

FIVE YEAR PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

(December 2016-November 2021)

CEDAR SPRINGS AREA KENT COUNTY, MICHIGAN

*As Adopted
February 2017*

CEDAR SPRINGS AREA PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD:

Joyce Hansen, Algoma Township
Sid Kempf, Algoma Township

Michelle Bayink, Vice-Chair, Cedar Springs Public Schools
Shannon Vanderhyde, Secretary, Cedar Springs Public Schools

Darla Falcon, City of Cedar Springs
Vacancy, City of Cedar Springs

Alexis Ader, Courtland Township
Carolee Cole, Courtland Township

Mark Tabor, Chairperson, Nelson Township
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February 2016

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MISSION STATEMENT

OF THE CEDAR SPRINGS AREA PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD

TO COORDINATE/PROVIDE RECREATIONAL LEISURE, FINE ARTS, AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES FOR ALL AGES IN THE CEDAR SPRINGS AREA COMMUNITY. THE CEDAR SPRINGS AREA PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE CEDAR SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS, CITY OF CEDAR SPRINGS, AND THE TOWNSHIPS OF ALGOMA, COURTLAND, NELSON, AND SOLON.

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APPENDICES

1. Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board minutes from [date] with resolution approving 5 year master plan.
2. City of Cedar Springs Council resolution.
3. Courtland Township support letter and meeting minutes.
4. Nelson Township meeting minutes of support.
5. Solon Township support and meeting minutes.
6. Algoma Township minutes of support.
7. Cedar Springs Public School Board support and meeting minutes.
8. Posting of review of master plan documentation, including signs for Cedar Springs Public Library, special meeting held by recreation board and minutes, and online documentation of copies available.
9. Notice of public hearing.
10. Minutes from cedar springs city council meeting with public hearing.
11. Letter to regional planning commission.
12. Letter to Kent County Parks Director.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

This Plan is an update, undertaken by the Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board, of the Community Parks and Recreation Plan adopted in November 1997. The Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board, which is comprised of representatives appointed by the City of Cedar Springs, Algoma Township, Courtland Township, Nelson Township, Solon Township, and the Cedar Springs Public Schools, has undertaken the update of the Parks and Recreation Plan.

(Note: Throughout this Plan, the Recreation Board consisting of the City of Cedar Springs, the Townships of Algoma, Courtland, Nelson, and Solon, and the Cedar Springs Public Schools will be referred to as the “Cedar Springs Area.”)

This update is intended to reflect the changed needs and goals of the communities; and to meet the Michigan Department of Natural Resources requirements for qualifying for grant monies.

Background

Through recreation planning, the facilities and programs necessary for protecting the quality of life in a community are developed that have broad and wide-ranging effects. The youth of the community are given places to go and activities in which to participate in that provide positive and constructive ways to use their leisure time. Families are able to find fun and inexpensive means of getting together with their friends and neighbors in a manner that builds a positive image of the community. The elderly also benefit from such programs in ways that provide for a healthy and happy retirement.

Recreation planning develops alternatives for policy decisions by the public and private sector. It is representative of what people want, imaginative in projecting what might be, and realistic in recognizing what is possible. Planning is a means of anticipating or reacting to change.

If a community is to provide effective recreational opportunities, it needs a way of solving current problems and anticipating future needs. Recreation planning is a means of:

- ◆ Obtaining a perspective on these problems.
- ◆ Developing realistic alternatives.
- ◆ Formulating goals, policies, and recommendations for public and private decisions.
- ◆ Developing criteria to measure change.
- ◆ Involving people in the planning, design and decision processes.

Recreation planning has a mission that distinguishes it from other types of functional planning. This mission can be used to rationalize recreation planning as a function of local government; it can also be used to describe the responsibilities of a recreation planning unit to a public agency.

There are some common principles of recreation planning that have been used in the drafting of this plan. These principles should be considered basic to the success of any planning effort and can be used to monitor the quality of the planning process:

1. All people should have access to recreational activities and facilities regardless of interest, age, sex, income, cultural background, housing, environment or handicap.
2. Public recreation should be coordinated with other community recreation opportunities to avoid duplication and encourage innovation.
3. Public recreation should be integrated with all other public services, such as education, health and transportation.
4. Facilities should be adaptable to future needs.
5. Facilities and programs should be financially feasible to all stages of development.

The following update of the Cedar Springs Area Parks & Recreation Plan is to serve as a guideline for the selection of sites, program development, and directing the Cedar Springs Area Park and Recreation Board in the operation and maintenance of existing and future facilities and programs. This plan addresses the short and long range facility and program needs and generally identifies the existing physical resources, considers and projects cultural conditions and trends, develops short and long range goals and objectives and recommends action programs to meet the identified goals and objectives.

It is anticipated that periodic adjustment will be made in the plans to best meet the ever changing needs and interests of the community. Reviews of program accomplishments and responsiveness to the community's input will be the basis for these adjustments and are intended to be an integral part of the development process. It is anticipated that this plan incorporates sufficient community input and adequately reflects current needs, trends and objectives to accommodate change and continues to guide and direct the Cedar Springs Area in a positive manner for many years to come.

It is important to note that planning does not end with the writing of a plan, rather the adoption of the plan signals the beginning of a community's commitment to the planning process. Planning is an attitude and an approach to providing the framework necessary to make development occur in a comprehensive manner. A community involved in the planning process exudes a stable demeanor while looking forward to the future with the assurance that growth and change are being anticipated and will be accommodated in a logical manner. The plan is the continuation of the path toward the realization that adequate recreation facilities and opportunities are a possibility for all persons within the community.

THE COMMUNITY

The Cedar Springs Area encompasses Algoma, Courtland, Nelson, and Solon Townships as well as the City of Cedar Springs. These municipalities are located in the northeast quarter of Kent County (see Map 1) which is situated on the west central area of the State of Michigan.

The settlement of the plan area begins in the 1850's when pioneers came to the Nelson and Solon area from New York State. At that time Nelson Township was known as North Courtland and was first settled in 1851; and Solon Township was known as North Algoma and Velzy Center, which was first settled in 1854. The City of Cedar Springs was settled during the 1850's also and was the second village in Kent County, and was incorporated by the Legislature on March 18, 1871.

The early industrial developments of the area were lumbering and farming and as time went on, with the invention of the automobile, a more expanded and diversified industrial base was developed.

The City of Cedar Springs is known to many as the Red Flannel Town and the first Red Flannel Day was held on November 11, 1939. There is a community festival to celebrate it on the first weekend of October and it has been ongoing for over 75 years.

According to the latest official US Census from 2010, there were 31,857 persons in the Cedar Springs Area. This represented a 25.52% increase over the 2005 estimate of 25,379 persons. According to US Census data population estimates, the Cedar Springs Area population for 2015 was projected to be 31,429 persons, which shows a modest decrease (-1.34%) from the 2010 US Census data figures.

History of Cedar Springs Parks and Recreation Board

In January of 1986, Jim Tackmann and Louise King realized the need for recreational programs and facilities in the Cedar Spring area. They shared their vision with the Cedar Springs School System, City of Cedar Springs, along with Nelson and Solon Townships. They realized the potential of four entities working together toward a common goal. After much planning the two townships, the City and the School System were convinced that a volunteer Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreational Board (C.S.A.P.R.) was essential for this community. There were representatives appointed from each unit to serve on the board consisting of; from the city; Amber Bailey and Rose Powell; Solon Township: John Hart and John Cornell; Nelson Township: Ellen Lewis and Don Mabie; and the School System: Louise King, Jim Tackmann and Ivan Opperman. On October 12, 1993 Algoma Township joined the C.S.A.P.R. board with two appointed representatives. Courtland Township became a partner organization in 2005 as well.

The Parks and Recreation Board developed By-laws, a budget and a well defined Master Plan that identified both short and long term goals.

