



## **WHITE LAKE OAKS PARK VISION AND FACILITY CONCEPTS**

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# Park Vision

Over the next ten years, Oakland County Parks and Recreation will provide services and facilities that complement the natural setting of White Lake Oaks, while increasing the long-term sustainability of the park and the Oakland County Parks system. The park vision looks forward ten years and describes the park after the recommended actions of the park planning process have been successfully implemented:

- Enjoyment of the woods, wetlands, and open space is an integral part of the White Lake Oaks experience, providing relief from the traffic and congestion of the M-59 corridor
- Parking lots meet capacity needs for both the Golf Course and Conference Center and pedestrians have a safe route across Pontiac Lake Road from the North Parking Lot to the Conference Center
- Accessibility is enhanced throughout the park
- Implementation of a long-term golf strategy and design update has adapted the course to meet the needs of current-day golfers and provided practice and training facilities focused on the next generation of golfers
- Golf programs and leagues for all ages and abilities are scheduled on a regular basis and are helping to grow participation in the game of golf
- Stewardship actions in the western portion of the park (former Girl Scout property) are integrated into collaborative regional efforts to conserve the Huron River corridor and improve the quality of water and natural resources in the Huron River watershed
- The public has the opportunity to experience and enjoy the western portion of the park through trail access and stewardship activities
- Implementation of customer service and marketing strategies for the Conference Center, developed collaboratively with the contracted vendor, have enhanced the customer's experience and increased the number and variety of scheduled events
- Facility improvements and improvements to business and operating practices have increased customer satisfaction of existing visitor populations; drawn new target populations to the park; and created new programmatic and revenue-generation opportunities

# Park Planning Units

The Baseline Park Analysis identified distinct planning units where similar park and recreation services are delivered. Planning units may be located in a specific geographic area in the park (Location-Specific Planning Units) or considered dispersed over the entire park (Park-Wide Planning Units). Park operations are called out as a separate category (Park Operation Planning Units). In some cases, new facilities are proposed for the park that would introduce services that are not currently offered (Proposed Service Planning Units) – these areas may or may not have a geographic location identified.

## Park-Wide Planning Units

1. Natural Resource Management
2. Park Entrances, Roadways and Parking
3. Maintenance, Utilities and Security
4. Technology
5. Non-Recreational Features
6. Park Trails and Regional Connections

