

**2011 OTTAWA COUNTY
PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE PLAN**

February 23, 2011

2011 Ottawa County Board of Commissioners

Philip D. Kuyers, Chair
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2011 Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

Ted Bosgraaf, President
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Jim Miedema
Ray Statema
David VanderKooi
David VanGinhoven

*Offices: 12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, MI 49460
(616) 738-4810*

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The development of the *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan* was a cooperative effort of the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission, citizens of Ottawa County, and various consultants.

OTTAWA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Ted Bosgraaf, President
Bobbi Jones Sabine, Vice-President
Philip Kuyers, Secretary
Ray Statema
Paul Geerlings
Roger E. Jonas
Bobbi Jones Sabine
James H. Holtvluwer
Joyce Kortman (retired 2010)
Jim Miedema
David VanGinhoven
David VanderKooi

PARK COMMISSION STAFF

John A. Scholtz, Director
Curt TerHaar, Coordinator of Planning & Development
Jonathan Nagel, Park Planner (2010)
Dave Mazurek, Coordinator of Maintenance and Operations
Chip Francke, Coordinator of Interpretive and Information Services
Sherry Costello, Administrative Secretary
Tabitha Rowley, Parks Secretary

PARKS PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Greg Holcombe, ODC-Macatawa Greenway Board
Lukas Hill, Spring Lake Township
Jim Key, County resident
Dan Carlton, Georgetown Township
Gray Gogolin, Holland Leisure and Cultural Services
Peter Homeyer, Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Tom Werkman, County Resident

Several consultants assisted the parks commission in preparing plans and recommendations for specific sites included in the plan:

Cornelisse Design Associates
Fleis & VandenBrink
Landscape Architects & Planners
M. C. Smith Associates & Architectural Group
O'Boyle, Cowell, Blalock, & Associates
Prein & Newhof
RJM Design, Inc.

The Ottawa County Board of Commissioners
of the County of Ottawa
West Olive, Michigan

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION OF THE *2011 OTTAWA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION
AND OPEN SPACE PLAN.*

At a meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Ottawa County, Michigan, held at the County Building, West Olive in said County on February 22, 2011:

PRESENT: Members - Kuyers, Holtrop, Baumann, DeJong, Disselkoen, Holtvluwer, Karsten, Ruiter, Rycenga, Swartout and Visser

ABSENT: Members - None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Rycenga and supported by Ruiter:

WHEREAS, it is a primary function of the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission to maintain a current plan for County park and recreation land, waters and facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has analyzed the cultural and physical resources of Ottawa County including an inventory of existing recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has sought public input from a variety of channels in establishing goals and objectives which address identified recreation deficiencies; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has transformed its goals into a logical plan of action for parks, recreation facility development and open space preservation in Ottawa County;

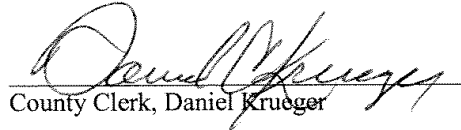
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners adopt the *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan* as a reference document for future decision-making and that the plan be transmitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

YEAS: Members: Kuyers, Holtrop, Baumann, DeJong, Disselkoen, Holtvluwer, Karsten, Ruiter, Rycenga, Swartout and Visser

NAYS: Members: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.


Chairman, Philip Kuyers


County Clerk, Daniel Krueger

Certification

I, the undersigned, duly qualified Clerk of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board of Commissioners of the County of Ottawa, Michigan, at a meeting held on February 22, 2011 the original of which is on file in my office. Public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in compliance with Act No. 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereto affixed my official signature this 22nd day of February, A.D., 2011.


County Clerk, Daniel Krueger

The Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission

of the County of Ottawa

West Olive, Michigan

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION OF THE *2011 OTTAWA COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PLAN*.

At a meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission of the County of Ottawa, Ottawa County, Michigan, held at the County Building, West Olive in said County on February 9, 2011:

PRESENT: Members: Ted Bosgraaf, Bobbi Jones Sabine, Jim Miedema, Roger Jonas, Philip Kuyers, David Vander Kooi, and Ray Statema

ABSENT: Members: David Van Ginhoven, James Holtvluwer and Paul Geerlings

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Sabine and supported by Statema:

WHEREAS, it is a primary function of the Ottawa County Parks and Recreation Commission to maintain a current plan for County park and recreation land, waters and facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has analyzed the cultural and physical resources of Ottawa County including an inventory of existing recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has sought public input from a variety of channels in establishing goals and objectives which address identified recreation deficiencies; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has transformed its goals into a logical plan of action for parks, recreation facility development and open space preservation in Ottawa County;

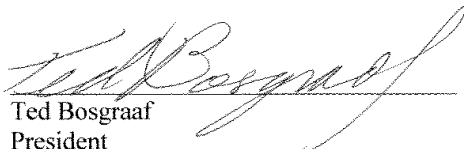
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Parks and Recreation Commission adopt the *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan* and forward the plan to the Ottawa County Board of Commissioners.

YEAS: Members: Ted Bosgraaf, Bobbi Jones Sabine, Jim Miedema, Roger Jonas, Philip Kuyers, David Vander Kooi, and Ray Statema

NAYS: Members: None

ABSTAIN: Members: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED


Ted Bosgraaf
President



Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

John A. Scholtz
Director

Commission Members

Ted Bosgraaf
President

Bobbi Jones Sabine
Vice President

Philip Kuyers
Secretary

Jim Miedema

Roger E. Jonas

David Van Ginhoven

James H. Holtvluwer

David L. Vander Kooi

Paul Geerlings

Ray Statema

February 23, 2011

Mr. Dave Bee, Director
West Michigan Regional Planning Commission
820 Monroe NW, Suite 214
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

Dear Mr. Bee:

Enclosed please find a copy of the *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan*. We intend to submit this plan to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for their approval in the near future.