In December of 1986, December of 1991, November of 1997, February of 2005, and December of 2011 the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) approved the C.S.A.P.R. Board's Master Plans. Since that first master plan, over \$1.15 million dollars of DNR grant funding has been awarded for the improvement of the Cedar Springs Area parks, including a new softball and baseball complex, nature trail, and a track and football facility. As of 2016, the list of DNR grant assisted projects for the Cedar Springs Area includes:

City of Cedar Springs

- 1977 (LWCF) Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for Beech Street Park
 - Develop site preparation and seeding, playground equipment, and LWCF sign.
 - Grant Amount: \$5,065.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 1992 (LWCF) Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for Morley Park - Phase 1
 - Construction of two sand volleyball courts, two shuffleboard courts, two horseshoe event areas, and six basketball goals.
 - Grant Amount: \$12,000.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 2009 (MNRTF) Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for Frederick Meijer White Pine Trail Staging Area
 - Development to include a trailhead area for improved access to the Frederick Meijer White Pine Trail and the proposed Cedar Creek walking trail.
 - Grant Amount: \$100,000.00
 - Status: Grant Closed

Algoma Township

- 1989 (BF) Recreation Bond Fund Grant for Camp Lake Park
 - Basketball court, shelter, play equipment, landscaping and fencing.
 - Grant Amount: \$63,236.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 1995 (CM) Clean Michigan Initiative Grant for Algoma Township Sports Park
 - Development of a 20-acre parcel into a new park, including restroom/concession building, play area, walking path, signage and picnic area.
 - Grant Amount: \$225,149.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 2006 (MNRTF) Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for River's Edge Park Addition
 - Addition of 3.5 acres to existing seven acre undeveloped park with wooded riparian wetlands and 360 feet of Rogue River frontage for greenway development, fishing, environmental education, and wetland protection.
 - Grant Amount: \$49,000.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 2010 (MNRTF) Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for Algoma RSC Archery Center Development
 - Development to include Olympic-style archery and air gun shooting facility with indoor and outdoor ranges.
 - Grant Amount: \$500,000.00
 - Status: Grant Closed
- 2015 (MNRTF) Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant for River's Edge Park Acquisition
 - Acquisition of approximately 1.7 acres of land with 208 feet of frontage on the Rogue River, immediately adjacent to 11 existing acres of township-owned land known as River's Edge Park. This acquisition will expand River's Edge Park, provide more public access to the Rogue River,

increase valuable greenspace in a riparian corridor along a Designated Wild and Scenic River, and potentially increase trail length, parking, and educational activities.

- Grant Amount: \$138,000.00
- Status: Project Agreement Executed

Courtland Township

- None reported by DNR.

Nelson Township

- None reported by DNR.

Solon Township

- None reported by DNR.

Cedar Springs Public Schools

- 1989 (BF) Recreation Bond Fund Grant for Community Baseball/Softball Field
 - The construction of one additional and reconstruction of two softball fields and one baseball field.
 - Grant Amount; \$63,959.00
 - Status: Grant Closed

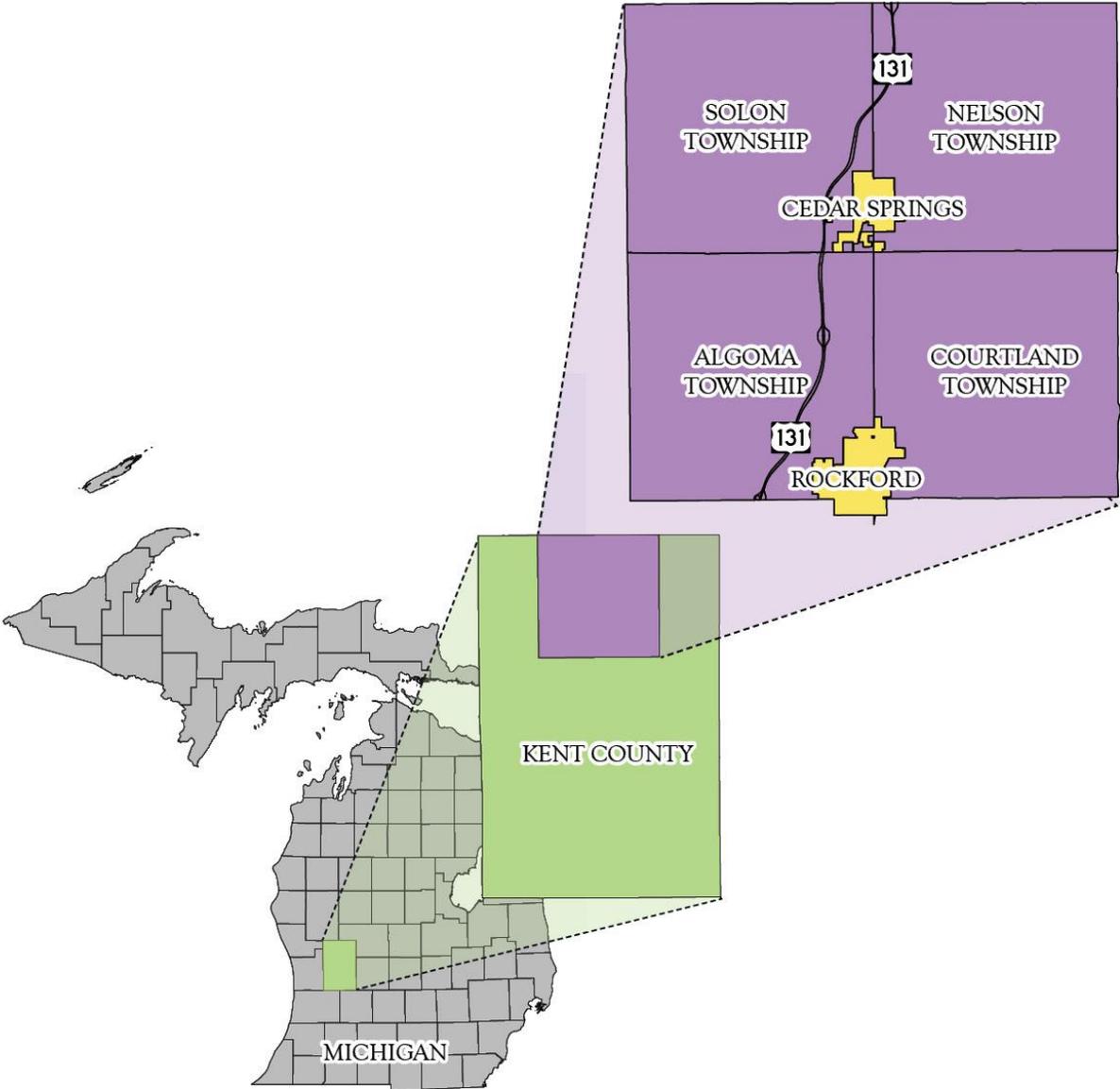
Since December 1991, several projects were completed with the assistance of local recreational grants. These include:

- Kent County Community Block Grant
 - [date] Morley Park improvements to include two volleyball courts, two shuffle board courts, and two horse shoe pits.
 - [date] Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.
- Kent County Health Department Grant.
 - [date] Community Health Screening which serviced approximately 90 community members.
- Michigan-After-School Grant.
 - [date] After school programs for at-risk students K-8.
- Kent County Community Block Grant.
 - [date] Installation at Morley Park in the City of Cedar Springs for adaptive play equipment and creation of a universally accessible parking and eating area.
 - [date] Trestle Park in Algoma Township removed a Port-A -Jon and installed a permanent vault toilet facility for residents.
- United Way Schools of Hope Grant.
 - [date] After-school reading program for below grade level readers in early elementary grades.

All of these worthy programs and facilities were met with success because of a very unique partnership between Algoma, Courtland, Nelson, and Solon Townships, City of Cedar Springs and the Cedar Springs School System. This partnership proved that six separate representative units could come together and share their goals, commitments, and funding to better serve the residents of a community. The original Parks and Recreation Board established a very significant and worthwhile volunteer board for the Cedar Springs Area. It is the current Board's goal to follow through with the established long-

term goal of providing each and every member of the Cedar Springs Area with the best possible recreational opportunities.