## Location-Specific Planning Units

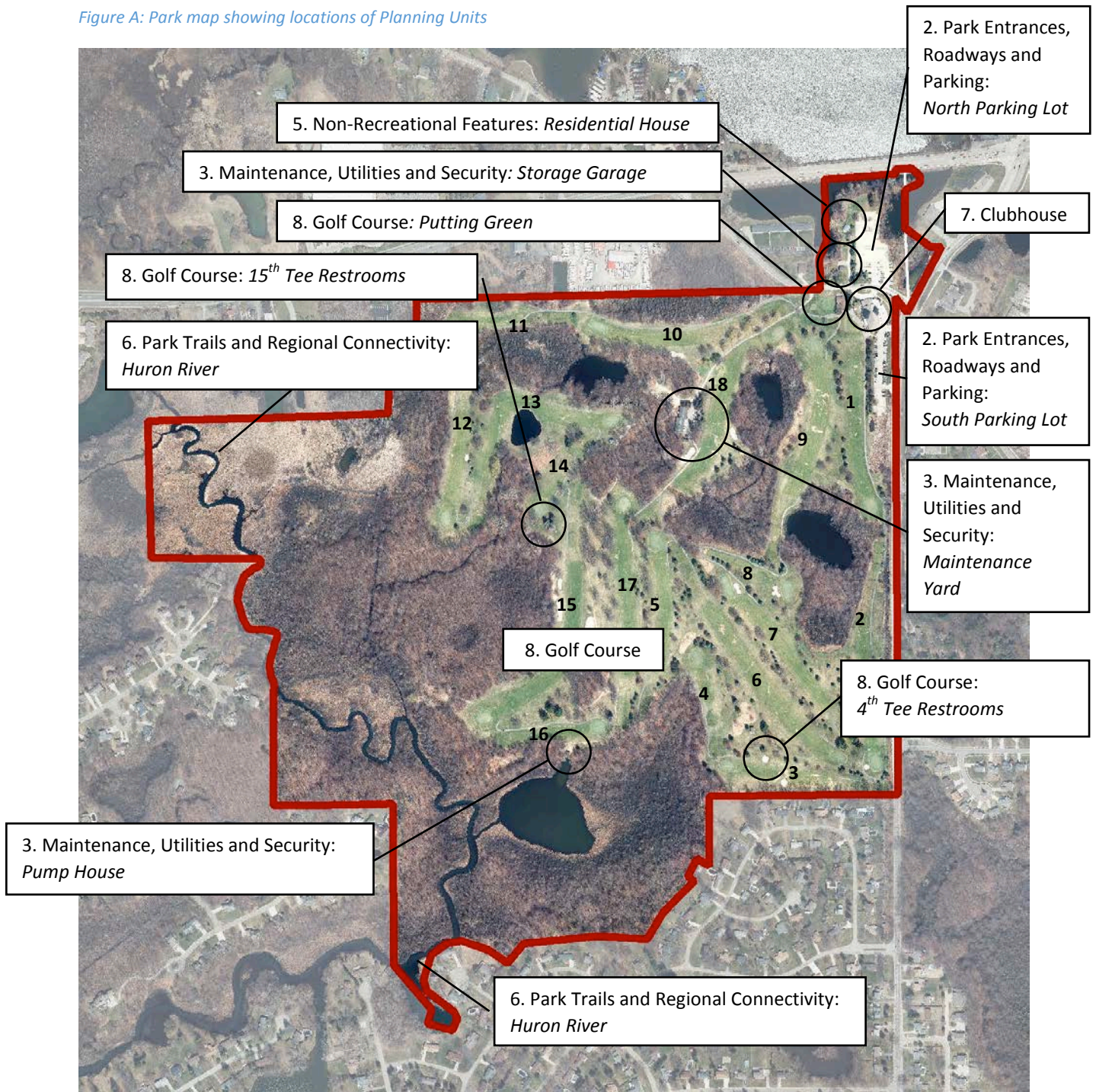
7. Clubhouse
8. Golf Course

## Park Operation Planning Units

9. Organized Programs and Events
10. Data Collection and Management
11. Response to Changing Needs and Trends



Figure A: Park map showing locations of Planning Units



# Summary Concepts

## 10-Year Concepts

The following table links the Facility Concepts developed with existing or proposed capital improvement (CIP) or maintenance projects or identifies if the Facility Concept would be implemented through planning and/or operational actions. The table provides estimates of potential budgetary effects of implementing Facility Concepts. For more details about CIP and maintenance projects, please refer to the current Capital Improvement Budget & Maintenance Management Plan (OCPRC, 8/4/2016)

*Table 1: Summary Table of Facility Concepts and Budget Effects*

10-Year Concept		Planning and/or Operations Actions	Transition Plan/Accessibility Actions	Maintenance Forecast	CIP Forecast	CIP or Maintenance Management Plans Project Name
<b>PARK-WIDE PLANNING UNITS</b>						
<b>1. <u>Natural Resource Management</u></b>						
A	Management of No-Mow Areas	✓				
B	Stormwater and Turfgrass Certification Compliance	✓				
C	Invasive Species Management	✓				
D	Wildlife Management	✓				
E	Forestry Management	✓				
F	Grassland Management	✓				
<b>2. <u>Park Entrances, Roadways and Parking</u></b>						
A	Pavement Management	✓	✓			
B	Park Entrance Update	✓	✓		\$ 25,000	WLG Sign Replacement
C	North Parking Lot Expansion and Accessibility	✓	✓		\$ 281,250	WLC North Parking Lot Expansion – Construction
					\$281,250	WLG North Parking Lot - Construction
D	Pontiac Lake Road Crossing Redesign	✓	✓		TBD	
E	South Parking Lot Accessibility	✓	✓			
<b>3. <u>Maintenance, Utilities and Security</u></b>						
A	Boundary Management	✓			\$ 52,000 TBD	WLG Fenceline Replacement New Project/Management of western boundary
B	Maintenance and Building Management – Maintenance and Storage Buildings	✓			\$ 20,000	WLG Maintenance Building Addition – Design
					\$200,000	WLG Maintenance Building Addition – Construction
					\$ 80,400	WLG Storage Building – Constr
					\$ 9,500	WLG Maintenance Building Furnace
C	Maintenance and Building Management – Cart Barn	✓			TBD	

