
AGENDA

THE BUCHANAN AREA RECREATION BOARD (B.A.R.B.) OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a regular meeting.

I. Call to Order**II. Pledge of Allegiance****III. Roll Call****IV. Approve Agenda****V. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)****VI. Approve Minutes**

A. Consider Approval of March 8, 2023 Minutes

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Discussion of Victory Park Basketball Court nets

B. Park Updates:

The Common/Pears Mill – Mark/Megan Weedon

Firehouse Park – Maintained by fire department volunteers

Harger Park – Mark/Megan Weedon

Kathryn Park – Jen Popielski

Buchanan Garden Club Park – Garden Club partnership

McCoy Creek Recreation Area (McCoy Creek Trail, Field of Dreams Dog Park, Centennial) – Katie Heyliger

Veterans Memorial Park – Mark/Megan Weedon

Ravish Park – Jeanne Harris

Redbud Riverfront Park –

Smith Park – Buchanan Youth Baseball/Softball Association partnership

E.B. Clark/Spafford Woods –

Victory Park/Tot Lot – Jeanne Harris

Mud Lake Bog – Rachel Plank

Madron Lake Boat Launch – Wendi Heyliger

Walton Bridge Park – Jen Popielski

VIII. New Business

A. Member Approval - Consider recommending Megan Weedon for a 3 year term, retroactive from July 2021 - July 2023

B. Consider Member Designations - Determine which terms are City and which is at-large

C. Consider Annual Review of 5-Year Master Plan

D. Consider making a motion to approve moving forward with the Victory Park Pavilion RFP

E. Discuss Picnic Tables

F. Discuss Playground Equipment and Previous Quotes

IX. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

X. Executive Comments

XI. Adjourn



BUCHANAN AREA RECREATION BOARD (B.A.R.B.)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023 – 6:00 PM

BUCHANAN CHARTER TOWNSHIP HALL – 15235 MAIN ST, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

THE BUCHANAN AREA RECREATION BOARD (B.A.R.B.) OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN in compliance with Michigan’s Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a regular meeting.

I. Call to Order

Plank Called meeting to order at **6:05PM**

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Plank led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Roll Call

Present: Jennifer Popielski, Jeanne Harris, Wendi Heyliger, Rachel Plank, Mark Weedon, Megan Weedon

Absent: Katie Heyliger

IV. Approve Agenda

Motion made by **Jeanne Harris**, seconded by **Wendi Heyliger** to approve the agenda.

Yes: **Unanimous**

No:

V. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

Dan Vigansky suggests that we review the 5-year plan annually.

VI. Approve Minutes

Motion made by **Wendi Heyliger**, seconded by Mark Weedon to approve the minutes from **February 8, 2023**, with the corrected date.

Yes: **Unanimous**

No:

VII. Unfinished Business

None

VIII. New Business

A. Reports

- 1) McCoy Creek Recreation-Katie Heyliger**
- 2) Field of Dreams Dog Park- Katie Heyliger reported it is flooded.**
- 3) Firehouse Park- Megan/Mark Weedon**
- 4)Madron Lake Boat Launch- Rachel Plank/Wendi Heyliger**
- 5)McCoy Creek Trail- Katie Heyliger**
- 6)Mud Lake Bog- Rachel Plank/Wendi Heyliger**
- 7)Garden Club Park-Jennifer Popielski**

- 8) Ravish- Rachel Plank
- 9) Veterans Memorial- Mark/Megan Weedon
- 10) Victory- Jeanne Harris
- 11) Walton Bridge Picnic Area-Jennifer Popielski
- 12) Kathryn Park-Jennifer Popielski reported there are broken picnic tables needing removed.

B. Have Fun at Buchanan Parks

Ashley Hanson reported the plans for this year’s weekly summer park days will involve child led learning and different park locations.

C. Discussion relating to Kathryn Park

Mark will forward a packet that includes playground options and put them on the agenda for the next meeting. DPW will be asked about additional picnic tables to replace the broken ones. Mark will also obtain a list of local marijuana businesses who may be interested in volunteering time to clean up parks and will be discussed at the next meeting.

IX. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

Ashley Hanson heard that Ross Sanders would be purchased and the Garden Club Park included in the sale?

Dan Vigansky reiterated approaching the Marijuana businesses for financial donations along with volunteer hours.

Emma Lysy read a public comment from Alexis Dewaters with three suggestions for teens to be able to use for recreation. These include a teen center, a teen park, and a skate park.

X. Executive Comments

None

XI. Adjourn

Motion made by Plank to Adjourn the meeting at 7:14PM.

1-2023



BUCHANAN AREA RECREATION BOARD
City of Buchanan
&
Buchanan Charter Township
Michigan
ByLaws

ARTICLE I

Name – Purpose – Authority

1. **Name.** The name of this organization is the **BUCHANAN AREA RECREATION BOARD** of the City of Buchanan, a Municipal Corporation.
2. **Purpose and Authority.** The purpose and authority of the organization shall be as defined and authorized by Ordinance No. 204 of the City of Buchanan, Berrien County, Michigan.

ARTICLE II

Board

1. **Board of Directors.** The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, The City Commission shall appoint four (4) members; two (2) that are residents of the City of Buchanan, one (1) City of Buchanan Commissioner and one (1) member at large. The Township Board of Trustees at Buchanan Charter Township shall recommend to the City Commission to appoint (3) members; two (2) that are residents of Buchanan Charter Township and one (1) Buchanan Charter Township Board of Trustees member. The City Manager of Buchanan, or his or her designee, shall attend each Board meeting but may not hold office or have voting rights.
2. **Term.**
 - a) The City Commission and Township Board, upon initial appointments as listed in this section, shall appoint one (1) member for a term of two (2) years, and two (2) members for a term of three (3) years, each appointment to terminate on June 30 of the year following the full extent of time of the original appointments. At the expiration of the terms of the members as above provided, the appointing authority for the specific membership shall fill the vacancy by an appointment for a three-year term. Any member may succeed himself.
 - b) All appointments for vacancies shall be for the unexpired term. If the unexpired term is less than two (2) years in length, such appointment shall not be considered a term for purposes of the two term limit described in Article II, paragraph 2a. If the unexpired term equals or exceeds two years, such appointment shall be considered a term for purposes of the two-term limit.

1. Chairman - Rachel Plank - Township - Board Representative
[Appointed 10/11/2021 - expires 10/11/2024](#)
2. Co-Chairman - Jeanne Harris - City
[Appointed 8/22/2022 - expires 8/22/2025](#)
3. Secretary - Jennifer Popielski - City
[Appointed 6/14/2021 – expires 6/14/2024](#)
4. Megan Weedon - City
[Unknown – Unknown](#)
[Term ended 2021](#)
5. Cayde Heyliger - Township - Township Resident
[Appointed – 05/23/2022 - expires 05/23/2025](#)
6. Wendi Heyliger - Township - Township Resident
[Appointed 10/11/2021 - expires 10/11/2024](#)
7. Mark Weedon - City - City Commission Representative
[Appointed 11/14/2022 - expires 11/13/2025](#)

Need to assign:

Popielski, Harris and Megan Weedon - two as city residents and one at-large.

2022-2026

Buchanan Community Recreation Plan



Photo by: Shelley Morgan



BUCHANAN COMMUNITY RECREATION PLAN

Prepared By:

The Buchanan Area Recreation Board

- Brittany Frantz, Chair
- Ashley Hanson, Vice Chair
- Megan Weedon, Secretary
- Sean Denison, Member (Buchanan City Mayor)
- Wendi Heyliger, Member (Buchanan Township Clerk)
- Rachel Plank, Member (Buchanan Township Treasurer)
- Dan Vigansky, Member
- Heather Grace, Ex Officio Member (Buchanan City Manager)

with assistance from Marcy Hamilton at the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission



for
 Buchanan City
 Adopted: January 24, 2022



and
 Township of Buchanan
 Adopted: January 24, 2022



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PLAN DEVELOPMENT

It is a primary function of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board to maintain a current plan for city and township owned or operated parks and recreation areas, facilities, and programs.

The 2022-2026 Buchanan Community Recreation Plan will help guide Buchanan City and Township with its parks and recreation planning and development efforts over the next five years and serve as a reference document for future decision making.

Development of the 2022 Buchanan Community Recreation Plan is in accordance with the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans, established by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Plan approval by the MDNR will enable Buchanan City and Buchanan Township to compete for state and federal recreation grants.

This plan was prepared by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) with the assistance of the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission and input from members of the community.

The **Organization Structure** chapter of the plan documents the Buchanan Area Recreation Board’s formation, legal authority and membership. It also addresses the City and Township’s administrative structures and budget resources.

The **Community Profile** is a review of Buchanan’s cultural and socio-economic characteristics and physical resources. Published socio-economic data, population statistics, land use, zoning, transportation, and natural features, were examined for this plan.

The **Recreational Inventory and Needs Assessment** focuses on the current adequacy of City and Township owned recreation land and facilities. This includes a general assessment of barrier-free accessibility of each park to persons with disabilities. Specific deficiencies and remedies will be addressed as part of all future park improvement projects.

The **Action Plan** is a determination of what actions the BARB, City and Township wish to undertake over the next five or more years. The necessity and estimated cost of each action item is described. Collectively, the proposed actions are intended to improve the community’s parks and recreation delivery system.

In the Appendix, the **Park System Financing** section provides an overview of multiple funding mechanisms available for land acquisition, facility development and parks operations. The plan adoption documents can also be found in the Appendix.

Public Involvement

Opportunities for public input occurred at meetings of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board. Further, the BARB developed an online survey that was available during October 2021. The survey had 253 respondents. Results can be found in the appendix.

Copies of the draft plan were made available for public review and comment at both the City and Township Halls, during the month of January 2022. Advanced public notice of the Plan’s availability for review and comment and the public hearing was given with an legal ad in the Berrien County Record. Only comments received were positive about the city and township working together on a joint plan for the community.

Plan Adoption

A public hearing notice was placed in the Berrien County Record two weeks prior to the Buchanan Area Recreation Board’s January meeting. The BARB recognizes that as proposed projects and actions are advanced, so is the likelihood for public interest. Therefore, the community will be given meaningful opportunities to review specific projects prior to their implementation.

Resolutions of plan adoption by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board and the City Commission and Township Board are located in the Appendix. Letters of transmittal to the Southwestern Michigan Planning Commission and Berrien County Planning Commission are located in the Appendix also. It is intended that this Plan be amended and updated as necessary, to ensure it is responsive to community needs and emerging opportunities.

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE

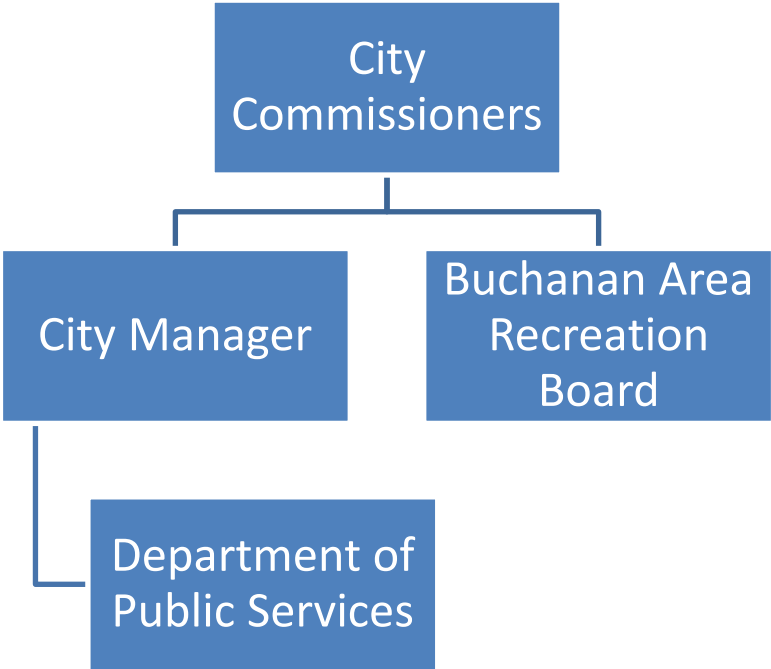
The original Buchanan Area Recreation Board was established by the Buchanan City Commission under a 1973 agreement between the City of Buchanan, Buchanan Township and Buchanan Community School Corporation, with the passage of City Ordinance Number 204. Staffing for the recreation programs was provided through the Communication Education Office of the Buchanan Community Schools. As a result of reorganization in 2008-2009 of positions at Buchanan Schools and the elimination of the Community Education Department, the BARB became null and void. The Buchanan City Commission recognized the importance of the BARB, and a restructure of the BARB Bylaws and Committee was completed in 2009 and 2018 as recreation is paramount for the community and its priorities.

The Board shall consist of seven (7) members, The City Commission shall appoint four (4) members, two (2) that are residents of the City of Buchanan, two (2) residents of a neighboring Township and two (2) members at large. The City Manager of Buchanan, or his or her designee, shall be a member of the Board but may not hold office.

