



# Healthy Communities

## Park & Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan

June 4, 2025 – Update

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Oakland County Parks and  
Recreation Commission

 **OAKLAND  
COUNTY PARKS**

## Summary

In October 2022, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners approved the Oakland County Parks (OCP) Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, a \$20.2M program aimed at enhancing park and recreation opportunities utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds (\$15M) matched with funding from OCP (\$5.2M).

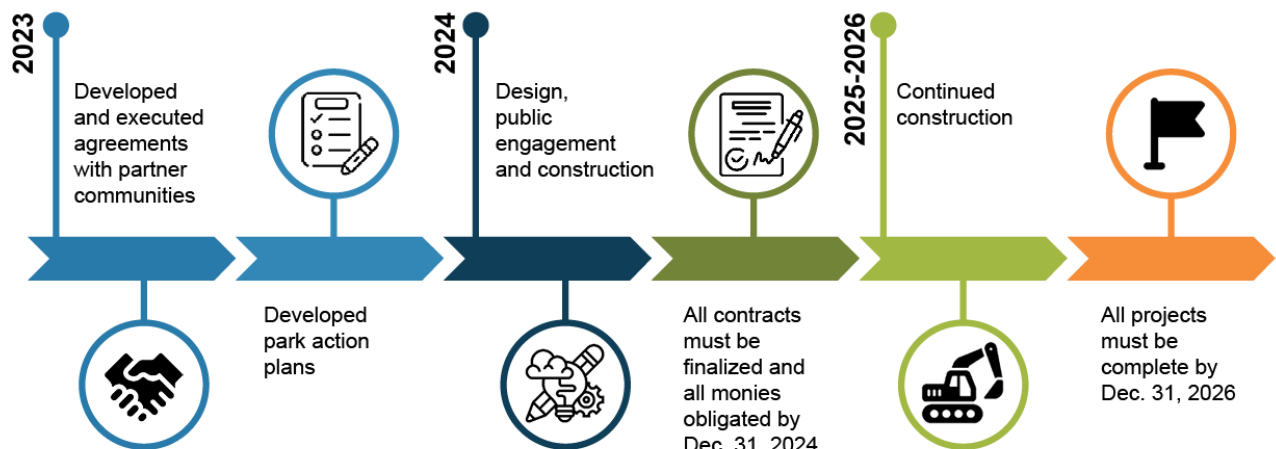
The dedicated funds support park improvement projects located in areas most disproportionately impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Projects were selected based on having the following community impacts:

- Transform and eliminate historic inequities in the distribution of the benefits of the OCP system and significantly enhance our capacity to serve residents of densely populated and diverse urban areas.
- Expand accessibility and use of existing community park facilities to serve regional recreational needs.
- Make investments in park infrastructure that will have the greatest impact in improving the health and wellbeing of our residents.

Identified projects include improvements to the following existing OCP properties: **Catalpa Oaks, Lyon Oaks, Red Oaks and Waterford Oaks**. Long-term local partnerships that enhance community parks and expand the OCP system were established in **Madison Heights, Oak Park, Pontiac and Southfield**. Funding has also been allocated for capital grants and partnerships with local communities: **Hazel Park, Royal Oak Township, Oak Park, Pontiac and Southfield**.

### [Construction Updates](#)

## Timeline



Cover Photo: New trails at Pontiac Oaks County Park



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## Hazel Park

### Green Acres Park Project



*Photo: New accessible playground at Green Acres Park*

#### **Project Agreement**

License Agreement and Consent to Work – May 11, 2023

#### **Summary Project Scope**

The City of Hazel Park was allocated \$400,000 from the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan for a new accessible playground with associated access routes, amenities, and manufacturer's warranty for play equipment, as well as planning assistance for future projects.

#### **Location**

Green Acres Park is a 17.9-acre park owned and operated by the City of Hazel Park.

