

# *Hopkins Community* **RECREATION PLAN**

DRAFT 2023



# Hopkins Community Recreation Plan

## *Allegan County, Michigan*

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Prepared with the assistance of professional planners at

**williams&works**

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## *CHAPTER 1*

# INTRODUCTION

# CH 1. Introduction

Hopkins Township and Village recognize that parks, open spaces and recreation play an important role in the lives and economy of a community. Parks and open spaces improve property values and draw industries interested in quality of life for their employees. Recreation programs provide a form of relief from busy schedules, physical conditioning for participants, develops a sense of team and community, provides an opportunity to interact with old friends and meet new friends.

It is common to view parks and recreation as a luxury item: something to develop and plan for after all other public needs are met (ie: police, fire, utilities, etc.). Without minimizing the value and importance of these other public needs, this type of thinking is flawed. Recreation creates an opportunity for participants to feel part of something positive and productive, it builds a sense of community. Providing such opportunities to youth inhibits negative behaviors and provides for a more productive outlet.

The Hopkins community is located in the northeast quarter of Allegan County. The Township and Village are in proximity to Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, and Holland, three fast growing metropolitan areas. Much of Allegan County, and consequently Hopkins Township and Village, are being impacted by the growth of "bedroom communities" for these metropolitan areas. The proximity to these expanding communities are creating growth pressures. As a result, the Township Board and Village Council have identified the need to maintain a plan to address the future parks and recreation needs.

The purpose of this Parks and Recreation Plan is to assess the existing recreational attributes of the community, to determine what recreational needs exist, and to outline a program for meeting those needs. The Plan will guide Hopkins Township and Village in current and future park and recreation management, acquisition, and development. The Plan identifies planning issues, community character, improvement goals and objectives, policies, and implementation measures / action plans.

Historically, Hopkins has been a rural community. The vast majority of the land use is agricultural. The recent past, and future trends show an increase in residential growth due to the proximity to Grand Rapids. In addition, the Interstate 131 corridor along the eastern boundary of the Township is experiencing commercial development demands. Hopkins is on the edge of growth pressures, along with the whole of Allegan County. The Plan endeavors to describe these community characteristics and changes, and to distill from the information presented, the resulting unique park and recreation needs.

As growth and development increases within the Township and Village, long range planning becomes important. The development of new residential areas, neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas must be done in concert with the development of parks, recreation and open space if the quality of life enjoyed by residents is to be maintained. Responsible and prudent development increases the values of undeveloped land, draws quality industries, and allows for desirable residential areas. The identification of properties for parks and open space now will ensure the optimum distribution of these tremendous assets as the community grows.

The 2024 - 2028 Hopkins Community Recreation Plan was developed using past planning and plans as a basis with each plan building on itself using new information, policy goals, and changed priorities. The planning methodology and approach is explained in detail in Chapter 5.



## *CHAPTER 2*

# **COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION**

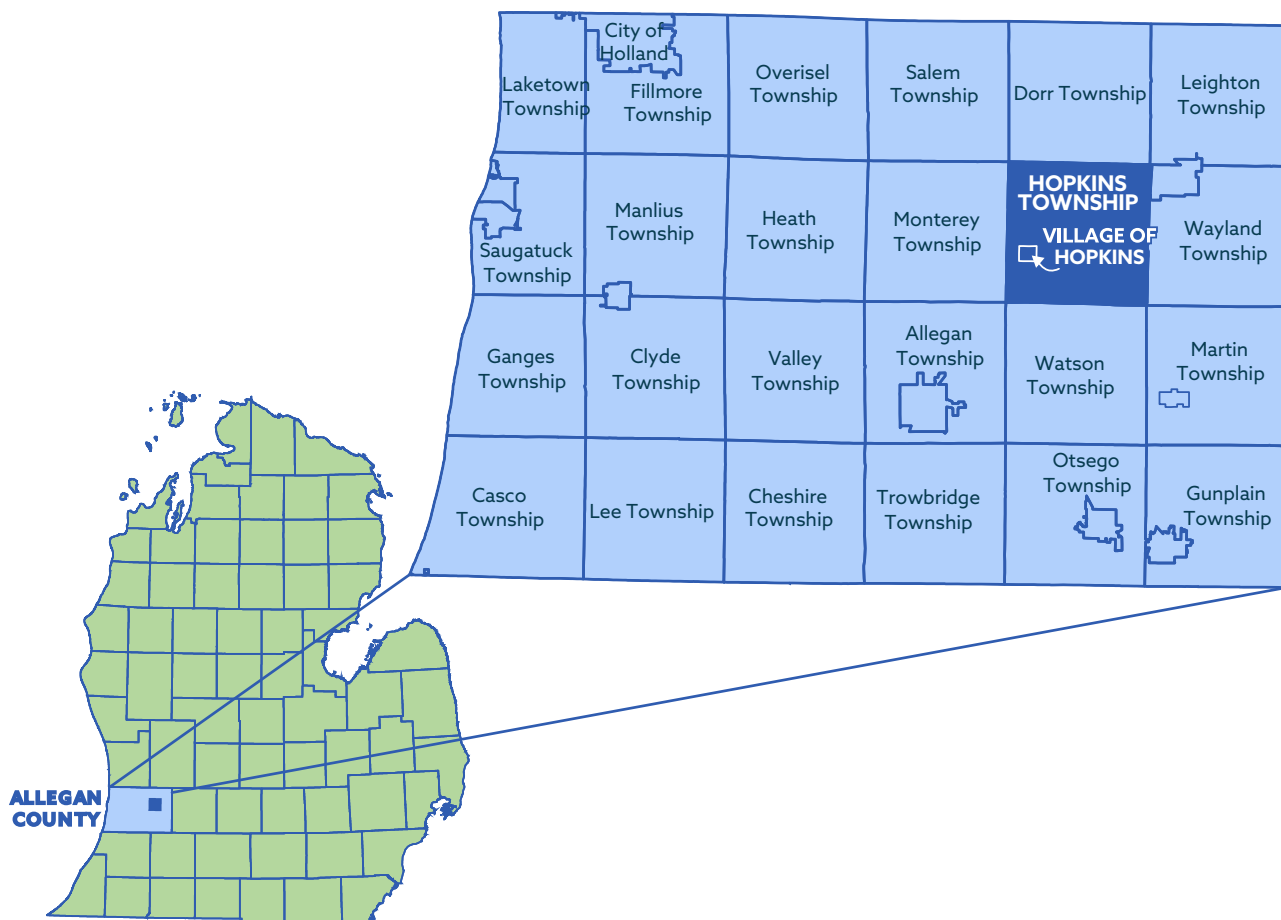
# CH 2. Community Description

## LOCATION AND GENERAL CHARACTER

Hopkins Township and Village are located in northeastern Allegan County and consists of 36 square miles of land area. The Township bounded on the north by Dorr Township, on the east by Wayland Township, on the west by Monterey, and south by Watson Township. All lie within Allegan County. The Village of Hopkins (pop. 600) lies in the west-central portion of the Township. The City of Wayland, a community of approximately 4,000 persons abuts the Township along its extreme northeastern limits and the City of Allegan, which is the county seat, is located 15 vehicle miles to the southwest.

Hopkins Township remains a predominately-agricultural community, although the Village of Hopkins (portions of sections 19, 20, 29, and 30) and pockets of small-scale residential development are located near East Lake, Herlan Lake, and the hamlets of Hilliards (Section 4) and Hopkinsburg (Section 26 & 27).

At the regional level, Hopkins Township is 21 miles due south of downtown Grand Rapids and 20 miles north of Kalamazoo. The shoreline of Lake Michigan is located approximately 22 miles west of the Township. The Township is well served by major freeways in the area including US-131, which runs north and south along the east border of the Township. The Paul Henry Expressway (M-6) intersects with U.S. 131 less than 10 miles north. It allows easy access to I-96, which runs east to west across the state, and Interstate 196, which allows access south along the Lake Michigan shoreline to the Chicago area.



## CLIMATE

Because of the Township and Village's proximity to Lake Michigan, the climate of the community and surrounding region is relatively cool and humid. Extremes in seasonal temperatures tend to be modified making winters comparatively shorter and warmer and the growing season longer than areas further inland. The average minimum daily temperature in January is 16°F, and the average maximum daily temperature in July is 84°F. The Township receives an average of 36 inches of rain each year.

## TOPOGRAPHY AND SURFACE MORPHOLOGY

The land surface within Hopkins Township and Village varies from nearly level to hilly. The greatest variations in terrain exist in the northwest corner and south-central portions of the Township. Elevations vary from a low point of 680 feet along the Rabbit River in Section 6 to highs of just over 900 feet above sea level in the extremely rolling south-central region. Local landforms can be attributed to the action of various ice sheets over the area during past glacial periods. The nearly level areas in the east and east central are composed of fine textured glacial until formed as ground moraines or as a till plane by the receding glacier. In the south-central Hopkins Hills, the area is an end moraine of coarse texture caused by a still stand of an ice sheet. The hills in the northwest are a similar end moraine but the texture of the till the material is finer sand and gravel. The largest glacial feature is a glacial outwash or alluvial plain that runs diagonally from the north, broadening in the southwest. The alluvial plain is now bisected and incised by stream action. It consists of stratified sand and gravel.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic factors are important for understanding community growth and development. This section of the plan provides information about the population, housing, social, and employment characteristics of Hopkins Township and Village. Understanding these conditions provides both a valuable insight into potential future conditions as well as a basis for projecting future needs in parks and recreation.

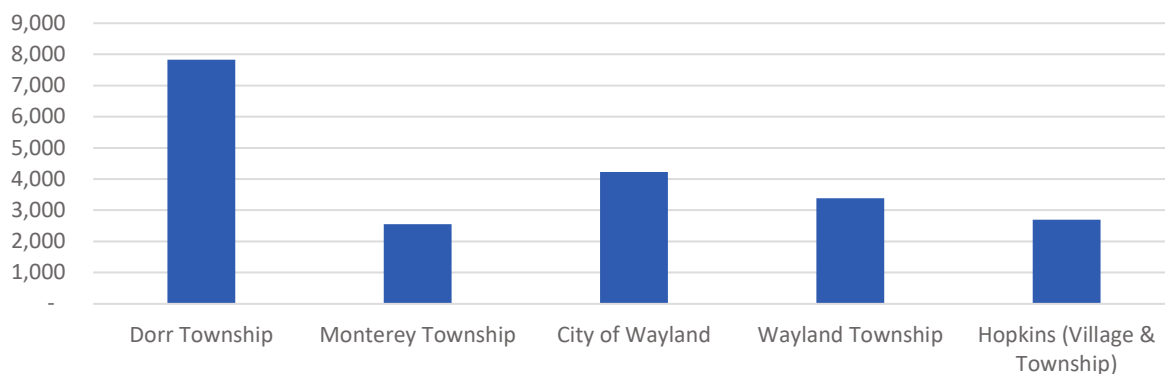
The Village of Hopkins and Hopkins Township are closely integrated as a community since the Village is surrounded by the Township. The Census Bureau tabulates village populations such that they are included in the townships in which they are located. Therefore, the Census population count for a village is included in the township total. For this Master Plan, Village of Hopkins totals can be assumed to be incorporated in Hopkins Township totals, unless specifically stated otherwise.

This chapter uses data from the United States Census Bureau and the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing survey conducted by the Census Bureau that provides vital information yearly about the United States and its people. While the ACS results are offered on a yearly basis, the surveys are sent to a sample population rather than every person in the United States as provided by the Census. Because the ACS is not sent to every individual in the United States, it is not a perfect dataset. However, the ACS provides current information to communities to inform programming, economic development, emergency management, and local issues and conditions.

## POPULATION TRENDS

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, the population in Hopkins Township was reported to be 2,145 people up from 2,020 in 2010, an increase of 6.2%. As shown in Figure 2.2 below, the Township has been experiencing a slow increase in population since 1970 except for a minor decline in 2010.

**Figure 2.1: Regional Population**



The population in the Village of Hopkins was reported to be 615 according to the 2020 U.S. Census. Similar to the Township, the Village population has been stable and slowly increasing over the past few decades. The Village population increased by 0.8% since 2010.

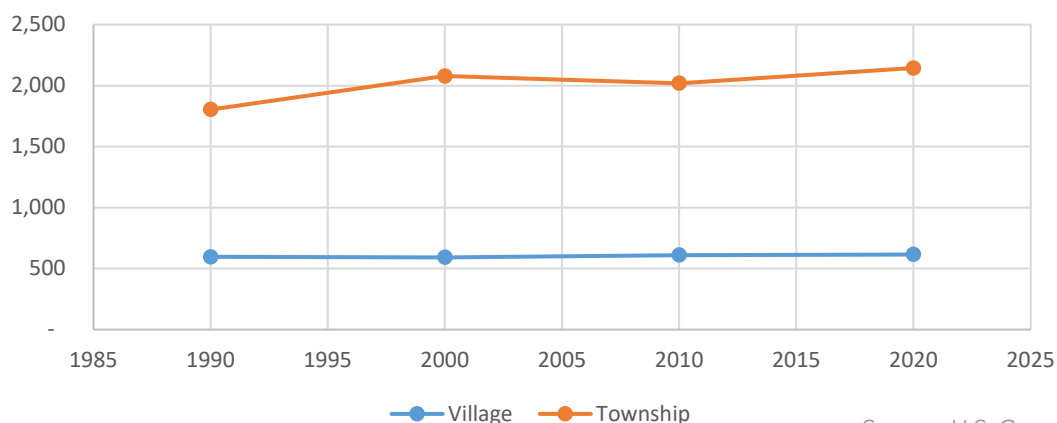
**Table 2.1: Hopkins Township Population Change**

Decade	Township Population	Change	% Change
1990	1,804		
2000	2,079	275	15.2%
2010	2,020	-59	-2.8%
2020	2,145	125	6.2%

**Table 2.2: Village of Hopkins Population Change**

Decade	Village Population	Change	% Change
1990	596		
2000	592	-4	-0.7%
2010	610	18	3.0%
2020	615	5	0.8%

**Figure 2.2: Hopkins Township and Village Population Trend**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## RACIAL COMPOSITION

The racial composition of rural communities tends to reflect a homogenous population and this is also the case with Hopkins Township and the Village of Hopkins. Nearly 91% of the population is white as shown in Table 2.3. Other races represent approximately 9% of the population and people of two or more races make up the majority of the population that is not white. The remaining population is represented by some other race (1.6%), American Indian and Alaskan Native (1.2%), Black or African American (0.5%), and Asian (0.1%).

