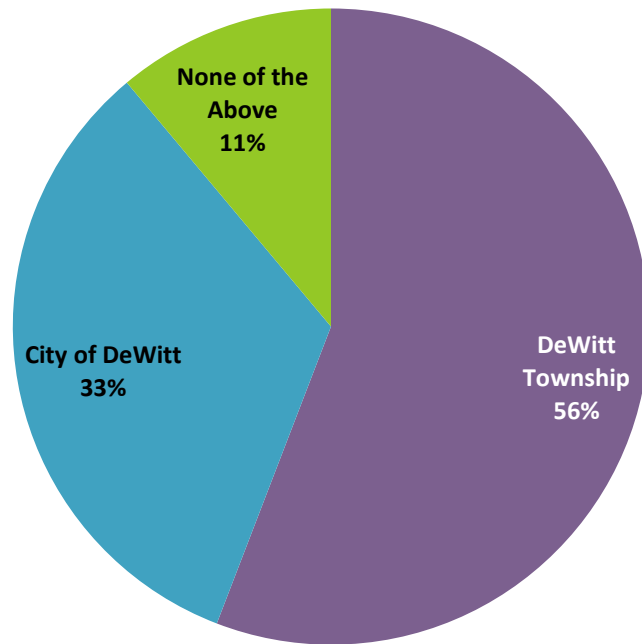
127. More publicity for facilities and programs, particularly for those that are suitable for seniors.
128. Post leash law signs. Many dogs are off leash and it is state law they need to be leashed. The dog park by Padgett park is often interpreted as being all of the trails and paved area.
129. Kayak launch. Disc golf. Walking trails.
130. Need more parks
131. More kayak launches
132. Volunteer clean up events at various parks
133. Would love to have more mountain bike trails. As they are draw for local businesses
134. Better up keep and maintenance. Mowing in summer more frequently. Adding rest rooms
135. Clear the rivers log jams
136. Add a community water site (pool, splash park, lake, etc.)
137. More unpaved trails
138. Added accessibility for handicapped people needs to be a top consideration.
139. Make more fishing opportunities
140. Pickle ball courts
141. The waters edge park has a LOT of matted down grass growth. Shouldn't it be removed every now and then?
142. More parks located south of the highway for communities off of Stoll Road.
143. Publicity
144. I would like to help clean up the trees and branches in the Looking Glass River between Bridge Street and Airport Road so it is more user friendly to paddlers. It doesn't make sense to offer two fancy handicap canoe launches and then make the handicap paddlers have to portage their boats through the mud and brush many times in that short section. I'd be happy to volunteer if a group gets organized.
145. More river access
146. Keep dogs in the dog park. Enforce leash laws with fines for violators. No dogs on any school property that serves as an athletic field.
147. More dog parks open year round
148. More trails, walkable paths
149. Make sure you do archaeological studies where appropriate prior to developments
150. Canoe/kayak launch(es) on the Looking Glass River.
151. Allowing leashed dogs on paved trails, or make new ones. The Granger meadows dog trail is terrible. Enforce leash policy
152. Created more forested areas
153. More options to do at the parks
154. More dog friendly trails, with minimal contact. Eg. One-way trails to minimize contact with strange dogs.
155. Upgrade the playgrounds. For how much money there is in DeWitt, the playgrounds are inadequate.
156. Clear out downed trees out of the river

157. Improve River access and use
158. More basketball and pickle ball courts
159. Additional paved walking/biking trails.
160. More non motorized paths
161. Short, easy walk from parking lot to water access and picnic area for people with mobility issues
162. McGuire parks basketball courts could be improved! Would love a mountain bike trail or course through Granger Park!
163. Monitor better to minimize vandalism and misuse
164. Better communication on events and activities
165. Some sidewalks are somewhat dark for extended distances. Although I understand the cost and light pollution are undesirable.
166. Improve looking glass river access for canoeing and kayaking. Too many water obstacles and need to remove trees and improve parking
167. More kayak ramps
168. I'd love to see a disc golf course here in town.
169. More trails that extend farther out from DeWitt for biking safely and clean river water for fishing and a splash pad or swimming pool with lessons available.
170. Take bags to pick up trash. Work w police to ensure safety to neighborhoods.
171. Larger parks with more to do, Dewitt should have as much to offer as Meridian twp
172. More disc golf courses
173. better access to the Looking Glass River
174. More walking trails.
175. Add/increase aquatic (pool) activities. Even before COVID, pool hours were limited.
176. Put more kayak ramps along the river. Wood RD and Forest hill RD area.
177. More nature trails
178. Get parking closer to the launch at riverside
179. Increase number of restrooms
180. Add bike paths
181. Water fountain
182. Advertise parks more. I'd never heard of several on the list.
183. 4 to six soccer/baseball/football to bring in money from Grand Rapids
184. River accessibility
185. Splash pad
186. More community activities
187. Replace the wooden deck overlooking the river at the river front park on Herbison near Airport. Clear the river of deadfall trees from the river. It is very dangerous for kayakers. Note it does not make any sense to have a handicap launch facility when a kayaker must get out of their kayak along the route to pull a kayak over fallen trees.
188. Offer more outdoor fitness/yoga classes for the community

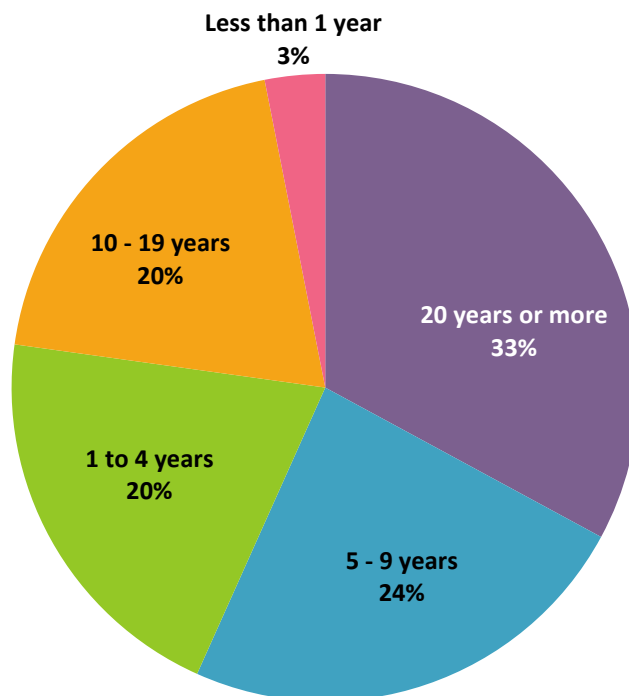
189. Connect to a paved cycling trail such as a rails to trails project.
190. Add some restrooms
191. Aquire/develop more land along the Looking Glass at multiple points. Stabilized fill along the North side of the river adjacent to Main St West of Mcguire park with a paved meandering path through a ribbon of grass and trees along the bank would be beautiful and wonderful to use. Boardwalks meandering through the marshy area along the south side of the river adjacent to Herbison just East of Airport on either side of the kayak launch park. Aquire the land on the Southeast corner of Airport and Herbison and develop it into another community park.
192. More canoe launches and cleaning of the looking glass river!
193. Having equipment for kids to play ball or sports. Having signs with pictures showing the progress of how dewitt became what it is today how it was founded.
194. Maintain Disc Golf Courses, Trails, and Playgrounds.
195. More canoe and kayak access to the Looking Glass river and more signage. Everything can always be improved to bring the community safe fun activities for all ages.
196. More youth and teen activities.
197. More playground equipment similar to Wacousts
198. I would love to see a splash park for the kids snd more Pickelball courts for adults
199. More water activities.. Things to keep kids active during the summer.. Not only sports,, Not all kids play sports..
200. Longer river trail/more accessible river access
201. Organization is doing a good job , with what is available. More connecting trails for biking
202. Sports park is underutilized due to the high costs
203. Increase natural areas
204. More paths that connect for safe walking and biking.
205. Canoe rentals
206. Add a crosswalk from riverside park to the gazebo
207. Larger play structures
208. Add more nature trails for walking.
209. More variety in programs for all ages
210. We need a pool or splashpad
211. Add special features to improve quality of parks.
212. I would love to see more activities for younger (under 4) kids.
213. Better disc golf course
214. advertise and communicate the availability. Use social media more often to reach your audience.
215. More is always better - the parks are great as-is. The only facility I would like to see is a public shooting range, but that may be a little niche for the cost.
216. Have swings at all playgrounds & replace or improve old worn structures. A splash pad would be awesome as well.
217. continue sidewalks to connect current paths- there are a few dangerous spots still with in the City. Never finished! Maybe sidewalk from Washington to Main st on Logan
218. Splash pad.

- 219. A community pool
- 220. side walks going all thru town
- 221. Keep the restrooms open longer.
- 222. keep bathrooms open all year
- 223. Keep the bathrooms open all year. Add basketball courts
- 224. Offer more walking paths
- 225. More community engagement activities. I know this is hard with the pandemic
- 226. I'd like to see more adult programs offered. I typically go to EL or Delta Township for my organized adult activities.
- 227. More trails
- 228. Better connection between parks.
- 229. Keep the bathrooms open year round.
- 230. Seating along the river at Looking Glass Riverfront Park!
- 231. Lights on walking paths at night through granger meadows
- 232. More nature area. It is getting so built up in the area. We could use some green space.
- 233. Leave restrooms open year round
- 234. More playground equipment areas. Splash pad!
- 235. More walking trails.
- 236. I would love more sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to downtown and parks.
- 237. Trim tree branches at parks and add more basketball courts
- 238. More events
- 239. More community events (when possible/safe)
- 240. Splash pad!!!
- 241. Connect parks with biking walking trails along the rivers to other communities
- 242. More trails for running/biking
- 243. Add restrooms to some of the parks with playgrounds.
- 244. Increase advertising or marketing and be clear in communications. Pricing, registration, dates, age requirements, etc. have not always been clear or highly visible on flyers and other materials I have seen.