#### **Outreach and Engagement**

- Planning Open House – July 25, 2023
- Playground Grand Opening – April 20, 2024

#### **Status – Park Improvements – Closed**

The playground replacement project removed outdated equipment and expanded the playground area from 1,125 square feet to approximately 4,500 square feet. The new playground has an urban nature theme and is appropriate for children ages two to 12. Features include six swings (two infant, one accessible); three slides; three musical play elements; two spring riders; three climbing structures; and activity panels that promote sensory experience and imaginative play. Poured-in-place rubber surfacing enhances access to the main playground features. Three bench seats with backs and shade structures are located around the play area.

The grant also funded restroom improvements, including plumbing, electrical, plumbing fixtures, new counters, new bathroom accessories, new partitions, accessibility improvements, new lighting fixtures, paint and epoxy floor finish.

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### Status – Planning Assistance – Closed

The original scope of the planning assistance was limited to developing a pocket park plan for Hazel Park's numerous small (under five acres) parks. An update of the City's 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan was incorporated into this scope and the new plan was approved by DNR and Hazel Park's City Council in January 2025.

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## Hazel Park Community Center Modernization Project



*Photo: Hazel Park Community Center*

### Project Agreement

Grant Agreement – August 21, 2023

### Summary Project Scope

The City of Hazel Park was awarded a \$300,000 grant from the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan for upgrades to the Hazel Park Community Center. Upgrades may include HVAC improvements, door and window replacements, updates to floors, walls and ceilings, and bathroom improvements. The improvements will include the development of a new Oakland County Parks South Office, which will be a community meeting and office space for OCP and Hazel Park staff as well as other partners and groups.

### Location

The Hazel Park Community Center is located at 620 W. Woodward Heights in the City of Hazel Park.

### Status – In Process

Hazel Park has received 50% of the grant funds from OCP. The City has contracted with AKA Architects for design and engineering services. Partial painting, roof work and flooring in the OCP office are complete, and ductless mini-split and energy recovery ventilator (ERV) unit have been installed. Roof replacement, lobby remodeling, reception desk window, front entrance security and inner doors installation are still outstanding. Project is anticipated to be completed in August 2025.



## Lyon Township and Wixom

### Lyon Oaks County Park



Photo: Grand Opening at inclusive playground at Lyon Oaks County Park on June 22, 2024

#### Summary Project Scope

Increase opportunities for active outdoor recreation with a destination playground, flexible open space for exercise, accessible pickleball courts and improved trail connectivity to the Huron Valley Trail. The project was funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$200,000 in ARPA funding and \$690,000 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program. The GameTime Statewide Funding Initiative grant covered 50% of the cost of the play equipment.

#### Location

Lyon Oaks is a 1,041-acre park in southwestern Oakland County in Lyon Township and the City of Wixom.

#### Outreach and Engagement

- Grand Opening – Saturday, June 22, 2024
- National Demonstration Site – The playground at Lyon Oaks meets the requirements to be a National Demonstration Site (NDS) for both inclusive play and for physical activity. Survey data will be collected on an ongoing basis and fed into a national database managed by PlayCORE. Site-specific data will be available for internal review and planning purposes. The data collected at Lyon Oaks will be added to aggregate national data, which will inform future playground design and development by the Center for Outreach, Research and Education (CORE).



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## Status - Closed

The completed project includes the following components:

- Old playground was replaced with a large, accessible playground that promotes physical and social inclusion through universal design.
  - Pickleball courts allow guests with and without disabilities to play. The four courts can serve 16 players at a time and are connected to the parking lot, pavilion and restroom by accessible routes.
  - Restrooms are available year-round (heat was installed in 2023 for the purpose of serving contact station staff), extending the season of use for playground and pickleball courts.
  - All areas of the reactivated space are connected by access routes that – at a minimum – meet ADA accessibility standards.
  - Paved improvements to the trailhead, close to accessible parking spaces, improves connection between the Woods Edge area and the Huron River Trail as well as the park's trail network.
  - Accessible parking, included as part of the park-wide Lyon Oaks paving project, provides three times the minimum required accessible parking spaces.
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## Madison Heights