10-Year Concept		Planning and/or Operations Actions	Transition Plan/ Accessibility Actions	Maintenance Forecast	CIP Forecast	CIP or Maintenance Management Plans Project Name
D	LUST Remediation	✓		\$10,000		Engineering Study
<b>4. <a href="#">Technology</a></b>						
A	Fiber Optic Upgrades	✓			TBD	
<b>5. <a href="#">Non-Recreational Features</a></b>						
A	House and Garage Removal	✓		\$25,000		
<b>6. <a href="#">Park Trails and Regional Connectivity</a></b>						
A	Huron River Trail Connectivity	✓	✓			
B	Trail Planning and Development	✓	✓			
C	Access Routes	✓	✓			
D	Cart Paths	✓	✓			
<b>LOCATION-SPECIFIC PLANNING UNITS</b>						
<b>7. <a href="#">Clubhouse</a></b>						
A	Conference Center Customer Service and Marketing Strategy	✓	✓			
B	Conference Center Interior Renovation and Accessibility Improvements	✓	✓		\$ 40,000 \$ 300,000  \$ 95,000 \$ 60,000 \$ 259,000	WLC Interior Renovation - Design WLC Interior Renovation – Construction WLC Acoustical Renovations WLC Grill Room Remodeling – Design WLC Grill Room Remodeling - Construction
<b>8. <a href="#">Golf Course</a></b>						
A	Golf Course Strategy and Design Update	✓	✓		TBD	Design Update
B	Drainage and Irrigation Improvements	✓			\$ 18,000 \$ 180,000 TBD \$ 290,000	WLG Drainage Improvements – Design WLG Drainage Improvements – Construction WLG Irrigation System – Replacement – Phase II WLG Irrigation System – Replacement – Phase III
C	Protective Fencing	✓	✓		TBD	
D	1 <sup>st</sup> Tee Renovation and Cart Staging Area	✓	✓		\$150,000	1 <sup>st</sup> Tee Renovation
E	Golf Course Restroom Accessibility Improvements	✓	✓			

10-Year Concept	Planning and/or Operations Actions	Transition Plan/Accessibility Actions	Maintenance Forecast	CIP Forecast	CIP or Maintenance Management Plans Project Name
<b>PARK OPERATION PLANNING UNITS</b>					
<b>9. <a href="#">Organized Programs and Events</a></b>					
A	Community Golf Programs	✓	✓		
B	Stewardship Activities	✓			
<b>10. <a href="#">Data Collection and Management</a></b>					
A	Park Visitor Surveys	✓			
<b>PROPOSED SERVICES PLANNING UNIT – Not Applicable</b>					
	FORECAST AMOUNTS		\$ 35,000	\$ 2,341,400	
	REINVESTMENT CALCULATION <sup>i</sup>				
	Total Combined Maintenance and CIP			\$ 2,376,400	
	CIP/Maintenance Forecast for New Assets			(\$ 0 )	* New assets
	Total Reinvestment in Existing Assets			\$2,376,000	
	Replacement Value of Existing Assets (2015)			\$6,528,620	
	<b>Average annual reinvestment over 10 years</b>			<b>3.64%</b>	

<sup>i</sup> REINVESTMENT CALCULATION: The **Average Annual Reinvestment** is expressed as a percentage of the total replacement value of park assets and is calculated with the following formula:

$$\frac{[(A + B - C) / D]}{E}$$

Where:

A = Total forecast maintenance costs (\$)

B = Total forecast CIP costs (\$)

C = Total forecast CIP costs for new assets (\$)

D = Replacement Value of Park Assets (White Lake's assets have an estimated value of **\$6,528,620** in 2015 dollars)

E = Number of years of the planning period (10 years for park plans)



# Park-Wide Planning Units

## 1. Natural Resource Management

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Management of No-Mow Areas

No-mow areas within the golf course are allowed to grow up in native grassland species. Maintenance includes periodic mowing, controlling invasive species by selective herbicide applications, hand weeding and/or prescribed burning. Include existing pond bank restoration within this management activity.