All city-owned park properties and facilities are maintained by the Buchanan Department of Public Works. The BARB conducts routine inspections of all properties and the DPW attends to the necessary repairs and improvements, with help from volunteers.

Appropriations from the City’s general fund supply most of the operating revenue needed to provide park and recreation services. Fees and charges are not a significant source of operating revenue at the present time. Major park improvement projects have traditionally been funded through a mix of state and federal recreation grants, City funds and private contributions. The City’s annual budget for BARB for parks operation and maintenance is \$76,600 or about \$17.81 per capita for the city.

City Organizational Chart



Buchanan Township park properties and facilities are maintained by the Township Board. The Township budgets \$17,000 for all parks. There is a trust fund set up for Mud Lake Bog and about \$600 is spent annually.

There are various volunteer committees and organizations that contribute to park development and maintenance such as the Friends of McCoy Creek Trail, Dog Park volunteers, Buchanan Youth Baseball/Softball Association, Youth Garden volunteers, Have Fun at Buchanan Parks committee, Friends of the Ducks.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Regional Location

Buchanan City and Township are located in southeastern Berrien County. They are in close proximity to a number of major metropolitan areas, approximately 15 miles north of South Bend, Indiana, 60 miles southwest of Kalamazoo, Michigan and 85 miles northeast of Chicago, Illinois.



Historical Sketch

The Potawatomi Indians were the first residents in this area, with many settlements established along the St. Joseph River. By 1833 the Potawatomi Indians had signed away the land in exchange for land west of the Mississippi River. Near the time of the treaty, the town’s industry was born when Charles Cowels, the first settler, built his shingle mill. Russell McCoy soon followed and constructed the first sawmill along McCoy Creek. Because of McCoy Creek and the power furnished by the water, sawmills and gristmills became the mainstay industry of the area.

The growing community joined in the battle for Michigan’s statehood between 1835 and 1837. A famous senator, James Buchanan of Pennsylvania who became the 15th President of the United States, sided with Michigan to obtain this goal. Miller John Hamilton, who platted the area, honored Senator Buchanan for his championship by naming the community after him and recorded it as such in 1842. At the time of the City incorporation in 1858, Buchanan was a thriving area with some 960 residents.

The area was rich in timber, in natural abundance of game, fruits, maple sugar, wild honey, and plentiful fishing in McCoy Creek and the St. Joseph River. Buchanan continues to enjoy

many natural amenities and is known as “Redbud City” due to the abundance of these trees throughout the area.

Demographics

The combined population of the City and Township is 7,736. Both the City and Township lost population in the last decade (2010-2020). However, the Township gained population from 1990-2020. The city has lessened its population loss from 2010-2020 at -3.5%, when in previous decades it was -4.8% and -6.2%.

Population (2010-2020)

	2010	2020	Change	% Change
Buchanan City	4,456	4,300	-156	-3.5%
Buchanan Township	3,523	3,436	-87	-2.5%
Total	7,979	7,736	-244	-3%

Source: 2010, 2020 US Census

Population (1990-2020)

	Buchanan City	Change	Percent Change	Buchanan Township	Change	Percent Change
1990	4,992	-	-	3,402	-	-
2000	4,681	-311	-6.2%	3,510	+108	+3.17%
2010	4,456	-225	-4.8%	3,523	+13	+0.37%
2020	4,300	-156	-3.5%	3,436	-87	-2.46%

Source: US Census 1990, 2000, 2010, 2020

According to the 2020 US Census, the median age in Buchanan City is 35.3, in Buchanan Township it is 45.3. The City’s median age is much less than the Township and also Berrien County (42.1). The majority of the population is 18-64 at 4,351, followed by under 18 (2,063) and 65 and over (1,396).

Age Distribution

	Under 18	18-64	65 and over
Buchanan City	1,176 (27%)	2,447 (57%)	681 (16%)
Buchanan Township	887 (25%)	1,904 (54%)	715 (20%)
Total	2,063 (26%)	4,351 (56%)	1,396 (18%)

Source: 2019 American Community Survey

There are slightly more females in the City and Township than males.

Gender

	Male	Percent	Female	Percent
Buchanan City	2,060	47.9%	2,240	52.1%
Buchanan Township	1,624	47.3%	1,812	52.7%
Total	3,684	47.6%	4,052	52.4%

Source: US Census 2020

The majority of residents in the City and Township are white, followed by two or more races, Black/African American and Hispanic Origin or Latino.

Race and Ethnicity

	White	Black/ African American	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander	Two or more races	Hispanic Origin or Latino	Some Other Race
Buchanan City	3462 (81%)	238 (5.5%)	34 (0.8%)	22 (0.5%)	1 (0.02%)	318 (7.4%)	209 (4.9%)	16 (0.4%)
Buchanan Township	3,096 (90%)	40 (1.2%)	15 (0.4%)	13 (0.3%)	0 (0%)	192 (5.6%)	68 (1.9%)	12 (0.3%)
Total	6,558 (85%)	278 (3.6%)	49 (0.6%)	35 (0.4%)	1 (0%)	510 (6.6%)	277 (0.4%)	28 (0.3%)

Source: US Census 2020

The median household income for the City is less than the County and Township. The Township’s median household income is higher than the county. The poverty rate in Buchanan City is 7%, for Buchanan Township it is 9.3% compared to the county at 16%.

Median Household Income

	Buchanan City	Buchanan Township	Berrien County
Median Household Income	\$42,593	\$54,844	\$50,153

Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Est.

The high school degree and some college rates are about the same in the City and Township. However, there is a higher percentage with Associate's degrees in the Township, but a higher percentage with Bachelor's degrees or higher in the City.

Educational Attainment, 25 years old and older

	Buchanan City	Buchanan Township
Percent with high school degree or equivalent degree	32.3%	35.5%
Percent with some college, no degree	27.8%	27.7%
Percent with Associate's degree	7.4%	13.2%
Percent with Bachelor's Degree or Higher	23.7%	14.1%

Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Est.

The labor force between the City and Township is 3,845 with an unemployment rate of 9% in 2019.

Labor Force

	Buchanan City	Buchanan Township	Total
Total Work Force	1,995	1,850	3,845
Employed	1,761	1,739	3,500
Unemployed	234	111	345
Unemployed Rate	11%	6%	9%

Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Est.

Most homes are owner-occupied in the City and Township and as expected there are more renter occupied homes in the City. The median rent and home value is higher in the Township. The County's median home value is higher than the City and Township at \$150,700.

Housing

	Buchanan City	Buchanan Township	Total
Number of dwellings	2,077	1,694	3,771
Owner occupied	960	1,244	2,204
Renter occupied	760	94	854
Median monthly rent	\$974	\$1,590	-
Median home value	\$109,700	\$141,300	-

Source: US Census 2020, 2019 ACS 5-Year Est.

The following table summarizes individuals with disabilities by age and type in the Buchanan community.

Individuals with a Disability (Civilian Non Institutionalized Persons)

	Buchanan City	Buchanan Township	Total
Persons 18 years to 64 years	353	208	561
 With a self-care difficulty, vision difficulty, or independent living difficulty	235	119	354
Persons 65 and over	348	198	546
 With a self-care difficulty, vision difficulty, or independent living difficulty	295	211	506
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population with a disability (percentage of total population)	745 (17%)	437 (12.5%)	1,182 (15%)

Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Est.

Local Economy

Buchanan has a well-diversified economy. The employees produce a variety of goods and services including furniture, manufacturing automation systems, automotive and aircraft components, packaging, and wine. Buchanan Community Schools is the top non-manufacturing employer. The downtown area of Buchanan is experiencing a retail renaissance with several new storefronts opening. These new businesses feature antiques, art, home decor, hospitality, and marijuana dispensaries. With this renaissance and rejuvenation of the downtown, the City of Buchanan often sees a large influx of tourists and visitors coming to experience the history, culture, and events sponsored by the various community organizations.

Land Use

The City of Buchanan is 2.5 square miles. Urban land uses include commercial, industrial and residential districts prevail in the City. Current land use precludes the acquisition of more large tracts of open space within the City limits. The City of Buchanan provides small more intensely developed parks and active recreation facilities typical of most urbanized communities, but also has a trail system through town and a large recreational/open space area with McCoy Creek Recreation Area.

Buchanan Township is 32.1 square miles. The Township is primarily rural and agricultural in nature with residential and some commercial development in the southeast corner of the Township. The Township has three Township owned recreation areas (Walton Bridge Park, Madron Lake Boat Launch and Mud Lake Bog).

Transportation

The three Buchanan interchanges on U.S. 31 promote convenient access to the South Bend metropolitan area. The Michiana Regional Airport in South Bend is only 12 miles south of Buchanan. When completed, U.S. 31 will provide direct expressway access to I-94 and I-196 to the north. The 80-90 Toll Road is just south of Buchanan in Indiana providing easy access East and West.

Buchanan Dial a Ride (DAR) provides same day curb to curb service dial a ride service in the city of Buchanan and in portions of Buchanan Township. Scheduled origin-to-destination shuttle bus service is available for Buchanan residents traveling to and from the City of Niles. Buchanan DAR is organized under Public Act 279 and is supported by a local millage that is used to match state and federal funding. In 2021 the Buchanan City Commission contracted with the City of Niles to operate Buchanan DAR which operates a six bus system that serves the City of Niles and Niles Township.

Amtrak passenger rail service terminals are located in Niles (5 miles), St. Joseph (20 miles), and New Buffalo (33 miles). The North Indiana Commuter Transit, known as the "South Shore", offers daily commuter service to Chicago from South Bend, Indiana and Michigan City, Indiana.

Both Buchanan City and Township have committed to Complete Streets principles in their master plans and are interested in making the community more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Non-motorized elements may include sidewalks on both sides of a roadway or street; adequate lighting; pedestrian signals and signage; paved shoulders, bike lanes; multi-use trails; and other features. Buchanan City officially adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2021.

Climate

Average high temperature	32F / JANUARY	82F / JULY
Average low temperature	18F / JANUARY	61F / JULY
Days over 90F	11	
Days below 0F	4	
Days of growing season	162	
Average Annual Rainfall	37"	
Average Annual Snowfall	70"	

Topography

In the last glacial period, some 13,000 years ago, the Buchanan area was completely glaciated, leaving several geologic land forms behind including rolling hills and many small "kettle moraine" lakes.

Soils

The soils of the Buchanan area were developed from parent material by the action of climate forces, together with plants, animals and their residues. Parent materials were distributed by the action of ice, water, and wind. Glacial till is predominant parent material in the area. There is diversity of soil conditions, from wet, poorly drained soils to dry, sandy soils with a random pattern of occurrence in many areas. Soil conditions may limit the placement of recreation facilities in some areas.

Vegetation

Most of the cities original vegetation has been lost to agriculture and urban development. The original vegetation of the area consisted of deciduous hardwood trees, prairie grasses, water tolerant grasses, and trees and various sedges. Most of the original remnant vegetation is located along the St. Joseph River and McCoy Creek.