### Red Oaks Play Garden honoring Gary R. McGillivray



*Figure: Red Oaks Play Garden rendering*

#### Project Agreements

- Interlocal Partnership Agreement – August 7, 2023
- Park Action Plan – November 17, 2023
- Capital Improvement Plan – April 17, 2024

#### Summary Project Scope

The addition of Ambassador Park to Red Oaks County Park – as the Red Oaks Play Garden – will provide land not located over G.W. Kuhn Drain that can support new infrastructure, including green restrooms. Improvements will focus on senior-friendly intergenerational amenities and will honor the life and public service of former Parks Commission Chair Gary R. McGillivray. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$2,750,000 in ARPA funding and \$4,390,465 from the OCP CIP.

#### Location

Red Oaks County Park is a 139-acre park located in southeastern Oakland County in the City of Madison Heights. The complex includes a nature center, nature preserve, water park, dog park and golf course. The 7-acre former Ambassador Park is now incorporated into the Red Oaks complex as Red Oaks Play Garden. The Nature Center, Nature Preserve and Red Oaks Play Garden are operated by OCP and owned by the City of Madison Heights.

#### Outreach and Engagement

- Stakeholder Engagement / Parks Improvement Planning Report by OHM – September 1, 2022
- Survey – September 11-24, 2023
- Planning Open Houses – September 16, 18, and 22, 2023
- Design Open House – August 5, 2024

#### Status – In Process

OCP contracted with Wade Trim for design and engineering services and construction management contract with DeMaria was executed December 10, 2024. The park closed in May for full renovation, including a new playground and tot garden, hammocks, sledding hill improvements, restroom building with attached shade structure and porch swings as well as a new parking lot. It is anticipated to reopen in 2026.



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## Oak Park

### Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park



*Figure: Rendering of the future Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park*

#### Project Agreements

- Interlocal Partnership Agreement – August 8, 2023
- Park Action Plan – January 30, 2024

#### Summary Project Scope

Develop an open space gateway with accessible trails, seating and gathering areas, and install a nature-themed playground, as well as updates to existing pavilions and restrooms. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$2,500,000 in ARPA funding and \$5,460,168 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program.

#### Location

Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park is a 17-acre area located within David H. Shepherd Park in the City of Oak Park. The park is jointly operated by OCP and Oak Park and is owned by the City of Oak Park.

#### Outreach and Engagement

- Survey – September 13-October 9, 2023
- Planning Open Houses – September 26 and 27, October 5, 2023
- Design Open House – July 10, 2024

#### Status – In Process

OCP management commenced on July 1, 2024, incorporating Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park into the OCP system. OCP contracted with Wade Trim for design and engineering services and construction management contract with DeMaria was executed December 10, 2024. The park closed in May and work is underway on pavilion and warming kitchen updates, a new restroom building, gathering and seating areas and a new play area. The renovated area is expected to reopen in 2026.



event hub concept

- Darker + lighter concrete block for service area
- Applied greenwall panels
- Backlit signage
- Angled service area canopy
- Tapered wood canopy
- Yellow accent columns

## Project Agreement

## Summary Project Scope

## Location

Status – In Process

[illegible]



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## Pontiac

### Pontiac Oaks County Park



*Photo: new paved trails at Pontiac Oaks County Park*

#### **Project Agreements**

- Interlocal Partnership Agreement – June 23, 2023
- Transition Period Plan – June 28, 2023
- Park Action Plan – October 3, 2023

#### **Summary Project Scope**

Provide a safe and welcoming environment for guests by updating buildings, adding amenities and increasing accessibility. Manage shoreline vegetation and invasive species for clear views of Cregar Lake and Upper Silver Lake. Install new accessible dock and boat launch (complete) and add accessible kayak launch. Undertake trail improvements, natural area restoration and forest management to provide quality experiences in nature. Assist the City with acquisition of additional parkland to increase park acreage. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$1,300,000 in ARPA funding and \$915,000 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program.