#### B. Stormwater and Turfgrass Certification Compliance

Recertification of The Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP) is required every 3 years.

#### C. Invasive Species Management

Invasive species control methods include prescribed burning, manual removal and chemical removal. The majority of the western portion of the park (recent Girl Scout property acquisition) is severely impacted by moderate to dense glossy buckthorn, oriental bittersweet and other woody invasives. Management to an ecologically acceptable density of buckthorn and other invasives, such that the property harbors reasonable wildlife habitat and ecological function values, would require significant sustained economic investment.

As progress is made and the seedbank is purged, annual treatment costs should decline. However, assuming buckthorn could be controlled to acceptable density levels within the first 5-7 years of active management; annual maintenance control costs would likely remain at 25-33% of estimated initial annual control costs. (OCPRC/NR 2015)

#### D. Wildlife Management

Periodic goose management which may include culling or egg and/or nest destruction. Wildlife surveys may also be conducted--surveys of deer, grassland birds, amphibians, reptiles, and nest box monitoring.

#### E. Forestry Management

Forestry management includes prioritized hazardous tree removal, tree replacement program, and pest and disease diagnostics. Continued management of existing wooded slope restoration. Potential thinning of golf course woodlands for increased air flow for turf grass.

#### F. Grassland Management

Grassland restoration includes continued management of native pollinator garden.

### Recreational Trends

Management of the natural resources within the Oakland County Parks system is important to the health of watersheds and regional ecosystems, but it is also an important aspect of recreation. In the Outdoor Foundation's national study, nearly half of all Americans 6 years and over who participated in outdoor recreation cited nature as a motivator for getting outdoors. The reasons cited were: be close to nature (48%), observe scenic beauty (46%), and enjoy sounds and smells of nature (44%) (Outdoor Foundation, 2014).

Current golf course design trends place an emphasis on sustainability, identifying it as a necessary visible component of the way the facility is marketed to the community (Staples 2016). Water conservation is a key element of sustainability - the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America reports that U.S. golf courses reduced water use by 21.8% from 2005 to 2013. Water conservation and management should be considered throughout the design process, including the management of extreme water events (ASGCA 2016).



Public Engagement – 2010 Community Survey

**Acquiring and Developing Open Space:** Based on the sum of their top two choices, the open space options that households most support are: “open space should be acquired and improved for passive use” (40%), “open space should be acquired and left undeveloped for future generations” (39%), and “open space should be acquired and improved for passive and active use” (37%) (Leisure Vision / ETC Institute, 2010).

## 2. Park Entrances, Roadways and Parking

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Pavement Management

Management of pavement should include marking of access aisle at the passenger loading area of the Clubhouse main entrance. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, p. 3; photo 9).

#### B. Park Entrance Update

Review entrance signage; coordinate with branding project. Relate location of sign with township ordinances.

#### C. North Parking Lot Expansion and Accessibility

Current parking lot does not accommodate need when multiple events are scheduled, for example, when a wedding and golf leagues are scheduled at the same time. Demolition of the existing residential house and garage will create the space needed for the expansion. As part of the expansion, create sufficient accessible and van-accessible parking spaces with appropriate signage and striping. Locate on the closest accessible route to the Clubhouse. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, pp. 2-3, photos 6-8).

#### D. Pontiac Lake Road Crossing Redesign

Safety of the pedestrian crossing from the North Parking Lot to the Clubhouse continues to be a concern. Medians and pedestrian refuge islands are recommended by the Federal Highway Administration as proven solutions for safe crossing in urban and suburban areas (FHWA 2011). The appropriate design solution should be explored in conjunction with planning for the North Parking Lot expansion.

#### E. South Parking Lot Accessibility

Create sufficient accessible and van-accessible parking spaces with appropriate signage and striping. Locate on the closest accessible route to the Clubhouse. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, pp. 1-2, photos 1-4).

Implement accessibility improvements to the passenger loading area at the Clubhouse south entrance, including regrading to the appropriate slope and separating the passenger loading zone from the roadway. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, p. 2; photo 5)

### 3. Maintenance, Utilities and Security

#### 10-Year Facility Concepts

##### A. Boundary Management

Identify deteriorating fences and conduct replacements as needed. Complete development of OCPR Boundary Standards (OCPRC/PRD, 2016) and identify appropriate boundary delineation standard to apply to recently acquired wetland and riparian areas.