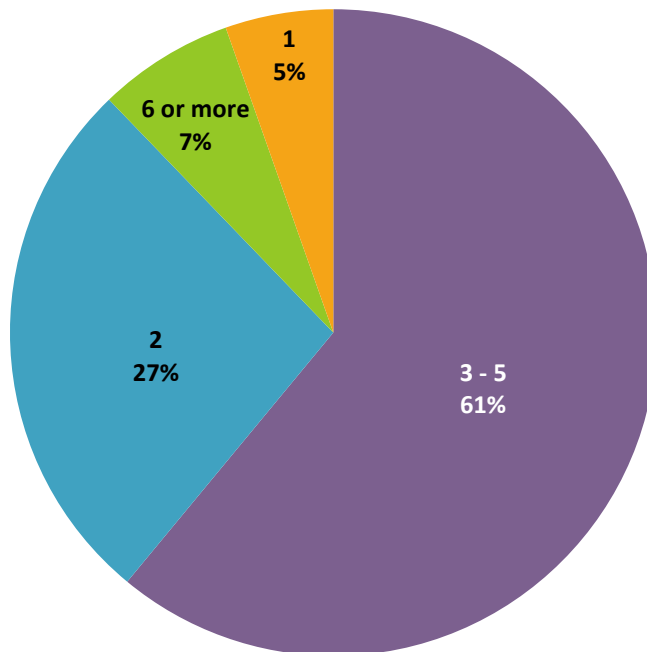
17. Where do you live?



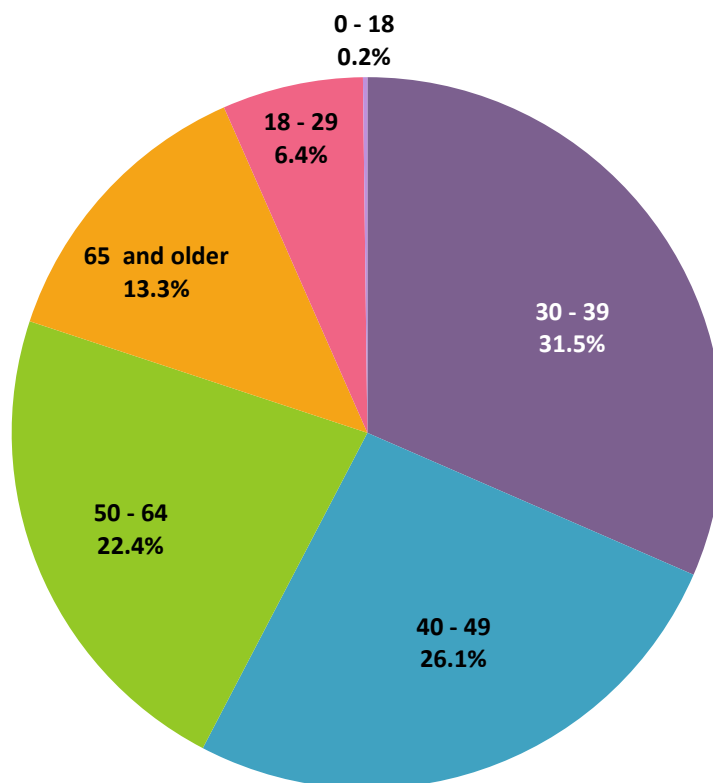
18. How long have you lived in the community that you selected above?



19. How many people live in your household?



20. What is your age?



Open Space Ad Hoc Committee Report

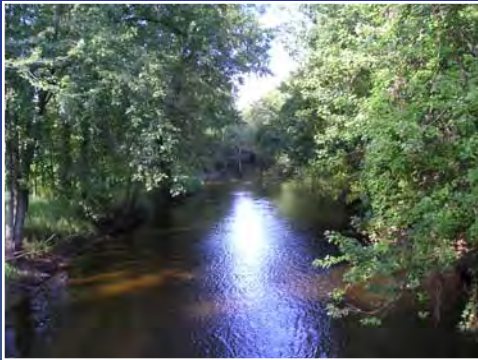


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Executive Summary

A DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE

“Open Space (Green Space): Privately and publicly owned land within the Township which provides, or could provide, scenic enhancement, active and passive recreational opportunities, and the preservation of rural character. These lands include improved parklands, undisturbed natural areas, and agricultural land uses.”

AN INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE IN DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Summary of DeWitt Charter Township Open Space Inventory		
Type of Open Space	Acreage	% of Total Township Acreage (19,882 acres)
Privately-owned agricultural land:	3735.15	18.8%
Privately-owned natural areas:	120.70	0.60%
Privately-owned parks:	9.77	0.04%
Publicly-owned natural areas:	1,495	7.5%
Publicly-owned agricultural land:	509.6	2.5%
Publicly-owned parkland:	352	1.7%
Percentage Total for privately-owned open space:		19.4%
Percentage Total for publicly-owned open space:		11.7%
Total Percentage of Open Space in Township		31.1%

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN DEWITT, CASCADE AND GENOA TOWNSHIPS

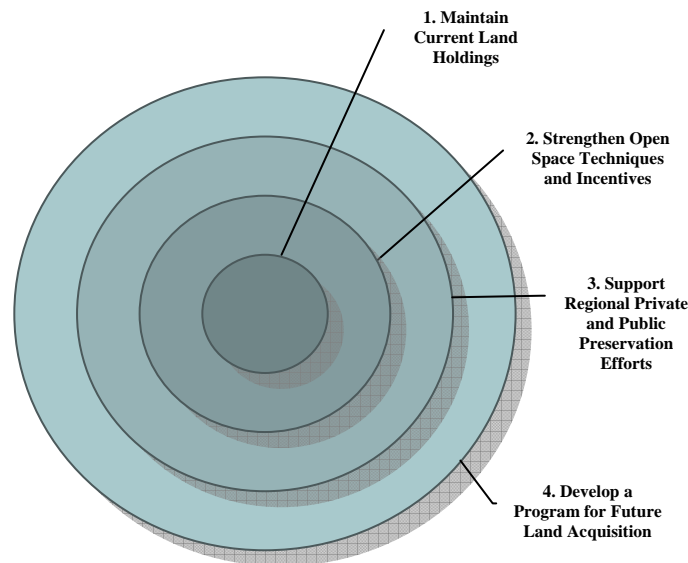
A comparative analysis was completed between DeWitt, Cascade and Genoa Townships. These Townships were chosen based on similarities such as proximity to a metropolitan area, population, proximity to a freeway system, and rural character. Cascade Township is in Kent County, near Grand Rapids, and Genoa Township is in Livingston County, near Brighton and Howell. The following charts depict the Committee's comparative findings. In looking at the analysis, it is important to note the Genoa Township data: Genoa Township included all vacant land (of any zoning classification) within its Farmland inventory, thereby creating a significant discrepancy between the acreage numbers.

An Overview of DeWitt Charter Township, Cascade Township and Genoa Township Open Space			
Land Type	DeWitt Charter Township (19,882 acres in size)	Cascade Township (21,696 acres in size)	Genoa Township (23,040 acres in size)
Privately-owned parks:	9.77	2	unknown
Privately-owned natural areas:	120.70	221	unknown
Privately-owned agricultural land:	3735.15	1,940	13,535 (including vacant land)
Publicly-owned parkland:	352	60	1,750
Publicly-owned natural areas:	1,495	550	
Publicly-owned agricultural	509.6	1,956	unknown (including vacant land)
Acreage Total:	5,905	4,729	15,285
Percentage of Total Township Area:	29.7%	21.7%	66.2%

A Comparison of Township-Owned Parkland Only			
	DeWitt Charter Township (19,882 acres in size)	Cascade Township (21,696 acres in size)	Genoa Township (23,040 acres in size)
Total Parkland Owned by the Township:	Approx. 185 acres	Approx 127 acres	45 acres
Percentage of Township:	0.93%	0.58%	0.19%

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following diagram depicts the four primary roles that DeWitt Charter Township can play in creating, maintaining, and preserving open space:



Recommendation 1 – That the Township maintain its current land holdings, including 185 acres of parkland and natural areas. The preservation of these lands is critical to the Township system of recreation opportunities and natural area preservation.

Recommendation 2 – That the Township increasingly direct development and redevelopment to areas that are served by existing infrastructure through the use of mixed use zoning, brownfield programs, and corridor overlay zoning. Also, Planned Unit Development open space requirements should be strengthened to include open space connections and corridors.

Recommendation 3 – That the Township support regional public and private open space preservation efforts, such as the county farmland preservation program, green space programs, private land trusts, etc. The Township is poised to gain from these efforts because we can serve as a “gateway” to the more rural areas of the county and beyond.

Recommendation 4 – That the Township develop an official program for evaluating future land acquisition. This program will include guidelines to ascertain how a proposed acquisition will expand recreation, rural character or development opportunities in the Township, and will also include a public education component through pamphlets and other media describing donation and bequeathal information.

Findings of the Open Space Ad Hoc Committee

1. AN INTRODUCTION

In 2006, the DeWitt Charter Township Board of Trustees established a temporary study committee for the purpose of defining open space, creating an inventory of open space, and completing a comparative analysis for the ultimate goal of making a recommendation to the Board. This report is the result of research, meetings and preparation by the entire committee.