There are annual activities made available by the Parks and Recreation Department including a Daddy-Daughter Dance, Concerts in the Park, Summer Athletic Camps, bus trips, community education and fitness classes to name a few.



Map 1

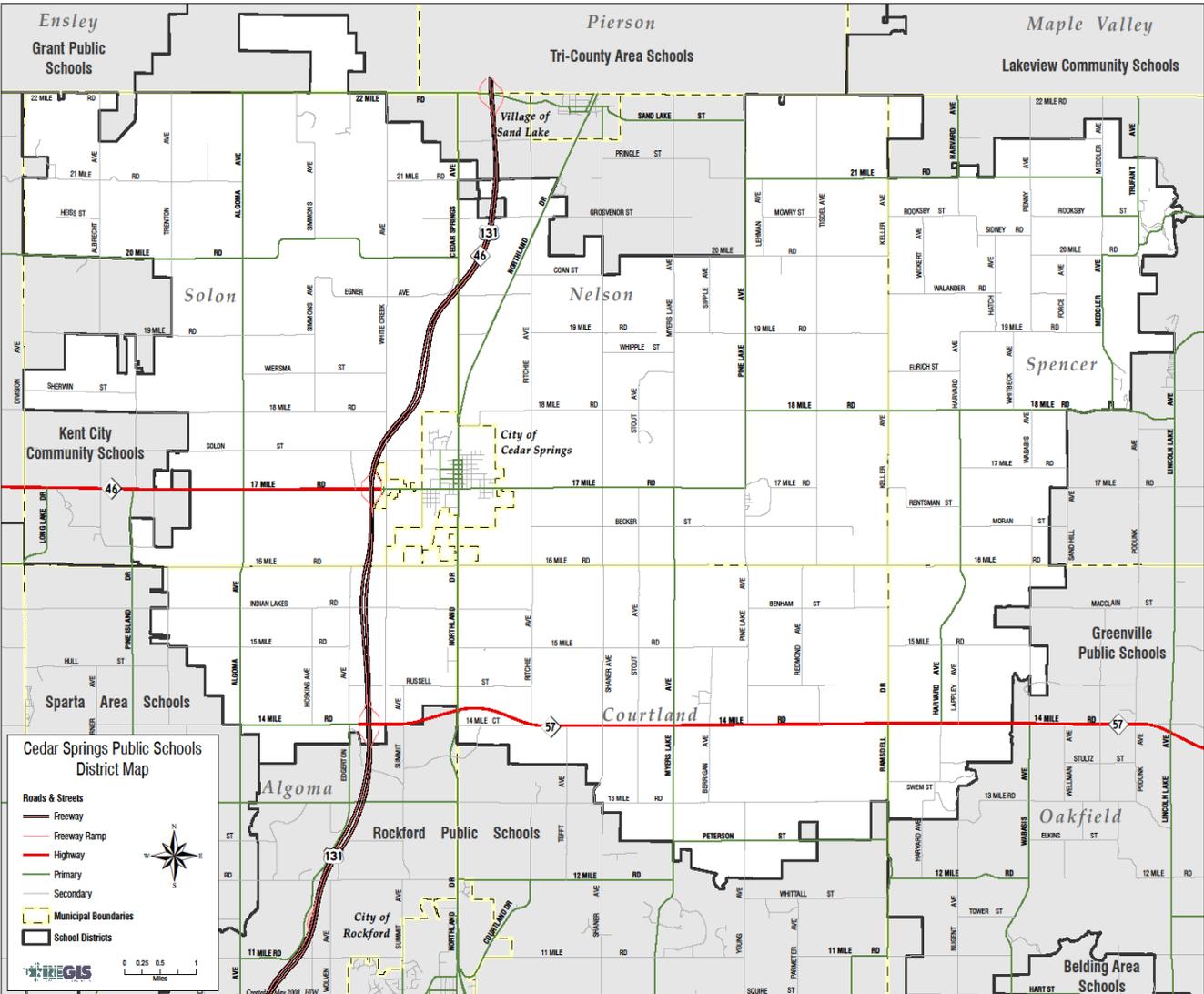
The plan area is bisected north and south by U.S.-131, which provides a connecting link between Kalamazoo and Cadillac. U.S.-131 provides the major facility for circulation between Cedar Springs Area and the surrounding communities. Leaving west out of Cedar Springs is M-46. This east/west highway connects Cedar Springs, the center of the plan area, with the City of Muskegon on the western shore of the state.

The School District

The Cedar Springs Public School District encompasses the City of Cedar Springs and includes parts of Solon, Nelson, Courtland, Algoma, Spencer and Oakfield Townships. A map of the district is shown on the following page.

The School District presently operates four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, one administration building, and one alternative high school, all located in the City of Cedar Springs. A new Middle School just south of the city limits opened in 2005.

CEDAR SPRINGS PUBLIC SCHOOLS DISTRICT & TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES



Map 2

The Plan

The following Parks and Recreation Plan is an outgrowth of the need for increased recreational programs and facilities as the Cedar Springs Area continues growing in population. A well-conceived strategy for the development of facilities, expansion of programs and the continuous operation and maintenance capabilities will assist the City, Townships and School District in meeting future recreational and leisure-time needs as they develop. This recreation plan identifies facility and program needs that presently exist and are expected to occur, projects cultural trends and conditions, develops short and long-range goals and objectives, and presents an action plan for the implementation of the goals and objectives and the maintenance of resulting facilities.

Consideration of a variety of factors, including past and current trends in population growth and economic development as well as the physiographic amenities, will play an important role in developing the recreation plan. Actual development, as opposed to projected development, may shift dramatically from one area to another, or may not spread uniformly over the entire area making projections somewhat difficult for the next few years. This Community Park and Recreation Master Plan will attempt to account for the somewhat unique conditions that currently exist and are anticipated in the near future.

The Planning Process

The Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board with aid from Landscape Architects and Planners, Inc. prepared the Community Parks and Recreation Plan update.

The Township Boards, School Board, and the City Council officials have had the opportunity to review and comment on the Recreation Plan. Letters of acknowledgment have been included in the appendix of this plan.

A public hearing was held on _____ at 7:00 p.m. during the City of Cedar Springs council meeting. A public notice was placed in The Cedar Springs Post on _____ informing the general public about the Public Hearing. The master plan was available for review starting on _____ with copies available at the Cedar Springs Public Schools district office at 204 E. Muskegon, where the CSAPR office is located, and also at the Cedar Spring Public Library. The plan was also available online through the parks and recreation website at www.csaparksandrec.com and community members were notified as well through postings on the Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation and the City of Cedar Springs “We Celebrate Underwear” Facebook pages. Documentation is in the appendix to support these statements.

CHAPTER 2 – ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The Cedar Springs Area Park and Recreation Board is a public authority formed under Act 156 of the Public Acts of 1917. The Board is established to address the local recreation resources in the service area of the City of Cedar Springs, Algoma, Courtland, Nelson and Solon Townships. Many park and recreation functions involving the organization and planning for recreation facilities and programs will be carried through the Park and Recreation Board. The Board is comprised of twelve members; two from each community and the school district, of which there is a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer. Further, the Recreation Director for the Cedar Springs Area works with the Board integrating activities of the Board throughout the Plan area.

PURPOSE

The Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board is established for the purpose of planning public recreation, parks, recreational facilities, and for the expenditure of funds as needed for the operation and supervision of such system. It will strive to serve the recreational needs of the entire population of the Cedar Springs Area. The Board will not discriminate based on gender, age, race, religion or ethnic background.

