



## NEWS RELEASE

Desiree Stanfield  
Communications & Marketing Supervisor  
248-705-4108 | stanfieldd@oakgov.com

### **Hazel Park celebrates grand opening of new playground in Green Acres Park** *Larger play area includes accessible features and new sensory experience*

**HAZEL PARK, MI – April 29, 2024** – City of Hazel Park and Oakland County officials unveiled a new accessible playground at Green Acres Park during a grand opening ceremony on April 20. The new play area provides additional space for physical, sensory and imaginative play. The Oakland County Parks Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan contributed \$400,000 to the project.

County and city officials touted the benefits of the new playground during the grand opening ceremony and how it will enhance access to green spaces and provide an inviting space for families and friends to connect with each other in Hazel Park.

This is an ongoing priority for Oakland County Parks, Parks Director Chris Ward said.

“We have been focusing on ways to partner with local governments across Oakland County to improve and expand recreation opportunities for residents,” he said. “Community investments like the Green Acres Park Playground will impact generations of children, making a positive impact on their physical and mental health.”

The playground project removed outdated equipment and significantly expanded the play area from 1,125 square feet to approximately 4,500 square feet. With an urban nature theme, the children’s playground offers six swings, including two infant swings and one inclusive swing; three slides of varying heights; a bumblebee spring rider; a ladybug spring rider; and three climbing structures. It also encourages creative play with three musical play elements and numerous activity panels that promote sensory experiences.

Rubber surfacing increases accessibility for individuals of all abilities to the main playground features and three shaded bench areas around the exterior of the playground offer children and their adults a place to relax and recharge together.

“We are endlessly thankful to Oakland County Parks and their tremendous partnership and support of the Hazel Park Recreation Department,” Director of Recreation Sareen Papakhian said. “The Green Acres Playground installation was extremely successful and the playground itself was greatly needed. The playground and its universal design standards will allow for all Hazel Park residents to have access to play and therefore improve the city’s overall quality of life.”

In 2022, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners and County Executive Dave Coulter approved \$15 million for OCP from pandemic relief funds the county received as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Combined with a \$5.2 million match from the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission, this provided the parks system with substantial funds to revitalize and enhance parks located in or servicing residents of communities most impacted by the pandemic.

Green Acres Park is a 17.9-acre park owned and operated by the City of Hazel Park. Input from residents during a public planning open house last July played a large role in development of the playground's features. After all elements were finalized, construction began in October 2023.

In addition to the playground investment, the City of Hazel Park was awarded a \$300,000 Healthy Communities grant for upgrades to the Hazel Park Community Center.

"We are so grateful to Oakland County Parks for their contributions to our Parks and Recreation Departments. Their grants will improve recreational options and quality of life for Hazel Park residents," Hazel Park City Manager Ed Klobucher said.

In addition to the Hazel Park projects, the Oakland County Parks Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan is funding improvements at Lyon Oaks County Park in Lyon Township and Wixom; Red Oaks County Park – Gary McGillivray Play Garden in Madison Heights; Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park in Oak Park; Pontiac Oaks County Park in Pontiac; Mack-Rowe Park in Royal Oak Township; Catalpa Oaks County Park in Southfield; Beech Woods Park in Southfield; and Waterford Oaks County Park in Waterford.

For more information about Oakland County Parks, visit [OaklandCountyParks.com](https://OaklandCountyParks.com). Join the conversation on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X](#).