Please respond with any comments, suggestions or concerns you may have regarding the plan.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly via telephone at (616) 738-4656 or e-mail at cterhaar@miottawa.org.

Sincerely,
Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

Curtis TerHaar
Coordinator of Park Planning & Development

Enclosure

12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, Michigan 49460

Phone (616) 738-4810
Fax (616) 738-4812

Web Site: miOTTAWA.org/parks
e-mail: parks&rec@miottawa.org



Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

John A. Scholtz
Director

February 23, 2011

Commission Members

Ted Bosgraaf
President

Bobbi Jones Sabine
Vice President

Philip Kuyers
Secretary

Jim Miedema

Roger E. Jonas

David Van Ginhoven

James H. Holtvluwer

David L. Vander Kooi

Paul Geerlings

Ray Statema

Mr. Mark Knudson, Director
Ottawa County Planning &
Performance Improvement Department
12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, MI 49460

Dear Mr. Knudson:

Enclosed please find a copy of the *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan*. We intend to submit this plan to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for their approval in the near future.

Please respond with any comments, suggestions, or concerns you may have regarding the plan.

If you have any questions, please contact me directly via telephone at (616) 738-4656 or e-mail at cterhaar@miottawa.org.

Sincerely,
Ottawa County Parks & Recreation Commission

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Curtis Ter Haar".

Curtis TerHaar
Coordinator of Park Planning & Development

Enclosure

12220 Fillmore Street
West Olive, Michigan 49460

Phone (616) 738-4810
Fax (616) 738-4812

Web Site: miOTTAWA.org/parks
e-mail: parks@rec@miottawa.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan

The *2011 Ottawa County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan* is intended to guide Ottawa County with its parks, recreation and open space planning and development efforts for the next five- to ten-year period. The 2011 Plan continues a comprehensive planning effort begun in 1989 which has resulted in a wide range of improvements and accomplishments enhancing the quality of life and leisure experience for Ottawa County residents.

Profile of Ottawa County

Ottawa County's extensive natural resources including the Lake Michigan shoreline and associated dunes, the Grand River with its extensive bayous and wetlands, inland lakes including Lake Macatawa, Pigeon Lake, and Spring Lake, numerous rivers and streams and other features provide a tremendous resource base for outdoor recreation. Population growth in Ottawa County and neighboring Kent and Allegan Counties is among the fastest in the state, which is a reflection of the area's unique natural attractions, diverse economy, and other indicators of a high quality of life.

Needs Assessment

Various methods were employed to obtain public input to help identify recreation needs in Ottawa County, including a survey of County residents, a park user survey, public workshops, plan advisory committee inputs, website comments, and comment cards in the parks. This information, along with population data and other background information, was useful in helping to analyze a wide range of issues related to recreation needs. Specific activities of interest to Ottawa County Parks were analyzed, park accessibility issues were explored, and the issue of planning for open space needs was studied in detail.

Basic findings reveal that Ottawa County should continue to pursue acquisition of additional park and open space lands and continue to expand recreation facilities if it is to keep pace with population growth and maintain the quality of life in the County. However, increased efforts should also be made to maximize the potential of existing park sites with appropriate property purchases and connections between park parcels and areas of higher population.

Plan and Action Program

Based on the Parks and Recreation Commission's mission statement, goals and objectives, an action program was developed to respond to the identified needs. Recommendations were organized into five categories based on the geography of the County. They included: 1) Lake Michigan Coastal Greenway, 2) Grand River Greenway, 3) Pigeon River Greenway, 4) Macatawa River Greenway and 5) General Parks, Open Space and Trails. Each of these categories was then divided into the following sub-categories: 1) Land Acquisition/Park Expansion Priorities, 2) Planning Strategies, 3) Proposed Park and Open Space Improvements, and 4) Operational Issues. Additionally, the plan looks specifically at accessibility improvements throughout the park system.

The Plan calls for continued improvement and expansion of existing parks where possible. The importance of Lake Michigan as a recreational attraction is emphasized in the plan, with a priority placed upon providing additional public access along the Lake Michigan coast as well as opportunities to preserve coastal habitat (i.e., sand dunes).

The Plan also continues the focus on the establishment of greenways on the Grand, Pigeon, and Macatawa Rivers. The greenway concept was introduced in the 1995 Plan, and significant progress was made between 2000 and 2010 with acquisition of significant new properties. The 2011 Plan calls for continued acquisition of key lands and linkages plus improvements to provide public access.

The Plan also looks at general park, open space and trail opportunities in other locations of the County. Basic land acquisition goals are reviewed and the purchase of approximately 900 acres is recommended. Criteria are identified to assist in evaluating lands for acquisition.

The county park system was thoroughly reviewed from an accessibility perspective. Specific improvements have been identified and a transition plan developed to identify estimated costs and proposed time frames for implementation.

The Plan concludes with sections on financing and park administration and operations. A capital improvement schedule is provided for the life of the proposed millage extension (through 2017). A diversified financial strategy is identified which includes the millage plus continued use of fees and charges, and aggressive efforts to secure state and federal grant support. The Plan also strongly emphasizes the need to expand operational capabilities as the park system grows and to maintain the emphasis on high standards for park operations and maintenance.