**Table 2.3: Racial Composition**

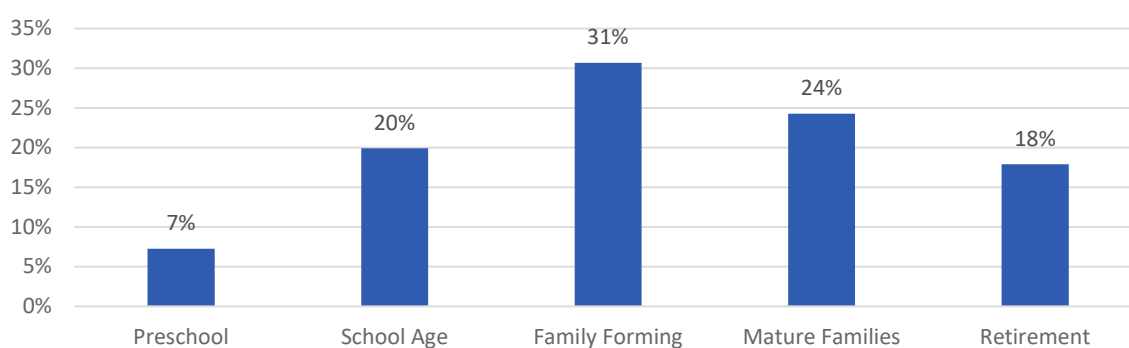
Race	Township	Village	Total Percent
White	1,958	556	91.1%
Two or more races	117	35	5.5%
Some other race	34	9	1.6%
American Indian and Alaska Native	23	11	1.2%
Black or African American	11	4	0.5%
Asian	2	0	0.1%

*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau*

## AGE

The median age of the Township and the Village population was estimated to be 37.6 years, down from 38.8 years in 2010. The Township's population is distributed very evenly in a classic pyramidal shape as illustrated in Figure 2.3. Family forming age groups represent the greatest number of people in the Township followed by mature families and school-age children. The retirement age group makes up about 18% of the Township population. For reference, the Age Groups are as follows: Preschool (under 4), School Age (5 to 19), Family Forming (20-44), Mature Families (45 to 64), and Retirement (65+).

**Figure 2.3: Age Group Comparison, Hopkins Township and Village**



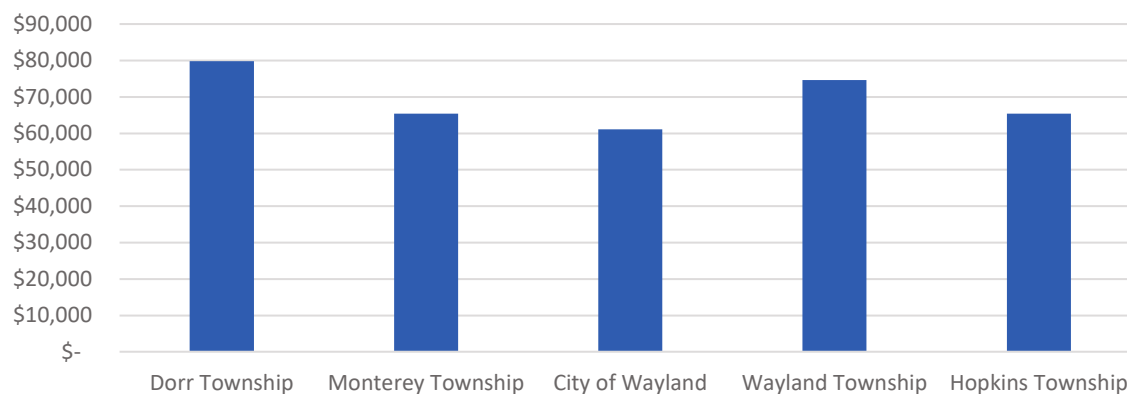
*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Includes Village)*

The Family Forming age group is a particularly important indicator for parks and recreation needs. This group represents a demand for single-family housing, schools, and recreational facilities, and their large numbers foretell increases in the preschool and school age group. Comparatively, the retirement age group saw a 63% increase since 2010 which can be an indicator of increased demand for senior living opportunities as well as continued demands for recreational facilities that serve both younger and older populations.

## INCOME

Median household income is traditionally used to measure the economic strength of an area. It is also a helpful indicator to identify disparities between communities. Income can also have parks and recreation needs implications since people with high incomes often have more disposable income for various types of recreation. Figure 2.4 compares the 2020 median household income in Hopkins Township with some of its neighbors. The median household income in the Township was \$71,226 which is higher compared to the county average median income of \$65,071 and the state average of \$59,234.

**Figure 2.4: Median Income Comparison**



*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Includes Village)*

The median income in Hopkins Township is similar to that of the surrounding communities in Allegan County, as shown in the figure above. The percentage of people living below the poverty level was 7.9% which is 0.8% lower than the 2010 poverty level in Hopkins Township. the poverty level in the Township is considerably lower than that for Allegan County (9.6%) and the state of Michigan (13.1%).

## HOUSING

The Township of Hopkins combined with the Village is essentially a bedroom community. As is the case with most such communities, single-family homes comprise the largest single type of dwelling unit (90.7%). The large majority of these (87.6%) are owner-occupied. A high percentage of owner-occupied units is generally perceived as a healthy characteristic that is reflected by stability in the community and relatively higher housing standards.

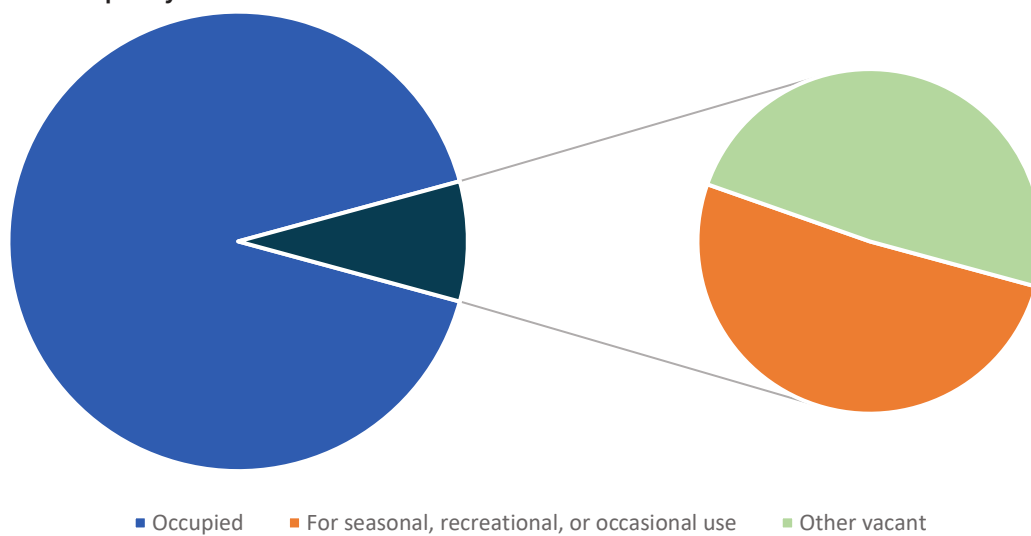
About 352 housing units were estimated to be built in 1939 or earlier in Hopkins (Township and Village) and about 23% of the units were built from 1980 to 1999, only 3.8% of the housing units were built in 2010 or later. Since 2012, an estimated total of 56 new housing units (15 mobile home units) were developed in the Township and two new housing units were built in the Village.

One measure of the health of a community is the ratio of renter-occupied homes to owner-occupied homes. Many growing communities try to maintain a 3:1 or better ratio of owner-occupied to rental housing within the market. Hopkins' ratio of 7 to 1 is above that range but is quite reflective of most rural Townships and Villages of this size.

According to the 2020 ACS 5-year estimates, there were a total of 247 housing units in the Village of Hopkins and 772 housing units in Hopkins Township. Of the total housing units in the Village and the Township, 92% were reported to be occupied and 8% of the units were classified as rental units. The Village has an occupancy rate of 94% and a vacancy rate of 6%.

Owner Occupied housing value in Hopkins is largely in the \$100,000 to \$299,999 category with a median home value of \$177,000. Mobile homes make up about 7% of the total housing stock in the Village and the Township.

**Figure 2.5: Occupancy Characteristics**

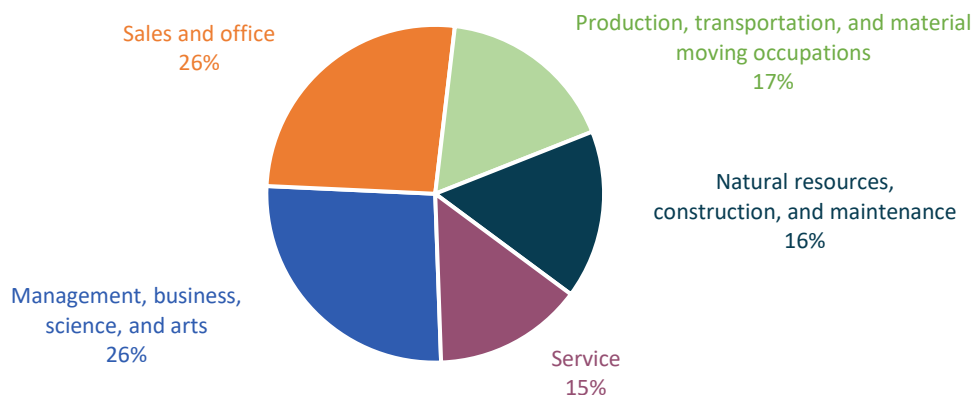


*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Includes Village)*

## EMPLOYMENT

According to the 2020 ACS estimates, there were 1,375 persons aged 16 years and over representing the local labor force. Of these, 1,375 persons, or 61.5% were employed. The 2020 ACS estimated that the average travel time to work for people living in the Township was 28.3 minutes. A majority of the people in the Township and the Village drove to work, about 5% used public transportation and another 5% reported working from home. This supports the conclusion that Hopkins continues to be a bedroom community with the majority of its residents working in other communities.

**Figure 2.6: Employment by Occupation**



*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Includes Village)*

As shown in Figure 2.6, a little more than a quarter of the labor force at Hopkins works in the Management, business, science, and arts occupations followed by Sales and office. Manufacturing and educational services, and health care and social assistance industries employed the largest number of people in Hopkins Township and Village of Hopkins. The information industry had the least number of employees of all industries at Hopkins.

As shown in Table 2.4, all industries experienced growth except, agriculture, manufacturing and finance and insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing. Public administration and other services except public administration experienced the largest increase since 2010 and the information industry saw the largest decline in employment.

Relative to the County and State, employment in the Township tends to fall more heavily in the sales and office and production categories than the other groupings. These occupations can be characterized by lower wages than the professional/administrative careers, but higher than some service categories.

**Table 2.4: Employment by Industry**

Industry	2020	Percent	2010	Change	Percent Change
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	75	5.8%	100	-25	-25%
Construction	134	10.3%	108	26	24%
Manufacturing	202	15.5%	315	-113	-36%
Wholesale trade	113	8.7%	71	42	59%
Retail trade	114	8.8%	144	-30	-21%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	75	5.8%	65	10	15%
Information	4	0.3%	14	-10	-71%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	45	3.5%	28	17	61%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	97	7.5%	57	40	70%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	200	15.4%	148	52	35%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	132	10.1%	90	42	47%
Other services, except public administration	78	6.0%	38	40	105%
Public administration	32	2.5%	14	18	129%

*Source: 2020 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (Includes Village)*

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Population trends refer to the historical direction a community has followed with respect to its population counts while population projections refer to the direction a community is anticipated to follow in future years. The Hopkins community has followed a steadily increasing population trend over the past few decades. Statistical averaging techniques have been employed to project the Township and Village's population growth to the year 2050. The approaches are intended to provide a general sense of growth in the future. The following generalizations are limited in scope and are based on past trends documented by the United States Census Bureau and Township data.

The projections have implications regarding land use, the demand for various public services, and capital improvements. The projections provide a better understanding of the future position of the community in terms of growth and future population. The following describes the projection techniques.

The **Arithmetic Method** is similar to the growth rate method in that population projections are based on growth that occurred in preceding decades. This method, however, bases population growth on the overall average increase/decrease in the number of persons per year, rather than the growth rate. The following projections are based on the average net increase of 3.14 people between 1980 and 2020 in Hopkins Township and 0.21 people in the Village of Hopkins, based on U.S. Census figures.

**Table 2.5: Arithmetic Method Projection, Hopkins Township**

Average Annual Change (1980-2020)	Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
		2030	2040	2050
3.14	2,145	2,176	2,208	2,239

**Table 2.6: Arithmetic Method Projection, Village of Hopkins**

Average Annual Change (1980-2020)	Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
		2030	2040	2050
3.14	2,145	2,176	2,208	2,239

The **Growth Rate Method** projects future population growth or decline based on the rate of growth of the community in the past. Using the growth rate method, the following assumes that the growth in the future will occur at the same average rate that has occurred annually since 1980. The Township experienced an average annual growth of 0.18% over this period and the Village experienced an average annual growth of 0.04%. The projections are estimated in Tables 2.7 & 2.8.

**Table 2.7: Growth Rate Method Projection, Hopkins Township**

Average Annual Change (1980-2020)	Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
		2030	2040	2050
0.18%	2,145	2,185	2,226	2,267

**Table 2.8: Growth Rate Method Projection, Village of Hopkins**

Average Annual Change (1980-2020)	Current Population 2020	Population Projections		
		2030	2040	2050
0.04%	615	616	617	618

The **Building Permit Method** projects the Township's population from the average number of residential building permits issued annually, assuming the community's population will continue to correspond to the number of building permits issued between 2010-2020 and that the average household size will be similar as it was during the 2020 U.S. Census. The average number of persons per household in the Township was reported to be 2.89 people and 3.53 people for the Village, according to the 2020 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates. Between 2010 and 2020 the Township received an average of 5.6 permits for new residential dwellings annually and the Village received an average of 0.2 permits annually. Tables 2.9 and 2.10 projects the population to 2050.

