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OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS AND FARMINGTON HILLS ANNOUNCE PLAN FOR INCREASED INVESTMENT, IMPROVEMENTS AT HERITAGE PARK

Public information and input sessions planned for fall to help shape the park's future

FARMINGTON HILLS, Mich. (August 14, 2025) – The City of Farmington Hills and Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission (OCPRC) have taken an important first step forward on a multi-million dollar plan to maintain and enhance Heritage Park, a beloved 211-acre park known for its hiking trails, nature center, splash pad, historic buildings, and more.

A preliminary agreement, unanimously approved by Farmington Hills City Council and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners, outlines a framework for long-term collaboration focused on the improvement, operation and maintenance of one of the largest and most popular recreation destinations in south Oakland County. The preliminary agreement provides for an investment of Oakland County Parks millage revenues back into Farmington Hills, including:

- An initial payment of **\$4 million** to recognize prior investments made by city taxpayers in the park
- Financial support for park capital improvement projects, park operation and maintenance costs during a 30-year period
- Increased county park services and programming at the park

City and county leaders will work together toward a mutually agreeable final plan following Farmington Hills public engagement opportunities. City and Oakland County Parks representatives will be on site to gather input and address questions during the following key events:

- **September 19** - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m., Heritage Celebration & Hayrides at Heritage Park, 24915 Farmington Rd.
- **October 4** - Noon - 3 p.m., Citywide Open House, Farmington Hills City Hall, 31555 W. Eleven Mile Rd.
- **October 7** - 5 - 8 p.m., Hay Day/Fly & Fry, Heritage Park, 24915 Farmington Rd.

“Heritage Park is a treasured oasis in our city — a true gem offering trails, green spaces, and recreational opportunities for people of all ages, interests, and abilities,” said Farmington Hills City Manager, Gary Mekjian. “Through this proposed interlocal agreement with the county, we intend to polish this gem so it will shine more brightly to benefit the community for generations to come.”

What the Interlocal Agreement Could Mean for Park Users

The agreement calls for improved trails, upgraded facilities, activity and gathering areas, and greater environmental preservation, such as habitat restoration, and sustainable infrastructure. Admission and parking will be free of charge.

The agreement is part of OCPRC’s long-term investment aimed at expanding access, improving facilities, and providing high-quality experiences for residents across Oakland County. Last year alone, an estimated 750,000 people visited Heritage Park.

“This is an extraordinary opportunity to better serve the residents of Farmington Hills and surrounding areas,” said Oakland County Parks Director, Chris Ward. “OCPRC is committed to preserving what residents already love about the park while bringing additional resources that will allow even more people to enjoy it.”

“This is exactly the kind of project where county funding makes a visible, lasting impact,” said Oakland County Commissioner William Miller. “By investing in Heritage Park, we’re not just upgrading facilities — we’re preserving the trails, open spaces, and experiences residents already cherish.”

“Heritage Park is one of our community’s treasures,” added Oakland County Commissioner Gwen Markham. “This interlocal agreement ensures we protect what people love about the park while expanding opportunities for recreation and education. It’s about bringing county investment home to benefit the people who live here.”

The transition will take place gradually, with expected full operational agreement beginning March 31, 2026, following public engagement sessions.

To learn more, visit OaklandCountyParks.com.

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About Oakland County Parks

Founded nearly 60 years ago, Oakland County Parks has 17 locations boasting more than 7,000 acres of natural areas and miles of scenic trails that provide guests with year-round opportunities for recreation, wellness and connection to nature.

From championship golf courses and a destination waterpark, to accessible playscapes and flourishing wildlife habitats, Oakland County Parks offers something for everyone while staying committed to promoting inclusion, environmental stewardship and strengthening communities

through innovative programs, partnerships and events that bring people together. Learn more: OaklandCountyParks.com.

About Farmington Hills

The City of Farmington Hills is a place where everyone is welcome. Founded in 1973, it is one of the largest communities in Oakland County. Farmington Hills is home to more than 83,000 residents who speak more than 60 languages, and more than 75 Fortune 500 businesses, including multinational corporations like Nissan and Bosch.

The City is known for its extensive amenities, including over 600 acres of parks, 90 athletic fields, six miles of hiking and walking trails, the Farmington Hills Golf Club, and an Ice Arena. Farmington Hills is also home to The Hawk, an award-winning, approximately 270,000-square-foot recreation and arts venue, which includes The Hawk Theatre and The Hawk Makerspace. For more information, visit fhgov.com.