#### **Location**

Pontiac Oaks, formerly known as Hawthorne Park, is a 77-acre park in Pontiac. The park is operated by OCP and owned by the City of Pontiac.

#### **Outreach and Engagement**

- Survey – August 7-30, 2023
- Planning Open Houses – August 21, 22 and 26, 2023
- Design Open House – July 16, 2024



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## Status – In Process

OCP management commenced in July of 2023, and the park formally transitioned to Pontiac Oaks on October 3, 2023, making it the 15<sup>th</sup> park in the OCP system. Pontiac Oaks improvements are being planned and executed in two phases:

Phase I is complete – it addressed the immediate needs of the park to be safely open to the public:

- New accessible fishing pier
- Restroom facilities – with restored utilities and a new roof and furnishings
- The playground was cleaned up and outdated equipment replaced
- Regular maintenance and cleaning by OCP

Phase II is underway – construction has started and is anticipated to be completed by Fall 2025:

- Accessible pathways
  - Nature-based play pockets
  - Improved lake views
  - New pavilion
  - Accessible kayak launch
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## Crystal Lake Park Revitalization

### MASTER PLAN KEY

1. PARKING LOT
2. PAVILION WITH GRILL AND TABLES
3. ASPHALT SIDEWALK
4. EXISTING CONCRETE VIEWING AREA
5. EXISTING COURT AREA AND CONCRETE PAD



*Photo: first phase master plan for Crystal Lake Park in Pontiac*

### Project Agreement

Grant Agreement – August 8, 2023

### Location

Crystal Lake Park is a 43-acre park along the north side of Crystal Lake in the southwest portion of the City of Pontiac. Currently closed to the public, it is owned and operated by Pontiac.

### Summary Project Scope

The City of Pontiac received a \$500,000 grant from the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan to reclaim and revitalize Crystal Lake Park so that its abundant environmental, recreation and historic resources may be enjoyed by residents. Due to vandalism and deteriorating conditions, the park has been closed. Funding will provide resources for clean-up and repair and restoration of the amenities.

### Status – In Process

Pontiac has received 50% of the grant funds. Mowing and brush removal are complete. The City has contracted with CTI Contractor Services for construction, which will begin June 2025 and is anticipated to be complete September 2026. The park master plan will be phased to ensure park opens to residents within the grant period.



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## Royal Oak Township

### Mack-Rowe Park



*Photo: Grand Opening at new playground at Mack-Rowe Park on May 18, 2024*

### Project Agreement

License Agreement – May 11, 2023

### Summary Project Scope

The Charter Township of Royal Oak was allocated \$300,000 from the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan for a new accessible playground with associated access routes, amenities, and manufacturer's warranty for play equipment. With the partnership of Township staff and elected officials, OCP completed the project for Royal Oak Township.

### Location

Mack-Rowe Park is a five-acre park owned and operated by the Charter Township of Royal Oak.

### Outreach and Engagement

- Planning Open Houses – June 17 and July 26, 2023
- Grand Opening – May 18, 2024

### Status – Closed

The playground replacement project removed outdated equipment and expanded the playground area from 2,450 square feet to approximately 5,250 square feet. The new playground has an urban nature theme and is appropriate for children ages two to 12. Features include six swings (two infant and one accessible); four slides; two musical play elements; two spring riders; three climbing structures; and several activity panels that promote sensory experience and imaginative play. Poured-in-place rubber surfacing enhances access to the main playground features. Two bench seats with backs and shade structures are located around the play area.

Remaining grant funds provided for park rules signs, fence replacement, tree removals and planting, sport court surfacing on the basketball court and conversion of the tennis court into a roller-skating rink.

# Southfield

## Catalpa Oaks County Park



Figure: Schematic master plan for Catalpa Oaks

### Summary Project Scope

Improve the parking lot with new pavement and stormwater management and add an accessible plaza with shaded gathering and seating areas to welcome visitors to the park. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$750,000 in ARPA funding and \$1,490,000 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program.