**Table 2.9: Building Permit Method Projection, Hopkins Township**

Avg # of Permits Per Year (2012-2020)	Avg. Persons Per Household	Current Population	Population Projections		
		2020	2030	2040	2050
5.6	2.89	2,145	2,223	2,469	2,631

**Table 2.10: Building Permit Method Projection, Village of Hopkins**

Avg # of Permits Per Year (2012-2020)	Avg. Persons Per Household	Current Population	Population Projections		
		2020	2030	2040	2050
0.2	3.53	615	622	629	636

Averaging the three population projection methods above provide a more comprehensive view of the future population. Tables 2.11 and 2.12 provide a summary of the preceding information, including the average of all three methods. It is estimated that the Township and Village population will continue to grow at a stable rate in the future.

**Table 2.11: Population Projections Average, Hopkins Township**

Projection Method	2020	2030	2040	2050
Arithmetic Method	2,145	2,176	2,208	2,239
Growth Rate	2,145	2,185	2,226	2,267
Building Permit	2,145	2,307	2,469	2,631
Average	2,145	2,223	2,301	2,379

**Table 2.12: Population Projections Average, Village of Hopkins**

Projection Method	2020	2030	2040	2050
Arithmetic Method	2,145	2,176	2,208	2,239
Growth Rate	2,145	2,185	2,226	2,267
Building Permit	2,145	2,307	2,469	2,631
Average	2,145	2,223	2,301	2,379

An aerial photograph of a vast rural landscape. The terrain is divided into numerous rectangular fields of varying shades of green and brown, indicating different crops or stages of agricultural use. A network of roads and highways crisscrosses the landscape, with some roads lined with trees. Several farm buildings, including barns and silos, are visible scattered throughout the fields. The sky is a clear, pale blue, and the overall scene conveys a sense of open, agricultural space.

## *CHAPTER 3*

# **ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**

# CH 3. Administrative Structure

Hopkins Township and Village formally exist independently of one another while informally working together to provide community services such as parks and recreation. The following pages describe the roles of the Township Board, Village Council, and others in providing park and recreation services.

## HOPKINS TOWNSHIP

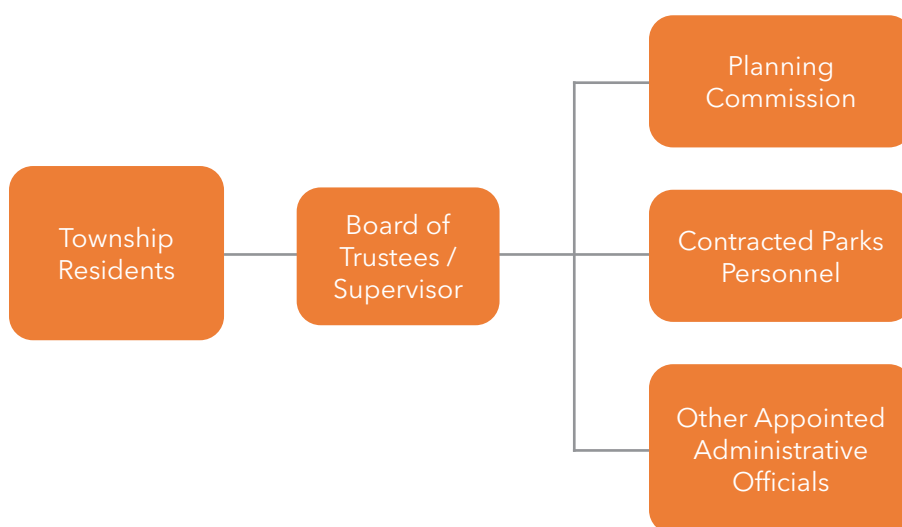
Hopkins Township is governed by a five member elected Township Board consisting of the offices of Township Supervisor, Township Clerk, Township Treasurer, and two Township Trustees.

### Hopkins Township Board

- Mark Evans, Supervisor
- Stacey Timmer, Clerk
- Eric Alberda, Treasurer
- Bob Modreske, Trustee
- Charles Wamhoff, Trustee

The Township Board, consisting of the five elected officials listed above, is responsible for the overall operation of the Township and for policy establishment and development. The Township Supervisor is responsible for implementing the directives of the Board, managing the daily administration of the Township, assuring that functions are performed as necessary, and being available and responsive to the public. The Township Board has the authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants, and purchase land on behalf of the community. Figure 3.1 shows the Township's organizational structure related to parks and recreation.

**Figure 3.1: Township Organizational Chart**



## Township Park Personnel

Hopkins Township is in the beginning stages of establishing a park system. Township is committed to assuring the adequate administrative, management and maintenance of all Township parks. The maintenance of Hillards Park is currently contracted out. All current and future properties purchased by Hopkins Township will not be acquired or developed without a long-term commitment to providing the necessary staff to manage and/or maintain them properly.

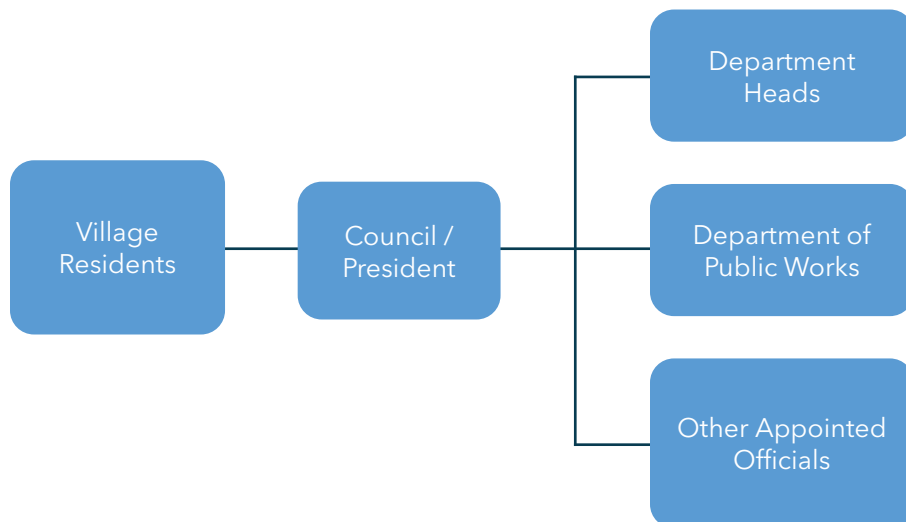
## VILLAGE OF HOPKINS

The Village of Hopkins is governed by a Village President and six Village Council Members. Additional personnel overseen by the Village President and Council include a Village Clerk, a Village Treasurer, an Assessor, a Fire Chief, a Police Chief, a Downtown Development Authority Director, a Public Works Director, a Wastewater Director, and a Library Director. The Village Council has the authority to commit funds for parks and recreation, accept grants, and purchase land on behalf of the community. Figure 3.2 shows the Village's organizational structure related to parks and recreation.

### Village of Hopkins Council

- Jonathon VanderWall, President
- Ben Williams, Pro Tempore
- Mike Alberda, Clerk
- Tabitha Kennedy, Treasurer
- Craig Osborn
- Dawn Buist
- Brad Sebright
- Sam Adams
- Phil Mullett

**Figure 3.2: Village Organizational Chart**



**Village Park Personnel**

The Village of Hopkins Department of Public Works oversees park maintenance and improvements for parks in the Village.

**ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS IN HOPKINS**

The Township and Village of Hopkins rely on volunteers for recreation and event programming in several Township and Village park facilities. Leagues, events, and other organized programming would not be possible without the time and effort of those in the Hopkins’ community. For example, area churches host events in Hopkins Village Park, Hopkins AYSO utilizes North Park for soccer, and little leagues activate park ballfields.

**RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES**

The Township and Village of Hopkins work with Hopkins Public Schools when needed or as necessary to provide for the needs of the community. While no formal agreements between the three organizations exist for sharing or providing parks and recreation, the Township and Village are open to continuing to maintain a relationship with Hopkins Public Schools that benefits the Hopkins community.

**ANNUAL AND PROJECTED BUDGETS**

Tables 3.1 and 3.2 contain programmed budget figures for the current/upcoming fiscal year and the previous four budget cycles for both the Township and the Village of Hopkins. Park budgets for both communities are primarily used for ongoing park upkeep and maintenance. The park systems of both communities are predominantly funded through general fund dollars.

**Table 3.1 - 2019 - 2024 Hopkins Township Parks Budget**

Budget Year	Budget Figure
2019 - 2020	\$7,500
2020 - 2021	\$7,500
2021 - 2022	\$7,500
2022 - 2023	\$8,000
2023 - 2024	\$8,000

**Table 3.2 - 2020 - 2024 Village of Hopkins Parks Budget**

Budget Year	Budget Figure
2020	\$3,150*
2021	\$2,105
2022	\$2,805
2023	\$3,200
2024	\$2,580

\*The Village of Hopkins also recieved a DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting Grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in 2020 in the amount of \$4,100.



## *CHAPTER 4*

# RECREATION INVENTORY

# CH 4. Recreation Inventory

This chapter provides an overview of the park and recreation facilities and programs available in the Township and an accessibility assessment. The inventory was updated using site visits by the consultant planning team and information provided by the Township and Village.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Per the Michigan Department of Natural Resources guidelines, an assessment of the accessibility of each park to people with disabilities is required in this recreation plan. This assessment considers the accessibility of both the facilities themselves (as appropriate) as well as the access routes to them. The accessibility grading system is based on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through a five-point system as defined in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1 - MDNR Grading System for Accessibility**

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

## HOPKINS TOWNSHIP PARK FACILITIES

Hopkins Township offers one existing park and one future park property:

### Hilliards Park:

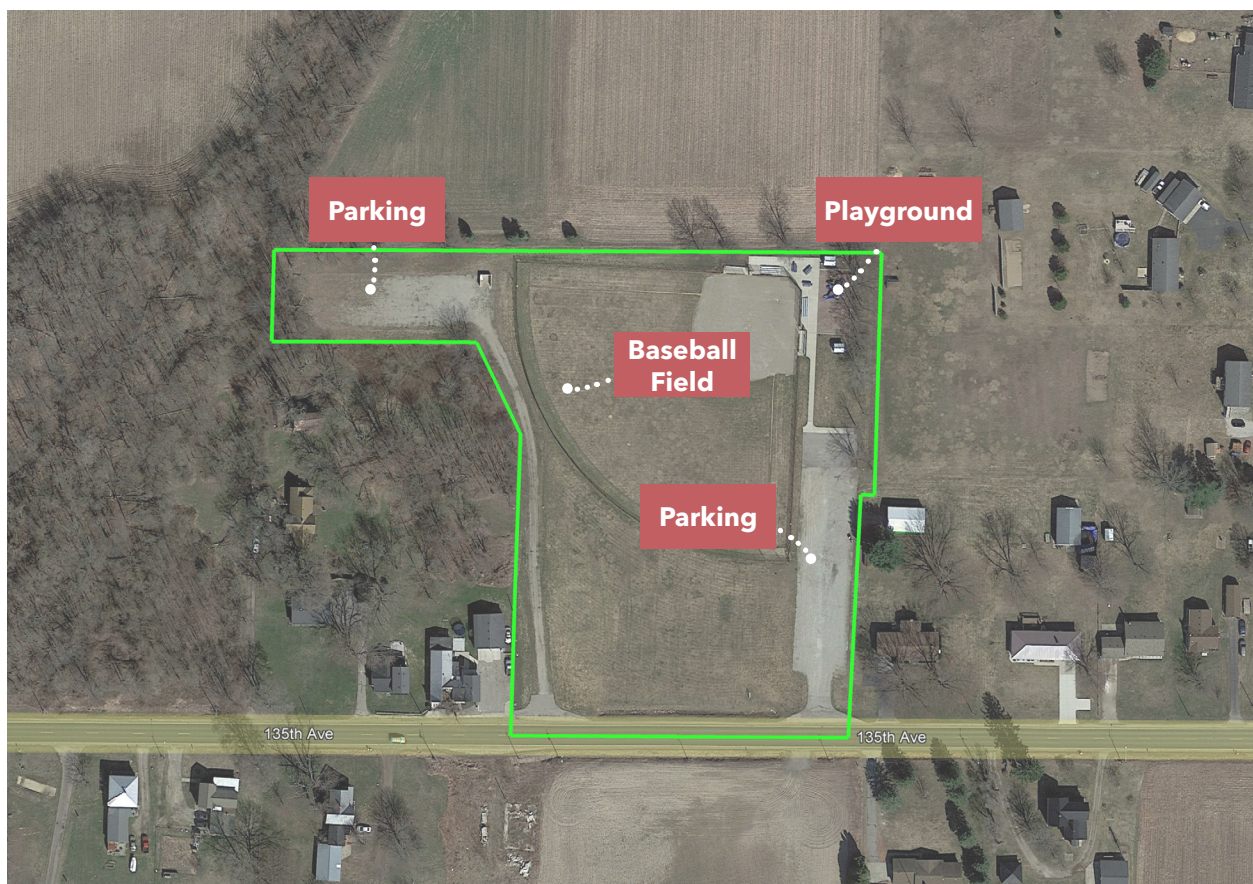
Hilliards Park is located in the northwest quadrant of section four (Map 4-1) and is approximately six acres. The park serves as recreation space for Township residents and adult softball. The park currently offers:

- Softball field with complete fencing and bleacher seating.
- Restroom facilities
- Playground equipment
- Picnic tables
- A utility building with a water well and pump
- Two gravel parking lot areas with access to 135th Avenue

**Strengths:** Quiet setting, easy access, lots of room for future development, and its open setting that makes maintenance easy and limits opportunities for vandalism - the local residents and businesses can “keep and eye” on the facilities.