##### B. Building and Equipment Management – Maintenance Building

Current maintenance and storage buildings have insufficient space to store and maintain equipment. Review capacity and condition of these buildings and plan needed additions and/or renovations.

The Maintenance Building furnace is old and inefficient, heating only four rooms at a time. Replacement is needed. A suggested interim solution is to insulate the roof using R-19 rolled insulation.

Facilities and Maintenance maintains a 25-year schedule of recommended building equipment replacements based on life-cycle. The following replacements have been identified for the Maintenance Buildings:

Unit	Size (BTU)	Forecast Fiscal Year
Maintenance Building Furnace	38,000	2017
Water heater	75,500	2024
Water softener	30-40,000 grains	2024

##### C. Building and Equipment Management – Cart Barn

The Cart Barn is a priority for roof replacement. Shingles have been replaced as they have fallen off. Leaks from the roof are especially problematic because the golf cart recharging cords are in the ceiling of the Cart Barn.

Insulation to the cart barn is needed to protect golf cart batteries from freezing. Battery replacement costs approximately \$5,000 annually at White Lake Oaks. Much of the battery deterioration is due to exposure to freezing temperatures. Once the cart barn is insulated, greenhouse heaters can be brought in during extreme temperatures to prevent freezing.

##### D. LUST Remediation

An underground tank was removed in 1972 and contaminated soils documented per MDEQ website. Conduct engineering studies to understand extent of contamination and plan for remediation.

## 4. Technology

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Fiber Optic Upgrades

Upgrades to the lines servicing the Clubhouse are needed for faster processing of RecTrac transactions, as well as providing high speed Wi-Fi to visitors.

### Recreational Trends

Modern technology is changing the way we access outdoor recreation. According to the 2013 Outdoor Participation Report, outdoor participants ages 18-24 use technology the most to engage in outdoor recreation with adults ages 25 to 44 coming in second. For these two age groups, 30-40% use smart phones and iPods or other music players. There is little variation between genders, except for a somewhat higher iPod/music player use among females (Outdoor Foundation, 2013, pp. 30-31). The Report also looked at use of technology among diverse populations – Hispanic participants used technology the most (40% use smart phones), followed by participants from Asian/Pacific Islander (38% use smart phones) and African American (33% use smart phones) populations. Caucasian participants reported the least use of technology (23% use smart phones) while engaging in outdoor recreation (Outdoor Foundation, 2013, p. 51).

## 5. Non-Recreational Features

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. House and Garage Removal

The house and garage will be removed in coordination with the North Parking Lot expansion. Early preparation for the removal of a park asset per Oakland County Board of Commissioners rules should start immediately in coordination with the Property Acquisition and Management (PAM) work group.

Note that furnace replacement was scheduled for the house in 2015 but was not implemented due to plans for eventual removal. Water softener replacement is also scheduled for 2023.

## 6. Park Trails and Regional Connectivity

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Huron River Trail Connectivity / Pontiac Lake Gateway

Collaborate with White Lake Township and the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) to plan for future public access to the Huron River at White Lake Oaks. Prioritize local water trail access for short kayak trips in partnership with the Township, followed by long-term planning to establish connections with the Huron River Water Trail to the south and Pontiac Lake to the north.

White Lake Township owns an 8.6-acre parcel on the Huron River south of White Lake Oaks with frontage on Elizabeth Lake Road and approximately 857 feet of river frontage. The township is considering development of this parcel into a potential launch site for non-motorized paddling within the next 2-3 years. A proposed initial phase of development would provide a short kayak route from the township launch through White Lake Oaks and back. Future phases could establish access to Oxbow Lake, which has two bar/restaurant establishments with lake access, and provide a crossing under M-59 with eventual connections to Pontiac Lake.

Connectivity of White Lake Oaks within White Lake Township should consider the context of the Pontiac Lake Gateway, which is a redevelopment opportunity envisioned in White Lake Township's *Master Plan for Land Use 2010-2011*. The Gateway's purpose is to "showcase White Lake Township at its only major entry from the east by enhancing lake views, removing blighted structures, and improving connectivity for pedestrians" and to serve as an attraction to users of the Oakland County International Airport. Enhanced views of Pontiac Lake and White Lake Oaks from roadways and sidewalks would "promote the Township as a Four Seasons Playground" (White Lake Township/Birchler Arroyo Associates, 9/15/2011, pp. 51-53).