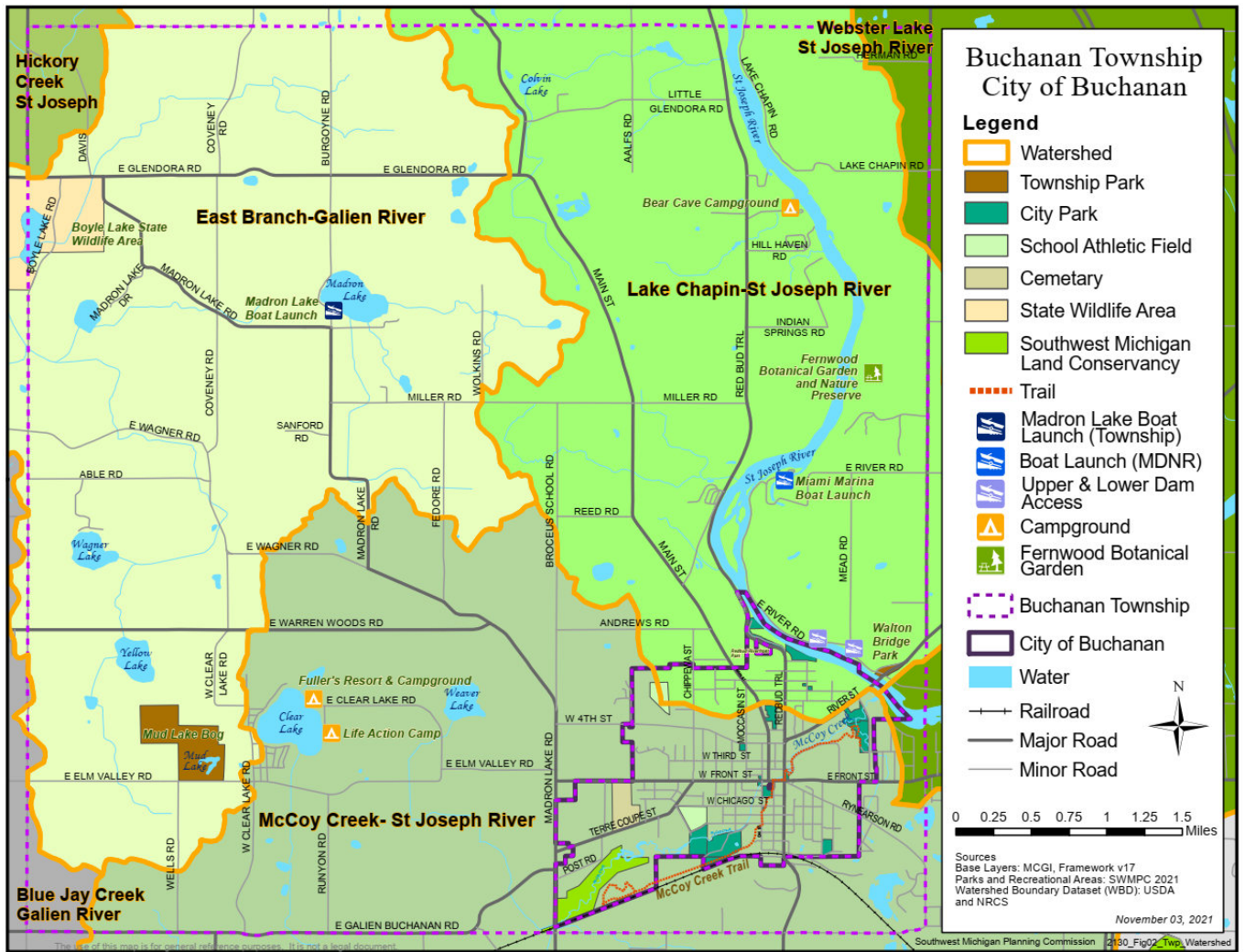
Water Resources

The St. Joseph River, McCoy Creek and the headwaters of the East Branch of the Galien River are the dominant water courses in the City and Township and are important recreation and economic resources.

The St. Joseph River provides recreational boating and fishing opportunities for migratory Salmon and Steelhead. The city's Riverfront Park, located just below the dam and fish ladder, provides important public access to the St. Joseph River fishery.

McCoy Creek flows through the City in a northeasterly fashion and is one of the most significant natural and historical features in the City. The McCoy Creek Trail Project seeks to highlight the creek's natural and historical amenities. The McCoy Creek Mill Race dug in the 1850's, served as a power source for local industry including the now restored 1853 vintage Pears Mill.

In Buchanan Township there are numerous kettle holes, swamps, and lakes. More specifically, there are at least 30 ponds and lakes of various sizes located within Buchanan Township. The largest of which include Clear Lake, Madron Lake, Weaver Lake, Wagner Lake and Yellow Lake. The western part of Buchanan Township is headwaters to the east branch of the Galien River.



Water is the reason that the City of Buchanan exists. Over a thousand years ago, a thriving Potawatomi people inhabited the banks of the St. Joseph River. Later in the 1800's, Buchanan was an early beautiful mill town that relied on tributaries of the St. Joseph River including McCoy Creek to produce flour. Throughout its history, residents and visitors have experienced Buchanan through these natural water resources. Throughout our history there has been a culture built around the water. We want to get back to that era by building better connections to the water.

Today, the City of Buchanan owns approximately 16 acres and over 2,000 linear feet of shoreline as public access on the St. Joseph River called Redbud Riverfront Park. The City will work to restore these ecosystems and create best practice public access by creating the Buchanan/St. Joe River Public Access plan which will propose a long term series of best practices for ecological restoration, increase the quality of our flora and fauna, resolve erosion and shoreline restoration issues, reduce runoff and increase water, allow for better and safe pedestrian access to blue water trails, build a boardwalk system and vista area,

allow enhanced experience for recreational activities including fishing, kayaking, boat access, river cruising, and more.

The City must leverage our underutilized water assets. The City of Buchanan has a vision to reestablish this primal connection to our public access areas to waterways in order to provide for more opportunities for human interaction with nature. Achieving this goal will result in higher quality of life, health and wellness, and economic prosperity.

Concepts for the riverfront area have been outlined in photo model renderings that were developed through community consensus in the City’s 2021 community engagement partnership with Andrews University, A Vision for Buchanan which can be accessed at www.nicestplacetowalk.com.

The following are renderings of these concepts. The City will prioritize these implementations in grant submissions to the Michigan DNR, MEDC, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Great Lakes Coastal Resilience Programs.

RIVERFRONT PARK

Indigenous History & Ecology Trail

A REGIONAL DESTINATION

Just north of Buchanan is the Moccasin Bluff archeological site - one of the most significant indigenous sites in Michigan. At least one thousand years ago, permanent villages were established on the banks of the St. Joseph River - named *Senathwen Zibé* by the Potawatomi people. The name refers to ‘water flowing over rocks’ because the natural water level before the dams was much shallower. Vibrant communities lined the water here, and these Northside bluffs still hold a very strong cultural significance for the Potawatomi people.

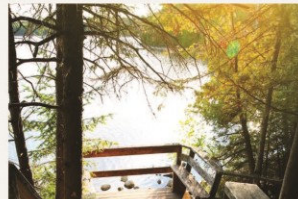
This fruitful land was taken from the Potawatomi people through deceit, the breaking of treaties, and coercion. Early missionaries such as Isaac McCoy advocated for “Indian Removal”, and the Potawatomi lost their home on the northside of what is now Buchanan.

Riverfront Park is an opportunity to remember, celebrate, and engage this proud culture, which is still an active part of the Berrien County community. The City of Buchanan should work closely with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi to identify appropriate redevelopment strategies near the

Northside bluffs. The design team for this vision sought counsel from representatives of the Pokagon Band throughout this process, and the concepts presented here intend to honor and respect the Band’s values.

An Indigenous History and Ecology Trail is proposed for Riverfront Park. Similar to Galien River County Park near New Buffalo, this park would include sensitively placed boardwalks that enable visitors to engage the stunning natural landscape and ecology of the riverside bluffs. The trail is envisioned as a learning environment, with ecology and history markers that illustrate the natural systems and indigenous history and significance.

These bluffs hold very strong cultural significance to the Potawatomi people to this day. Careful engagement with the landscape may be welcomed by some, but not others. Shortly before completing this document, the design team was informed that the Tribal Council strongly suggests not to develop here due to the sensitive nature of the area.





GENTLY ON THE LAND

INDIGENOUS HISTORY AND ECOLOGY INN

The concept illustrated here includes a destination inn and restaurant carefully positioned on the bluff overlooking long view over the *Senathwen Zibé* (St. Joseph River). Minimal footprints and stilt construction are intended to be gentle on the sensitive landscape. The team suggests that the City seek a partnership with the Pokagon Band, which has extensive experience in operating hospitality venues. Besides an authentic hospitality experience, the building should also establish the highest standards of environmental performance.



The Hidden River

The St. Joseph River is hidden behind the trees and shrubs of Riverfront Park. Long-time residents of the Northside remember when the tree limbs were kept trimmed, which used to reveal sweeping views.

Forgotten Culture

The Moccasin Bluff site is directly visible from Riverfront Park. Potawatomi villages and older indigenous cultures occupied this land for thousands of years. The site is an opportunity to remember and honor this.

Overlooked Ecology

Older residents remember walking down to the river on foot paths to go fishing and spend time in nature. The Northside Bluffs represent a unique terrain with a sensitive ecology worth engaging and protecting.

A Northside Liability

Riverfront Park would not be recognized as a public space were it not for the abandoned restroom building and its sign. Neighbors observe that the neglected park building has attracted some undesirable behavior.



Engaging the River

This concept illustrates a raised boardwalk that traverses the bluff and enables visitors to reach the water. Tree limbs are kept trimmed to enable views. The boardwalk can be extended to connect with the public landing.

Honoring Culture

The improved park features a circular fire pit area near Richards St and is oriented with a direct view of Moccasin Bluff downriver. The *Indigenous History & Ecology Trail* informs visitors of the significance of this landscape.

Celebrating Ecology

The park is designed to be gentle on the land and to promote the restoration of a native species ecology. Educational markers on the trail engage visitors, and the inn is built to the highest standards of sustainable design.

A Northside Destination

Richards Street is improved with tree lines, on-street parking, and trails leading to the park and a destination inn and restaurant. This is where Buchanan interfaces with the agro-tourism landscape of nearby townships.