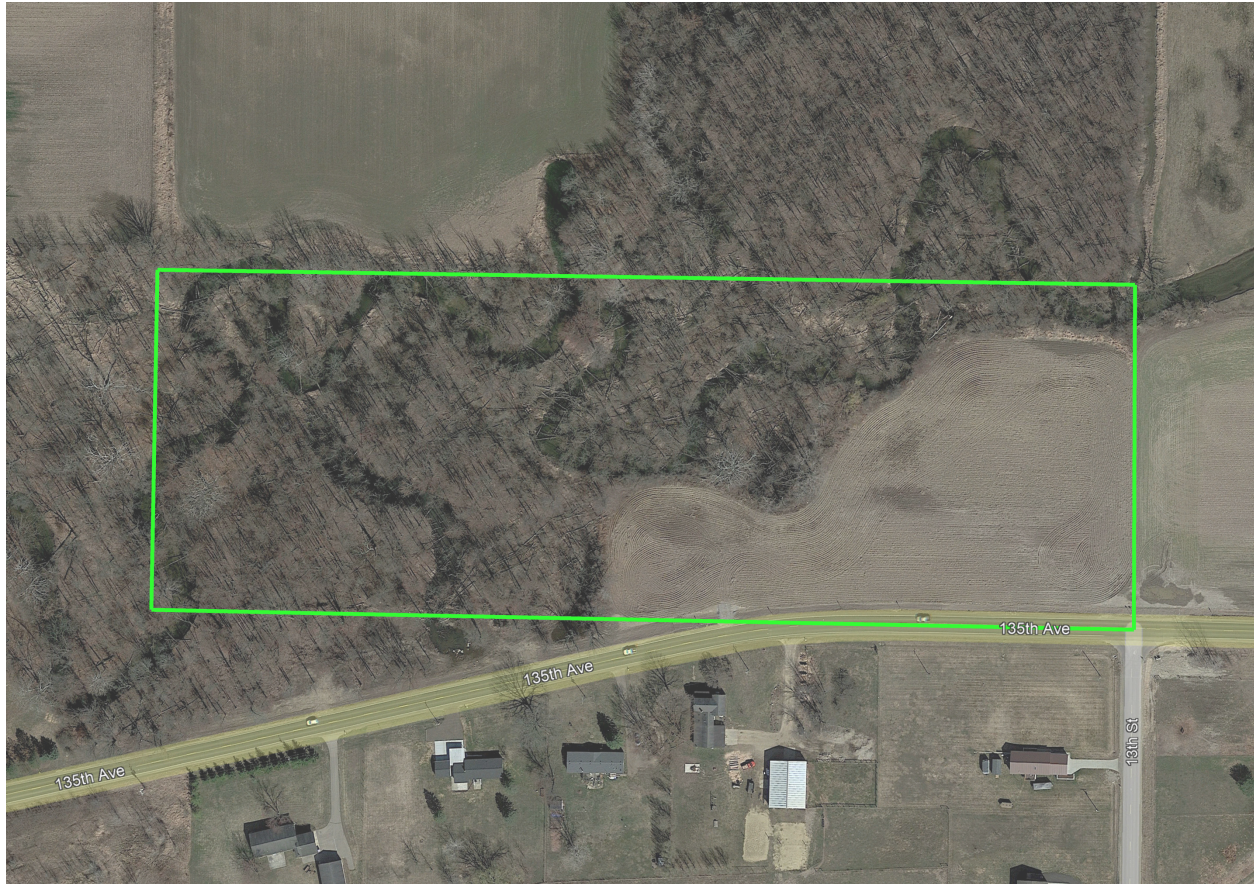
**Weaknesses:** The lack of facilities and the condition of some of the limited facilities available. Limited accessibility.

Accessibility Score: 2



### **Nowak Property (undeveloped):**

This property was donated to the Township by John and Mary Nowak for future park use and is approximately 15 acres. There are currently no established amenities.



## VILLAGE OF HOPKINS PARK FACILITIES

The Village of Hopkins, located within the boundaries of the Township, offers two parks:

### Hopkins Village Park:

Hopkins Village Park is located in the Village's downtown on 128th Avenue (Map 4-1) and is approximately 1.1 acres. The park serves as the "front lawn" of the Village and currently offers:

- A covered pavillion and stage
- Historical Monument
- Paved Parking

**Strengths:** Hopkins Village Park is located in the center of the community within walking distance several neighborhoods and acts as a "town square." The multi-purpose space is visible and used frequently for a variety of events. Ample space for additional amenities.

**Weaknesses:** Limited amenities and accessibility.

Accessibility Score: 2



## North Park:

North Park is located at the northernmost extent of the Village (Map 4-1) on (6.1 acres). The park serves as a neighborhood park and currently offers:

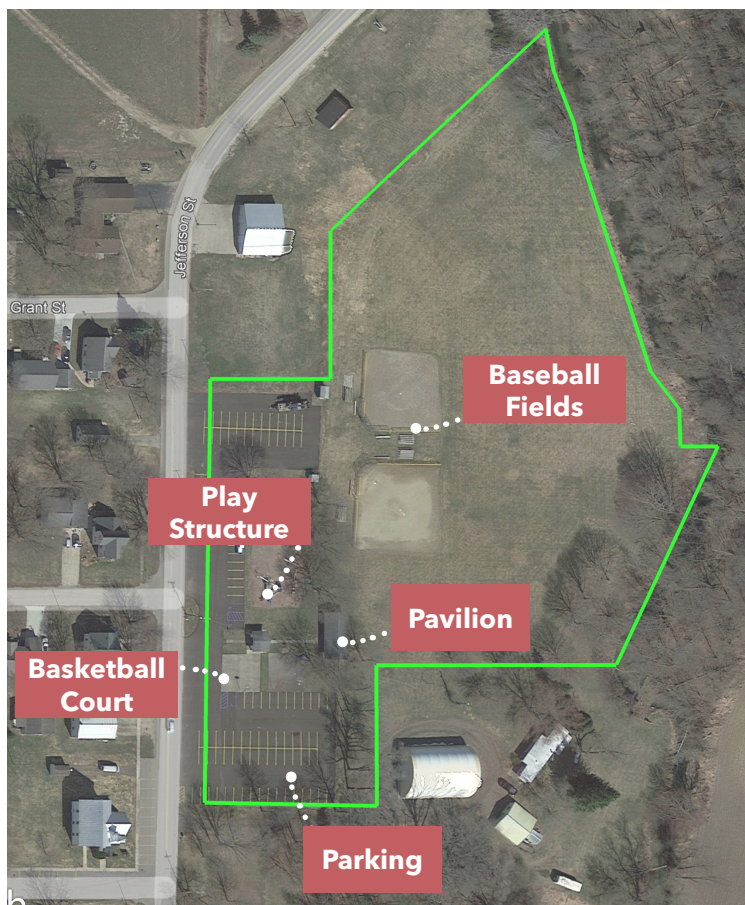
- Basketball courts
- Two ball diamonds
- Playground equipment
- Pavilion
- Newer paved parking lot area with access to Jefferson Street

**Strengths:** North Park is located in a walkable Village neighborhood with hundreds of residents. It serves residents of multiple age groups as well as those living outside of the Village. Ample space for additional amenities.

**Weaknesses:** Limited accessibility. Aging amenities.

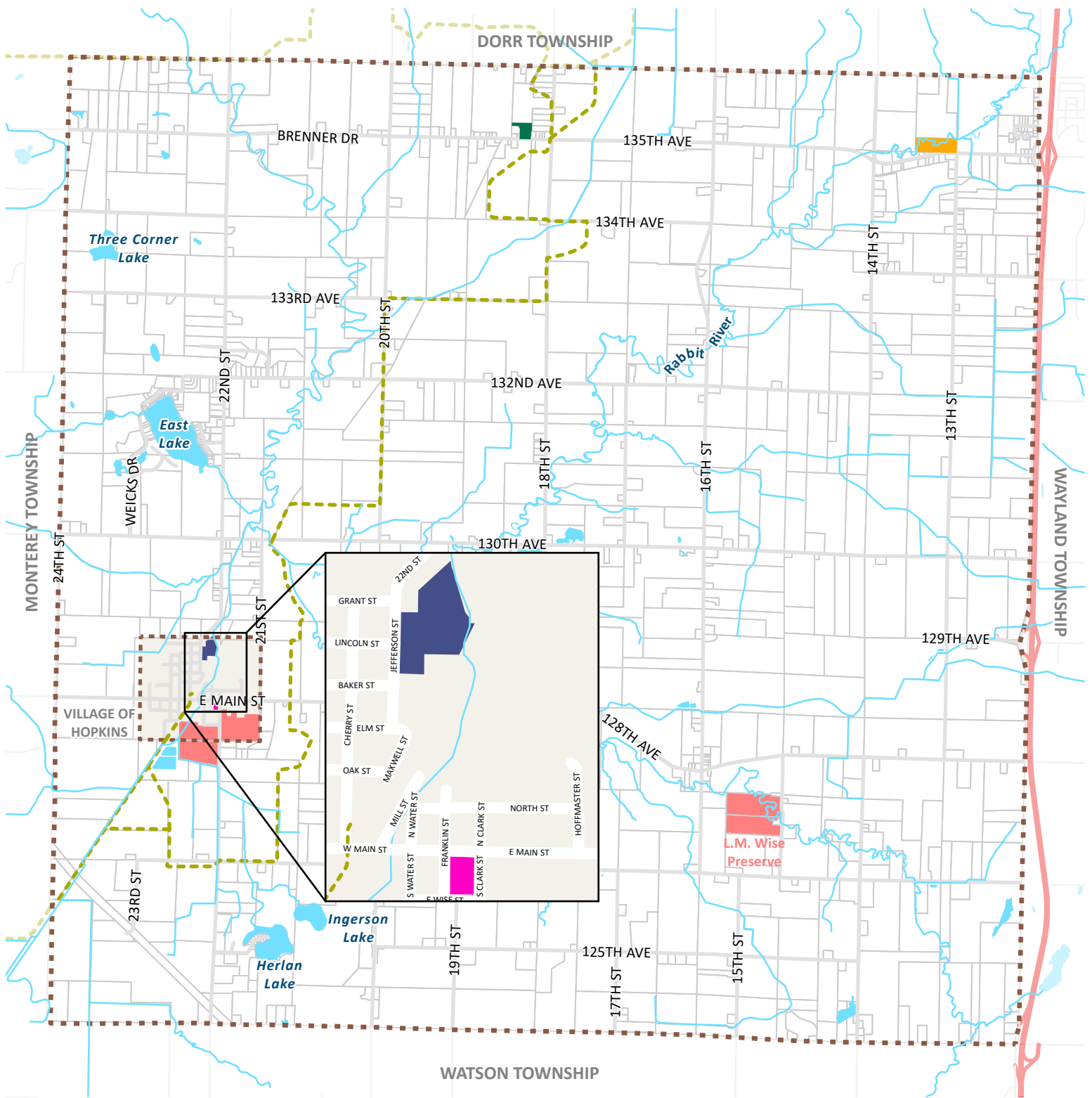
**Previous Grant Funding (26-00828):** The Village of Hopkins received an \$11,085 Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant in 1976 for the construction of two tennis courts, landscaping, and an LWCF sign. The tennis courts have since been removed and were replaced with parking.

Accessibility Score: 2



In addition to the two parks, the Village of Hopkins also offers a variety of activities for the community year-round. These include:

- 4th of July Festival
- Ice skating in the Village Park
- Concerts in the open space in the Village Park
- Co-ed softball in the Community Park.



Data Sources: MI GIS Open Data Portal, Soil Survey Geographic Database



# Map 4-1

## Parks & Recreation

*Hopkins, Allegan County, MI*



### Legend

- Hilliards Park
- Nowak Property
- Hopkins Village Park
- North Park
- Hopkins Public Schools
- Streams
- Lakes
- Snowmobile Trails

## HOPKINS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Hopkins Public Schools maintains several facilities that provide a variety of indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities to the Hopkins Community:

- A basketball camp is held on Saturdays in January at both Hopkins Elementary and Hopkins High Schools.
- Senior Citizens may walk in the elementary school cafeteria and high school gymnasium in the early morning hours.
- The Elementary Schools offer:
  - Two ball diamonds
  - Playground equipment
  - Outdoor exercise equipment
- The Middle School offers:
  - A gymnasium
  - Ball diamonds (shared with the high school)
- The High School offers:
  - A football field
  - A gymnasium
  - Ball diamonds (shared with the middle school)

Hopkins Public School system also owns a 60-acre nature area that allows for hiking, skiing and a classroom building. Below is an inventory of the Hopkins Public School District Schools.

Hopkins High School - This school is located at 333 South Clark Street in the Village of Hopkins. The school serves grades 9-12. The school had a student count of 498 in 2023.

Hopkins Middle School - This school is located at 215 South Clark Street in the Village of Hopkins. The school serves grades 6-8. The school had a student count of 349 in 2023.

Hopkins Elementary School - This school is located at 400 Clark Street in the Village of Hopkins. The school serves grades K-5. The school had a student count of 386 in 2023. This site also serves as the district's administrative center.

Sycamore Elementary School - This school is located at 2163 142nd Avenue in Dorr Township. The school serves grades K-5. The school had a student count of 243 in 2023.

## ALLEGAN COUNTY

Allegan County maintains several parks. Table 4.2 provides a brief description of the County's parks.

**Table 4.2. Allegan County Parks**

Park	Location	Acreage	Picnic Facilities	Water Features	Active Play Areas	Other
Dumont Lake park	Monterey Twp	19	X	X	X	Swimming
Dumont Lake Boat Launch	Allegan	3		X		Boat Launch
Gun Lake Park	Wayland Twp	4	X	X	X	Swimming
Littlejohn Lake Park	Allegan Twp	113	X	X	X	Swimming, Trails
Silver Creek Park/ Campground	Heath Twp	320	X	X	X	Swimming, equestrian, camping
West Side Park	Ganges Twp	11	X	X	X	Swimming
Ely Lake Campground	Clyde Twp	90		X		73 camp sites, boat launch
Pine Point Campground	Valley Twp	80		X		32 camp sites, boat launch
Bysterveld Park	Dorr Twp	70				
New Richmond Bridge	Manlius Twp	20		X		Historic Bridge

## STATE OF MICHIGAN FACILITIES (Located within Region 8)

- **Holland State Park:** This 142-acre park on Lake Michigan located in the City of Holland, in Ottawa County. The park offers 368 campsites, picnic facilities, swimming, a beach house, a boat launch and fishing.
- **Saugatuck State Park:** This 866-acre park on Lake Michigan is located in the City of Saugatuck, in Allegan County. The park offers swimming, hiking, cross-country skiing, and picnic facilities.
- **Ionia Recreation Area:** This 4,085-acre facility located between Saranac and Ionia in Ionia County has 50 campsites and offers a variety of opportunities including picnic facilities, playground equipment, swimming, boating, a beach house, a boat launch, hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, mountain biking and horseback riding.

- **Grand Haven State Park:** This 48-acre park is located on Lake Michigan in Ottawa County's Grand Haven. The park provides a variety of opportunities including 182 campsites, picnic and playground facilities, swimming, a beach house and fishing.
- **Yankee Springs Recreation Area:** This 5,017-acre area is located in eastern Allegan County/ western Barry County. The recreation area provides many opportunities including 325 campsites, an organization camp, equestrian activities, picnic facilities, swimming, concessions, playground facilities, boat launch areas, an interpretive program, hunting, fishing, hiking, snowmobiling, mountain biking and cross-country skiing.
- **White Pine Trail:** This 92 mile Rail-Trail stretches from Comstock Park, in Kent County, to Cadillac, in Wexford County. The trail is currently open along most of its course, and is paved in many areas. Plans are to pave the entire trail.