The first task of the Committee was to develop a definition of open space. This task involved multiple debates, shared readings and thoughtful discussion. Secondly, the creation of a workable inventory, based on the definition, was technically challenging, utilizing the knowledge and experiences of committee members, maps from the County Drain Commissioner's Office, and the database from the Township geographic information systems (GIS) software. The third task, the comparative analysis, was a significant element of the study that involved telephone interviews, master plan research and other technical support from the planning staff. The final recommendations were left to the entire committee due to the significant nature of this final element of the study.

The committee is rooted in the work that a joint committee between the City of DeWitt and DeWitt Charter Township completed in 2004. The joint committee looked at the feasibility of an open space millage, and recommended that four tasks be completed in an effort to create a successful millage. The four tasks include a survey of public perceptions of open space; an inventory of open space parcels; increased public dialogue; and increased public initiatives. The task of creating an inventory, including the development of a definition of open space, was the springboard for the current ad hoc committee's activities.

2. THE COMMITTEE

The Open Space Ad Hoc Committee is composed of members of the Board of Trustees, the Planning Commission, Township Planning staff and the general public. The committee was made up as follows, in alphabetical order:

Table 1	
The Open Space Ad Hoc Committee	
MEMBER	AFFILIATION
Phil Farhood	General Public
Harmony Gmazel	Township Assistant Planner
Kenneth Pung	General Public
David Seeger	Board of Trustees
Kim Smelker	Planning Commission

The tasks performed by the committee, as handed down from the Board of Trustees, included the following:

- Develop a consistent and useable definition of open space.

- Complete an inventory of open space within the Township using the definition of open space from above.
- Determine other comparable Townships in an effort to evaluate how the DeWitt Charter Township inventory of open space measures up.
- Make a recommendation on what role the Township should have in creating, maintaining, and preserving open space.

The tasks delegated to the committee were completed by the entire group, with input and discussion from each member. In addition, technical support was provided by the planning staff. In addition, all photographs in this report were taken by the Planning Department.

3. A DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE

The phrase “open space” can mean different things to different people. The committee’s main concern in creating a definition of open space was that it be representative of the many potential interpretations among the Township’s residents as to what “open space” can mean. During discussions, the committee posed the following questions in an effort to understand the characteristic of open space: What is the intended use of open space? Who owns and accesses open space? Is our open space protected from development? These multi-faceted questions helped to shape the creation of a comprehensive definition:

What is the intended use of open space?

Agriculture has historically played an important role in DeWitt Charter Township. The majority of open space that is located throughout the Township evolved from what was first natural area, and then cultivated into vast agricultural areas over the past one hundred and fifty years. Open space is also thought of as land used for recreation activities. “Active” recreation activities, such as ball fields, courts, playgrounds, and pools, is a common use of open space that require significant improvements to the land. Open space also serves as an area for “passive” recreation activities, such as hiking, birding and picnicking, that do not require significant improvements to the land. Open space is also utilized for many other important functions such as landscaping, water drainage areas, wildlife habitat, and rural scenic areas.

Who owns and accesses open space?

The ownership of land plays a significant role in the type of open space that exists in the Township. There are many types of ownership found in the Township, ranging from fee simple ownership, where the owner holds all of the rights inherent with the property, to preservation easements, where the owner has released the development rights of the property to another entity, either permanently or temporarily. Open space in DeWitt Charter Township is owned by various entities. These entities range from the Township, various State and Federal agencies, and local school districts, to homeowner associations and private citizens. The most common owners of open space, in the Township, depending on the use of the land, are private landowners, the Capital Regional Airport Authority (Capital City Airport), the Michigan Department of Transportation, DeWitt Charter Township, the DeWitt School District, and private landowners.

It is important to note that various private landowners in the Township are participating in state agricultural preservation programs. Under the state programs known as Public Act 116, and PDR (Purchase of Development Rights), landowners can sell the development rights of their agricultural property to the state in perpetuity, or they can receive tax credits as long as the use remains agricultural. Land that is held in a PDR or PA 116 program is not accessible to the public, yet, the landowner does not have the right to develop the land beyond its agricultural status.

Based on land ownership, not all open space areas within the Township are publicly accessible. Access to certain open space areas can be restricted mainly due to private ownership, or because of public agency policy that restricts access in the name of preserving its use, as in the Airport-held lands that are restricted from public access.

Is our open space protected from development?

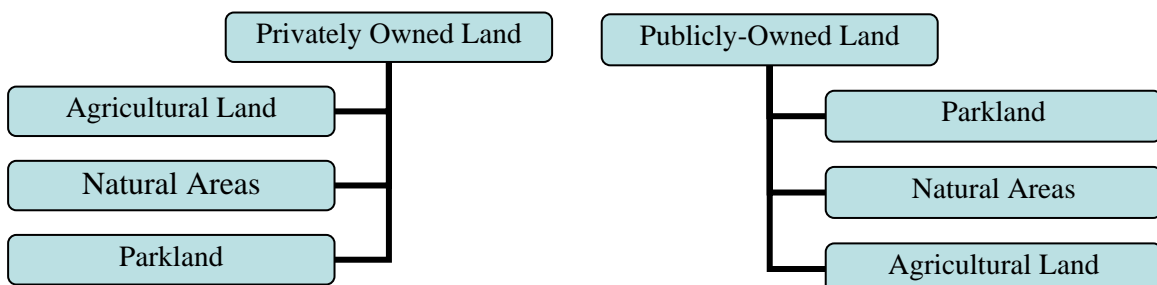
A major component in creating an open space definition involves whether specific open space parcels in the Township are protected from future development or not. Open space can be easily identified by its lack of commercial, residential and industrial development. The majority of the Township's open space parcels are not permanently protected from development, and only a handful of properties are permanently protected from future development. The Township does not offer permanent protection of open space through specific programs, but certain State programs are available to residents, such as PDR and PA 116. With these three questions in mind, the committee created a useable, consistent definition of open space. The definition is as follows:

“Open Space (Green Space): Privately and publicly owned land within the Township which provides, or could provide, scenic enhancement, active and passive recreational opportunities, and the preservation of rural character. These lands include improved parklands, undisturbed natural areas, and agricultural land uses.”

4. AN INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE

An inventory was created by the committee that incorporates each of the elements found within the definition. The elements of the inventory, as depicted below, include two main elements: publicly-owned and privately-owned land. Subordinate to these two main elements, the inventory is further divided into three sub-categories: Parkland, agricultural land and natural areas. These elements are depicted in the chart below:

Table 2
Elements of the Open Space Inventory



The inventory includes land that falls within the total 31.07 square miles, or 19,882 acres of DeWitt Charter Township. The Township itself encompasses the City of DeWitt and a portion of the City of East Lansing. These two cities make up an additional 4.93 square miles within historical Township boundaries. City land was not inventoried as part of this study for reasons of consistency for the comparative analysis that follows in Section 5 of this report.

Privately-Owned Agricultural Land

Privately owned agricultural land is the largest inventory of open space acreage within the Township. Agricultural parcels of 20 acres or more in size were included within the inventory based on the assumption that acreages of this size would be more inclined to provide not only a site for a residence, but would also host agricultural activities, most prominently, crop farming. Parcels of this size also lend themselves to the scenic value of open space, and would more than likely include natural areas or wetlands. If there are agricultural parcels in the Township that include natural areas, these areas are counted as agricultural due to the overall use of the site. Approximately 3,735.15 acres of agricultural land is included with this inventory, as depicted below in Table 3:



Table 3	
Inventory of Privately-owned Agricultural Land	
Land Type	Acreage
Total Private Agricultural Land (>20 acres)	3,735.15
Land under the P.A. 116 program (temporary)	1,373.11
Land under the PDR program (permanent)	733.72
Total PDR and PA 116 Land	2,106.83
Percentage of land, greater than 20 acres in size, protected under PDR and PA 116	56.4%

Of the total agricultural inventory, approximately 1,373.11 acres are protected under the State Public Act 116 (PA 116) program. PA 116 waives specific taxes on the properties as long as the land remains as farmland. This program offers temporary protection of open space, as the land can be developed if all back taxes are paid to the State in the event that the use changes. In addition to the PA 116, the State Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program is also active within the Township. Currently, 733.72 agricultural acres are protected permanently under PDR. The State of Michigan holds the development rights of these parcels in perpetuity. The Township has a total of 2,106.83 acres of farmland protected under one of the two State programs. The percentage of farmland, 20 acres or more in size, protected in the Township, is approximately 56 percent.

Privately-Owned Natural Areas

Privately owned natural areas within the Township are found within existing subdivisions as drainage areas and designated open space, and also within agricultural parcels and other privately held parcels throughout the Township. Currently, there are 253.70 acres of designated natural areas within the following platted developments that include common areas such as unimproved wooded or wetland areas, ponds, or detention basins:

Table 4	
Inventory of Privately-owned Natural Areas	
Development	Acreage
Arbor Meadows	26.96
Creekside	1.10
Crowner Farms	4.74
Heritage Meadows	21.21
Heritage Woods	0.13
Mak-tech	1.03
Hawthorne Woods East	17.28
Saffron Hills	44.68
Shadybrook	1.03
Springbrook Hills East	2.54
Auto-Owners Insurance	+/- 133.0
Total:	253.70

There are also assorted other privately owned parcels that are strictly preserved as natural areas within the Township, most specifically 32 vacant acres on Primrose Lane, three vacant land-locked acres on Airport Road, and 100 vacant acres on Boichot Road. It is important to note for the purposes of this study that these parcels can be developed in accordance with the zoning district if the landowner is so inclined at any time in the future. It is also significant to note that there are privately-owned natural areas located on private agricultural parcels that are inventoried below under “agricultural” for all intents and purposes of this study. The implications of this are discussed below, most significantly that the land can be developed in the future.