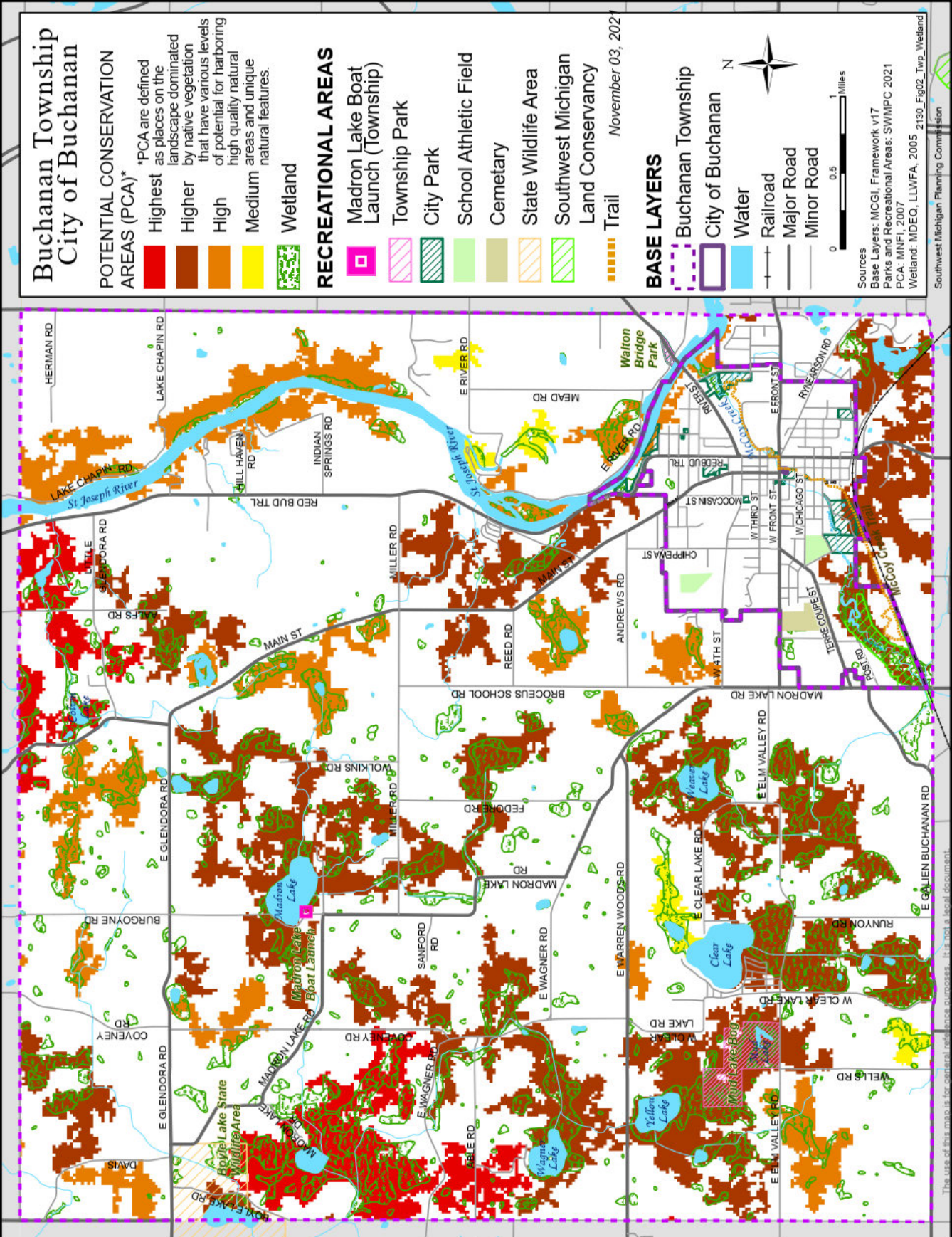
Wetlands/Potential Conservation Areas

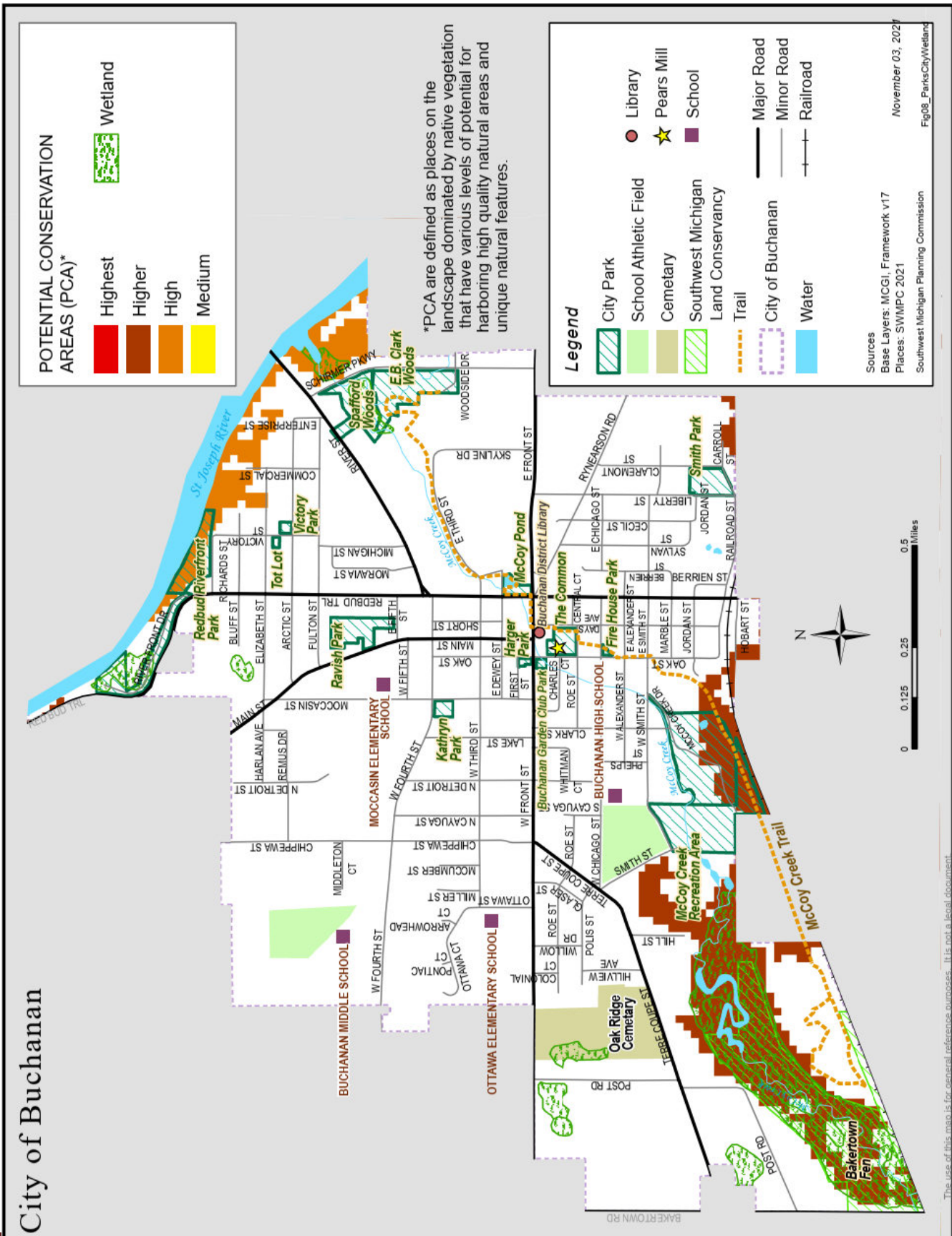
The Potential Conservation Areas map represents the last remaining remnants of the area’s ecosystems and natural plant communities. These maps rank areas where the landscape is dominated by native vegetation that has various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. In addition, these areas provide critical ecological services such as maintaining water quality and quantity, soil development and stabilization, habitat for pollinators of cropland, wildlife travel corridors, stopover sites for migratory birds, sources of genetic diversity and floodwater retention. Consequently, it is to a community’s advantage that these sites be carefully integrated into the planning for future development. Striking a balance between development and natural resource conservation and preservation is critical if Buchanan is to maintain its unique natural heritage.

Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs)
Defined as places on the landscape dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. Scoring criteria to prioritize areas included: total size, size of core area, length of stream corridor, landscape connectivity, restorability of surrounding land, vegetation quality and biological rarity score.

Wetlands and floodplains are extremely valuable resources. In the past, people viewed wetlands and floodplains as wastelands. Wetlands were drained and converted to farmland or filled for development. Attitudes today towards wetlands and floodplains have changed with the discovery that they are valuable natural resources providing many important benefits to people, wildlife and water quality.

Buchanan Township has an abundance of intact wetlands and high ranking potential conservation areas scattered throughout the Township. Most of the City's wetlands and high ranking potential conservation areas are either along the St. Joseph River in the northeast of the City and to the southwest portion of the City where Bakertown Fen and McCoy Creek Recreation Area are located.





MDNR GRANT FUNDING HISTORY

The following is a list of recreation grants received by the City of Buchanan from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. A self-certification form has been completed for each grant project and is located in the Appendix.

Park	Project Number/ Project Type	Project Title	Scope of Project	Project Year	Grant Name	Grant Amount
McCoy Creek Trail	TF11-039 Development	Trail Phase 2	Established linear park through the city,	2011	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund	\$288,000
Redbud Riverfront Park	26-01186 Development	Redbud Park Development	Installation of boat ramp, parking lot, access, portable toilets	1981	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$48,331
Redbud Riverfront Park	26-01222 Development	Redbud Park Phase 3 Development	Installation of restroom bldg., picnic facilities, parking lot, landscaping, walkways	1981	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$24,793
Redbud Riverfront Park (Hubbard Park)	26-01075 Acquisition	Hubbard Park Acquisition	Acquisition of 5.5 acres along the St. Joseph River and 1 block inland for Hubbard Park	1979	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$28,262
McCoy Creek Recreation Area (Fisher Field)	26-00732 Development	Buchanan Recreation Development	Installation of lighting for softball field	1976	Land and Water Conservation Fund	\$11,274
TOTAL						\$400,660

RECREATION INVENTORY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Barrier-Free Accessibility

The Buchanan Area Recreation Board is committed to making every “reasonable accommodation” to ensure recreational opportunities are available to all persons regardless of their level of ability. Specific barriers for persons with disabilities will be identified and addressed in conjunction with all future park improvement projects. In the following inventory of parks, all of the City and Township parks were rated as follows in terms of their general accessibility. None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

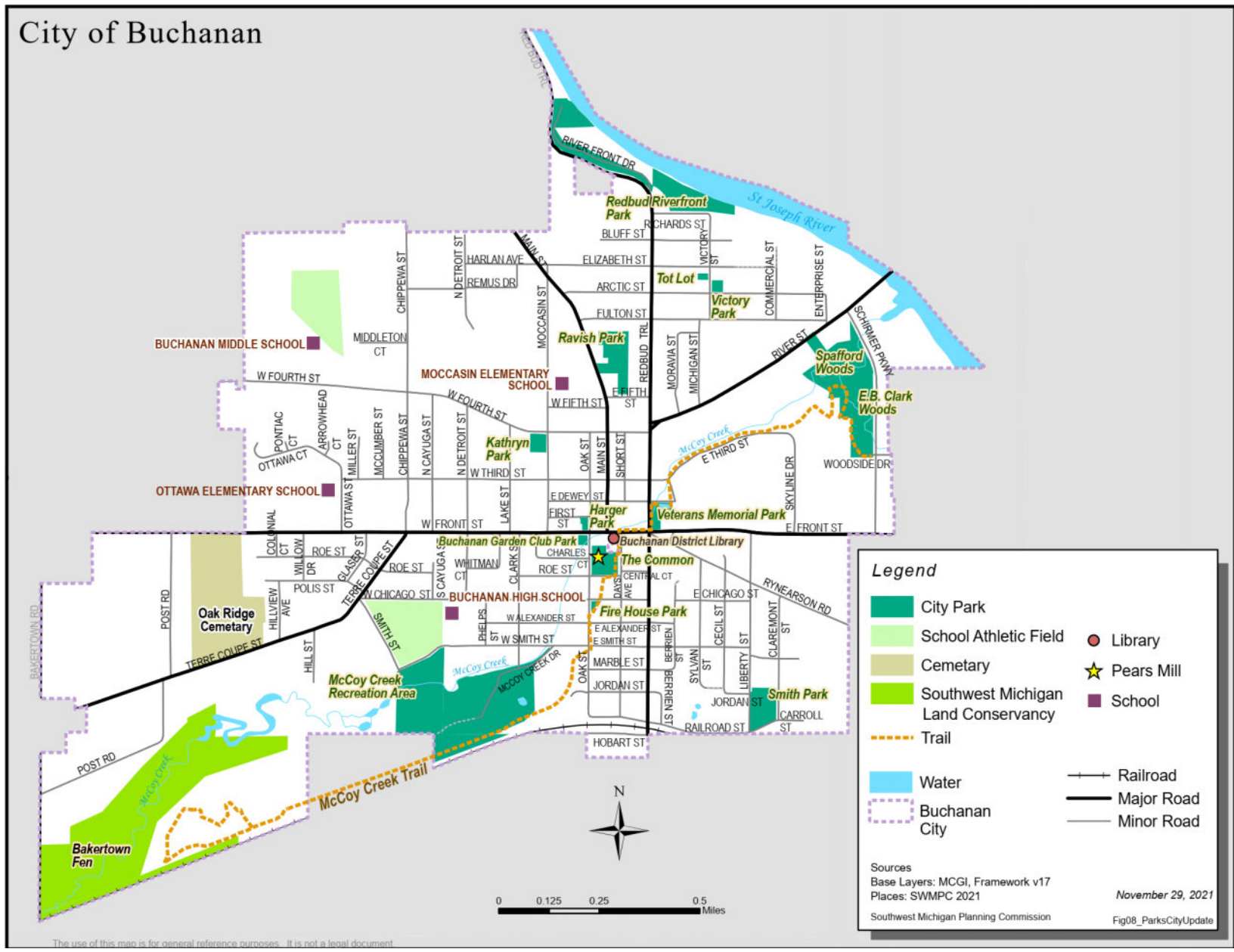
- 1- Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2- Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3- The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 4- The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

*Evaluation reference ADA Checklist for existing facilities - Insite for Human Centered Design

This information will help guide and prioritize park improvements to ensure that the City and Township are making efforts to improve accessibility of its facilities.

Buchanan City Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities

Buchanan offers diverse public outdoor recreation opportunities from river access sites to baseball diamonds and playgrounds. The City owns 14 parks and recreation areas and the McCoy Creek Trail.



The Common/Pears Mill



Size	2.7 acres
Description	<i>The Common</i> includes an open stage structure, a farmer’s market structure, Pears Mill, Tin Shop Theatre and surrounding green space. The Common was developed in the early 1990’s by citizens to create a central gathering place for Buchanan. The Common hosts many events, including summer concerts, children’s programs, outdoor movies and community festivals. Pears Mill was built in the 1850’s as a fully automated flour mill. By 1960, it was the largest and most profitable industrial facility in Berrien County. Pears Mill became a feed mill and operated until 1983 when it was acquired by the Buchanan Downtown Development Authority. The mill was restored by the Buchanan Preservation Society in the 1980’s.
Facilities	Open stage structure, Farmer’s market structure, 2 picnic tables, 4 benches, trash can, storybook walk displays, walkways, community center, McCoy Creek Trail
Accessibility Rating	3
Suggestions	Upgrade amphitheater, covered area for concerts, expand covered area for farmer’s market, update kitchen in community center

The Common/Pears Mill



Fire House Park



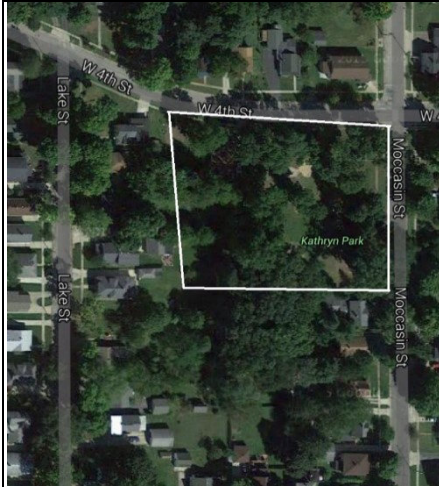
Size	0.2 acres
Description	A small memorial park to honor the Buchanan City Fire Department. The park centerpiece is the structure with the bell from the original fire station. The McCoy Creek trail goes along this park.
Facilities	2 benches, picnic table, trash can, memorial structure with bell
Accessibility Rating	4
Suggestions/ Notes	The Fire Department maintains this park area.

Harger Park



Size	0.3 acres
Description	A small area downtown on Front Street often used as staging area for parades and for festival activities.
Facilities	Walkway, trash can, little free library
Accessibility Rating	3
Suggestions	Add a bench and picnic table. Consider selling property for development in the future.

