**A blue sign with white text

Description automatically generated with medium confidence**

Desiree Stanfield

Chief - Communications & Marketing

248-705-4108 | stanfieldd@oakgov.com

**Oakland County Parks opens outdoor recreation area in Lyon Oaks County Park**

*Playground to serve as PlayCore National Demonstration Site play area*

**LYON TOWNSHIP, MI – June 24, 2024** – Visitors to the Woods Edge day-use area at Lyon Oaks County Park this summer will be greeted with increased opportunities for active outdoor recreation. Work has concluded on a destination playground, flexible exercise space, accessible pickleball courts, updated parking lot and improved trail connectivity to the Huron Valley Trail.

The project is part of Oakland County Parks’ commitment to providing inclusive facilities.

“The universal design of the Lyon Oaks playground and pickleball courts promotes not only the physical advantages of exercise, but also social inclusion,” Parks Director Chris Ward said. “Children of all abilities can engage with each other through active play and the pickleball courts are designed for interaction and game play for guests with and without disabilities. By making these investments, we are able to remove barriers and ensure that all guests have access to the proven benefits of outdoor recreation.”

In addition, the playground at Lyon Oaks meets the requirements to be a National Demonstration Site (NDS) for both inclusive play and physical activity. This means survey data will be collected on an ongoing basis for inclusion in a national database. This data will be available for internal review and planning purposes as well as added to aggregate national data that will be used to shape future playground design and development by the Center for Outreach, Research and Education (CORE).

The playground project, funded with a GameTime Statewide Funding Initiative grant that covered 50 percent of the cost of the play equipment, includes ramps and wide pathways to the various play elements as well as inclusive swings and other features. Outdated equipment was removed and the overall play area significantly expanded.

“Playgrounds are often a child’s introduction to a park setting. Whether it’s their first visit or their 100th, we want to make every experience a positive one,” said Ward.

Other improvements at the Woods Edge day-use area include:

* Adding four pickleball courts designed to allow for guests with and without disabilities to play the game. The courts are able to serve 16 players at a time and will include accessible routes that connect with the parking lot, pavilion and restroom
* Opening a year-round, heated restroom to extend the season for the playground and pickleball courts
* Connecting reactivated spaces with universally accessible pathways.
* Paving projects, including improvements to the trailhead, with accessible parking spaces in the proximity. The clearly marked and improved trailhead will improve connecting the Woods Edge area with the Huron River Trail, as well as the park’s trail network
* Installing accessible parking as part of the existing, park-wide Lyon Oaks paving project. Because a focus when reactivating this area is on universal accessibility and making people of all abilities feel welcome, installation of three times the ADA minimum-required accessible spaces is incorporated into the design

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.

In addition to the Lyon Oaks County Park in Lyon Township and Wixom project, the Oakland County Parks Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan is funding improvements at Green Acres Park in Hazel Park; Mack-Rowe Park in Royal Oak Township; 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; 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://www.oakgov.com/parks/Pages/default.aspx)**.** Join the conversation on[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ocparks), [Instagram](http://instagram.com/oaklandcountyparks) and [X](https://twitter.com/OCParksAndRec).