Heritage Meadows



Hawthorne Woods East



Saffron Hills



Privately-Owned Parkland

Privately owned parks within the Township are the result of an adopted Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance which allows subdivisions that are greater than 20 acres in size to cluster buildings or reduce lot sizes in an effort to retain open spaces and recreational areas within the development. Currently, there is private parkland designated within the following developments:

Table 5	
Inventory of Privately-owned Parkland	
Development	Acreage
Arbor Meadows	1.54
Springbrook Hills	2.88
Springbrook Hills East	5.35
Total:	9.77

Arbor Meadows, Springbrook Hills and Springbrook Hills East each have designated private parklands, totaling approximately 9.77 acres that are owned by the respective homeowners associations, and are accessible only to the residents within each of these developments. The parks include groomed lawn areas, fountains, picnic pavilions, and tennis courts. As a side note, the Township is adjacent to a 95-acre privately owned St. Francis Retreat Center within the City of DeWitt on Webb Road. This retreat is worthy of note because it maintains a rural or open space feeling to the areas of the Township that surround it, particularly Arbor Meadows to the north of it, and the farmland to the east.



Springbrook Hills East



Springbrook Hills



Arbor Meadows

Publicly-Owned Parkland

Publicly owned parkland in the Township includes those areas for passive and active recreation opportunities that are held by five different public entities including DeWitt Charter Township, the Clinton County Road Commission, the Clinton County Drain Commissioner's Office, local school districts, and the Capital Regional Airport Authority. The DeWitt School District and DeWitt Charter Township are the two entities who hold the most acreage of improved parkland in the Township. The following chart depicts the acreage and type of park held by each respective entity:

Table 6			
Inventory of Publicly-owned Parkland			
Public Entity	Park Name (acreage)	Acreage (approx)	Types of Facilities
DeWitt Charter Township	Valley Farms Park (13) Riverfront Park (5) Station House Park (0.50) Coleman Rd Play Lot (1) Granger Meadows Park (75) Padgett Park (69) Valley-Turner Play Lot (3) (Waters Edge (11 acres), and Wood-Webb (7 acres) are inventoried under "publicly-owned natural areas")	166 (not including Water's Edge and Wood/Webb)	Playgrounds, outdoor athletic facilities, canoe launch, picnic areas, trails, etc.
DeWitt Public Schools	High School, Schavey Rd School, Herbison Woods, and the Middle School	148	Quasi-public School grounds and outdoor athletic facilities
DeWitt Charter Township	Hurd Cemetery, Gunnisonville Cemetery	21	Cemetery grounds, passive recreation opportunities
Lansing School District	Gunnisonville School, Gunnisonville one-room Schoolhouse	17	(quasi-public) School grounds, historic site, playgrounds, athletic facilities
Total Parkland Owned by the Township and the School Districts:			352 acres

The publicly-owned parkland included in Table 6 spans many sections of the Township, for a total of 352 acres. The parklands in question includes facilities and improvements for many types of recreational opportunities, such as playgrounds, picnic areas, athletic facilities, a sledding hill, a boat launch, historic structures, trails, pavilions, and green areas, among many other uses. Each of these facilities is accessible to DeWitt Charter Township residents. It is important to note that certain outdoor school facilities, such as green areas, ball parks, trails, and playgrounds, are "quasi-public" in that they are owned and maintained by the public school system, yet, all outdoor facilities are not open freely to the public at all times.

The Historic Gunnisonville Schoolhouse



Gunnisonville Cemetery



DeWitt Public Schools



Hurd Cemetery



DeWitt Public Schools



DeWitt Public Schools



Granger Meadows



Station House Park



Valley Turner Play Lot



Padgett Park



Riverfront Park



Coleman Road Park



Table 7 National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Guidelines				
Type	Service Area	Desirable Size (acres)	Acres/1000 residents	Existing Facilities
Community Parks	1-2 miles	25+	5-8	Typically offers athletic facilities, pools etc.
Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ mile	5-15	1-2	Open space, playgrounds, picnic areas, ball fields
Regional Parks (within a 1-hour drive)	Several Communities	200+	5-10	Encompasses significant natural resources
Special Use Areas	N/A	Variable	Variable	Campgrounds, golf courses etc.
Source: NRPA 1983				

As shown in the Table 7, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides a comprehensive recreation facility guide based on population numbers and proximity to recreation areas. In Table 8, below, DeWitt Charter Township offers approximately 144 acres of community parks, which is, according to NRPA standards, 79 acres more than what is required to meet the needs of Township residents. The Township owns 22 acres of Neighborhood Parks, or 17 acres less than the 39 acres required. It is important to note that the Township owns an additional 18 acres of natural areas, including the Wood/Webb area and the Waters Edge area which could be improved and added to the parkland inventory. In addition, the Township is near numerous public and private golf courses, a regional aquatic center and is near two state park areas, thereby meeting and substantially exceeding current NRPA requirements.

Table 8 Inventory of DeWitt Charter Township-Owned Parkland based on NRPA Standards				
Type	Service Area	Recommended Size (acres)	Recommended NPRA acreage based on 13,729 residents	Existing Facilities
Community Parks	1-2 miles	25+	65	144 (Granger Meadows & Padgett Park)
Neighborhood Parks	¼ to ½ mile	5-15	39	22 (Valley Farms, Riverfront, Station House, Coleman Rd, Valley-Turner)
Regional Parks (within a 1-hour drive)	Several Communities	200+	65	Approx. 7,000 acres (Rose Lake Wildlife Area; Sleepy Hollow State Park)
Special Use Areas	N/A	Variable	Variable	Numerous golf courses; East Lansing Aquatic Ctr.
Source: DeWitt Charter Township Planning Department				

Publicly-Owned Natural Areas

Publicly owned natural areas within the Township typically encompass unimproved land such as County drains, wetlands, floodplain areas, airport-held upland and lowland areas, and interstate freeway right-of-way areas. The following chart depicts the various entities that have jurisdiction over said properties:

Table 9 Inventory of Publicly-owned Natural Areas		
Owner Entity	Type of Land	Acreage
Michigan Department of Transportation	Interstate Right-of-Way	1110
Capital Regional Airport Authority	Wooded upland and lowland areas within the Airport Buffer Zone	318.3
Clinton County Drain Commissioner's Office	Drain Detention Areas	47.7
DeWitt Charter Township (Wood/Webb Park & Water's Edge Park)	Wood/Webb Park- Water's Edge Park; Wooded upland and lowland areas	19
	Total:	1,495

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), holds the rights to approximately 1,110 acres of wooded or cleared vacant land, located entirely along the rights-of-way for Interstate 69 and US-127. These areas were included within the inventory because of the public perception that these natural areas provide a scenic element to the Township, and also because of the inherent wildlife habitat value of the land. The rights-of-way are generally inaccessible to the public, as the parcels are typically bordered by a freeway on one side and private property on the other, yet, the visual "viewshed" that these open expanses provide, lend to the rural character of the Township.

MDOT-Owned I-69 Right-of-Way



The Capital Regional Airport Authority (CRAA), which is the governing board for the Lansing Capital City Airport (LAN), located in the southwest corner of the Township, is responsible for the appropriate creation of an "airport buffer zone" around the Airport. As mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), all airports that receive federal funding for maintenance and improvements must acquire land that surrounds the airport and must keep that land either vacant, or develop it as a use that is compatible with the operation of the airport, such as industrial or as farmland, or as vacant land. This federal mandate protects both the viability of the airport and also protects the safety of both pilots and passengers and also surrounding Township residents. The CRAA owns many acres of land, as described here and also below in the "*publicly-owned agricultural land*" section. For this inventory, an approximate measure of Airport acreage has been included. According to the chart above, the CRAA owns 318 acres of wooded upland or lowland natural areas. This property is not accessible to the public and it is not

guaranteed to remain in a natural state, but the land remains a valuable part of the scenic viewshed and rural character of the Township.

The Clinton County Drain Commissioner's Office (CCDC) is also a large landholder of natural areas with over 47 acres of land in its name. The CCDC controls drainage easements over private property, and holds the rights to the land as a custodian that maintains the overall drainage system of the Township. County Drains, for all intents and purposes, are typically maintained in a natural state, including upland and lowland flora and fauna. The drains lend themselves to the rural character of the Township and their locations span the entire Township, creating notable corridors of natural areas that are typically in conjunction with lowland, or wetland areas.

Wood-Webb Park



DeWitt Charter Township owns two parcels that are unimproved natural areas with no public access. The Wood-Webb Park, located at the northeast corner of Wood Road and Webb Road intersection in Section 11 of the Township. It is a 7-acre natural lowland area, currently serving as a drainage area and wetland habitat. "Water's Edge" is an 11-acre parcel located in the southeast corner of the Round Lake Road-Wood Road intersection. It is currently unimproved and serves as habitat for local wildlife and is adjacent to the Looking Glass River to the south.

Water's Edge Park



Publicly-Owned Agricultural Land

The Township has a few instances of publicly owned farmland, totaling 509.6 acres. The largest landholder is the Capital Regional Airport Authority (CRAA) with approximately 337 acres of farmland that is not accessible to the public, but was acquired with federal money and is now leased to area farmers. The Lansing Public School District is the second largest public holder of farmland, with 94.63 acres that is leased for farming as well. Also, the Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs owns 49 acres as a result of a Lansing land swap with the Lansing Schools.