Its duties include:

1. Determine and establish general policies to be followed in carrying out the Board's mission, vision and values.
2. Consider and pass judgment upon the recommendations coming from any source outside the Board, especially if such suggestions involve matters of general policy.
3. Establish a sound fiscal plan.
4. Provide for an adequate system of programs.
5. Oversee the development of an annual fiscal report and have it available for the public.
6. Determining short and long range goals and work toward the achievement of those goals.
7. Advise the director in making decisions regarding the daily operations of the department, while keeping in mind the fiscal plan and goals of the department.
8. Defining the objectives of public recreation services and determining fundamental policy.
9. Interpreting the community recreation program to public officials and general citizenry in terms of adequate moral and financial support.
10. Determining and establishing general policies to be followed in carrying out the purposes for which the Board was established.
11. Reviewing recommendations coming from any source outside of the Board, especially if such suggestions involve matters of general policy.
12. Establishing a sound fiscal plan to achieve recreation goals.
13. Provide for an adequate system of recreation facilities, areas and programs.
14. Determine long range goals and work toward the achievement of those goals.

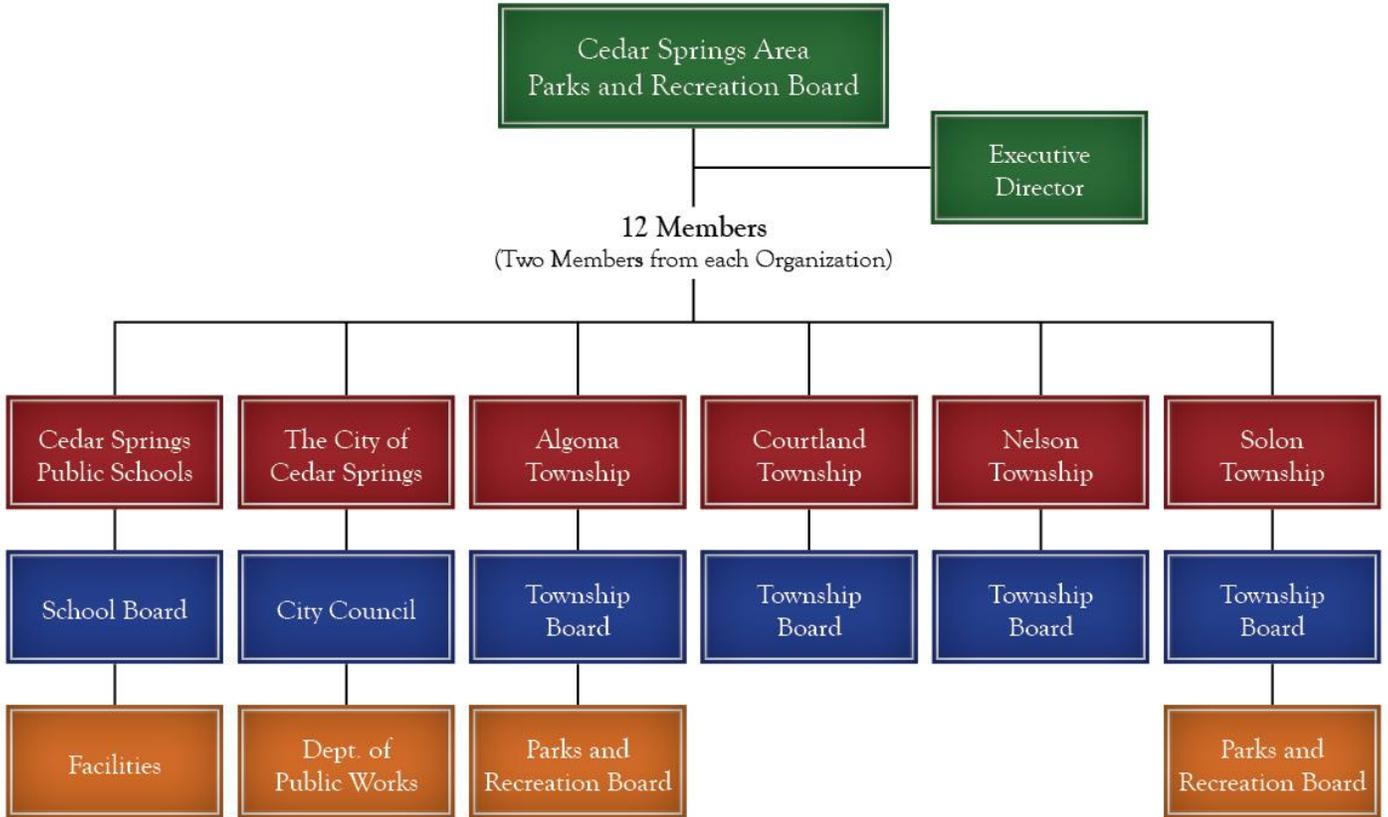


FIGURE 1

Funding

With the joint cooperation of five municipalities and the School Board, funding for recreation activities is founded on a strong and diverse base. Funds for the activities of the Board are provided from each authority represented on the Board and profits from programs.

The department is operated by a salaried director with the assistance of part-time hourly employees, paid instructors and volunteers. Volunteers continue to be an integral part of the department’s success. Previous projects have been achieved with the donation of time, materials, equipment, and money.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

In the past, the individual authorities retained the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of recreation facilities. With the establishment of the Park and Recreation Board, all aspects of recreation programs and facility development may be handled through the Board. Typically, the local government unit in which the facility is located handles recreation facilities maintenance.

BUDGET

The Park and Recreation Board annually establishes the program budget. The following is a summary of the revenue generated for the past 6 years. As shown, about one-third of the Board’s revenue is generated from the annual dues of the membership with the remaining coming from numerous recreation programs.

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Revenue						
Government	\$ 22,775.00	\$ 23,250.00	\$ 24,000.00	\$ 25,250.00	\$ 25,250.00	\$ 27,000.00
Recreation	\$ 63,507.00	\$ 84,993.00	\$ 88,795.00	\$ 75,496.00	\$ 60,749.00	\$ 82,480.00
Other	\$ 487.00	\$ 415.00	\$ 919.00	\$ 301.00	\$ 1,066.00	\$ 797.00
Total Revenue	\$86,769.00	\$108,658.00	\$ 113,714.00	\$101,047.00	\$ 87,065.00	\$ 110,277.00

Primarily program events and contributions from the five member communities and school district will generate the anticipated revenues. The anticipated expenditures include program events, administrative salary, and typical office operation expenses.

HISTORY OF INTERLOCAL AGREEMENTS

While this Plan represents a continuing agreement concerning the topic of recreation facility development in the community, there has been a considerable history of cooperation amongst the authorities represented on the Board. Some projects have included the joint expenditure of funds for capital improvements, shared responsibility for facility maintenance and joint staffing for conducting recreation activities.

With the increased awareness of the role that recreation plays within the community, the Board represents an escalation, rather than a beginning, to the organizational efforts directed towards recreation within the Plan area.

CHAPTER 3 – RESOURCE INVENTORY

TOPOGRAPHY

Topography refers collectively to the physical features of an area. Included in a topographic description are soil descriptions as they pertain to drainage, land forms, slopes and elevations.

The bedrock in Kent County consists of the edges of bow-like formations that fill the Michigan Basin. The oldest rock is Marshall Sandstone, which underlies the entire county and is the uppermost bedrock in the southwestern part. To the northeast, Bayport Limestone, Parma Sandstone, and the Saginaw Formation progressively overlap the bedrock. Overlying these rock formations is a mass of glacial drift that was deposited during the Wisconsin glacial period.

The present surface features are primarily the result of glacial action, which produced an area of hills and valleys. One of the most apparent physical attributes of the Cedar Springs Area is its natural landscape, areas of open cropland, brushy hillsides, lakes, streams and marshy lowlands.

The land tends to slope from east to west with a maximum elevation found in the Cheney Hills area of approximately 1,000' above sea level and a low in Solon Township of 790' where Sherwin Road exits the Township to the west.

SOILS

Soils in the plan area are of two principal types, which are generally divided along a line of demarcation, running east and west.

Towards the southern half of both Townships, the soils are predominately sands and sandy loams. Soils of this nature are typically well drained with low water retention characteristics. This sandy loam composition makes these soils less fertile than those found in the north half of the plan area.