Kathryn Park



Size	1.2 acres
Description	A small neighborhood park with a playground and community garden with on-street parking only. This park has a lot of history with it being a former cemetery. The Women’s Civic Club of Buchanan, led by Kathryn “Kit” Kingery and assisted by the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Campfire Girls, American Legion, and the community at large, raised funds, secured volunteer labor, and transformed the old cemetery into an impressive city park and playground. Dedication ceremonies were held on 24 July 1921.
Facilities	4 picnic tables, little free library, bike rack, portable toilet, 2 benches, drinking fountain, 3 trash cans, playground equipment (slide, swings, etc), community garden
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Add handicap parking with curb cut to accessible path to amenities, replace playground equipment



Buchanan Garden Club Park



Size	0.4 acres
Description	A small park that provides a small downtown seating area. There is an electric charging station on Front Street.
Facilities	4 benches, pavilion, walkway
Accessibility Rating	2
Suggestions	Add musical instrument play equipment

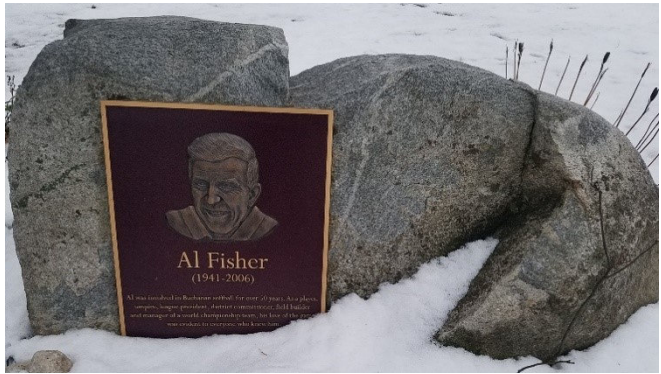


Buchanan Community Recreation Plan

McCoy Creek Recreation Area



Size	20.6 acres
Description	A large recreation area across from Buchanan High School with McCoy Creek peacefully traversing the property. There are opportunities to picnic, view nature, play ball and it has the newly developed Field of Dreams Dog Park developed by community volunteers. There is an important memorial at this park for Mr. Fisher who helped develop the ball fields, provided lighting and improvements for 50 years. This recreation area also is home to the City's drinking water wells. It also serves as a trailhead to the McCoy Creek Trail.
Facilities	Shelter, 14 picnic tables, 1 grill, drinking fountain, 11 trash cans, portable toilet,, playground, swings, walkway from parking area to shelter, bridge over creek, 2 lighted baseball fields, concession building, 3 picnic tables, 1 grill, 2 trash cans, dog park, 2 gravel parking areas
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Add disc golf course, add playground equipment, upgrade pavilion with roll down doors and restroom facilities and possibly an outdoor fireplace, new picnic tables, provide water at Dog Park.



“Al Fisher was involved in Buchanan softball for over 50 years. As a player, umpire, league president, district commissioner, field builder and manager of a world championship team. His love of the game was evident to everyone who knew him.”



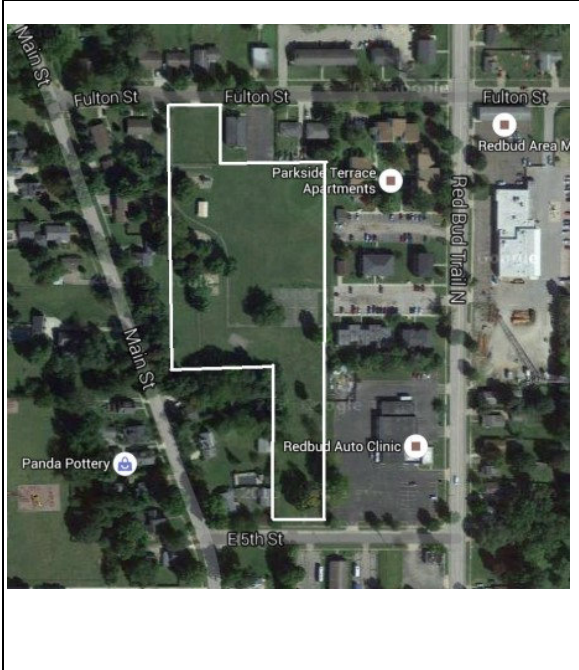
Veterans Memorial Park (formerly McCoy Pond Park)



Size	1.5 acres
Description	A small downtown park along McCoy Creek and the McCoy Creek Trail with a veteran's memorial. A dam was removed at this location restoring the flow of McCoy Creek. There is a parking area adjacent to the park along Front Street that serves as a trailhead to the McCoy Creek Trail.
Facilities	5 benches, picnic table, 2 trash cans, walkway, bridge, duck feeding station, free little library, memorial
Accessibility Rating	2
Suggestions	The approaches to the bridge need to be flush with the walkway. A handrail along the creek at the old dam location is needed.



Ravish Park

	<p>Size</p>	<p>5.4 acres</p>
	<p>Description</p>	<p>A large neighborhood park with picninc facilities, playground and ball field/basketball courts with on street parking.</p>
	<p>Facilities</p>	<p>Shelter, 7 picnic tables, 2 benches, portable toilet, 2 trash cans, drinking fountain, little free library, playground equipment, swings, 2 basketball courts, ball field, walkway</p>
	<p>Accessibility Rating</p>	<p>1</p>
	<p>Suggestions</p>	<p>ADA walkway should connect to shelter. Pathway is in need of repair. New playground equipment, signage, designated parking area, new fence, splash pad. (In 2022 basketball courts will be resurfaced.)</p>



Redbud Riverfront Park



Size	13.7 acres
Description	A park located along the St. Joseph River on the north side of town. There are restrooms along Richards Street. Down by the river is a boat launch with a picnic table.
Facilities	Restrooms (Richards Street), boat ramp and pier, picnic table, small shelter, portable toilet, gravel parking area
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Signage, ADA parking, work with USFWS to fix road (erosion issues), remove small shelter, improve boat ramp/pier – ensure accessibility. Seek outfitter for canoe/kayak rental, campground. Acquire additional property along St. Joseph River. See additional ideas in “A Vision of Buchanan” pages 40-45.



Smith Park



Size	4 acres
Description	
Facilities	3 lighted baseball fields, concession building, 7 picnic tables, 4 trash cans, 3 portable toilets
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Electrical work in partnership with Buchanan Youth Baseball/Softball Association for the pitching mound.



E.B Clark/Spafford Woods



Size	E.B Clark Woods – 10.8 acres Spafford Woods – 8.1 acres
Description	A large natural area. E.B. Clark serves as a trailhead for the McCoy Creek Trail.
Facilities	E. B Clark - 2 Benches, picnic table, trash can, portable toilet, paved parking Spafford Woods – no facilities
Accessibility Rating	2
Suggestions	



Tot Lot/Victory Park



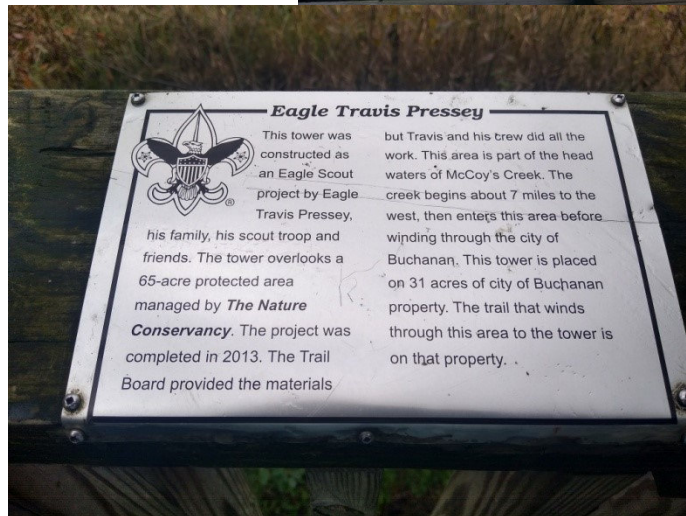
Size	Tot Lot – 0.3 acres Victory Park – 0.5 acres
Description	Tot Lot and Victory Park both have on-street parking.
Facilities	Tot Lot – Community Garden Victory Park - Basketball court, bleachers, playground equipment (swings, slide, bars), 3 benches, picnic table, 2 trash cans
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Replace playground equipment, Expand Victory Park and potentially sell Tot Lot and vacate alley. See “A Vision for Buchanan” (page 40) for more ideas.



McCoy Creek Trail

The McCoy Creek Trail has a rich historical background, which begins in the 1820's. At this time, 13 mills were located along the McCoy Creek generating energy for the City of Buchanan. The McCoy Creek Trail serves Buchanan as a non-motorized shared use path. The trail is currently 2.3 miles mostly paved off road path except for a couple small sections downtown that are along the roadways or sidewalks. The unpaved loop on the west side of Buchanan is 0.8 miles. The trail extends from the east side of the city at E.B Clark woods on Schirmer Parkway to the west side at McCoy Creek Recreation Area. There are several access points and parking spaces are available: off of Schirmer Parkway at E.B. Clark Woods, at Skyline Drive Avenue, at McCoy Pond Park along Front Street and at the Mc Coy Creek Recreation Area. There are several fitness stations along the trail. The City is actively securing funds to extend the trail north on Schirmer Parkway and east on River Street/Walton Road to River St. Joe Brewery. The city also would like to expand the trail to Redbud Riverfront Park and also to connect to the Indiana Michigan River Valley Trail in Niles along Walton Road.



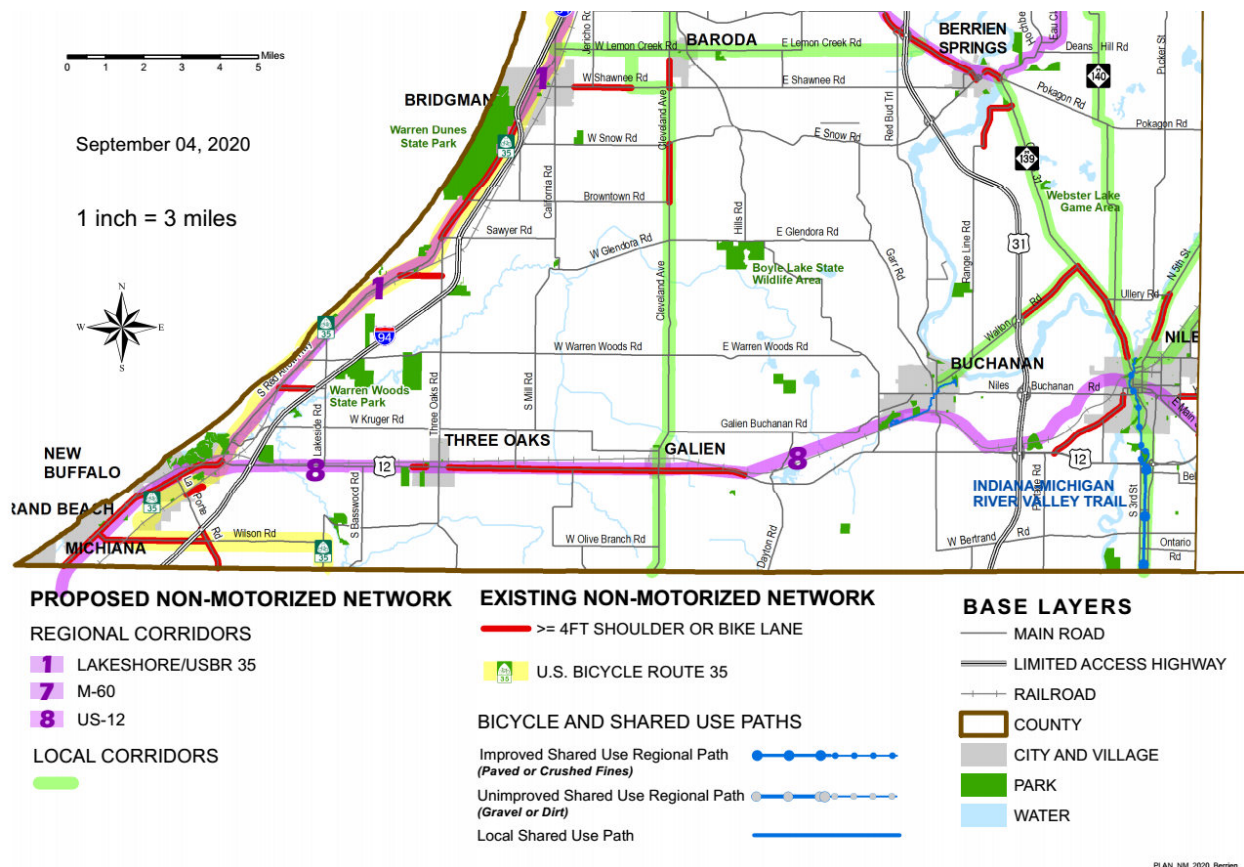


With the McCoy Creek Trail and the St. Joseph River Water Trail, Buchanan could consider becoming a designated trail town. **A Trail Town** is an active, attractive and interesting place with accessible and comfortable spaces, hosting a variety of activities that promote social interaction and a strong sense of place. A Trail Town should meet the needs of trail users and residents of the community. A Trail Town has physical amenities that support trail users such as bike and kayak racks, wayfinding signs, wide sidewalks, drinking fountains and benches. A Trail Town has business amenities to support day trip trail users such as bike shop, kayak outfitter, casual restaurants, ice cream shop, etc. as well as overnight trail users with lodging options. Buchanan took part in a Trail Town effort and the results are in the Lake Michigan Coastal Communities: Trail Towns Master Plan.