**West View of
Capital City Airport**



This property is also being farmed by a lessee. Finally, the DeWitt Public School District has approximately 29 acres of farmland that is being leased near the area of the High School. This land is not protected from development, but currently serves as a major element of the rural character of the Township.

Summary of the DeWitt Charter Township Inventory

Overall, DeWitt Charter Township inventory of open space encompasses both private and publicly-owned properties. Parks, natural areas and agricultural land play a major role in the preservation of the small town and rural character that makes the Township a unique place to live. Out of the total 19,882 acres that fall within the Township boundaries, percentage calculations are depicted in the following chart that provide a quick reference as to the amounts of “open space” that currently exist in the Township:

With the public parkland inventory completed, the next logical step in this report is to complete a comparison of the existing parks within the Township to national park standards. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) provides standard park requirements based on population numbers. The following charts depict the NRPA standards and a comparative analysis of DeWitt Charter Township facilities based on the current estimated township population of 13,729.

Table 10		
Summary of DeWitt Charter Township Open Space Inventory		
Type of Open Space	Acreage	% of Total Township Acreage (19,882 acres)
Privately-owned agricultural land:	3735.15	18.8%
Privately-owned natural areas:	120.70	0.60%
Privately-owned parks:	9.77	0.04%
Publicly-owned natural areas:	1,495	7.5%
Publicly-owned agricultural land:	509.6	2.5%
Publicly-owned parkland:	352	1.7%
Percentage Total for privately-owned open space:		19.4%
Percentage Total for publicly-owned open space:		11.7%
Total Percentage of Open Space in Township		31.1%

As depicted in the chart above, 19.4% of Township open space is privately-owned. By comparison, 11.7% of Township open space is publicly-owned. Based on open space acreage totals as compared to total acres in the Township, open space accounts for 31.1% of all land found within the Township boundaries.

5. A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

As part of the directive from the Township Board of Trustees, the committee made a determination of other comparable Townships within the State in order to develop a comparative analysis. The purpose of the analysis is to evaluate how DeWitt Charter Township open space “measures up” to other Townships that are similar to it. The committee concluded that the main criterion should be the population of the Township, as larger and smaller township populations may not compare as easily due to varying development pressures. Other criteria included the existence of rural character in the Township; The presence of a major interstate and freeway interchanges that dissect the Township, and the proximity of the Township to an existing urban area. Other criteria could include the existence of a major airport within Township boundaries and the presence of multiple school districts as well. All of these criteria play an important role in

estimating the development pressures and patterns of the chosen Townships and add to the legitimacy of the committee's analysis.

Based on the criteria stated above, two Townships were identified as being comparable to DeWitt Charter Township and therefore, worthy of a comparison for this study. The first Township is Cascade Township, located in Kent County, 10 miles southeast of the City of Grand Rapids and adjacent to a first-ring inner suburb, Kentwood. The second Township is Genoa Township in Livingston County, located adjacent to both the City of Brighton and the City of Howell.

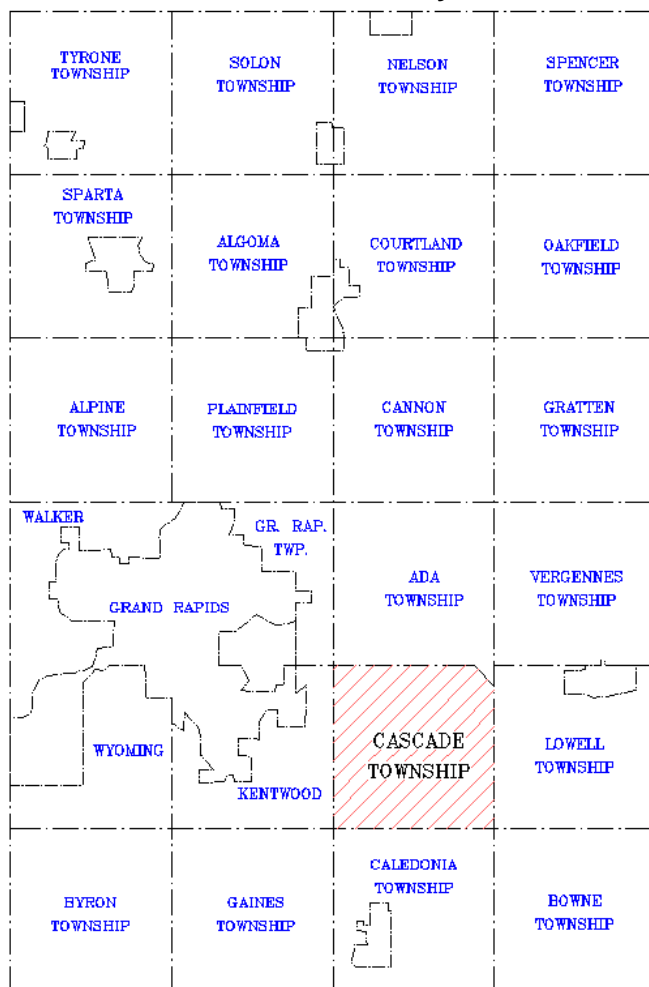
Both Cascade and Genoa Townships share similar traits with DeWitt Charter Township. The following section illustrates the traits of each Township:

Cascade Township, Kent County

Cascade Township has a population that is slightly larger than DeWitt Charter Township, based on the 2000 Census, when the township had 15,107 residents. Cascade Township also has a rural character and is located on the Thornapple and Grand Rivers, also encompassing a significant amount of agricultural land. The Township is bisected by I-96 with two local interchanges, and is the host community of the Kent County Airport. Based on these findings, Cascade Township serves as an adequate comparison with DeWitt Charter Township.

The Cascade Township Planning Department provided the committee with limited acreage amounts, as far as privately and publicly-held land, yet, the numbers lend themselves to critical study. A typical Township is 36 square miles, and with Cascade Township having 33.9 square miles, or 21,696 acres, these land categories total the following: Cascade Township has approximately 2 acres of privately owned parks, and 221 acres of privately-owned natural areas, or 1.02% of the total Township area, and approximately 1,940 acres of privately-owned agricultural land or 8.9% of the total Township area. Publicly-owned parkland totals approximately 60 acres in Cascade Township, or 0.27% and publicly-owned natural areas total approximately 550 acres, or 2.53% of total Township area; finally, publicly-owned agricultural land accounts for approximately 1,956

Location of Cascade Township within Kent County, MI



acres or 9.01% of total Township area. This total open space inventory totals 4,729 acres or 21.73% of the total Township acreage.

Table 11 Cascade Township, Kent County, Open Space Inventory		
Land Type	Acres	% of Total Township Acreage
Privately-owned parks:	2	Negligible
Privately-owned natural areas:	221	1.02%
Privately-owned agricultural land:	1,940	8.9%
Publicly-owned parks:	60	0.27%
Publicly-owned natural areas:	550	2.53%
Publicly-owned agricultural	1,956	9.01%
Total:	4,729	21.73%

Cascade Township is currently conducting a preliminary open space inventory that was spurred by a private donation in the form of a 10-year grant for \$500,000. The inventory is underway in order to ascertain which open space areas are appropriate for acquisition by the Township. As of recently, the inventory is in its second phase of analysis, and no land has been acquired to date.

Genoa Township, Livingston County

Genoa Township has a population that is slightly larger than DeWitt Charter Township, based on the 2000 Census, when the township had 17,726 residents. Genoa Township has a rural character that encompasses farmland and 15 lakes with numerous wetland areas. Township is bisected by I-96 with one local interchange, and is bordered on the southeast by the City of Brighton and on the northwest by the City of Howell. Based on these findings, Genoa Township serves as an adequate comparison with DeWitt Charter Township.

The Genoa Township Planning Department provided the committee with acreage amounts, as far as privately and publicly-held land, and the numbers lend themselves to critical study. Genoa Township approximately 36 square miles, or 23,040 acres in area, these land categories total the following: Genoa Township has approximately 15 subdivisions with reserved open space areas, yet the Township was unable to provide the committee with exact acreages. Genoa Township has 13,535 acres of privately-owned agricultural or vacant land, which is 58.74% of the total Township area. Publicly-owned parkland and natural areas, including the Brighton State Recreation Area, total approximately 1,750 acres, or 7.5% of total Township area; and publicly-owned agricultural land is

Location of Genoa Township within Livingston County, MI



insignificant and the Planning Department was unable to provide the committee with acreage numbers.

Table 12		
Genoa Township, Livingston County, Open Space Inventory		
Land Type	Acres	% of Total Township Acreage
Privately-owned parks and natural areas:	unknown	-
Privately-owned agricultural land:	13,535	58.74%
Publicly-owned parks and natural areas:	1,750	7.5%
Publicly-owned Agricultural (or Vacant)	unknown	-
Total:	15,285	66.24%

Genoa Township does not have any active open space initiatives at this time. It is significant to note that the Township does fall under the jurisdiction of the Livingston Land Conservancy which acquires land and conservation easements throughout Livingston County.

Summary

Based on the findings of this report, the following chart depicts an inventory of DeWitt Charter Township, Cascade Township, and Genoa Township open space areas, set as percentages of the total Township acreage. Most notably, Genoa Township holds approximately 66% of the land within their boundaries as private and public open space; DeWitt Charter Township holds approximately 31% of the land as private and public open space, and Cascade Township holds approximately 21% of the land as private and public open space.