Soils in the north are predominately loams. These soils are typically more fertile than and not as quick to drain as a sandy loam or sandy soil.

WATER RESOURCES

Surface water, in the form of lakes and streams, is abundant in the Cedar Springs Area. Within the Cedar Springs Area, the following lakes and streams are available for use by local residents:

LAKES

Algoma Township	Courtland Township	Nelson Township	Solon Township
Camp Lake	Big Brower Lake	Brefork Lake	Gilbert Lake
Lime Lake	Little Brower Lake	County Lake 880	Upper Lake
Ke-wag-a-wan Lakes	Big Myers Lake	County Lake 907	Middle Lake
Indian Lakes	Little Myers Lake	Helena Lake	Lower Lake
High Lake	Stoner Lake	Lake Henry	Lime Lake
Low Lake		Pine Lake	Black Lake
			No-Ko-Mos Lake
			Giddings Lake
			Long Lake
			Clear Lake
			KeWagaWan Lake
			Olin Lake

RIVERS AND STREAMS

Algoma Township	Courtland Township	Nelson Township	Solon Township
Rogue River	Rum Creek	Duke Creek	Duke Creek
Stegman Creek	Becker Creek	Black Creek	Forest Creek
Cedar Creek	Stegman Creek	Cedar Creek	Cedar Creek
Little Cedar Creek	Beaver Dam Creek	Alder Creek	Spring Creek
Shaw Creek	Shaw Creek	Becker Creek	White Creek
			Frost Creek

City of Cedar Springs
Cedar Creek

EXISTING LAND USE

The four Townships and City that make up the Cedar Springs Area are comprised of approximately 144 square miles. A majority of this land lies within the Townships, the City only consumes slightly over one square mile.

The primary existing land use or predominate character of Algoma, Courtland, Nelson, and Solon Townships is a mixture of rural residential and agriculture. As stated earlier in the Plan, in addition to the lakeside residential, most of the residential uses are located along major roads scattered throughout the area. Several of these residential uses reflect both residential and agricultural. These areas represent properties that are actively cultivated and serve as primary residence of the occupant. Also, some large parcels contain a small portion for residential with the remaining considered open/vacant.

The City of Cedar Springs represents the “urban” character of the Cedar Springs Area. This community contains medium to high density residential situated on small lots. Most of these small residential lots were platted several years ago, yet these areas are part of the “small town” atmosphere desired by its residents. Further, the community has a small business corridor along the primary access route through the community. The business district has businesses primarily intended to serve the local residents and occasional passers-by.

CHAPTER 4 – INVENTORY OF EXISTING PARKS, NATURAL AREAS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

An analysis of the existing facilities and programs currently available to the Cedar Springs Area residents was undertaken to determine the recreational needs of the population. The intent is to provide a clear evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses within the existing recreational opportunities the Cedar Springs Area has to offer its citizens.

Within the city limits there are four parks, two of which would be classified as neighborhood parks and the others are classified as a community park and memorial park. The public schools also have six buildings in operation. Each of the four elementary buildings, along with the Middle School, has a playground and a baseball/softball field that are available on a year-round basis to district residents. There are also two county parks available to the Cedar Springs Area residents.

The various public, quasi-public and private recreation facilities are described in the following section. In addition, an Existing Recreation Facilities Plan is also provided at the end of the section.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

This area is suited for intense recreational activities, such as field games, court games, playground areas, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc. These parks should be easily accessible to the neighborhood populations and geographically centered with safe walking and bike access, may be developed as a school-park facility.

H.B. Riggle Park is located in the southwest section of the city. It is comprised of 3.0 acres of land bordered on the north and western edges by Cedar Creek and Cherry Street on the southern edge. In its present condition it offers a limited amount of play equipment; six bouncing animals; monkey bars; two swing sets; whirl around; slide; a buck-a-bout; a basketball hoop, backboard and concrete slab; (all in poor condition), no restroom facilities; shelter and limited picnicking and seating areas. The park primarily services residents living in the southwest section of the City. H.B. Riggle Park's location is adequate for families residing in that area of the city. Due to its lack of parking and equipment, its impact on the neighborhood is limited at the present time.

North Park is in the northeast section of the City. It is comprised of 5.2 acres of land bordered on its western edge by Main Street. In its present conditions it offers a limited amount of use. All the play equipment within the park was unsafe and has been removed. There is one ballfield in poor condition. Also, on the site, is a small pond, which was once used as an ice rink. There are no restroom or picnic facilities on site. The park primarily serves the northeastern section of the City's population and is inadequate for families residing in that area. Due to its lack of parking and equipment, its impact on the area is limited at this time.

None of the existing neighborhood parks and playgrounds is located together or close to one another and they are not geographically centered within their residential service areas.

Consideration should be given to a possible linkage of several of these parks to better meet the recreational needs of the city's residents.

Township Parks

Chalmers Park is a neighborhood-oriented facility situated in the southwest quarter of Algoma Township. This 5.3 acre park includes two ballfields, new picnic shelter and picnic area, tot play equipment, and developed parking.

Trestle Park consists of 2.35 acres of Township owned land adjacent to the White Pine Trail. This park has a picnic area with tables, two viewing decks, parking, parking for bikes and a historical marker and a vault toilet for a restroom facility.

Rivers Edge Park consists of 10.96 acres of Township owned land. This park is currently undeveloped.

Camp Lake Park consists of 2.5 acres of Township owned land near the west side of Camp Lake, but does not offer access to the water. This park is located north of 14 Mile Road near the west boundary of the Township. The park offers a basketball court, a picnic shelter with table, playground, and sliding hill. Camp Lake Park is readily accessible to nearby Algoma Township residents as well as those from the adjacent Sparta Township.

Algoma Sports Park consists of 20.00 acres of Township owned land adjacent to the north side of Algoma Township Hall. This park has -three- tournament regulation ball fields, restroom, concession, picnic areas, and two t-ball fields, play structure, soccer field, one fully developed parking area, swing set and walking path .64 of a mile. Helsel Memorial Garden was added to the park in 2004 and a senior regulation field was added in the summer of 2009.

Velzy Park consists of approximately 13 acres of Township owned land immediately west of the Solon Township Hall. This park contains a gazebo, picnic tables and a rustic walking trail with plans for improving the walking trail and adding benches in the spring and summer of 2017.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES OR CITY-WIDE PARKS

Parks are designated as city wide primarily due to their location and facilities available. The Cedar Springs Area has three community parks at the present time.

Morley Park is located at the southern end of the City of Cedar Springs. It is approximately 7 acres in size and is semi-developed. The park is bordered by Main Street on the east, Cedar Street to the north, Skinner Field to the West, and South Street at the southernmost edge. The community park has been developed to the extent that it has a gazebo, picnic tables, grills, lighting, drinking fountain, restroom facility (opened during the summer), and multiple sets of swings and play equipment, including adaptive swings and an accessible parking area. Also on the site is the Cedar Springs Historical Society Museum consisting of the one-room Payne School House and an expanded museum which is open with limited hours, and the Boy Scout cabin, maintained by the

Cedar Springs Rotary Club and Boy Scout Troop 222/Venture Crew 2222. Informal parking is available.

Skinner Field is located at the southern edge of the City limits and is a part of Morley Park. It is approximately 3 acres in size and maintained by the “Friends of Skinner Field.” The developed park includes a football field and track; a field house with showering and restroom facilities; announcer’s booth; concession stands; and parking. Because it is part of Morley Park and the use is determined by a lease agreement with the school and it is used by the whole community, it is listed in this category of parks.

Veteran’s Memorial Park is located in the City of Cedar Springs at the corner of Main Street and Oak Street. The park has sitting areas for reflection and is lit for evening use.

Algoma Township Hall is located in Algoma Township building. It has a public meeting hall for township residents and is located next to the Algoma Township sports park.

Courtland Township Hall is located on 14 Mile Road/M57 in Courtland Township. It is easily accessible and has a picnic shelter, a playground, a baseball diamond, a sand volleyball court and is currently using port-a-johns for restrooms until future development is finished.