<https://www.swmpc.org/downloads/buchanan.pdf>

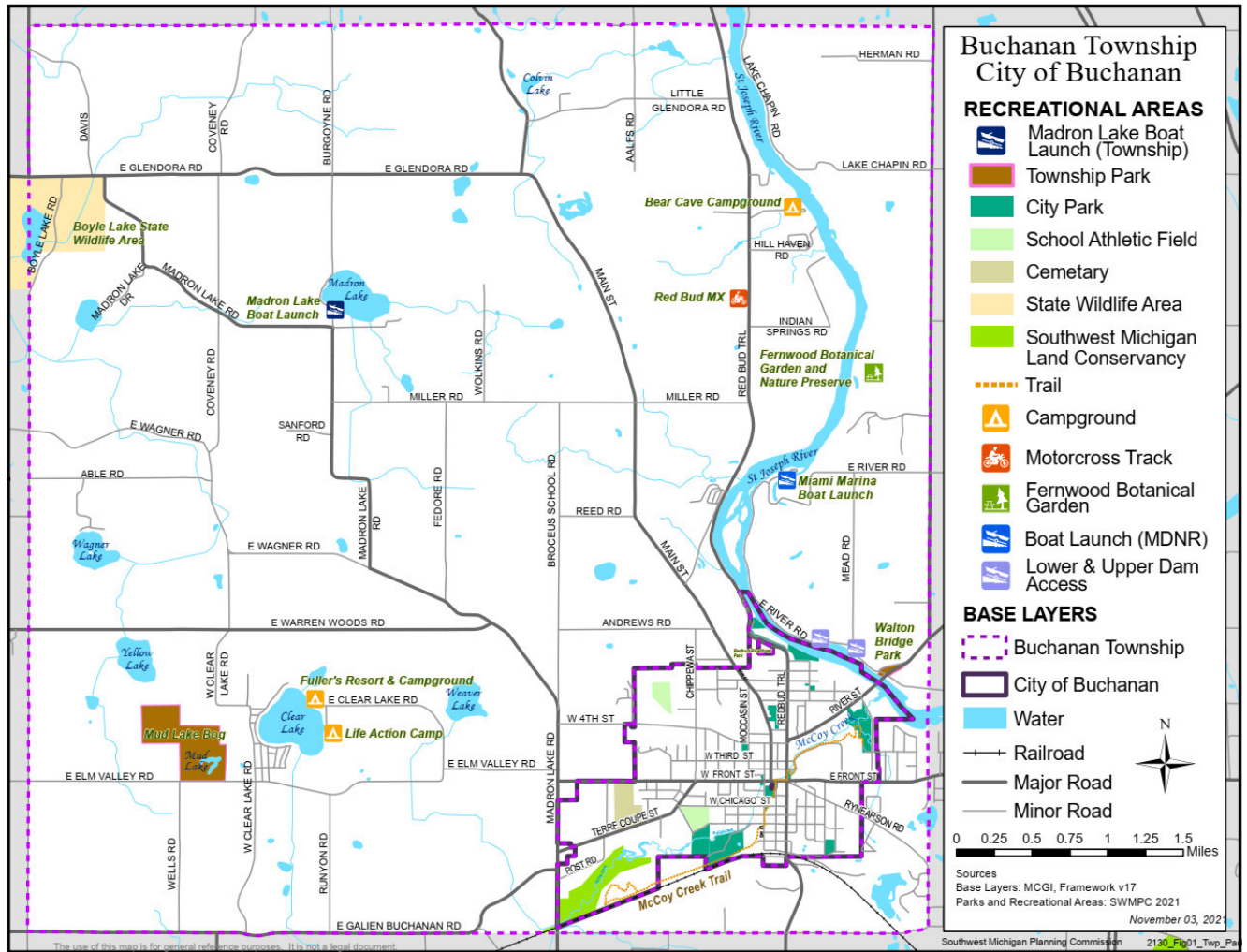
<https://www.swmpc.org/trailtowns.asp>

The City of Buchanan has a complete streets policy to encourage roads that accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. Buchanan Township lays out Complete Street principles in their most recent Master Plan.



Buchanan Township Owned Parks and Recreation Facilities

Buchanan Township owns three parks and recreation areas which include Walton Bridge Park, Mud Lake Bog and Madron Lake Boat Launch. There are several privately owned recreation areas in the Township.




Mud Lake Bog



Size	107.9 acres
Description	<p>Located north of Elm Valley Road and was formerly used as the township dump. A group of residents petitioned the township to purchase the property and preserve the bog. In 1980 the property was purchased, a committee formed to supervise the cleanup and Fernwood Botanical Gardens personnel agreed to oversee the cleanup and development of the Bog preserve. The original committee, along with personnel from Fernwood, and many other volunteers were responsible for cleaning the bog and installing the board walks and other amenities. In later years, boy scouts have done repair work to the bog to help them with advancement. In 1987 an award was presented to the Bog Committee by the Greater Michigan Foundation for their work on the Mud Lake Bog Nature Preserve. The bog is open to the public at no charge. A key to the gate can be obtained by contacting the Township Hall. There is a boardwalk winding through the bog along with an observation tower and a shelter. There are many rare and endangered plants, birds and other wildlife.</p>
Facilities	Grass parking areas, gate at entrance, signage, shelter, overlook tower, boardwalk trail
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Upgrade shelter, tower, boardwalk and parking lot. Increase accesibility. Add security cameras.



Madron Lake Boat Launch

	Size	0.6 acres
	Description	A small access site on Madron Lake enjoyed by kayakers and others with small (non-motorized) boats.
	Facilities	Parking area (handicap down by launch, other parking up at road), boat ramp, pier
	Accessibility Rating	1
	Suggestions	Paved ADA parking, paved drive, accessible launch (such as EZ Dock), create a beach area, add security cameras.



Walton Bridge Park



Size	5.3 acres
Description	A small park overlooking the St. Joseph River at the corner of Mead and Walton Road.
Facilities	Gravel parking area, picnic table with concrete pad
Accessibility Rating	1
Suggestions	Add signage, trim trees for better viewing of river, add pavillion with picninc tables, add accessible parking, pathways to all amenities from parking area.

Buchanan School Properties

The Buchanan School District has several properties within the city limits offering recreational areas and facilities that are open to the public after school hours.

The **Buchanan High School** has tennis courts, Memorial Field (football and track), baseball and softball fields.

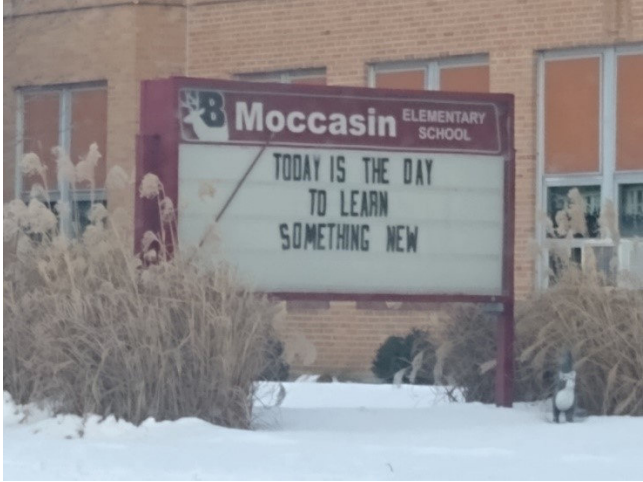




The **Buchanan Middle School** has a soccer complex, two football fields and two basketball hoops.



Moccasin Elementary School has a soccer field, three basketball hoops, two swing sets and two playground structures.



Ottawa Elementary School has a soccer field, baseball field, football field, playground equipment, a climbing structure and swing sets.



Organized Programs

A wide range of organized recreation programs, leagues, events and clubs are offered for all ages in the Buchanan community. These include Rocket Football, Optimist Soccer, Youth Baseball and Softball, McCoy Creek Trail 5k Extreme, Trek or Treat, Michiana Cruisers, Thrill on the Hill, Have Fun at Buchanan Parks, Community Gardens, Floor Hockey, Bike Buchanan, Buchanan Westerners and Disc Golf.

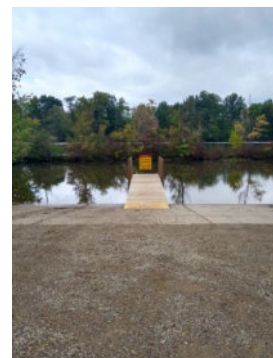
Other Regional Parks and Recreational Facilities

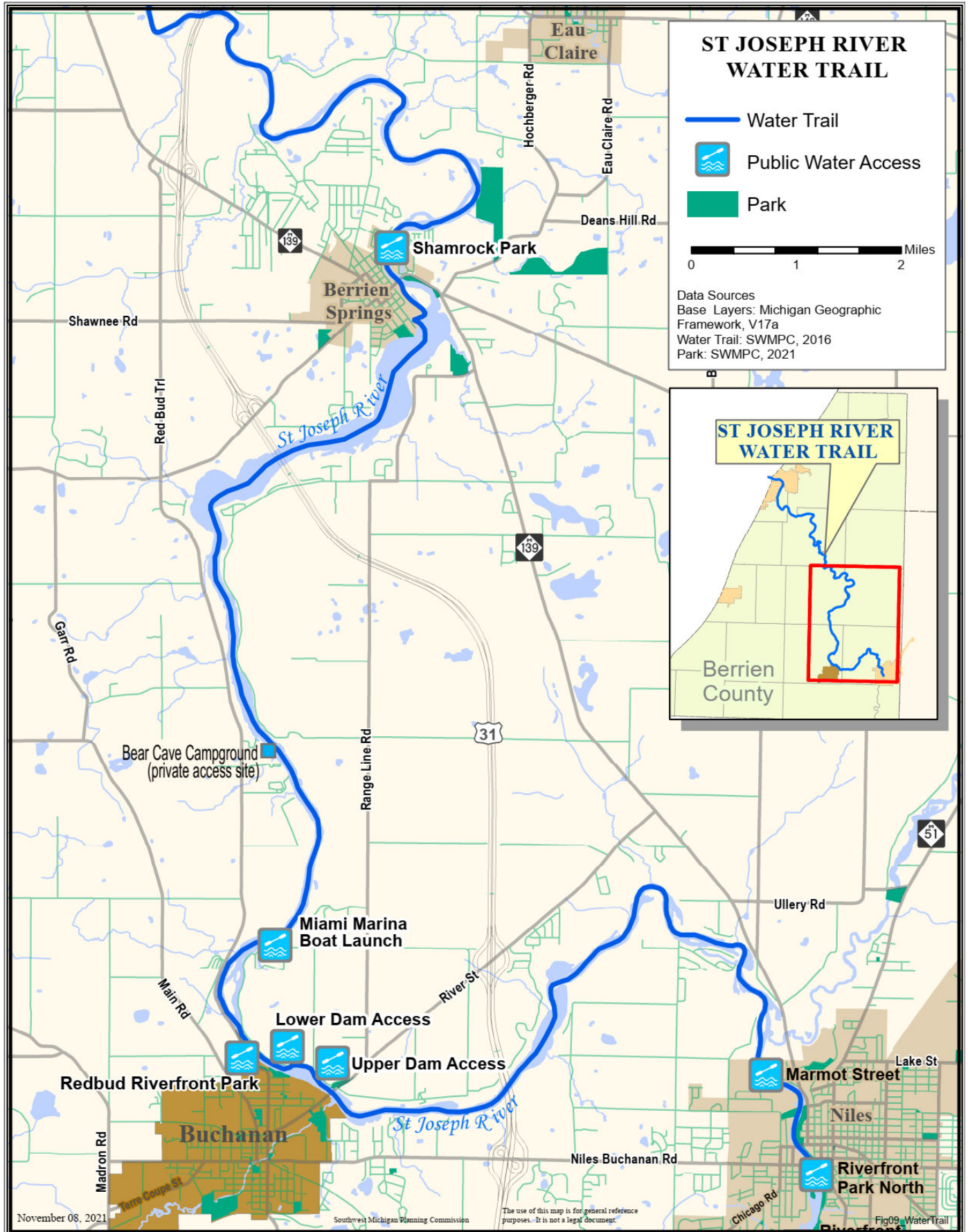
St. Joseph River Water Trail is a canoe/kayak trail that is over 66 miles from Niles, Michigan to Lake Michigan. The City’s Redbud Riverfront Park has a boat ramp and an expansive dirt parking area. The city recently ran power to the park. The City is interested in an outfitter offering canoe/kayak rentals and possibly a small campground (with restrooms). Indiana Michigan Power offers access above and below the dam. The site above the dam along Mead Road has stairs down to the river from the parking area and a small dock. Many paddlers bypass the dock and exit the river along a narrow strip of land just downstream. An accessible launch should be placed directly off the dock and the unprotected access area should be blocked off with new landscaping or signs. The Lower Dam Access Site provided by Indiana Michigan Power is located just below the Buchanan Dam, along East River Road with a pathway down to the river from the parking lot, a dock and fishing platform. An accessible launch should be placed directly off the shoreline. In addition, a paddler’s plaza and kayak storage could be placed at the site. The MDNR owns a boat launch downstream in the Township. In addition, Bear Cave offers parking for \$5 at their location along the river. Visit www.michiganwatertrails.org for more information on the water trail.