#### **STATE OF MICHIGAN FACILITIES (Located within 50 miles of Region 8)**

- Traverse City State Park - Grand Traverse County
- Interlochen State Park - Grand Traverse County
- William Mitchell State Park - Wexford County
- Orchard Beach State Park - Manistee County
- North Higgins Lake State Park - Crawford County
- South Higgins Lake State Park - Roscommon County
- Wilson State Park - Clare County
- Newaygo State Park - Newaygo County
- Charles Mears State Park - Oceana County
- Silver Lake State Park - Oceana County
- Duck Lake State Park - Muskegon County
- Muskegon State Park - Muskegon County
- P. J. Hoffmaster State Park - Muskegon County
- Hart-Montague Trail - Muskegon and Oceana Counties
- Sleepy Hollow State Park -- Clinton County
- Fort Custer Recreation Area - Kalamazoo County
- Kal-Haven Trail - Kalamazoo and Van Buren Counties
- Van Buren State Park - Van Buren County
- Warren Dunes State Park - Berrien County
- Grand Mere State Park - Berrien County
- Warren Woods Natural Area - Berrien County

## STATE GAME AREAS (Located within Region 8)

### Allegan County

- Allegan State Game Area

### Kent County

- Rogue River State Game Area
- Cannonsburg State Game Area
- Saranac-Lowell State Game Area

### Ottawa County

- Grand Haven State Game Area

### Ionia County

- Flat River State Game Area
- Saranac-Lowell State Game Area
- Portland State Game Area

### Montcalm County

- Flat River State Game Area
- Tanton State Game Area
- Langston State Game Area
- Edmore State Game Area
- Vestaburg State Game Area

### Osceola County

- Pere Marquette State Forest
- State Wildlife Management Area

### Mecosta County

- Pere Marquette State Forest
- Haymarsh Lake State Game Area

## BOAT LAUNCH SITES

Allegan County has 24 public Boat Launch sites maintained by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The list of sites follows.

Allegan Dam

Base Line Lake

Big Lake

Duck Lake

Eagle Lake

Echo Point

Ely Lake

George Schutmaat Park

Green Lake

Gun Lake County Park

Hacklander (Kzoo River)

Howard Shultz Park

Lake Sixteen

Little Tom Lake

M-89 Bridge

Main Ottawa Landing

Miner Lake

New Richmond (Kzoo River)

Pike Lake

Pine Creek Impoundment

Selkirk

Sheffer Lake

Swan Creek Pond

Swan Lake

## CAMPGROUNDS

In addition to State and County Campgrounds there are several privately operated campgrounds in Allegan County. A summary of these facilities follows.

- Hungry Horse Campground, Dorr, 83 campsites
- Sandy Pines Wilderness Trails, Hopkins, 2,400 campsites
- East Lake Camping, Hopkins, 109 campsites
- Dumont Lake Campground, Allegan, 82 campsites
- Schnable Lake Family Campground, Martin, 133 campsites
- Tri-Ponds Family Camp Resort, Allegan
- Miller Lake Campground, Watson

## GOLF COURSES

Allegan County has 20 golf courses. A list of the courses follows.

- Orchard Hills, Shelbyville
- Lake Doster, Plainwell
- Lake Monterey, Dorr
- Winding Creek, Holland
- Clearbrook, Saugatuck
- Hawks Head Links, South Haven
- Wilderness Hills, Plainwell
- Beeches, South Haven
- Cheshire Hills, Allegan
- The Ravines, Saugatuck
- Lynx Golf Course, Otsego
- Yankee Springs, Wayland
- Diamond Springs, Hamilton
- Shamrock Hills, Gobles

## SKI AREAS IN REGION 8

- Bittersweet, Allegan County
- Cannonsburg, Kent County

A photograph of a hand raised in a meeting, with a blue overlay. The hand is wearing a watch and a ring. The background is blurred, showing other people in a room.

## *CHAPTER 5*

# **PLANNING PROCESS & PUBLIC INPUT**

# CH 5. Planning Process & Public Input

## PLANNING METHODS

The Hopkins Community Parks and Recreation Plan was initiated to provide direction for future Township and Village parks and recreation projects and administration as well as ongoing operation and maintenance. The timetable for review and approval began with a kickoff meeting with the Hopkins Township Planning Commission and members of the Village of Hopkins Council (the project steering committee), and ended with adoption of the Plan in January 2024. Community input was gathered by working with members of the Committee and facilitating two public open houses.

Numerous tools can be used to determine the recreational needs of a community. One way to assess a community's needs is to compare metrics or data. Another way is to use a systems planning approach to identify local issues, priorities, and levels of service that can be determined via community input to inform the planning process. Both of these methods are employed in the Hopkins Community Parks and Recreation Plan.



## COMPARISON TO PARK METRICS

One method of evaluating the need is to compare the community's facilities with those of other communities using some standardized measure. The recreation classification system and facility development standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association have data on different types of parks, their desired site characteristics, size, and service area. The following tables provide a comparison with recreation development standards and classifications systems to help inform the planning process:

Table 5.1 - Mini-Park	
Use	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific groups such as tots or senior citizens.
Service Area	Less than ¼ mile radius
Desirable Size	1 acre or less
Acres per 1,000 Population	0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 population
Desirable Site Characteristics	Within neighborhoods and near apartment complexes, townhouse development, or housing for the elderly.
Mini-Park in Community	None

Table 5.2 - Neighborhood Park / Playground	
Use	Area for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.
Service Area	¼ to ½-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood)
Desirable Size	15+ acres
Acres per 1,000 Population	1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population
Desirable Site Characteristics	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood populations geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school park facility.
Neighborhood Park in Community	Hilliards Park, North Park, Village Park

Table 5.3 - Community Park	
Use	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, and picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.
Service Area	Several neighborhoods. 1-to-2-mile radius.
Desirable Size	25+ acres
Acres per 1,000 Population	5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population
Desirable Site Characteristics	May include natural features such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served
Community Parks near Community	Dumont Lake County Park

Table 5.4 - Regional Park Preserve	
Use	Area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitat, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail uses. May include active play areas. Generally, 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management with less than 20% used for recreation development.
Service Area	Several communities. 1 hour driving time.
Desirable Size	1,000+ acres; sufficient area to encompass the resource to be preserved and managed.
Acres per 1,000 Population	Variable
Desirable Site Characteristics	Diverse or unique natural resources such as lakes, streams, marshes, flora, fauna, and topography.
Regional Park Preserves near Community	Yankee Springs State Recreation Area, Barry State Game Area

## SYSTEMS PLANNING

When using the systems planning approach to parks and recreation development, the results of the public engagement can be used to guide the development of recommendations. Two open houses were held alongside the Hopkins Community Master Plan update. One at the beginning of the process, and the second once draft policies and action plans were drafted.

### Open House #1

The first open house was held on Saturday, December 10, 2022 from 6pm to 8pm at the Hopkins Fire Station. The event took place alongside the Hopkins Christmas Tree Lighting to both educate the community about the process and engage with members of the public who may not typically take part in planning efforts. Approximately 150 people were estimated to have attended the event, which was advertised using flyers, social media, and local government websites. Several activities were provided, prompting public participation for topics related to parks and recreation. The activities included a welcome board, penny jar voting activity, facilities improvements activity, short survey, and comment cards. Based on the results of these efforts, the following highlighted issues and results were used to guide the development of the goals, objectives, and action plan.

- Feedback from the penny jar voting activity resulted in the following top three priorities:
  1. Improve North Park site amenities and facilities
  2. Continue to provide winter recreational facilities for residents
  3. Improve Hopkins Village Park site amenities and facilities
- When asked about specific new facilities and amenities that would be beneficial to the community, attendees listed the following most often:
  1. Walking trails
  2. Skate park
  3. Dog park
  4. pickeball courts
  5. Bike paths
- Attendees were generally interested in the potential of the Nowak property and future park amenities.
- Attendies were pleased that the Township and Village were working together to improve parks and recreation in the community.

## Open House #2

The second open house was held on Saturday, September 9, 2023 from 8am to 10am at Hopkins Village Park during the Hopkins' "Cars and Coffee" event and a small farmers market. Approximately 30 to 40 people were estimated to have interacted with, reviewed, or engaged with the planning materials, local leadership, or professional planning staff. Participants were given the opportunity to review draft materials and provide comments. The materials included a welcome board, a "What Changed?" board containing the existing and proposed action plan for the parks and recreation plan, printed copies of the goals and objectives, and general comment cards. Generally, participants were supportive of the planning materials generated by the work of the Township and Village. There were not any substantial negative comments regarding the goals and objectives and action plan items. Again, most participants were happy to see that the Township and Village were working together on a planning effort.

## SUMMARY

A more detailed engagement summary of both open houses is located in the appendix. After each open house, the Hopkins Township Planning Commission and Village of Hopkins representatives reviewed the results to incorporate the findings into their review of plan policies and actions. A goals and objectives workshop and action plan workshop were held to review both.

## PARKS AND RECREATION ANALYSIS

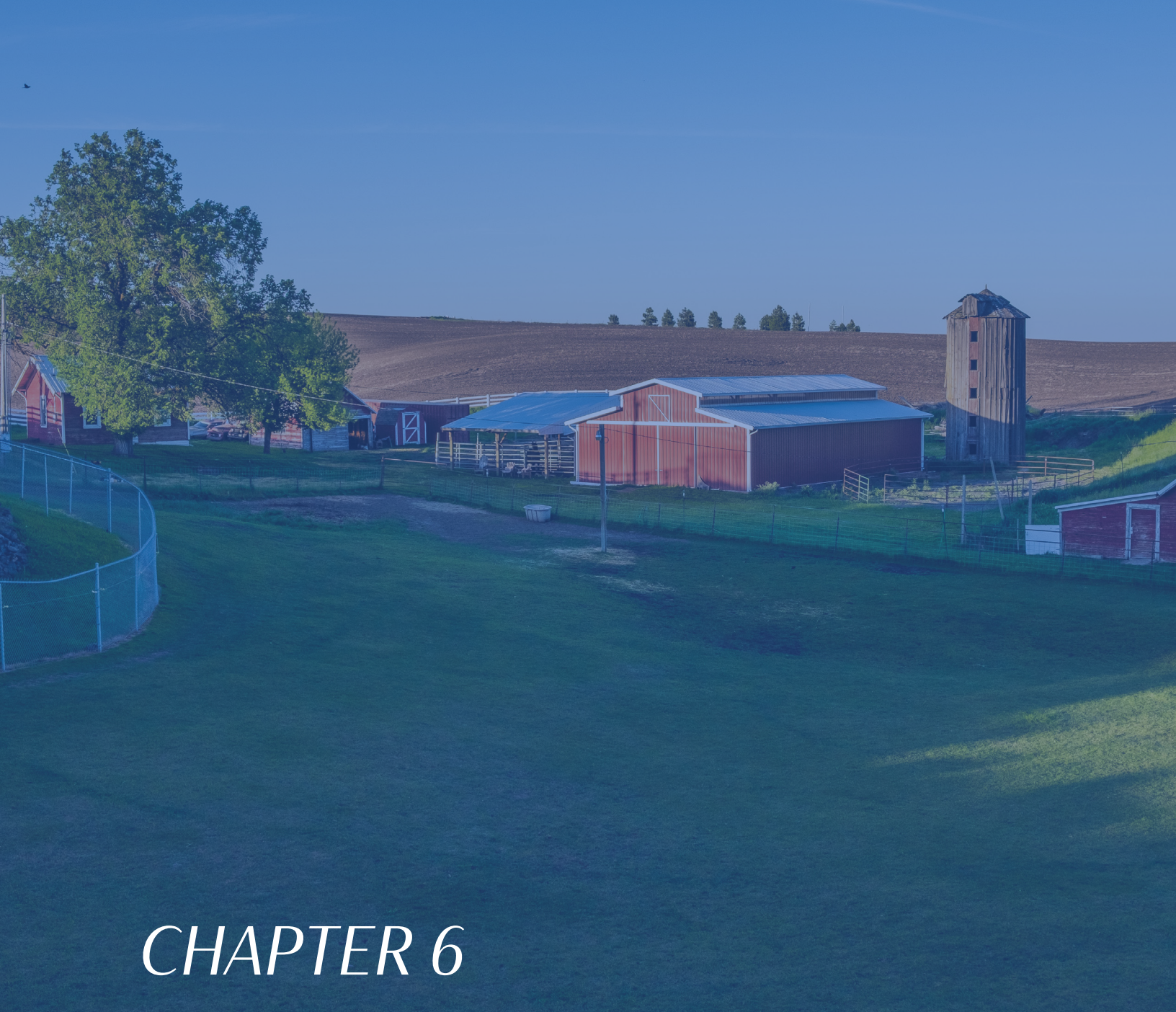
Considering the results of the standardized park metrics analysis, along with the systems planning approach that included the results of the community engagement tasks provides a great resource in developing a list of needs for the Hopkins community. With the focus being on supporting the maintenance and long-term, sustainable investment in the facilities, this will provide an important way to continue to meet the recreational needs of the community.

## PUBLIC MEETING AND PLAN ADOPTION

Following the preparation of the Plan, citizens were provided an adequate opportunity (at least 30 days) to review and comment on the Plan before the adoption by the Hopkins Township Board and Village of Hopkins Council.

A draft of the Plan was submitted to the Hopkins Township Planning Commission and Village of Hopkins officials for their review and comments. A notice was published in the local newspaper INSERT NEWSPAPER on INSERT DATE, notifying the public of the availability of the Plan to provide them the opportunity to review and comment. The plan was available for public review at the Township/Village Hall and the Township/Village websites. Suggestions received to improve the Plan were incorporated into the document, which was then revised and finalized.

The Hopkins Township Board adopted the Plan on INSERT DATE and the Village of Hopkins Council adopted the Plan on INSERT DATE.



## *CHAPTER 6*

# **GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

## CH 6. Goals & Objectives

The purpose of this Chapter is to document the vision and policy direction of Hopkins Township and Village as it pertains to parks and recreation in the community. Goals represent a broad general statement of a final purpose or ambition; a position or situation a community seeks to achieve. An objective is a specific action position that is specifically needed to accomplish a goal. Objectives are most often directive in tone and often referred to as “policy statements.” The goals and objectives were based on the information received from the public during an Open House evaluating the Hopkins Community Recreation Plan and the Hopkins Community Master Plan, the results of which are included in the appendix. The statements below are listed by topic area and cover both parks and recreation facilities in Hopkins Township and the Village of Hopkins.