HRWC coordinates the Huron River Water Trail<sup>i</sup>, which currently runs from the Detroit River at Pointe Mouillee State Game Area to the east end of Proud Lake within Proud Lake State Recreation Area, approximately 7 miles southwest of White Lake Oaks. Currently, there are no future plans to extend the water trail north. The following lakes and public areas are located north of the current northern terminus of the trail: Commerce Lake, Mill Race Park, Fox Lake, Mud Lake (south end of Brendel Lake), Cedar Island Lake, Oxbow Lake, White Lake Oaks County Park, Pontiac Lake State Recreation Area, and Indian Springs Metropark.

#### B. Internal Park Trails

Trail planning in the western portion of the park must coordinate with natural resource stewardship and invasive species management; collaborate with local community and regional planning efforts. Due to the site's underlying hydric soils and lack of uplands, trail improvements and development will rely on boardwalks as a basis for design (OCPRC/NR, 2015).

#### C. Access Routes

As parking lot and building improvements are implemented, create or improve existing access routes to ensure access to facilities for persons of all abilities. Access routes should provide safe connections from access aisles from the South Parking Lot and North Parking Lot to the Clubhouse and Golf Course. Cracks and unevenness of pavement along access routes and at building entrances needs to be repaired. Running and cross slopes and abrupt level changes need to be corrected in several areas. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, pp. 4-7; photos 4, 6, 7, 10-22).

#### C. Cart Paths

Develop a cart path program to ensure that repairs and replacements are conducted on a timely basis. Cart paths are estimated to have a lifespan of 5-10 years for asphalt and 10-30 years for concrete (ASGCA, 2006). The priority

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<sup>i</sup> See <http://huronriverwatertrail.org/>



cart path for redevelopment is by the 1<sup>st</sup> tee box as part of a project to create an improved staging area for golf carts (see 8.D).

#### Recreational Trends

Running, including jogging and trail running, is the most popular outdoor activity in the United States with 53.2 million participants, nearly 19% of all Americans. It's also the most popular activity in terms of frequency, with an average of 87 outings annually per runner. Nearly 15% of trail runners in 2012 were first-time participants, while only approximately 9% of runners/joggers were first-time participants. A surge of nearly 35% of triathlon runners were first-timers, indicating a growth in this movement (Outdoor Foundation, 2013).

#### Public Engagement – 2010 Community Survey

The Oakland County residents who responded to the 2010 Community Survey were positive about investment in a regional trail network. When asked which actions households were most willing to fund with county parks and recreation dollars – the 3rd ranked choice was “purchase land to develop walking and hiking trails” (27%) and the 4th ranked choice was “develop new hard surface walking and biking trails that connect to regional trails” (22%) (Leisure Vision / ETC Institute, 2010).

# Location-Specific Planning Units

## 7. Clubhouse

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Customer Service and Marketing Strategy

Implementation of improvements and renovations at the Clubhouse should include marketing actions to ensure that both Katherine's Catering and Oakland County Parks highlight the features that make White Lake Oaks a premier wedding and conference venue. Specific wedding features, such as the bride's room and any associated services (drinks, hors d'oeuvres, concierge service, etc.) should be advertised in relevant marketing outlets. Universal access to persons of all abilities and any special accessibility features should also be highlighted.

#### B. Clubhouse Interior Renovation and Accessibility Improvements

The Clubhouse interior, including the Conference Center and the Grill Room, has not been updated since the building was constructed. Interior updates are recommended every 10-15 years to replace worn carpet, fixtures and furniture and to welcome the public with a décor that is current and attractive. Sound reverberates in the main dining room of the Conference Center. As part of the interior renovation, install panels or other measures to absorb sound and improve the acoustics in the room.

As part of an overall renovation, implement accessibility improvements, including: adjust push force on doors; remove/replace objects projecting into circulation path; lower a portion of sales or service counters; lower at least one coat hook in bride's room; adjust restroom stalls and doors; adjust mirror height in restrooms; adjust toilet and pipes to achieve needed clearance for grab bars; and adjust drinking fountains.