Upper and Lower Dam Access Sites



MDNR Miami Marina Boat Launch





Bakertown Fen Nature Preserve owned by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (83 acres) nature preserve is located within the city limits.

Fernwood Botanical Garden is a non-profit, 105 acre property with cultivated gardens and vast natural areas, as well as a cultural and education center located in Buchanan Township.

Numerous Campground Facilities. Buchanan Township is home to several camping opportunities. All are privately owned and operated but provide an important recreational opportunity for residents and visitors alike.

Bear Cave Resort is an RV park located on the St. Joseph River with a swimming pool, recreation area, lodge and recreation facilities. They offer parking for those wanting to kayak/canoe the St. Joseph River for a \$5 fee. The resort is promoted as having the only naturally formed caves in the State of Michigan and a Conference Tree, used by the Potawatomi Indian braves as a lookout point to see approaching enemies coming down the river.

Fuller's Resort and Campground is an 80-acre facility located on Clear Lake. It offers log cabin cottages, full service and primitive campsites with about 400 feet of beach on the lake. The facility offers guests a place to relax and enjoy the area's natural features.

Life Action Family Camp is a part of the Life Action facility located on 175 acres on Clear Lake. The facility offers a broad range of services and is promoted as a family-oriented, religious facility where one can escape the daily routine and reconnect with their family and meet their spiritual needs.

Red Bud MX is a nationally-known motocross racing park located in the Township on Red Bud Road. Sometimes referred to as Red Bud Track and Trail, the facility offers a variety of off-road tracks for motocross racing, practice and leisure enjoyment. Periodically, the facility sponsors regional events bringing tourists and motocross enthusiasts to the area for camping and to enjoy this popular spectator sport.

Brookwood Golf Course is a public course located in Buchanan Township on Rynearson Road.

Madeline Bertrand County Park

Madeline Bertrand County Park is 22 acres of regional recreation open space on the St. Joseph River, in Niles Township. Features include cross country skiing, picnicking, river fishing, hiking, disc golf, special events and a playground.

Love Creek County Park

Love Creek County Park is a 200-acre wildlife sanctuary and education facility located in Berrien Township (near Berrien Springs). Features include a nature center, six miles of

hiking and cross country ski trails and 3.5 miles of beginning/intermediate level mountain bike trail from spring through fall. In winter the mountain bike trail is groomed for fat tire biking and fat bike rentals are available. Cross country skis rentals are also available.

Warren Dunes State Park

Warren Dunes is 1,600 acres on Lake Michigan, just south of Bridgman. Features include 3 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, picnicking, hang gliding, 15 miles of hiking trails, swimming, birding, nature study, cross country skiing, 211 modern campsites, 36 semi modern campsites and an organizational campground. Park attendance exceeds one million annually, making it one of the busiest parks in the Midwest.

Grand Mere State Park

Grand Mere is 985 acres located on Lake Michigan in Lincoln Township. Grand Mere features 5,000 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline, 7 miles of hiking and cross country ski trails, nature study, swimming, and picnicking. Grand Mere was designated a, "National Natural Landmark" by the U.S. Government in 1968, recognizing the unique significance of the sites fresh water dune complex.

Warren Wood State Park

Warren Woods is 312 acres located in Chikaming Township. The property is managed as wildlife sanctuary and features a high quality beech-sugar maple forest and floodplain forest, hiking trails and nature study.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives which follow, guide the work of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board, and the preparation of this park and recreation plan.

Goal Statement

It is the mission of the Buchanan Area Recreation Board to plan, acquire, develop and maintain, in cooperation with the city, township, school district, and all interested individuals and groups, a responsive, efficient and innovative community parks and recreation delivery system available to all citizens, composed of a variety of services, park areas and special facilities that contribute to the well-being of the individual, the family and the attractiveness, social and economic health of the greater Buchanan community.

Objectives

- Be responsible to citizen needs.
- Encourage citizen participation in decision making.
- Assume responsibility for park and recreation services planning.
- Cooperate with other government and recreation agencies, organizations, and groups involved in leisure services.
- Provide balanced services at affordable prices.
- Operate efficiently and effectively.
- Operate within available resources.
- Operate special facilities and activities on break even basis.
- Encourage citizen resources contributions.
- Support efforts for economic growth.
- Provide safe and secure parks and facilities by on-going maintenance and implementing universal design principles into future improvement projects.
- Attract and retain competent and service oriented personnel at competitive wages.
- Increase physical beauty of all areas.

Work cooperatively with other community organizations to improve the quality of life of Buchanan area residents.

ACTION PLAN

This chapter sets forth a plan of action for improvements to Buchanan City and Township parks and recreation areas over the next five or more years. The action plan, which follows, is also intended to help guide the development of a detailed capital improvement budget each year.

Buchanan City

General Projects

Establish an annual replacement program for picnic tables, grills, benches and drinking fountains. Annual replacement and the addition of universal accessible items.

Establish City Park and Recreation Endowment Fund for maintenance and improvements under the umbrella of the Michigan Gateway Community Foundation.

Add a description and pictures of each park on the City's website, along with the map of all park and trail, trailhead locations.

Purchase properties adjacent to parks and recreation areas to expand opportunities.

Highest Priority Projects

1. McCoy Creek Trail Maintenance and Expansion

In 2022, the City plans to perform maintenance on the existing trail from Schirmer Parkway to the native prairie fen loop just past the McCoy Creek Recreation Area. The estimated cost is \$10,000 and will be financed by the city and private donations.

The expansion of the trail from Shirmer Parkway Trail Entrance to River St. Joe Brewery on Walton Road is in the final planning and grant funding stage. There is interest to expand the trail to the east to connect to the IN MI River Valley Trail that is expected to go from Niles to Berrien Springs. The cost estimate is \$492,000 and the City will be applying to MDNR Natural Resources Trust Fund and has been awarded a conditional commitment from MDOT Transportation Alternative Program. Construction is expected in 2023 – 2024.

(Please see McCoy Creek Trail 5 year plan in the appendix.)

2. Playground and Related Improvements

- a. **Kathryn Park** -Add accessible parking with a curb cut. Add an accessible pathway that goes to all park amenities. Replace playground equipment.
- b. **Victory Park** – The City has recently bought an adjacent property to expand this park. Replace playground equipment. See “A Vision of Buchanan” page 40 for more ideas.

- c. **Ravish Park** -Connect the accessible pathway to the shelter. The pathway is need of general repair. The park needs new signage, a designated parking area, landscaping, site lighting, playground equipment and fencing. This park would be a good location for a splash pad.
 - d. **McCoy Creek Recreation Area** - Add disc golf course and playground equipment. Upgrade the pavilion with a new roof, roll down doors and restrooms. Replace picnic tables. Replace entrance sign and landscaping. Add an outdoor fireplace. Provide water at the dog park. Pave or resurface the roadway to softball diamonds a section at a time, to serve both the trail and the softball fields.
3. **Redbud Riverfront Park** - The park is underutilized at present and is in need of improvements. The entrance and parking area need to be surfaced with the addition of accessible parking spots. The City is currently working with the US Fish and Wildlife Service to address the erosion issues with the entrance drive. The boat launch ad pier needs repair and upgrades for accessibility. The small shelter should be removed and a picnic area added along the river. The site could use lighting. If additional property comes available along the river, it would be good to expand this park. See additional ideas in “A Vision of Buchanan” pages 40-45.

Other High Priority Projects

Buchanan Garden Club Park

Add musical instrument play equipment as a small play feature downtown.

The Common/Pears Mill

Upgrade the amphitheater. Add a covered area for concerts and expand the covered area for the farmer’s market. Update the Tin Shop Theatre to ensure the building is adequate for indoor performances. Update the kitchen in community center.

Harger Park

Add a bench and picnic tables to support downtown festivals and parades.

Veterans Memorial Park (formerly McCoy Pond Park)

For safety, add a handrail along the walkway where the dam was removed. Also make the approaches to the bridge flush with the walkway on both sides of the bridge.

Smith Park

Upgrade electrical service to the pitching mound in cooperation with the Buchanan Baseball/Softball Association.

Tot Lot

Consider selling along with the vacated adjacent alley and move community gardens to the newly expanded Victory Park.

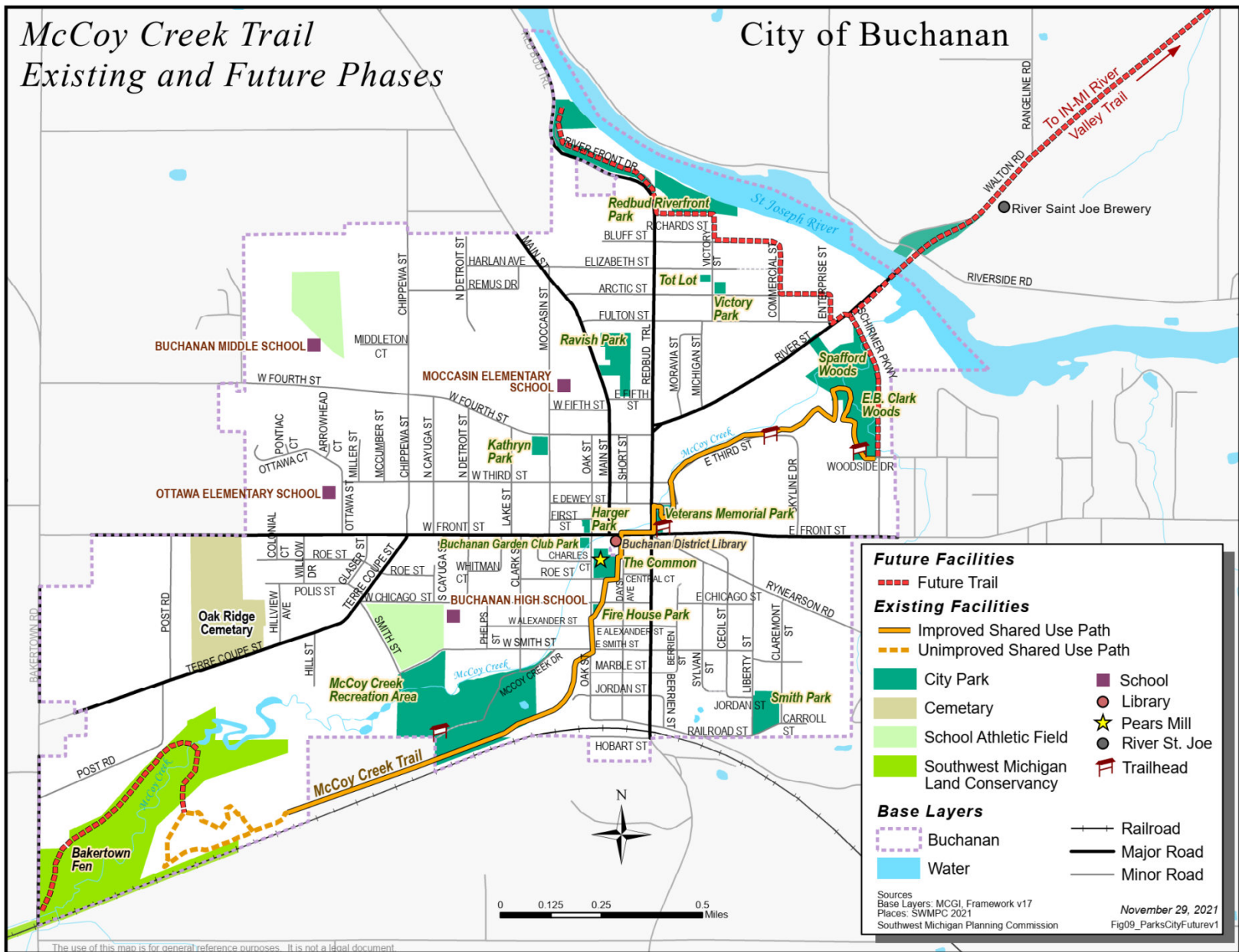
Other Non Motorized Projects

For the McCoy Creek Trail, improve signage/wayfinding along route; especially behind City Hall to Veterans Memorial Park, from Veterans Memorial Park to The Common and from Firehouse Park to W. Smith Street. It would also be good to have signage at the four trailheads that have good maps of the entire existing route (E.B. Clark Woods parking lot, parking lot at the intersection of Skyline Drive and E. Third Street, parking lot on Front Street at Veterans Memorial Park and at the parking areas at McCoy Creek Recreation Area.