Table 13			
An Overview of			
DeWitt Charter Township, Cascade Township and Genoa Township			
Open Space			
Land Type	DeWitt Charter Township (19,882 acres in size)	Cascade Township 21,696 acres in size)	Genoa Township (23,040 acres in size)
Privately-owned parks:	9.77	2	unknown
Privately-owned natural areas:	120.70	221	unknown
Privately-owned agricultural land:	3735.15	1,940	13,535 (including vacant land)
Publicly-owned parks:	352	60	1,750
Publicly-owned natural areas:	1,495	550	
Publicly-owned agricultural	509.6	1,956	unknown (including vacant land)
Acreage Total:	6,221.7	4,729	15,285
Percentage of Total Township Area:	31.2%	21.7%	66.2%

The percentage of privately-owned open space ranges within each of the three Townships, from Cascade Township at 21.7%, to DeWitt Charter Township at 31.2% and finally, Genoa Township at 66.2% of the total acreage within each respective Township's boundaries. This notable range of percentages between Townships is due mainly to the amount of private farmland within Township boundaries. Genoa Township

has a significant amount of farmland (13,535 acres) that is held by private landowners, yet there is also an unknown amount of “vacant” land, agricultural or otherwise, that is included with Genoa Township’s definition of “farmland,” and it is unclear whether or not the vacant land could be farmed. This discrepancy is worth note and may indicate that the actual acreage of private farmland in Genoa Township could be somewhat lower in number than what is presented here.

DeWitt Charter Township and Cascade Township have more definite parameters in the definition of private farmland. With the use of geographic data, the definition of farmland within DeWitt Charter Township was customized to include all parcels zoned “Agricultural,” and greater in size than 20 acres. Cascade Township also provided data for parcels zoned “Agricultural,” yet, of any acreage size, thereby eliminating the discrepancy that occurs when “vacant” property is included in the acreage numbers. In light of these variables within the definition of private open space, it becomes clear that the acreage numbers within DeWitt Charter Township and Cascade Township are safely within reasonable range for private open space within Townships of similar population and development pressure.

Public open space areas vary by small degrees from Township to Township. This small variation depends on certain variables such as DeWitt Charter Township public open space, at 11.9% of the total Township area, including freeway right-of-way areas and county drain areas, which are not calculated as part of Cascade Township’s 11.8% for public open space.

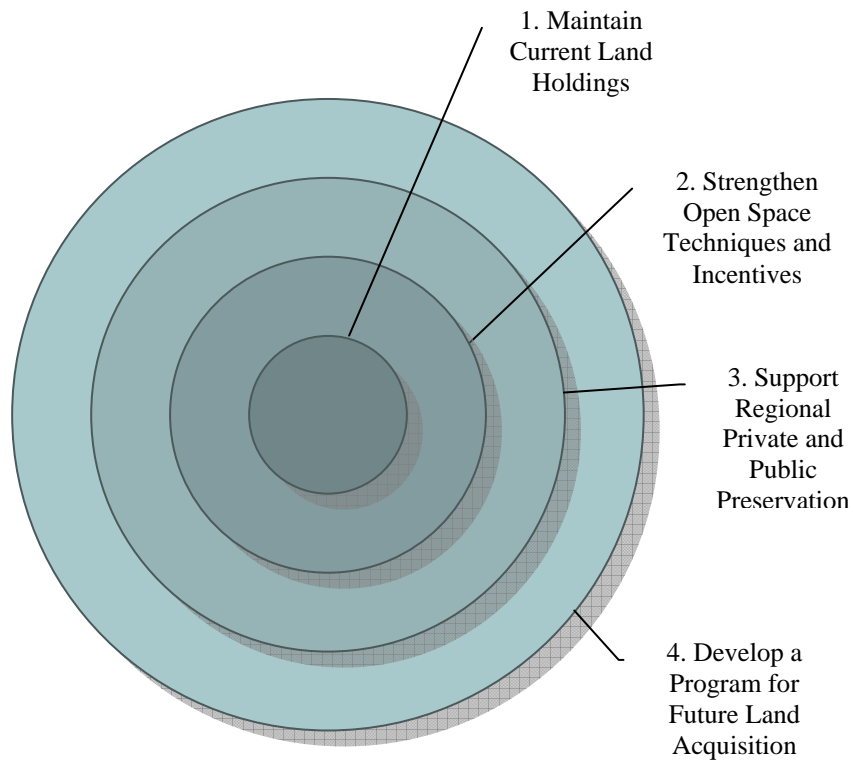
An analysis was completed of strictly Township-owned parkland as part of the overall comparative analysis between DeWitt Charter Township, Cascade Township, and Genoa Township. Although each Township varies in size, with DeWitt Charter Township encompassing 19,882 acres; Cascade Township encompassing 21,696 acres and Genoa Township encompassing 23,040 acres, the greatest percentage of Township-owned parkland lay in DeWitt Charter Township, with 0.83% (or 166 acres) of the total 19,882 acres being parkland. Cascade Township parkland totals 127 acres or 0.58% of their total land area; and Genoa Township parkland totals 45 acres or 0.19% of their total land area.

Table 14 A Comparison of Township-Owned Parkland and Natural Areas Combined			
	DeWitt Charter Township <small>(19,882 acres in size)</small>	Cascade Township <small>(21,696 acres in size)</small>	Genoa Township <small>(23,040 acres in size)</small>
Total Parkland Acreage:	Approx. 185 acres <small>(see Tables 6 & 9 for breakdown)</small>	Approx 127 acres	45 acres
Percentage of Township:	0.93%	0.58%	0.19%
Source: DeWitt Township Planning Department			

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee, after completing the inventory and comparative analysis, determined that there were four succinct roles that the Township should play in creating, maintaining and preserving open space within our boundaries. The first role is that of maintaining current Township-owned lands. The second role involves the detailed consideration of future land acquisition opportunities that may arise as a result of donation of land, etc. The third role involves supporting regional cooperation efforts for open space preservation including the county-level program for the purchase of development rights (PDR). The fourth role involves providing incentive for development to occur in areas with existing infrastructure, with the purpose of attracting development to those areas of the Township that are more suitable for redevelopment or infill development as compared to greenfield areas. This section describes and defines the basis of each respective recommendation.

Figure 1
DeWitt Charter Township
Open Space Committee Recommendations



Recommendation One-

The Open Space Committee recommends that the Township maintain its current land holdings, including 185 acres of parkland and natural areas. The preservation of these lands is critical to the Township system of recreation opportunities and natural area preservation.

DeWitt Charter Township holds a significant amount of open space as described in the comparative analysis section of this report. Maintaining these parcels for agricultural, natural resource, habitat and recreational reasons has been deemed by the Committee to be a top priority. The Township currently owns and maintains approximately one hundred and eighty-five (185) acres of parkland and natural areas that serve the purposes outlined in the Committee's definition of open space. In the interest of the future generations who will live in DeWitt Township, the proper stewardship of Township held lands is imperative.

Recommendation Two-

The Committee recommends that the Township increasingly direct development and redevelopment to areas that are served by existing infrastructure through the use of mixed use zoning, brownfield programs, and corridor overlay zoning. Also, Planned Unit Development open space requirements should be strengthened to include open space connections and corridors.

New development creates less impacts on existing open space when it is directed towards those sections and corridors of the Township that are currently served by public infrastructure, versus development that occurs in greenfields where infrastructure is not present. The Township can assume a proactive role in attracting development, or redevelopment, to those areas that host existing commercial, residential and industrial uses through the consideration of incentives such as a brownfield redevelopment program, mixed use zoning and corridor overlay zoning, home improvement programs, etc. In this way, existing green space preservation can indirectly benefit from the placement of new development in those areas that have already been improved with infrastructure.

Concerning greenfield development, it is important to note that the Township currently promotes residential "Planned Unit Developments (PUD)" where increased densities are traded for increased open space preservation within each development. This system has been successful in providing increased private open spaces, yet it is important that future PUDs provide open space areas that are connected to one another to create a greater opportunity for wildlife corridors and recreation trails from one part of a subdivision to another.

Recommendation Three-

The Committee recommends that the Township support state and regional public and private open space preservation efforts, such as the county farmland preservation program, county brownfield initiatives, green space programs, private land trusts, etc. The Township is poised to gain from these efforts because we can and do serve as a "gateway" to the more rural areas of the county and beyond. In addition, that the Township remain willing to review county proposals for future millages.

The State of Michigan currently operates a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program where the “development” rights tied to farmland are purchased and held on a parcel by parcel basis, in order to protect active farmland from development pressure. Recently, Clinton County has been researching the opportunity to enact a county-wide PDR program as well. Supporting the County-wide PDR initiative would serve to strengthen the Township’s current regional cooperation efforts that began with recent economic development discussions.

Further regional discussions concerning county farmland preservation will further solidify the role that the Township plays economically and geographically within the county. The Township, being located between the greater Lansing area and the more rural Townships of Clinton County, has an opportunity to benefit not only from merely its location within the county, but the county farmland preservation effort can be a component of the greater economic development toolbox that will positively impact areas that are slated for future development, and for those areas that are slated for agricultural preservation. The Committee recommends that the Township remain willing to review County proposals for regional open space initiatives including not only farmland preservation, but recreation and wildlife habitat preservation discussions as well. The Committee also recommends that the Township remain willing to explore the possibility of a future millage for open space preservation.