### VISION:

*“To provide the Hopkins Community with the opportunity to associate with family, friends, and neighbors through the use of outdoor recreation facilities.”*



## PARKS & RECREATION MAINTENANCE

- **Goal 1:** Hopkins Township and Village will proactively maintain existing park facilities and amenities so that they continue to be safe, accessible, and usable to all residents and physical abilities.
  - Objective 1:** Ensure the safety of park facilities by annually evaluating amenities and park grounds for wear and tear.
  - Objective 2:** Repair or replace damaged, worn, or obsolete facilities and amenities as they are identified.
  - Objective 3:** Regularly clean each park and provide designated location(s) for refuse.

## PARKS & RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS

- **Goal 1:** Hopkins Township and Village will improve existing and future facilities with modern, accessible, and relevant equipment and amenities for all seasons.
  - Objective 1:** Examine future park needs and desires as the community grows and changes and construct new amenities when needed or desired.
  - Objective 2:** Design new facilities and amenities in compliance with ADA requirements and strive to achieve universal design.
  - Objective 3:** Work with property owners living adjacent to community park facilities regarding modifications to access, security, and hours.
  - Objective 4:** Explore funding opportunities for park development, including the DNR Trust Fund Recreation Grants Program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the Recreation Passport Grant Program.
  - Objective 5:** Continue to provide winter recreation facilities and amenities for residents and visitors.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE LAND ACQUISITION

- **Goal 1:** Hopkins Township and Village will strategically acquire land for park uses, open space, and expansions when opportunities become available that align with the vision, goals, and objectives of this Plan and the Hopkins Community Master Plan
  - Objective 1:** Identify and maintain a list of potential opportunities for existing park expansions and open space preservation.
  - Objective 2:** Budget and plan for land acquisitions if and when potential opportunities are on the horizon.
  - Objective 3:** Investigate and acquire land for recreational and open space purposes when opportunities arise.

## PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAMMING

- **Goal 1:** Hopkins Township and Village will encourage the utilization of community park facilities for programming, community building, and placemaking.

**Objective 1:** Explore opportunities for events at all Hopkins parks with a particular focus on events held at Hopkins Village Park.

**Objective 2:** Partner with organizations interested in utilizing community park facilities for programming, leagues, and other activities.

## MOTORIZED & NON-MOTORIZED TRAILS

- **Goal 1:** Hopkins Township and Village will enable safe, accessible, and convenient motorized and non-motorized trails and trail connections for use by all ages and abilities.

**Objective 1:** Establish non-motorized walking loop trails in existing and future park facilities where space allows.

**Objective 2:** Ensure that all non-motorized facilities are designed and built to be ADA accessible and strive for universal design.

**Objective 3:** Coordinate with the Allegan County Road Commission to ensure that roads are designed to accommodate non-motorized users.

**Objective 4:** Provide non-motorized trail connections between the various community parks, open space, and natural features.

**Objective 5:** Continue to work with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, property owners, and trail groups in the maintenance of snowmobile trails, trailheads, and related amenities.



## *CHAPTER 7*

# **ACTION PROGRAM**

## CH 7. Action Plan

All of the other sections of this plan lead to performing actions to address the recreation-related needs of Hopkins community residents and visitors. The following actions identify the year and location for improvements. The Action Program is meant to be a guide. Some actions may be performed prior to, or after, the scheduled time due to funding opportunities, or difficulties in obtaining funds, land, or other resources. Due to recent volatility in pricing, estimates of probable cost have not been provided and will be determined at the time of implementation. The responsibility of implementing this Action Plan falls on the Hopkins Township Board, Hopkins Village Council, and staff. However, partners and local stakeholders will also play an important role in ensuring that the Action Program is implemented.

The order of the actions does not necessarily indicate the priority of issues, but reflects a plan to accomplish actions over a five-year period. When seeking grants, such as a grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, it is likely that several actions would be grouped together to create a complete project and to reflect the financial realities of maintaining a park system.

The identification of the Hopkins community's mission in regards to parks and recreation, along with the development of goals and objectives, led directly to a list of plans for establishing and developing parks and recreation within the Hopkins community.

While not specifically identified in the following matrix, this Action Program supports a variety of programming in all park facilities. Park programming may be an extension of current programming activities or may include new events that have not yet been created. As such, programming year-to-year may change depending on interest and demand for facilities.



### PHASE I: 2024 - 2026

- Provide dog poop bag and trash stations at all Township and Village parks
- Build bathrooms, pavilion, and improve parking at Hilliards Park
- Acquire property north of North Park for expansion
- Improvements to North Park:
  - Additional parking
  - Improved lighting
  - Improved drainage
  - Upgrade basketball court to multi-sport
  - Upgrade playground equipment
  - Install walking loop

### PHASE II: 2026 - 2028

- Explore adding additional ballfields
- Improve bleachers at ballfields
- Improvements to North Park:
  - Bathroom updates or replacement at North Park (including ADA)
  - Add ADA picnic tables to North Park

### PHASE III: 2028 - 2029

- Acquire Wamhoff property for future park
- Establish non-motorized trail connections between parks
- Improve "Nowak property" into park with trails, boardwalk, and bidge providing access to the Rabbit River
- Explore a location for additional/new soccer fields
- Improve fencing and security at Hilliards Park to prevent trespassing onto private property

## FUNDING SOURCES

Hopkins Township and Village have received grants for funding various park improvement projects as previously discussed in this report. The Township and Village plan to apply for similar grants in the future to fund additional projects as listed in this Action Plan. The following is a list of grants that may be utilized to fund the programmed improvements. This list is not intended to be exhaustive or all-inclusive.

### **ALLEGAN COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT**

- Environment and Conservation
- Economic Development and Placemaking

### **MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

- Natural Resources Trust Fund
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Recreation Passport Grants
- Snowmobile Trail Improvement Program

### **MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)

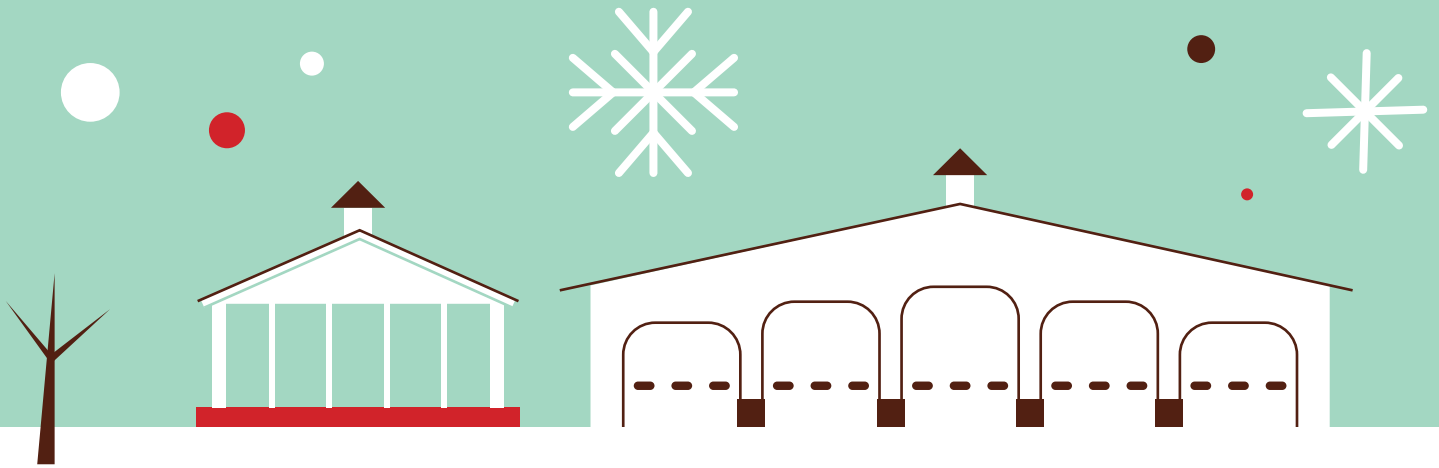
*APPENDIX A:*

# **OPEN HOUSE RESULTS**



Township and Village of Hopkins  
*Master Plan & Parks and Recreation Plan Update*

# OPEN HOUSE



Hopkins Township and the Village of Hopkins need your help making the community a better place to live, work, and play! Please join us in our effort to update the Township and Village's Master Plan & Parks and Recreation Plan by stopping in and providing your input! You will have the opportunity to share your vision for the community regarding planning topics such as development, land use, streets, farmland preservation, and parks.

## WHEN:

Saturday,  
December 10<sup>th</sup>  
6 to 8 PM\*

## WHERE:

Hopkins Area Fire Station  
200 E. Main Street  
Hopkins, MI 49328

\*Drop in anytime, this event is during the Hopkins Community Tree Lighting in Hopkins Village Park!

For more information, contact:

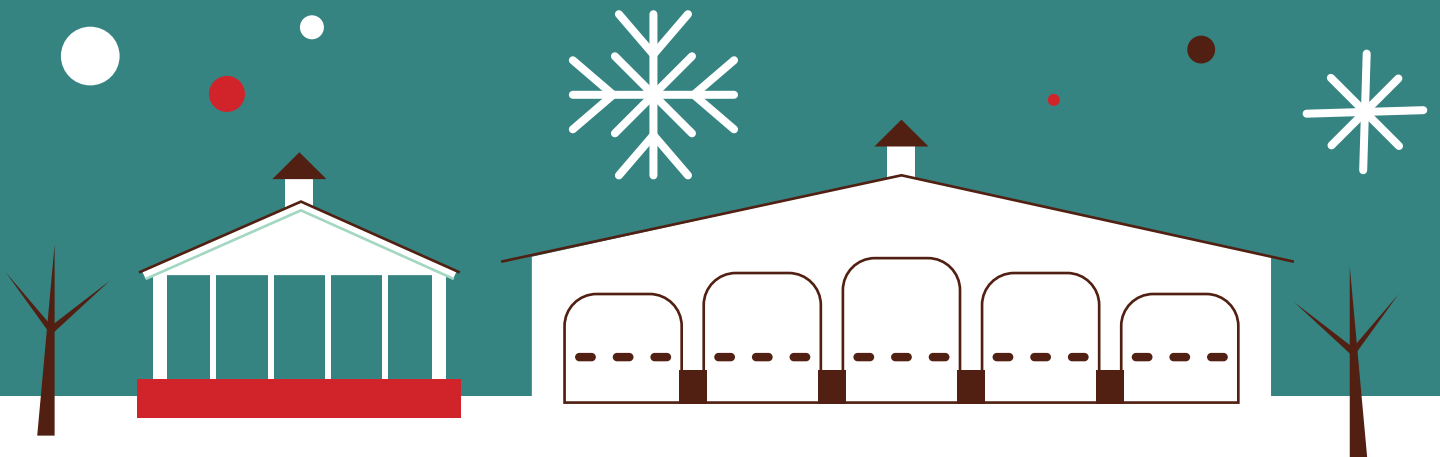
Mark Forbes (Hopkins Township Planning Commission Chair): (616) 466-3760 or [markglenforbes@gmail.com](mailto:markglenforbes@gmail.com)

Jonathon VanderWall (Hopkins Village President): (616) 901-9229 or [jonathonvanderwall@gmail.com](mailto:jonathonvanderwall@gmail.com)



Township and Village of Hopkins  
*Engagement Report*

# COMMUNITY RECREATION PLAN



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February, 2023  
Prepared by Williams & Works

## Introduction

The existing Hopkins Area Recreation Plan was written and adopted in 2006 and updated in 2016. The Parks and Recreation Plan for the Hopkins area was written to assess the existing recreational attributes of the Township to determine recreational needs and outline a program for these needs. As part of the update, the Township and the Village utilized an open house to engage with community members and to gain input regarding parks and recreation facilities and opportunities. The open house was utilized for both the Master Plan and the Parks and Recreation Plan update. This report presents the findings of this outreach effort. It includes a summary of findings and a discussion of the methods used to solicit feedback.

## Public Open House

The public open house was held on Saturday, December 10, 2022, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Hopkins Area Fire Station. The event took place alongside the Hopkins Christmas Tree Lighting to both educate the community about this process and engage with members of the public who may not typically take part in planning efforts. Approximately 150 guests were estimated to have attended the event. Several activities were provided, prompting public participation for topics related to parks and recreation. The public was tasked with providing feedback regarding parks and recreation facilities and programming. Attendees were given the opportunity to engage in any of the activities as they pleased and further discuss specific items of personal importance with village/township officials and planning consultants.



## Welcome Board

The welcome board featured informational text that explained the planning process for the Parks and Recreation Plan update and the importance of long-range planning. The board encouraged participants to take part in available activities and provide their feedback regarding parks and recreation topics for the Village and the Township. The board included educational text regarding three questions: (1) What is a Community Recreation Plan? (2) Why do we need a Community Recreation Plan? (3) Why are we here today?



## Station 1. Penny Jar Voting Activity

A voting exercise was provided during both events to gauge the importance of specific park investments. For this activity, participants were told to imagine they were in charge of directing funding for a variety of parks and recreation-related improvement initiatives. Each participant was given 10 pennies representing their tax dollars. They were instructed to distribute their pennies into jars labeled with various parks and recreation topics, according to their preference of interest.

The activity resulted in a total of 414 votes in total. Improving North Park site amenities and facilities received the greatest number of votes of all other investments. The second the greatest number of votes were added to the penny jar labeled as “Continue to provide winter recreation facilities for residents.” Improving Hopkins Village Park site amenities and facilities received the third greatest number of votes. All feedback from this activity is can be found on the subsequent page in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Penny Jar Votes



## Station 2. Facilities Improvements Activity

For this activity, participants were asked to provide feedback regarding park facility improvements by placing a sticky note on the map corresponding to the categories and colors listed on the board. Purple sticky notes represented new facilities or amenities, orange sticky notes signified underserved areas, and yellow sticky notes denoted comments for repair and maintenance. Underserved areas were described as places in which the attendees feel there is a lack of public parks or access to park amenities. Two activity boards were provided during the event, separating Village and Township recreational facilities.

### VILLAGE FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

Feedback for the Village recreational facilities included comments that described new park infrastructure, like a dog park, sledding hill, skate park, walking paths, and bathrooms. All comments are displayed on the subsequent page, both on the scanned board in Figure 2 and transcribed in Table 1.