### Location

Catalpa Oaks is a 24-acre Oakland County Park located in the City of Southfield.

### Outreach and Engagement

- Stakeholder Engagement / Parks Improvement Planning Report by OHM – September 1, 2022

### Status – In Process

OCP contracted with PEA for design and engineering services, and construction management contract with DeMaria was executed December 10, 2024. The park closed in May to allow for work on new picnic shelter, improved accessible pathways, playground expansion and paved parking lot. Renovations are expected to conclude in Spring 2026 and intermittent closures are anticipated throughout that year to allow for turf growth.



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## Southfield Oaks County Park



*Figure: Southfield Oaks concept sketch*

### Project Agreements

- Interlocal Partnership Agreement – November 29, 2023
- Park Action Plan – March 28, 2024

### Summary Project Scope

Natural resources management and park development of the former nine-hole golf course will provide quality experiences in nature with accessible trails, boardwalks and access to the Rouge River in a restored grassland and forest habitat. Seating areas will provide opportunities to socialize and relax in a natural setting. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$1,500,000 in ARPA funding and \$1,500,000 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program. OCP also received \$300,000 from Sustain Our Great Lakes, a public-private partnership administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. These funds will be used to reconnect and restore four acres of floodplain along the Rouge River.

### Location

Southfield Oaks is a 39-acre area located within Beech Woods Park in the City of Southfield. The area is operated by OCP and owned by the City of Southfield.

### Outreach and Engagement

- Survey – November 16 – December 8, 2023
- Planning Open Houses – December 5, 2023

### Status – In Process

OCP management commenced April 1, 2024. OCP contracted with Stantec for design and engineering services and construction management. The former golf course will get new trails, restored natural areas, interpretive stations and play and seating areas. Southfield Oaks is expected to open in 2026.

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## Beech Woods Park Playground and Shade Structure Project



*Figure: City of Southfield Beech Woods Park playground*

### Project Agreement

Grant Agreement – November 29, 2023

### Summary Project Scope

The City of Southfield was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan for the construction of an inclusive playground designed to provide a safe and engaging environment for children of all abilities. This inclusive approach promotes social interaction and enables children to develop valuable friendships while playing together.

### Location

Beech Woods Park is an 82-acre park owned and operated by the City of Southfield.

### Status – In Process

Southfield has received 50% of the grant funds. Construction is underway and about 90% of the playground is complete, including the concrete, sidewalks, irrigation and stone seating area. All playground equipment has been received from the vendor and most has been installed. Outstanding components include the rubber surfacing – which is in process – mulch, plantings and installation of the last few elements of the playground. The project is anticipated to be completed by June 2025.

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## Waterford Township

### Waterford Oaks County Park



*Figure: Waterford Oaks Renovation Master Plan*

#### **Summary Project Scope**

Creation of a new and expanded playground and an accessible plaza with shaded gathering and seating areas to welcome visitors to the park and provide opportunities to socialize and relax. The project is funded by the OCP Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan, including \$3,500,000 in ARPA funding and \$1,000,000 from the OCP Capital Improvement Program.

#### **Location**

Waterford Oaks is a 199-acre Oakland County Park located in Waterford Township.

#### **Outreach and Engagement**

- Stakeholder Engagement / Parks Improvement Planning Report by OHM – September 1, 2022



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### **Status – In Process**

OCP contracted with DLZ for design and engineering services and a construction management contract with DeMaria was executed December 10, 2024.

The existing platform tennis courts have been repaired, repainted and lined for pickleball (dual use).

The newly named “Cattail Cove” (formerly “Paradise Peninsula”) section of Waterford Oaks closed in May to allow for a major playground expansion, new restrooms, new pavilion and new fitness area. It is anticipated to reopen in 2026.

The final phase of the project will focus on development of an overall master plan for the park that considers the future of the entire park, including its trail system and various facilities.

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