Recommendation Four-

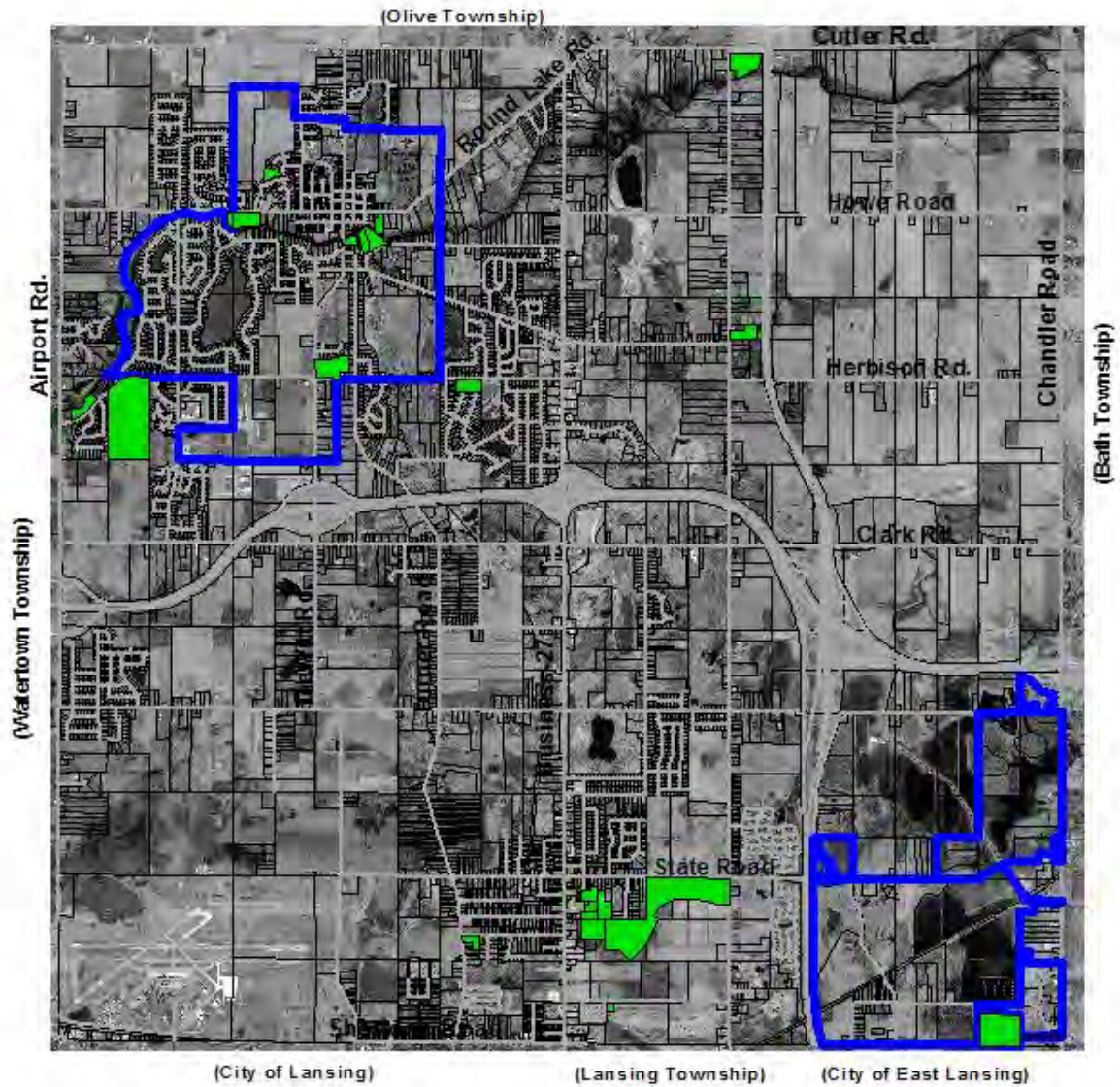
The Committee recommends that the Township develop an official program for evaluating future land acquisition. This program will include guidelines to ascertain how a proposed acquisition will expand recreation, rural character or development opportunities in the Township, and will also include a public education component through pamphlets and other media describing donation and bequeathal information.

The Committee recommends that supplemental guidelines and additional public education efforts for new parcel acquisitions be developed for use by the Township Manager and Board. From time to time, the Township is presented with an opportunity where a party is offering a parcel of land to the Township as a donation, or where a parcel has become available for other reasons. Parcels have been acquired by the Township in the past, ranging from donated parkland and natural areas to tax-defaulted properties. Currently, parcels are analyzed on a case-by-case basis for whether or not they are appropriate for the Township to acquire. Case-by-case analyses allow the Township to better understand the obligations and merits of acquiring available parcels, while supplemental guidelines could provide benchmarks for assessing whether or not the parcel in question will expand recreation, rural character, or planned development opportunities within the Township.

Also, as seen in Cascade Township, a substantial amount of money was donated to that Township for the study and acquisition of open space. The same situation could occur in DeWitt Township if the public is educated, through the means of pamphlets, etc. as to the appropriate steps to be taken if they own a piece of land or would like to bequeath a sum of money to the Township for land acquisition. Public education efforts, along with supplemental guidelines for the acquisition of parcels, will advocate a thoughtful, planned course of action for future land acquisitions by the Township.