Place a sticky note with your written comment on the map corresponding to the categories and colors below:

These are locations which you would like to see new public parks or amenity improvements.

These are areas which you feel are underserved by existing public parks or amenities.

These are areas where you feel a public park or amenity has fallen into disrepair.

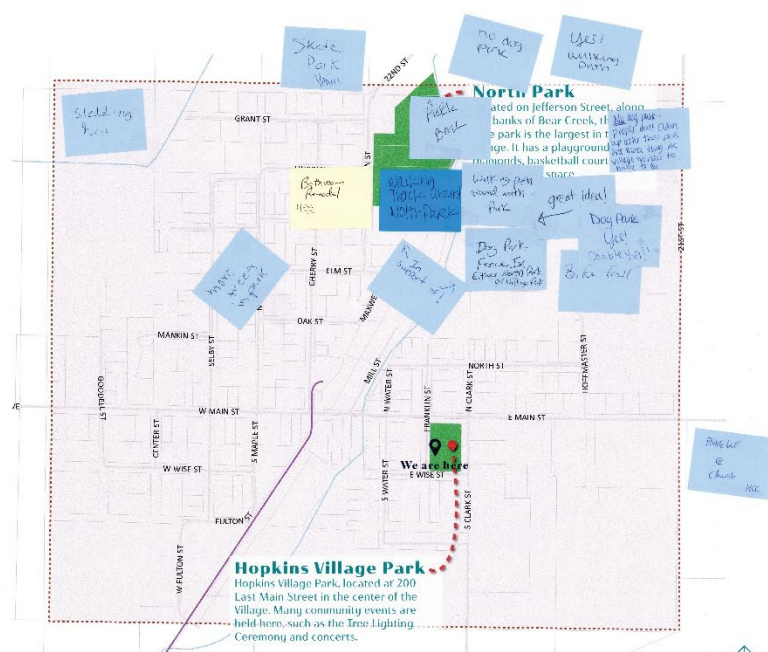


Figure 2. Village Parks Facilities Improvements Results



Sledding hill
Skate Park
Pickle Ball (2x)
No dog park (2x)
Walking path (4x)
Fenced dog park in North Park or Village Park (3x)
Bathrooms need to be remodeled

Feedback for the Township recreational facilities included comments summarized in Table 2. A majority of the comments talked about the addition of trails or paved walkways for pedestrian and bike use. Other comments included the desire for pickleball courts, a skate park, and cross-country ski trails. All comments are displayed on the subsequent page, both on the scanned board in Figure 3 and transcribed in Table 2.

[illegible]

Figure 3. Township Parks Facilities Improvements Results

## Hike + bike trails

### Station 3. Short Survey & Comment Cards

Participants were asked to complete comment cards that also included a short two-question survey related to use of the parks and recreation facilities in the Village and the Township. The attendees were asked to provide input on how frequently they visited parks in the Township or the Village. The input from this question is provided in Figure 4. A total of 10 comment cards were completed and their content has been described in Table 3.

The attendees were asked to describe the reason why they most frequently visit the local parks and any additional thoughts they had regarding parks and recreation in the Village of Hopkins or the Township. North Park was listed as the most frequently visited park by the attendees followed by Hopkins Village Park. Hilliards Park had the least number of visits compared to other parks.

During this task, participants often needed assistance identifying the parks in question. Many hadn't realized that Hopkins Village Park included the public space where the event was taking place and some had difficulty placing Hilliards Park.

Figure 4: Hopkins Parks Visits by Frequency

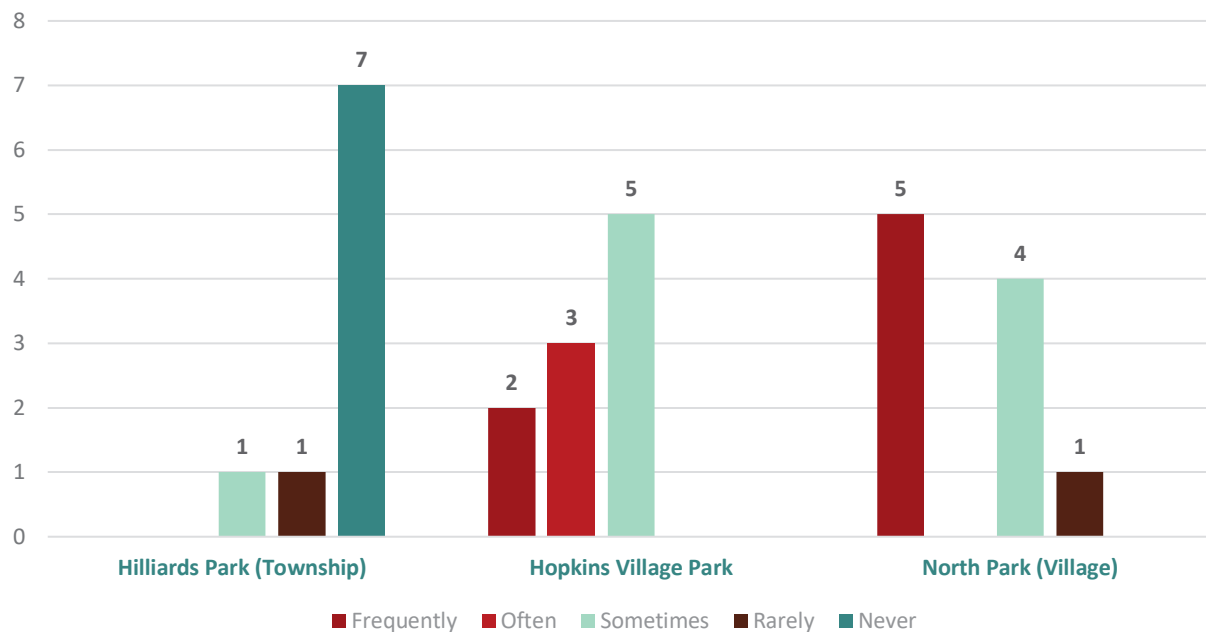


Table 3. Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

Activities for children, ball game

Events (2x)

We live in the village and love to spend time at North Park. Anything walkable is a great asset to the village.

Sports and family

Activities with family and friends, exploring nature, and being outside in the community

Playgrounds, events

Help out with Hopkins youth baseball. Family uses picnic tables and basketball.

## Additional Discussion

While much of the participant input was captured through the various open house activities, some community feedback was shared through discussion with staff and the consulting group. Topics such as the Township ownership and development of the Nowak property, the expansion of non-motorized trails, the use of and connection to other communities through the existing snowmobile trail, the creation of new winter amenities like ice skating and sledding, and overall satisfaction with the existing North Park facilities were repeatedly expressed. A proposal for paved paths at Hillards Park from a citizen participant was also shared during the event and included previous designs completed for the Township during previous planning processes.



## Conclusions

Based on the public open house, the Township and the Village of Hopkins Planning Committee may wish to consider the following as it updates the goals, objectives, and action items contained in the Parks and Recreation Plan.

## Recommendations

- When asked to provide feedback on new facilities and amenities that will be beneficial to the community, attendees listed walking trails, a skate park, a dog park, a pickleball court, and biking paths. Repair and maintenance comments focused on improvements to public restrooms. When developing the parks and recreation plan, the planning committee should consider the feedback listed above to prioritize adding amenities to the parks in the Township and the Village.
- Hilliards Park was listed as the least frequently visited park of all the parks in the village and the township. The committee should explore potentially adding more amenities from the feedback provided above to increase usage of Hilliards Park.
- Feedback from the penny jar voting activity resulted in a majority of votes towards improving North Park site amenities and facilities as it is the most visited park according to the attendees. Adding cross-country skiing and providing winter recreation facilities, such as ice skating or sledding, should also be considered when developing goals for the parks and recreation plan.
- Many participants were interested in learning more about the Nowak property, including the park ownership and what natural features exist. Public access and potential improvements to this property should be explored as part of this planning process.

**Township and Village of Hopkins**  
*Engagement Report*

**APPENDIX**

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## Parks and Public Facilities Improvements

Place a sticky note with your written comment on the map corresponding to the categories and colors below:

## NEW FACILITIES OR AMENITIES

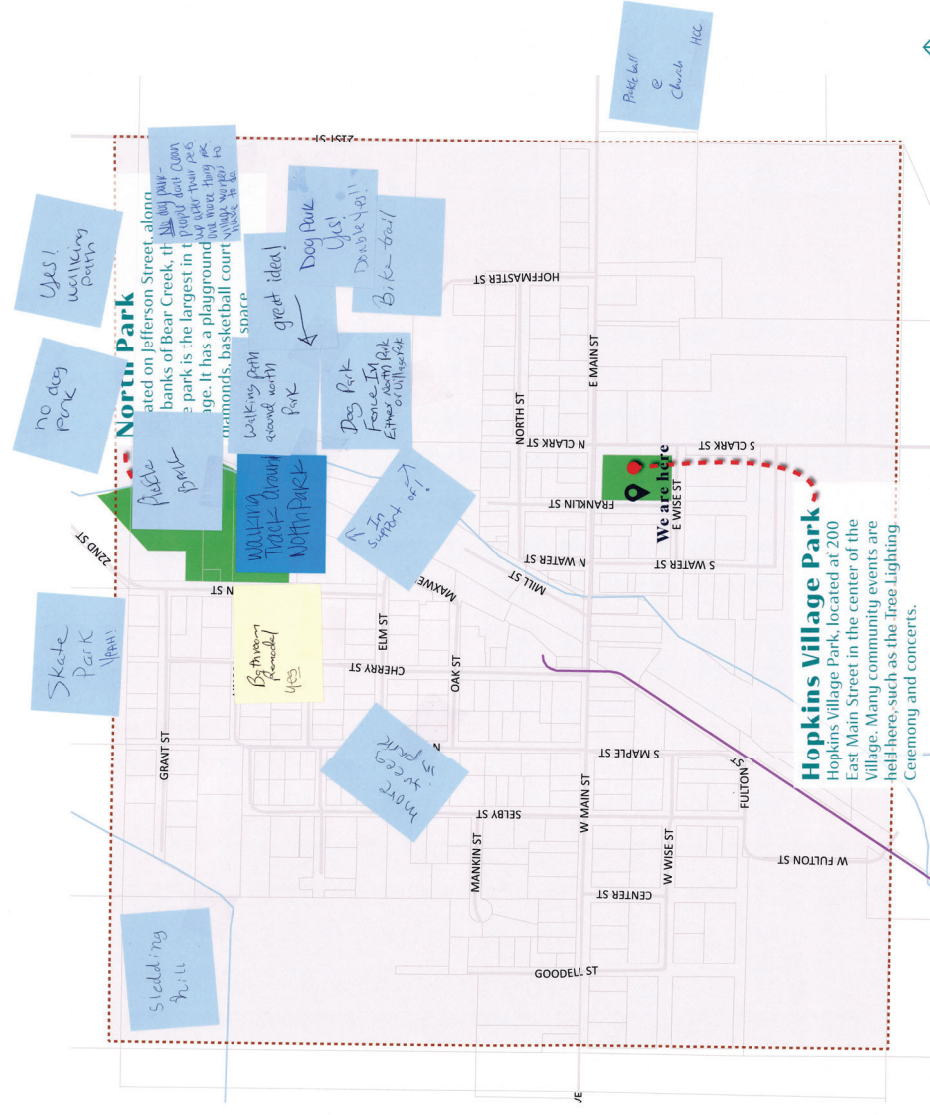
These are locations which you would like to see new public parks or amenity improvements.

## UNDERSERVED AREAS

These are areas which you feel are underserved by existing public parks or amenities.

## REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

These are areas where you feel a public park or amenity has fallen into disrepair.



A small, rectangular piece of white paper with a hand-drawn letter 'B' in the center. The paper is placed on a dark green background.

## Parks and Public Facilities Improvements

Place a sticky note with your written comment on the map corresponding to the categories and colors below:

## NEW FACILITIES OR AMENITIES

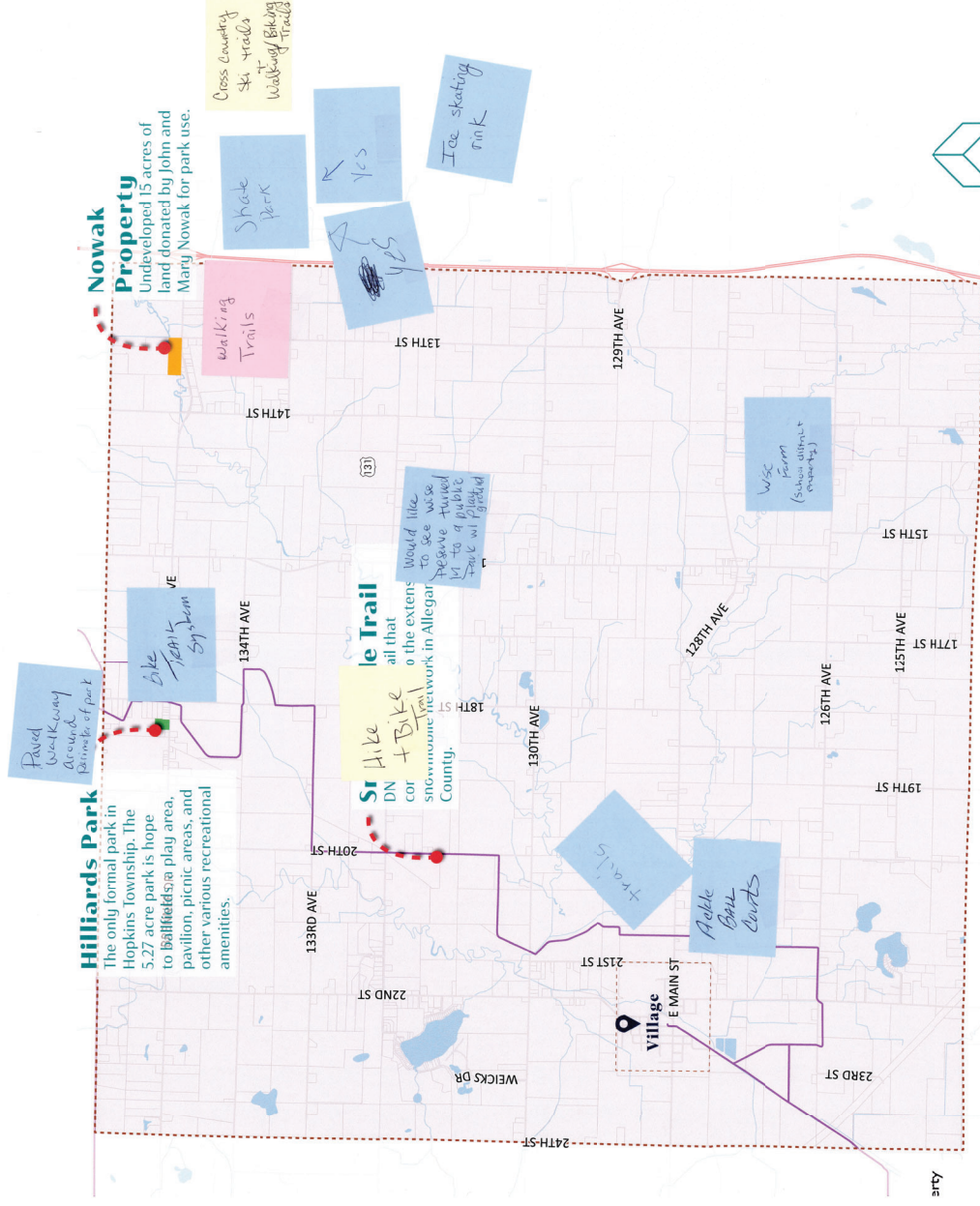
These are locations which you would like to see new public parks or amenity improvements.