Boomer Park Soccer Fields are located on the east side of Ritchie Rd. in Nelson Township. There are 8 fields on 25 acres with concession stand and rest room facilities. The AYSO, a national organization, runs this park.

Shaner Ballfield is located on the southeast corner of 17 mile and Shaner Ave. There are 7 fields for t-ball softball and baseball with a concession stand and parking. The local ball club runs this facility.

Solon Township Hall is located on Algoma Avenue. It is 19 acres in size and includes the Hall, gazebo, picnic tables and walking path.

Village of Sand Lake/Nelson Township Hall is located in the Village of Sand Lake. It has a public meeting hall used for community meetings and events.

Nelson Township Library is located in the Village of Sand Lake. It has a public meeting hall used for community meetings and events.

City of Cedar Springs Hall is located on Main Street in the City’s downtown area. It houses the offices of City staff.

COUNTY PARKS

There are two countywide parks, and three public access sites for fishing purposes within the Cedar Springs Area that are in operation and used by the Community. Also, Fisk Knob, which is

located in Solon Township, is county-owned, but currently it is undeveloped. The paragraphs that follow will briefly describe each of these facilities.

Kent County Long Lake Park is located in Solon Township. It is 133 acres in size. On site the facilities include: one ball field; boat launch (primitive); picnic tables and grills; pavilion; three bath houses; primitive restrooms; play equipment and parking areas, all in good condition. Long Lake Park is located on Long Lake and there are two swimming areas, as well as fishing.

Kent County Gordon Park is located in Nelson Township and is approximately 20 acres in size. On site the facilities include a four picnic area with tables and grills; a ball field; open play areas; and play equipment. Restrooms are also on site, as well as parking. The park is located across from the Fred Meijer White Pine Trail.

Kent County Myers Lake Park is located in Courtland Township between 10 and 12 mile roads and east of Myers Lake Road. This park has a shelter, restrooms, playground area, picnic area, swimming area and is accessible for fishing. There is not an access to the water for boats.

Lime Lake Public Access is located on the northern side of Lime Lake for fishing purposes.

Pine Lake Public Access includes a 10' walkway at the end of Oak Lane, a 10' walkway at the end of Patience Drive and one 20' wide boat launch at the end of Love Drive. However, there is no public parking.

Middle Lake Public Access is in Solon Township on the northern edge for fishing purposes.

Fisk Knob is located in Solon Township along its northern boundary. It is the highest spot in Kent County. In the past it was open to the public as a lookout area. Currently it is undeveloped.

SCHOOLS

The Cedar Springs Public School District includes the City of Cedar Springs and portions of seven townships: Algoma, Courtland, Ensley, Nelson, Oakfield, Solon, and Spencer. The current facilities are located on a 222 acres campus setting within the City limits. The school also owns the Cedar Springs Forest Area, an undeveloped section of land on the Northeast corner of 18 Mile and Stout. There are four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school and a community resource center.

Cedar Trails Elementary, opened in November 1996, is located on the East Side of Northland Drive between 16 Mile Road and 17 Mile Road. Housing preschoolers through first graders, the school has several pieces of playground equipment as well as a nature center.

Beach Elementary School is located off of Northland Drive on the southeastern edge of the city. The area is approximately 7.5 acres. The school's classroom houses students in second and third grades. The school has a fully developed playground area.

Cedar View Elementary houses students in fourth and fifth grades. The area is approximately 8.6 acres in size. Outdoor recreation areas at Cedar View Elementary are one combination baseball/softball field; two softball fields; one baseball field; bleachers, dugout, ten basketball hoops in parking lot, one tether ball; exercise area with parallel bar and chip-up bar; three picnic tables; four benches; and a nature and fitness trail. Indoor facilities include six basketball hoops with men and women’s locker facilities.

Red Hawk Elementary houses students in sixth grade. The area is approximately 7 acres in size. Outdoor recreation facilities include; a football practice field; four tennis courts, one small and one large backstop. Indoor facilities include men and women’s locker facilities, stage, and six basketball hoops.

Cedar Springs Middle School houses students in grades 7th and 8th. The area is approximately 38 acres in size. Outdoor recreation facilities include; 4 tennis courts, a climbing wall, basketball hoops, and one game field. Indoor facilities include men and women’s locker facilities, and six basketball hoops.

Cedar Springs High School sits on the east campus and houses students in grades nine through 12. This newer facility was built for 1,200 students on approximately 32 acres. Indoor facilities include classrooms; media center; 600 seat auditorium; gymnasium with seating capacity of 2,000 plus; and technology centers. Outdoor facilities include a sports stadium for football, soccer, band, and track and field events on a synthetic surface. There are restroom facilities and two concession stands in this stadium. There are eight tennis courts

Hilltop Community Resource Center is located on the corner of E. Muskegon and Main Street, on the south side of the city. This facility houses New Beginnings High School (the district’s alternative high school), the Region 1 Transition Services program offered through the Kent Intermediate School District, school district administration offices, Board of Education meeting room, the Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Office, and other offices and meeting space available to the community.

Creative Technologies Academy has grades kindergarten through 12th and is located in the City of Cedar Springs on 7 acres.

Quasi Public Facilities

Public School Library

City Library - Lakeland Cooperative Library System

Nelson Township Library - Kent District Library System

Regional Facilities

Rogue River State Game Area - partially located in Solon Township.

Regional facilities area also available to local residents in neighboring Townships.

Howard Christensen Nature Center is located in the center of the Rogue River State Game Area near the juncture of Red Pine Drive and 20 Mile Road. Offers dawn to dusk access to about 140 acres plus seasonal elementary education programs and programs open to the public.

Municipal Facilities

Algoma Township
Township Office

State Facilities

The Rogue River State Game Area is located in Solon and Tyrone Townships. It is approximately 674 acres. There are no state parks in Kent County.

Fred Meijer White Pine Trail State Park is Michigan’s longest Rail Trail State Park stretching a distance of 93 miles from Comstock Park to Cadillac. This trail runs north and south on the eastside of highway 131. The section that runs through the Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation district is paved to the Village of Sand Lake, in the northern section of the area.

Public access area to Camp Lake.

Public access area to Spring Lake.

Private Facilities

North Kent Golf Course - Eighteen holes, 154 acres-Courtland Township
Rogue River Golf Course - Eighteen holes, 147 acres
Duke Creek Campground - 114 licensed sites-Solon Township
Lakeside Camp Park - 200 licensed sites-Solon Township
Red Flannel Rod and Gun Club - Nelson Township
Cedar Chase Golf Course - Eighteen Holes, Nelson Township