One accessibility improvement, *installation of compliant exit and emergency signage*, should be done as soon as feasible and not wait for the renovation to be implemented. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, pp. 8-15; photos 23-48).

## 8. Golf Course

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Golf Strategy and Design Update

We propose development of a long-term golf strategy that increases the resources we provide to the community and expands the ways in which the community relates to our parks that contain golf courses. Consultation with a professional firm that is well-versed in current trends in golf and the most up-to-date science and engineering related to golf course design could aid in the development of this strategy.

In a white paper regarding the status of municipal golf course, Andy Staples of Staples Golf Design recommends that the time has come for communities to institute innovative changes to update the golf course as a community resource or make the tough decision to close and repurpose the land (Staples 2016) –potentially opening the door for new and innovative recreational opportunities.

Four major opportunities that can be seized to update a golf course as a community resource:

1. **Health and Wellness**  
The benefits of physical activity and interacting with nature are well-documented. A stronger emphasis on these aspects, as well as accessibility for persons of all abilities, has the potential to diversify the user-base and more fully incorporate the facility into the surrounding communities (Staples 2016).
2. **Family and Kids**  
A focus on family activities and child-centered programs may open opportunities for quality parent-child experiences and provide constructive activities for youth in the community (Staples 2016).
3. **Diversity of Park Users**  
This opportunity focuses on providing amenities, events and programs that are more inclusive and not restricted to golf. Examples include: “open greenspace dedicated to education, local farmers’ markets, musical/theatrical performances, health-oriented programs, etc.”, all of which will help expand the ways in which the community relates to the facility (Staples 2016).
4. **Conservation and Education**  
The emphasis on sustainability should be a priority and a visible component of the way the facility is marketed to the community (Staples 2016). Water conservation is a key element - the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America reports that U.S. golf courses reduced water use by 21.8% from 2005 to 2013. Water conservation and management should be considered throughout the design process, including the management of extreme water events (ASGCA 2016).

The design update should take into account all aspects of the golf course and ensure that a time table is in place for replacement and update of all components. The following table of golf course component life cycles is provided by the American Society of Golf Course Architects:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ▪ Greens – 15 to 30 years (per ASGCA; staff reports greens lifecycle of 30-50 years) | ▪ Cart Paths (Asphalt) – 5 to 10 years   |
| ▪ Bunker Sand – 5 to 7 years   | ▪ Cart Paths (Concrete) – 15 to 30 years |
| ▪ Irrigation System (Varies by quality) – 10 to 30 years                             | ▪ Practice Range Tees – 5 to 10 years    |
| ○ Irrigation Control System – 10 to 15 years   | ▪ Tees – 15 to 20 years                  |
| ○ PVC Pipe (Under pressure) – 10 to 30 years   | ▪ Corrugate Metal Pipes – 15 to 30 years |
| ○ Pump System – 15 to 20 years   | ▪ Bunker Drainage Pipes – 5 to 10 years  |
|  | ▪ Mulch – 1 to 3 years                   |
|  | ▪ Grass – Varies                         |
- (ASGCA 2006)

### B. Drainage and Irrigation System Improvements

Scheduled updates to the drainage and irrigation of the Golf Course ensure that culverts, irrigation lines, heads and other infrastructure are in good working condition. As part of drainage improvements, replacement of approximately 200 feet of culvert is anticipated. Expected irrigation system updates include satellite replacement (Phase II) and replacement of lines and heads (Phase III).

### C. Protective Fencing

Evaluate condition of protective fencing separating golf course from South Parking lot and replace as needed.

### D. 1<sup>st</sup> Tee Renovation and Golf Cart Staging Area

Replace existing 1<sup>st</sup> tee to downsize and create space for a golf cart staging area to relieve the congestion around the golf carts at the rear of the Clubhouse.

### E. Golf Course Restrooms Accessibility Improvements

Make accessibility improvements, including: remove pipes on 4<sup>th</sup> Tee Restroom building that protrude into circulation path; adjust restroom signage; adjust sink height and cover exposed pipes; adjust level of soap dispenser location; adjust grab bar locations; adjust force required to operate flush toilets; and replace toilet paper dispensers. See *Transition Plan for White Lake Oaks Golf Course* for details and specifications (OCPRC, 8/3/2016, pp. 16-19; photos 49-53).