## UNDERSERVED AREAS

These are areas which you feel are underserved by existing public parks or amenities.

## REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

These are areas where you feel a public park or amenity has fallen into disrepair.



## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
Hilliards Park (Township)					✓
Hopkins Village Park (Village)	✓				
North Park (Village)	✓				

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

activities for children  
ball games  
~~down~~ often

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
Hilliards Park (Township)					X
Hopkins Village Park (Village)			X		
North Park (Village)				X	

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

EVENTS

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>			<del>X</del>	X	
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>		✓	X ;		
<b>North Park (Village)</b>			X		

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

Events

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>					X
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>		X			
<b>North Park (Village)</b>	X				

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

We live in the village and love to spend time at N. Park. Anything walkable is a great asset to the village.

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>					X
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>		X			
<b>North Park (Village)</b>	X				

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

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## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>					X
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>	X				
<b>North Park (Village)</b>	X				

Why do you most frequently visit local parks? Sports & family

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## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>					X
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>			✓		
<b>North Park (Village)</b>			X		

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

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## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
<b>Hilliards Park (Township)</b>					X
<b>Hopkins Village Park (Village)</b>			X		
<b>North Park (Village)</b>			X		

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

- Activities with family, friends
- Exploring nature, being outside, in the community

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
Hilliards Park (Township)					
Hopkins Village Park (Village)			X		
North Park (Village)			X		

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

playgrounds, events

## How frequently do you use the following Hopkins Parks?

	Frequently (1+ times a week)	Often (2-3 times a month)	Sometimes (a few times each year)	Rarely (less than once a year)	Never (I have never visited this park)
Hilliards Park (Township)			X		
Hopkins Village Park (Village)		X			
North Park (Village)	X				

Why do you most frequently visit local parks?

Help out with hopkins youth baseball. Family use picnic & basketball.



**Proposal for paved  
path at Hilliards Park**

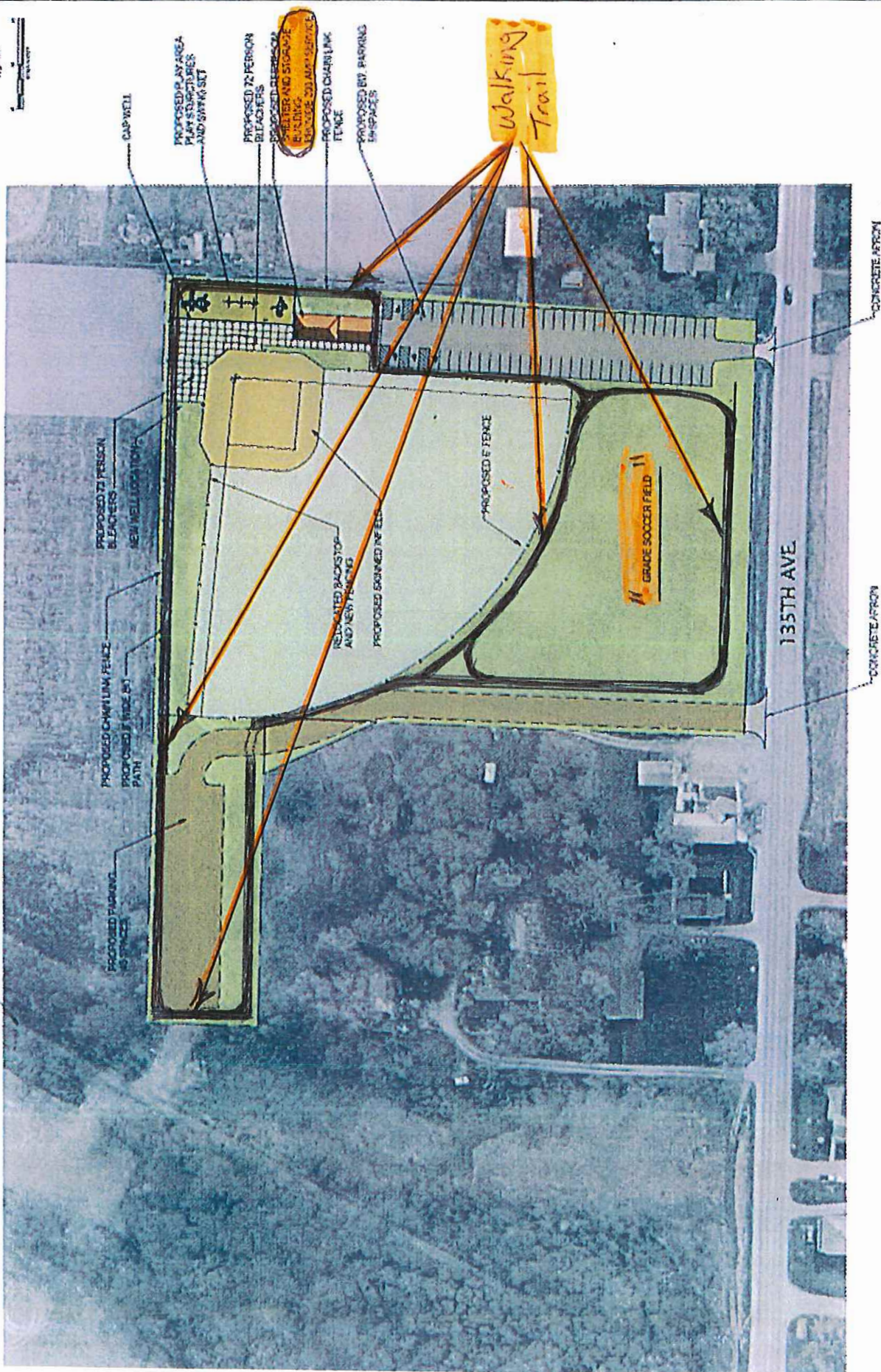
**Sample of paved trail  
located at Salem  
Township Park,  
Burnips, MI**



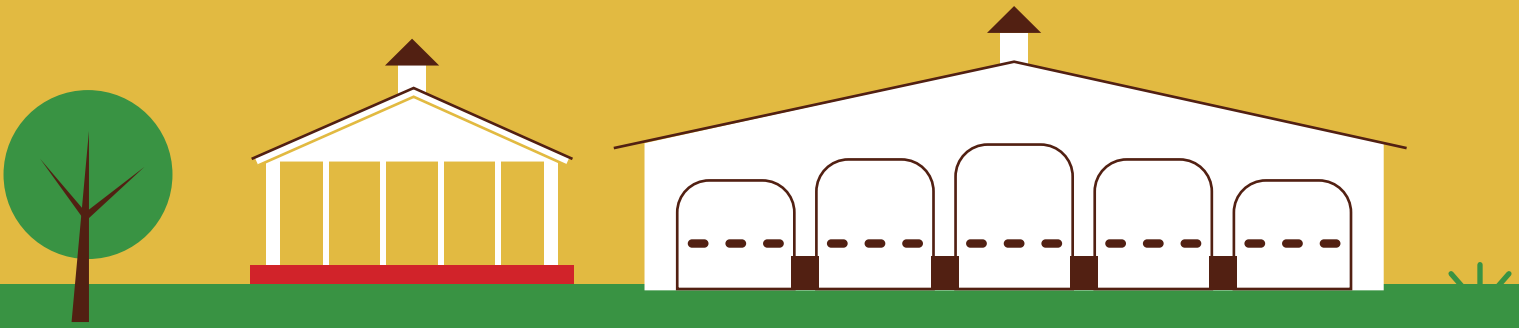
**Handicap Accessible**




**Would provide a great  
option for families to use  
while they're waiting for  
a loved one playing at a  
baseball game.**



**Township and Village of Hopkins**  
*Master Plan & Parks and Recreation Plan Update*  
**OPEN HOUSE**



Hopkins Township and the Village of Hopkins need your help making the community a better place to live, work, and play! Please join us in our effort to update the Township and Village's Master Plan & Parks and Recreation Plan by stopping in and providing your input! You will have the opportunity to review planning efforts pertaining to development, land use, streets, farmland preservation, and parks.



**WHEN:**

Saturday,  
September 9<sup>th</sup>  
8 to 10 AM\*

**WHERE:**

Hopkins Village Park  
200 E. Main Street  
Hopkins, MI 49328



\*Drop in anytime, this event is during "Cars and Coffee" at Hopkins Village Park!

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For more information, contact: Jonathon VanderWall, Hopkins Village President, (616) 901-9229

# williams&works

engineers | surveyors | planners

## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Village and Township of Hopkins Planning Commissions  
**Date:** September 21, 2023  
**From:** Nathan Mehmed, AICP  
**RE:** **Hopkins Community Open House #2 Summary + Next Steps**

**Overview.** The Hopkins Community Open House #2 was held Saturday, September 9, 2023 from 8 am to 10 am at Hopkins Village Park during the Hopkins' "Cars and Coffee" event and a small farmers market. Approximately 30 to 40 people were estimated to have interacted with, reviewed, or engaged with the planning materials, local leadership, or professional planning staff. Participants were given the opportunity to review draft materials of the Hopkins Community Master Plan and Hopkins Community Parks and Recreation Plan and provide comments. The planning materials did not include an entire draft document, but instead focused on the policies, maps, actions, and implementation. More specifically, the materials included the following:

- Welcome Board
- "What Changed?" Boards containing the existing and proposed future land use maps for both the Township and Village
- Future Land Use Description Boards containing abbreviated summaries of each future land use category in the Township and Village
- "What Changed?" Board containing the existing and proposed Action Plan for the parks and recreation plan
- Printed copies of goals and objectives for both the Community Master Plan and Community Parks and Recreation Plan
- General comment cards
- Sticky notes for board comments

**Summary of Engagement.** Generally, participants were supportive of the planning materials generated by the work of the Township and Village. There were not any substantial negative comments regarding the policies, actions, or maps. Most participants were happy that the Township and Village were working together on a planning effort for the future of the community. We do not see a need to recommend any policy, action plan, or map changes at this time. In addition to the two comment cards attached to this memo, the following conversations were had with participants:

- Desire for a grocery store in the Village Downtown
- Desire for trail connections
- Desire to keep Hopkins a rural farming community
- Desire for more housing in the Village
- Discussion regarding the high quality of farmland in both the Township and the Village
- Concern regarding the potential for commercial growth along US 131, specifically between 129<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 132<sup>nd</sup> Avenue
- Dislike of the DDA Boundary and 425 Agreement areas
- Excitement about the improvements to Township and Village parks
- Discussion regarding the potential extension of North Street to the Village boundary.

**Next Steps.** Pending any further direction from the Planning Commission regarding the input received at Open House #2 or any additional edits, we will move forward with finishing and finalizing the first drafts of both plans. We expect to have a draft of each available at the October 24<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting. While the Community Master Plan does not have a required completion timeline, the Community Parks and Recreation Plan must be adopted and submitted to the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources by February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. The remaining adoption process steps for both plans are as follows:

Community Parks and Recreation Plan:

1. Review full Parks and Recreation Plan draft and make any edits.
2. Optional: Give both the Township Board and Village Council the opportunity to review the draft plan before noticing and the required public hearing.
3. Notice of 30-day review and public hearing.
4. Public hearing held by both the Township Board and Village Council.
5. Both the Township Board and Village Council adopt the Plan by resolution.
6. Transmittal of Plan to Allegan County, West Michigan Regional Planning Commission, and State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Community Master Plan:

1. Review full Master Plan draft and make any edits.
2. Recommendation by both the Village Planning Commission and Township Planning Commission of the draft Plan to the Township Board and Village Council for distribution.
3. Both the Township Board and Village Council review the Plan, assert their right to adopt the Plan, and approve the Plan for distribution to the notice group.
4. Mail distribution letters to the notice group indicating that a draft plan is available for review.
5. Wait 63 days for any comments from the notice group.
6. Both the Township Planning Commission and Village Planning Commission must hold a public hearing on the Plan.
7. Both the Township Planning Commission and Village Planning Commission must approve the Plan by resolution, and recommend adoption to the legislative body.

8. Both the Township Board and Village Council must adopt the Plan by Resolution.
9. Distribute the adopted Plan to the notice group.

We can provide templates for all public notices, letters, and resolutions needed for the adoption of each Plan. I will discuss next steps or any other questions or concerns that you may have at the September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

As always, please let us know if you have any questions.

## Master Plan Comments

Have additional thoughts or ideas regarding the Township/Village of Hopkins Master Plan update? Tell us what you think in the space provided below!

Hopkins Twp has some of the most productive farmland in Allegan County. Farmland preservation has been a top priority of Hopkins Township for years and should continue to be for years to come. I understand that Hopkins township has limited residential areas, that is part of the reason that everyone desires to live in this area. Let's keep Hopkins Twp great by keeping it rural and preserving the excellent highly productive farmland. The peace and quiet is really something to be cherished!

Name/email (optional):

## Master Plan Comments

Have additional thoughts or ideas regarding the Township/Village of Hopkins Master Plan update? Tell us what you think in the space provided below!

① Grocie Stone

Name/email (optional):

*APPENDIX B:*

**ADOPTION  
MATERIALS**







*Hopkins Community*  
**RECREATION PLAN**