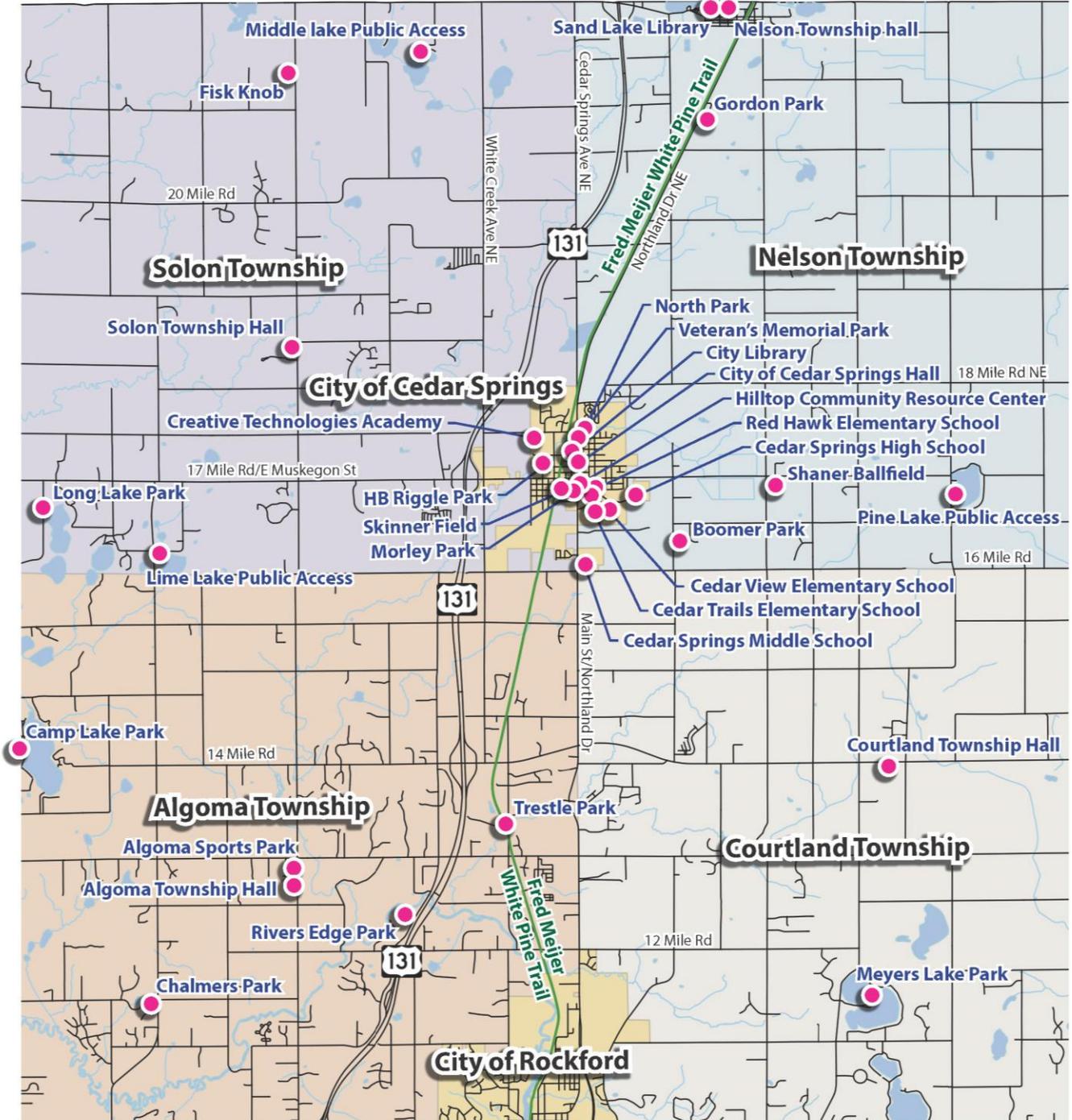
Existing Recreation Programs

At the present time, the Cedar Springs Public School District does not offer community education programs. The Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation department is working with the schools to assist in program offerings.

The Kent Theatre provides venues for discounted sub-run movies; live theatre productions from the Cedar Springs Community Players, Rogue River Players, local schools and other organizations; live musical performances.

Future Parks

[insert narrative about parks planned for the future]



Map of Existing Recreational Facilities



CHAPTER 5 – GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In order for the Cedar Springs area to stay on a logical, programmed course of action over the next few years, the following goals and objectives have been developed. The goals are long-range in nature and intended to be broad in scope and flexible enough to accommodate future change. The objectives are short-range in nature and intended to direct specific program and development decisions to be made in the next five years. Both the goals and objectives are not meant to be cast in stone, but to guide the intent of the actions to be taken. Time and attitude changes can impact on specific options, and a degree of flexibility is essential if the Cedar Springs Area Parks and Recreation Board is to be responsible to its residents.

GOAL ONE

Expand and improve recreational facilities and programs to provide adequate opportunities for year-round active and passive recreation for all members of the community.

Objectives

1. Improve all playgrounds in the Cedar Springs Area to provide safe, interesting and challenging areas and encourage adult supervision.
2. Develop basketball courts or ball fields of some kind in each neighborhood park, so that each park had a gaming/sport based area.
3. Improve and develop the school campus as a “neighborhood park.” This may include paving of trails, improved access, an education station, and identification signage.
4. Upgrade existing conditions of current tennis court facilities at Hilltop Community Center and Red Hawk Elementary School including lighting and possibly changed to a play area for older children.
5. Strive to acquire lands that are closely associated and easily connected to other park facilities and large enough to take best advantage of a wide range of opportunities.
6. Pursue and promote the development of a sidewalk and/or bike trail system connecting parks, sports fields and other points of interest in conjunction with new development and public utility and road improvements.
7. Construct a community center with recreational areas for activities and programming within the Cedar Springs Area.
8. Promote the development and use of the White Pine Trails through the Cedar Springs area and other trails system in the Cedar Springs area, including around the trail with signage and aesthetics, seating, etc.
9. Develop a skateboard/rollerblade area in the Cedar Springs area.

GOAL TWO

Provide a geographically balanced system of park and recreation facilities within the Cedar Springs Area.

Objectives

1. The acquisition of property contiguous to Kent County's Gordon Park either on the north or south side for expansion of sorely needed soccer field and recreation facilities.
2. Acquire land for a future neighborhood park or to expand existing parks.
3. Improve access to existing parks to minimize the shortcomings of their locations.
4. Improve accessible parking, seating and activities for people of all abilities and all facilities.

GOAL THREE

Promote or maintain strong working relationships of coordination with the community, school and City or Township, and other community groups providing recreational opportunities to the area's residents.

Objectives

1. Work with, encourage and support all state, county, community, school system and municipal groups, organizations and agencies to promote and expand community recreation opportunities and programs for all age groups in all parts of the Cedar Springs Area in an efficient, coordinated manner.
2. Develop enrichment activities to enhance the educational experiences available to persons of all ages and allow for the continued learning to occur.
3. Engage in activities associated with community festivals and activities to ensure the development of the area and programming.

GOAL FOUR

Acquire and develop access to water bodies by direct purchase, easement, lease, use agreements or other appropriate means and strive to maintain and improve the quality and character of the valuable resources in every way possible for current and future generations.

Objectives

1. Acquire land along the Cedar Creek for passive recreation, picnic areas, trails, etc., either by direct purchase, lease or donation.
2. Improve waterfront access to lakes in the Cedar Springs Area, providing docks for fishing and improved parking.
3. Develop programs with Kent County that provides access to water in their park areas.

GOAL FIVE

Preserve and protect natural, scenic or environmentally sensitive areas for appropriate public use and enjoyment.

Objectives

1. Develop the Cedar Springs Public School Forest Area (located in Nelson Township) to provide access into and around the site with trails and provide for other passive recreation activities, including a possible cross country ski trail.
2. Provide programming to educate the community about the area/environment and how to preserve and protect it.
3. Pursue and assist in the development of a nature center with Solon Township.

GOAL SIX

Strive to connect recreational facilities to schools, residential areas and to one another with non-motorized trails that provide safe, pleasant and satisfying recreational experiences.

Objectives

1. Provide non-motorized walks along Cedar Creek linking recreational and residential areas.
2. Provide a staging area that includes parking, restrooms, and benches along the White Pine Trail.
3. Provide non-motorized trails that connect Cedar Springs and the White Pine Trail along 17 Mile Road with the soccer fields on Ritchie Avenue and baseball/softball fields on Shaner Avenue.
4. Provide non-motorized trails that connect with the White Pine Trail near the juncture of Northland Drive and 18 Mile Road to the east through the Field Stone I and II developments on to Ritchie Avenue and then south along the Ritchie right-of-way across Cedar Creek to the non-motorized trail outlined in section 3 above.
5. Develop a trail along 21 Mile from Shaner Avenue west along the right-of-way to Gordon Park and the White Pine Trail.

GOAL SEVEN

Provide programming and structures that enrich and educate the community through culture and knowledge.

Objectives

1. Provide cultural and community functions for the residents in the Cedar Springs area.

2. Construct a band shell/ stage/ amphitheater for musical and theater groups, plus community forums and events.
3. Organize speakers and musicians to engage Cedar Springs area residents in new activities.
4. Organize a community band and choral group to provide area residents to utilize the life skills of music.