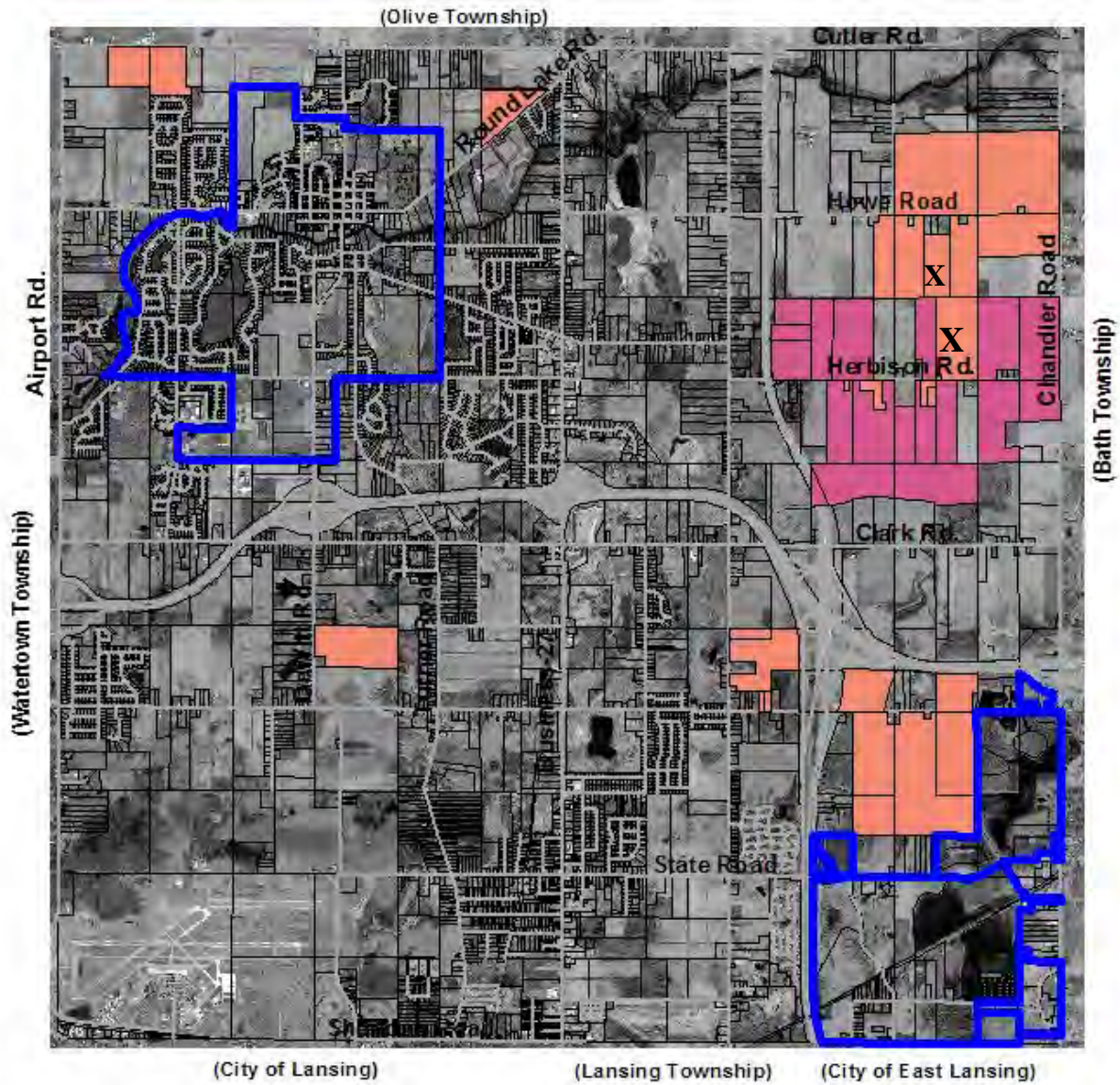
Appendix A. Related Maps

Publicly-Owned Parks in DeWitt Charter Township and Environs

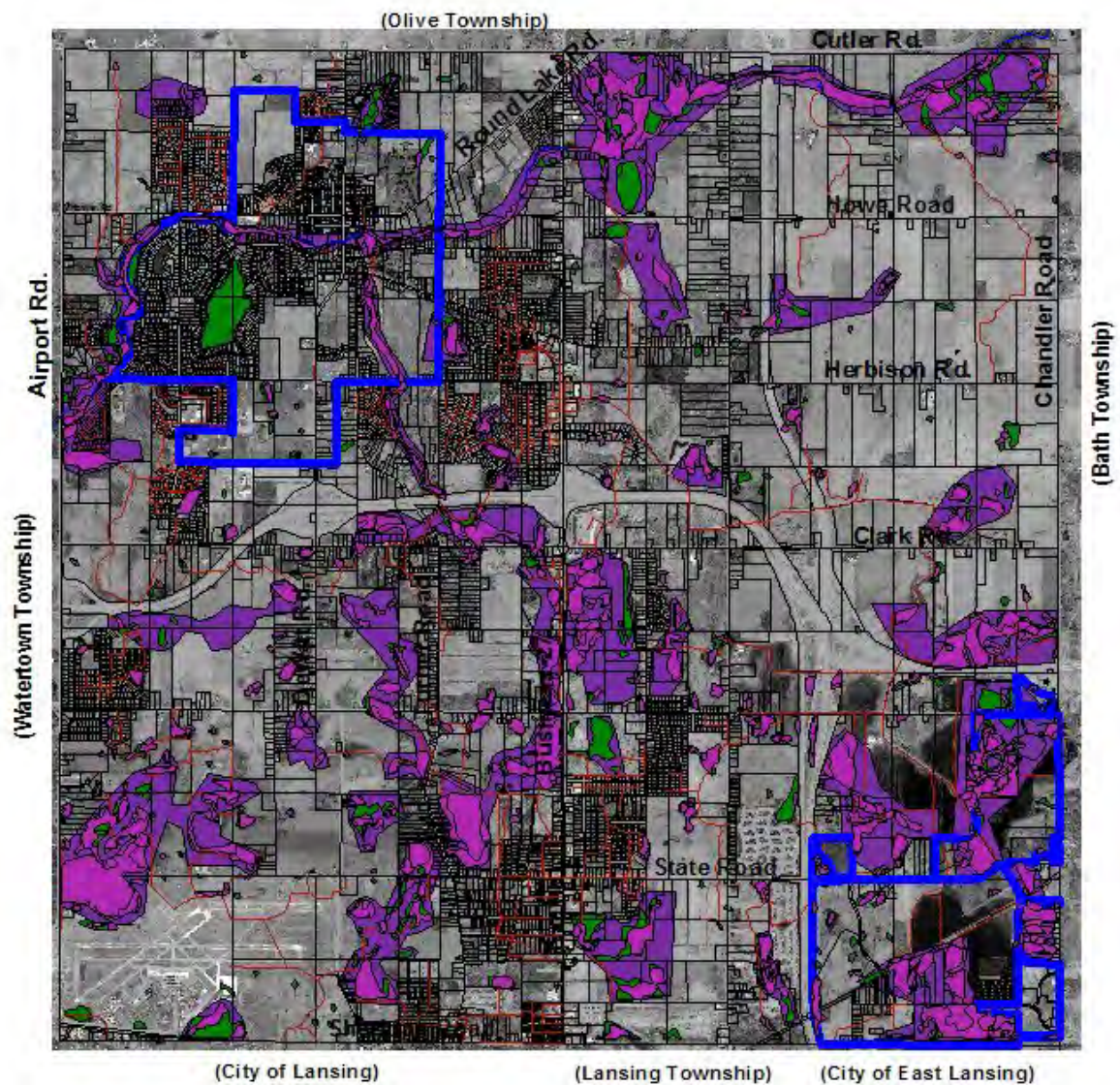


Publicly Protected Farmland in DeWitt Charter Township

Key:
Parcels Under the Purchase of Development Rights Program: Pink
Parcels Under Public Act 116: Orange



**Wetland Areas and Hydric Soil Areas that Indicate
Lowland or Wooded Areas
in DeWitt Charter Township**



APPENDIX B-1

Inventory of Public Park Lands

Parcel Number	Parcel Address	Owner Entity	Name	Acreage
050-034-300-070-01	E COLEMAN RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Coleman Road Play Lot	1.30
050-018-200-025-00	3671 W HERBISON RD	CLINTON COUNTY	Padgett Park	77.46
050-018-200-030-00	W HERBISON RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Looking Glass Riverfront Park	5.95
050-016-200-011-00	1401 W HERBISON RD 1445	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Station House Park/Township Hall Grounds	7.51
050-034-200-235-00	1080 E WIELAND RD	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Valley Farms Park	2.37
050-034-200-035-00	BROOK RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Valley Farms Park	7.77
050-034-200-095-00	E WIELAND RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Valley Farms Park	11.61
050-034-200-215-50	BROOK RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Valley Farms Park	2.83
050-034-200-210-00	16101 BROOK RD	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Valley Farms Park	4.69
050-034-100-021-60	1275 GRANGER MEADOWS LN	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Granger Meadows	76.25
050-471-000-171-00	TURNER RD VACANT	CAPITAL REGIONAL AIRPORT	Valley-Turner Play Lot	3.37
050-023-200-005-00	E CLARK RD VACANT	LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT	Historic Marker Grounds	0.49
050-022-100-020-00	1754 E CLARK RD	LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT	Gunnisonville Elementary School Grounds	7.50
050-033-400-105.00 et al	16900 CEDAR ST	LANSING SCHOOL DISTRICT	Sheridan Road Elementary Grounds	8.28
050-017-300-006-00 et al	3100 W. CLARK RD	DEWITT SCHOOL DISTRICT	DeWitt High School Grounds	40.46
na	SCHAVEY ROAD	DEWITT SCHOOL DISTRICT	Schavey Rd and Herbison Woods Elementary	49.42
na	HERBISON RD	DEWITT SCHOOL DISTRICT	DeWitt Middle Schools Grounds	58.12
050-020-300-090-00	DEWITT RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Hurd Cemetery Grounds	4.52
050-023-200-010-00	E CLARK RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Gunnisonville Cemetery Grounds	7.02
050-023-200-030-60	E CLARK RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Gunnisonville Cemetery Grounds	7.70
050-110-000-001-00	E. SHERIDAN RD	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Sheridan Road Vacant Lot	0.30
TOTAL ACREAGE:				384.92

APPENDIX B-2
Inventory of
Public Agricultural Land

Parcel Number	Type	Parcel Address	Parcel Owner	Name	Acreage
050-030-400-005-00	Agricultural**		CRAA	Airport Open Space	337.00
050-027-400-005-50	Agricultural	E STATE RD VACANT	LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS	State and Wood	94.63
050-027-400-006-00	Agricultural	E STATE RD VACANT	MI DEPT of MILITARY AND VA	State and Wood	49.06
050-017-300-020-00	Agricultural ***	DEWITT RD VACANT	DEWITT PUBLIC SCHOOLS	School Grounds	29.00
Total Acreage:					509.69

** This land is
inaccessible and is in
conjunction with the
airport buffer zone

***May include natural
areas- but the majority
of the parcel is ag

APPENDIX B-3
Inventory of
Public Natural Areas

Parcel Number	Parcel Address	Parcel Owner	Name	Acreage
050-002-200-006-00	WOOD RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Wood/Webb Park	12.38
050-011-300-016-00	WOOD RD VACANT	DEWITT CHARTER TOWNSHIP	Water's Edge Park	6.64
050-030-300-025-00	AIRPORT RD VACANT	CRAA	Airport Open Space**	112.99
050-032-400-005-00	DEWITT RD VACANT	CRAA	Airport Open Space**	52.86
050-032-100-005-00	DEWITT RD VACANT	CRAA	Airport Open Space**	152.52
050-233-000-032-01	SANBORN DR VACANT	Clinton County	CLINTON COUNTY DRAIN OFFICE	6.18
050-024-300-035-00	E STOLL RD VACANT	Clinton County	REMY CHANDLER DRAIN	0.25
050-374-000-009-51	UNKNOWN	Clinton County	PRAIRIE CREEK-GUNDERMAN LK DR	1.83
050-014-300-055-00	E CLARK RD VACANT	Clinton County	REMY CHANDLER COUNTY DRAIN	0.07
050-014-300-050-00	E CLARK RD VACANT	Clinton County	REMY CHANDLER COUNTY DRAIN	0.09
050-160-000-011-00	NORTHWARD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.26
050-320-000-018-00	W DILL RD VACANT	Clinton County	OAKLAND HILLS DRAINAGE DIST.	0.29
050-471-000-139-03	W VALLEY RD VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.29
050-160-000-013-00	NORTHWARD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.32
050-160-000-046-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.37
050-160-000-045-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.37
050-160-000-044-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.37
050-160-000-043-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.37
050-160-000-042-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.37
050-160-000-047-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.39
050-160-000-014-00	NORTHWARD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	0.39
050-320-000-007-00	W DILL RD VACANT	Clinton County	OAKLAND HILLS DRAINAGE DIST	0.58
050-160-000-048-00	MAYFIELD DR VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	1.45
050-034-200-100-02	S US 27 VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	1.52
050-034-200-080-01	S US 27 VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	1.67
050-034-200-085-01	E STATE RD VACANT	Clinton County	COOPER/BANCHES CO DRAIN DISTR	2.35
050-017-400-060-00	TURNER RD VACANT	Clinton County	EDWARDS FILL DRAINAGE DIST	28.00
050-021-200-035-01	S. OF DELVIN HILLS	Clinton County	BALDUF & LIETZKE DRAINAGE DISTRICT	1.20
050-035-300-100-00	I-69 & US 27	MDOT	I-69 & US 27*	1110
Total Acreage:				1496

*This property is inaccessible & is in conjunction with limited access right-of-way

** This property is inaccessible and is part of the airport buffer zone