### Recreational Trends

The first municipal golf course opened in 1895 in the Bronx, NY. Municipal golf courses were established throughout the country with a focus on providing a community amenity and provide access and enjoyment to the everyday golfer. This emphasis has declined as the pressure to succeed financially has become more prevalent – especially as golf participation has declined nationwide. The golf participation rate declined by 20% between 2005 and 2015. Declining revenues has meant less investment in infrastructure at municipal golf courses (Staples 2016).

The National Golf Foundation (NGF) documents a slow but steady decline in golf participation between 2011 and 2015, citing that the attrition is confined mainly to those who never really got into the game. Approximately 80% of players are identified as committed golfers each year (NGF 2016).

*Table 2: Number of persons who played at least one round of golf in the U.S. 2011-2015*

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total Golfers	25.7 million	25.3 million	24.7 million	24.7 million	24.1 million
Committed Golfers	20.9 million (81%)	20.9 million (83%)	20.7 million (84%)	20.5 million (83%)	19.5 million (81%)

Source: (NGF 2016)

NGF also reports that “an estimated 81 million, including 62 million non-golfers, watched golf on TV in 2015 while 27 million read about the game in traditional or electronic media. One out of three Americans – about 95 million – played golf on a golf course or alternate venue, watched on TV or read about it in 2015. The interest is there. The challenge is to activate more of the people who are interested in playing, and retain a higher percentage of those who do give golf a try” (NGF 2016).



# Park Operation Planning Units

## 9. Organized Programs and Events

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Community Golf Programs

Expand the opportunities offered by White Lake Oaks in the community for constructive activities for youth and families, that encourage healthy living, and that build the skills of new golfers.

#### B. Stewardship Activities

As natural resource management of the western portion of the park develops, incorporate outreach to volunteers to participate in stewardship activities.

### Recreational Trends

Getting more beginners to enter the game through structured introduction programs like the Professional Golf Association's Get Golf Ready<sup>i</sup> is key to improving retention.

According to the National Golf Foundation: "While participation growth remains difficult to achieve, with the recession in the rear view mirror and an exciting new wave of young players in front of us, there are good reasons to be optimistic about future growth if emphasis continues to be placed on converting more beginners into committed golfers" (NGF, 2016).

## 10. Data Collection and Management

### 10-Year Facility Concepts

#### A. Park Visitor Surveys

Conduct ongoing voluntary park visitor surveys to help assess trends in park user perceptions and needs. When major change or investment is anticipated, use appropriate methods to obtain statistically significant results.

The survey will ask the following questions:

1. Rate the amenities at this Oakland County Parks golf course

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Greens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sand Traps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf Carts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Practice Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pro Shop	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pro Shop Merchandise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beverage Cart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vending and Snacks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.pga.com/play-golf-america/get-golf-ready>

2. Rate the golf course's characteristics

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	N/A
Beauty of the Course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pace of Play	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf Course Conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food Service – Quality and Selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barrier-Free Access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of Clubhouse Restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Condition of On-Course Restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helpfulness of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Golf Course Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sense of Security/Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Availability of Programs, Leagues and Other Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tee Time Reservation Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Check-In and Payment Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Tell us a little about yourself

What is the ZIP code where you live? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your gender? ☐ Male ☐ Female

What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

Including yourself, how many people in your household are:

____ Younger than 5 years old	____ 25-34 years old
____ 5-9 years old	____ 35-44 years old
____ 10-14 years old	____ 45-54 years old
____ 15-19 years old	____ 55-64 years old
____ 20-24 years old	____ 65+ years old

In the past 12 months, how often have you visited this park?

☐ Less than once a month
 ☐ 1-3 times a month
 ☐ Once a week  
☐ 2-4 times a week
 ☐ More than 5 times a week

Are you a golf league member? ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Do you have any comments or suggestions?

## 11. Response to Changing Needs and Trends

Our communities and the nature of recreation is constantly changing and evolving. One important outcome of OCPR's planning work is a constantly renewed understanding of recreational needs and trends and nimbleness in adapting to changes in the community. For this reason, in the next few years, OCPR will evaluate a range of alternative recreational uses for our existing parks and facilities – based on current documented recreational need and appropriateness to the physical site.

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