CHAPTER 6 – ACTION PROGRAM

The Action and Financial Program for the Cedar Springs Area states the proposed course of acquisition and development action that will be taken over the next five -year period. The goals and objectives will serve as the guidelines for the development of the action program. The financial program will focus on the needs identified in the action program and will project potential expenditures for the year action period on a year-by-year basis. The five year period will begin in 2009 and extend to the year 2014.

The Action Program will focus on the elimination of current deficiencies and the expansion of facilities and programs in a manner that not only meets current needs but also diversifies and redistributes the types and quantities of recreational opportunities within the Cedar Springs Area. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies these needs in general terms in the needs and deficiencies section, and describes specific actions to be taken to eliminate those needs. Proposed actions for the next five years involve improvements to existing facilities and the addition of new facilities and programs as follows:

- A. Develop Cedar Springs Public School Forest Area with trails for hiking, cross-country skiing, designated parking, restroom facilities, benches, picnic shelters, tables and grills.

Justification: Currently, there are no natural areas with developed hiking or ski trails in the area. Development of this area provides the much-needed facilities needed to meet recreation standards.

- B. Fisk Knob: Acquire county land by direct purchase, easement, lease, use agreement or other appropriate means and develop this area to include parking, drive, turn-around, observation deck, telescopes, and a history board for the area, picnic shelters, walkways, tables and grills.

Justification: This is the highest elevation point in Kent County, which holds a symbolic meaning to the area residents and would provide additional recreation opportunities.

- C. H.B. Riggle Park: Improve existing play structure facilities and develop new play areas, walkways, basketball court, picnic facilities, and restrooms and designated parking area.

Justification: Due to its close proximity to a high-residential area and body of water, the existing facilities must be upgraded to meet present and future recreation opportunities. The current play structures are not meeting the playground safety requirements.

- D. North Park: Develop as a neighborhood park through development of a picnic shelter, tables and grills, basketball court, softball field, dog park, ice rink in winter, benches, walkways, and restroom and designated parking area. Alternatively, this land could be the location of a Community Center as described in I. below.

Justification: Provides recreational facilities which are needed to support the high residential neighborhood adjacent to it, and provides an additional greenspace to link the Cedar Creek walkway and H.B. Riggle Park.

- E. Morley Park: Improve aesthetics adjacent to Park entrance and improve accessibility to the Park facilities for the physically challenged. To improve aesthetics, install benches and planters near entrance. To improve accessibility to physically challenged, install lighting, identification signage, and circulation walkways with paved surfaces. Modify the bathrooms to be A.D.A. accessible and add additional restroom facilities. Develop a stage area for the growing number of activities in the park. To improve the drainage area in order to prepare the area for paved parking. To improve the drainage and consistency of the subsurface of the volleyball court areas for the annual Mud Volleyball tournament

Justification: This is the only park within the Cedar Springs Area, which holds a historic and symbolic meaning for the residents of this area. Presently on the site is the location of the old schoolhouse, which is in the National Historic Register and a new museum with historical displays. It is imperative to the area's history to further enhance this area and make accessible for all people and have safe areas for users to access all needs and programs.

- F. Cedar Creek Linkage: Develop existing parks along Cedar Creek by linking together with pathways, lighting and benches.

Justification: Provide a linkage between existing public facilities, parks and neighborhoods along the Cedar Creek which are not there presently. This creates a unique opportunity for pedestrian and non-vehicular use in which interaction with the water body can be obtained.

- G. Cedar Springs Public School Ballfields: Improve existing facilities to meet current usage and demand requirements by the 78er baseball/softball organizations by providing electrical scoreboards, bleachers, concession stand, restrooms, sprinkling systems, lighting, parking facilities, and improved access for physically challenged. Develop signage to promote the area and be more visible for community members and visitors.

Justification: There are no designated parking facilities next to the presently upgraded fields. Further, there are no lighted ball diamond facilities north of Rockford.

- H. Cedar Springs Public Schools High School and Middle School Tennis Courts. Upgrade the extensively used tennis courts at both facilities with new surfaces, adequate lighting, and bleachers.

Justification: The tennis courts are in need of new surfaces on both courts and presently there is no lighting at either court.

- I. Recreation Center: Construction of a recreation center would ease a number of deficiencies for the community.

Justification: The center is intended to contain a gymnasium, meeting room, exercise room, men's and women's locker facilities and a pool. Currently, there is not a facility to meet the area's needs.

- J. Rails to Trails Accessibility: Acquire property adjacent to the White Pine Trail and/or North Country Trail to improve accessibility. This creates the opportunity to provide parking, restroom facilities, and "rest" areas for users of the Trails.

Justification: Providing public entry to the rails to trails facilities in the Cedar Springs Area offers a direct means of access to active (running, hiking, biking) recreational facilities to local residents. Economically, the rails to trails facilities attract people regionally. Thus, the local businesses (food establishments, etc.) may witness an increase in customers. Ideal general locations for acquiring property include the vacant property at the intersection of the White Pine Trail/North Country Trail and area within the Sand Lake business district adjacent to the White Pine Trail. Trail access to Gordon Park. Within the city of Cedar Springs: properties adjacent to the intersections of Maple St., White Pine Trail, and Cedar Creek.

- K. Solon Township Hall: Develop active recreational facilities such as ball fields, tennis court, basketball courts, and shuffleboard area on Township owned property on Algoma Avenue. Develop a picnic area with tables, grills, parking and restrooms. Include the development of a rentable space for events in the building of a new township hall on Algoma Avenue.

Justification: Developing these facilities would provide recreational opportunities that do not exist within close proximity to Solon Township residents.

- L. Algoma Township Sports Park: To assist the Algoma Parks and recreation Committee in developing recreational activities and help where possible in developing active recreational facilities such as ballfields, tennis courts, volleyball courts, soccer field, shuffleboard area, and community center on Township owned property adjacent to the Township Hall.

Justification: Developing these facilities would provide recreational opportunities that do not exist within close proximity to Algoma Township residents.

- M. Acquire land for Community Center, Parks and Recreational opportunities in the Cedar Springs area. Construction of a community center to provide space for public and private gatherings.

Justification: There is not a facility in the area that would meet these needs. Acquiring lands for park and recreational facilities development would provide future recreational opportunities for the future growth of the Cedar Springs Area.

- N. Veteran's Park: To develop and incorporate memorials for service members from the various military conflicts. To include aesthetic additions, lighting and seating for community members to enjoy as they pay respect.

Justification: This new park only features the most recent military conflicts and does not include many aesthetic enhancements, especially in landscaping.

- O. Non-motorized trails: Develop non-motorized trails that connect the White Pine Trail, the City of Cedar Springs, Nelson Township and local sport fields.

Justification: These trails would provide non-motorized access to both the sport fields in Nelson Township and Gordon Park used by residents through out the area and the White Pine Trail.

This Action Program looks at some of the potentials that might evolve in the next five years and also looks beyond to future years for some of the activities. Some of the acquisitions listed may not be necessary for five years or more, but they should be accomplished, as opportunities occur to place the land necessary for future generations in the public trust. Physical development actions are intended to occur within the next five years if adequate funds and support services are available.

FINANCIAL PROGRAM

As stated in the Action Program, development will occur as funds and opportunities evolve. Assistance will be solicited from all available sources and will include both physical and financial support. Local business, industry, service organizations and governmental agencies and the school district will be solicited for monetary and material support. Associations such as scouts, church groups, school groups and service organizations can provide physical construction assistance, along with construction contractors retained for various projects. The community will be encouraged to make maximum advantage of job training and related work programs to assist in cleanup, miscellaneous construction and general maintenance projects. The Cedar Springs Area will also seek grant-in-aid funding assistance from all available sources such as trusts, foundations and federal and state funding programs.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

[Insert Capital Improvement Program]

APPENDICES

Parks inventory table

Public notices

 30 day review period

 Public input/public hearing

Meeting minutes

Resolutions