There are also plans to expand the trail from the loop at Bakertown Fen to Bakertown Road and then connect to US12. The estimated cost is \$500,000 and timeline is 2025-2026.

There are also interest to expand the McCoy Creek trail north of Shirmer Parkway to Redbud Riverfront Park along the St. Joseph River (Enterprise Street, Arctic Street, Commercial Street, Bluff Street, Richards Street to River Front Drive).

Look at possible lane reductions for River Street and Front Street to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic. See joint projects with the Township.



Buchanan Township

Mud Lake Bog

Upgrade the shelter, tower, boardwalk and parking lot (ensure accessible parking spaces). Increase overall accessibility of all elements. Add security cameras.

Madron Boat Launch

Add paved accessible parking, pave the drive, add an accessible canoe/kayak launch and create a beach area for swimming. Add security cameras.

Walton Bridge Park

Add signage, trim trees for better views of river and add a pavilion with picnic tables. Add accessible parking spots and an accessible pathway to all park elements.

Buchanan City and Township

Work to expand the McCoy Creek Trail to connect to the IN MI River Valley Trail along Walton Road. Work on other non-motorized connections such as along Niles-Buchanan Road, Bakertown Road to US12, Red Bud Trail and Rangeline Road.

Explore a public-private partnership for a commemorative project such as an art piece, sign or bike par for Hannah Roberts, an American BMX freestyle cyclist from Buchanan. She is a three time world champion in the UCI Urban Cycling World Championships and silver medalist in freestyle BMX at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics.

Review this plan every year at the BARB September meeting. Discuss progress on action plan items and determine next steps for planning, applying for grant funding and implementation of projects.

Update this plan every five (5) years to stay eligible for grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

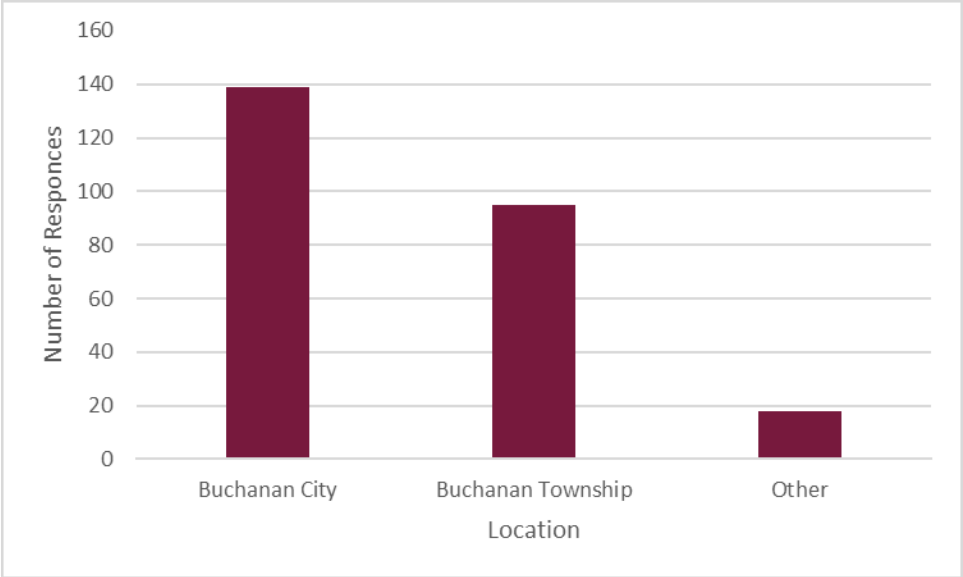
APPENDICES

Survey Results

Buchanan City and Township Recreation Survey October 2021

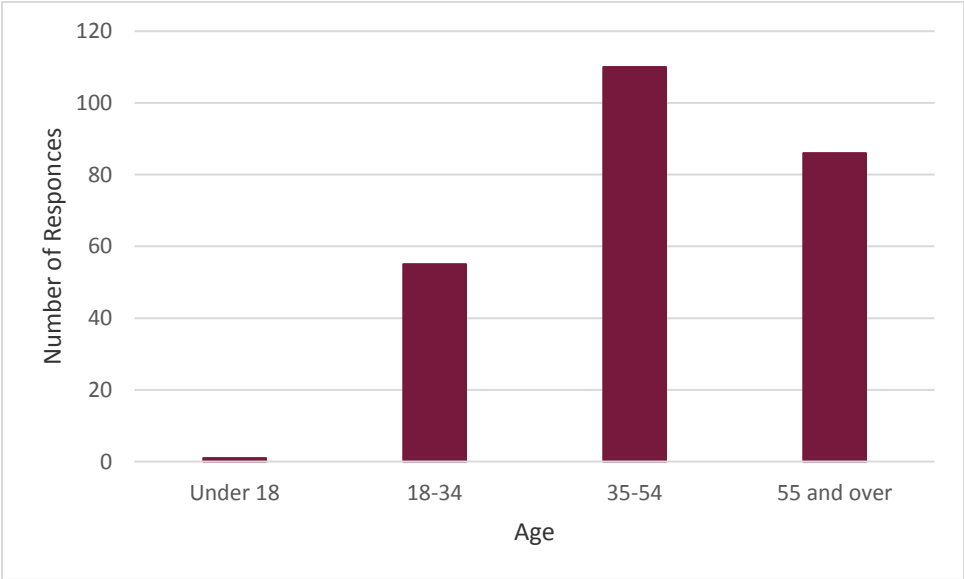
A total of 253 individuals completed the survey.

1. What city or township do you live in?



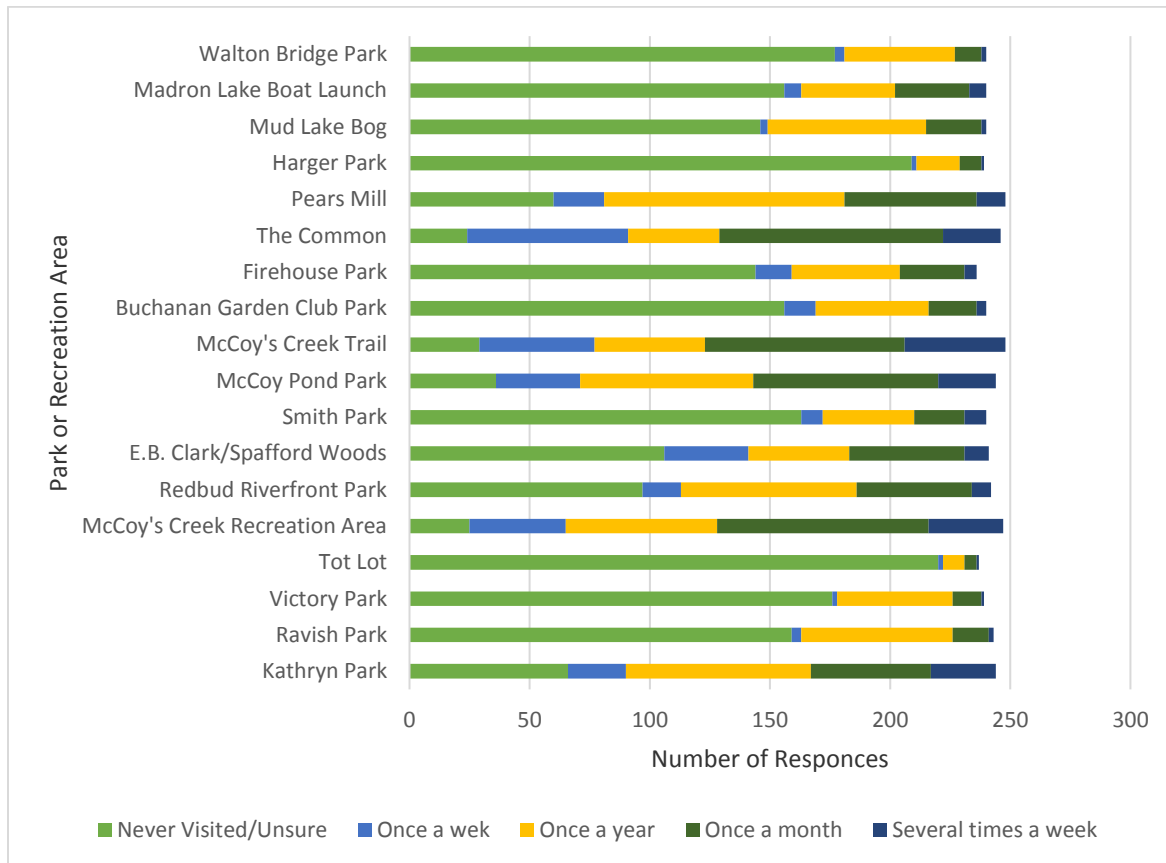
59% of the respondents were from Buchanan City with 40% from Buchanan Township. Most of the “other” respondents were from Niles and Bertrand Townships.

2. How old are you?



Most of the respondents were 35-54 years old (43%), followed by 55 years and older (34%). There were not many respondents under 18 years of age.

3. On average, how often do you use or visit the following Buchanan City and Township parks and recreation areas?

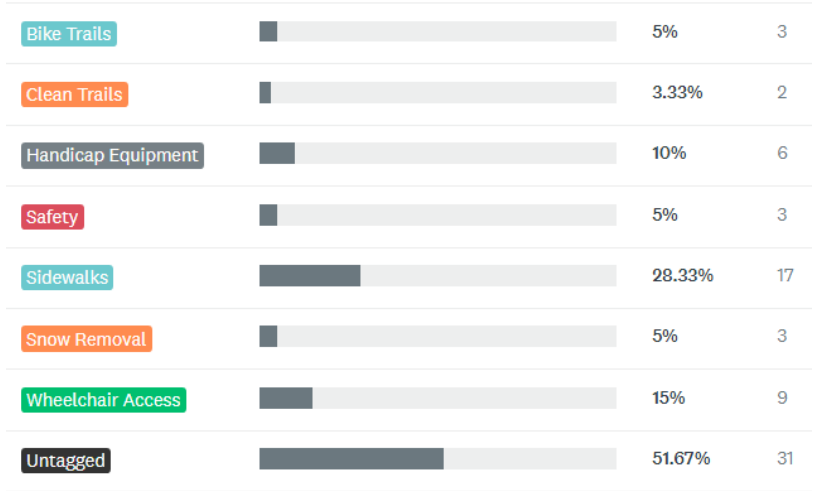


The most visited parks are McCoy Creek Trail, McCoy Creek Recreation Area and Kathryn Park followed by The Common/Pears Mill and McCoy Pond Park.

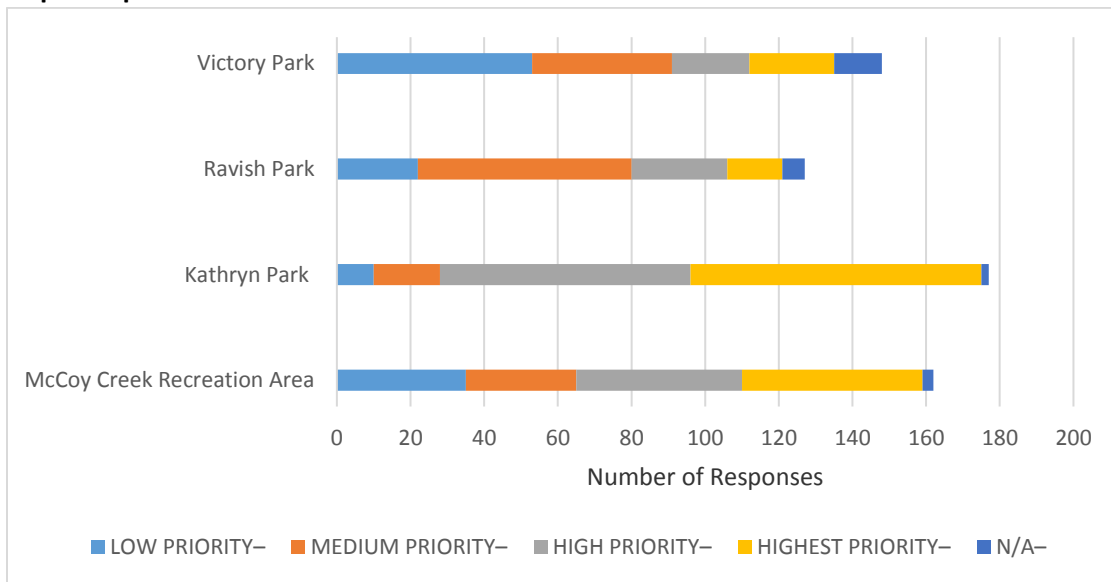
4. Are there any specific improvements that you would like to see at the parks or recreation areas listed above? Please list park(s) name and desired improvement(s).

playgrounds playground equipment kids place McCoy Creek Trail Madron Lake Boat
 Victory Park McCoy Creek walking commons visiting McCoy seating love see much
 Park used play USE paved Kathryn park needs Mud Lake Bog updated
 picnic tables splash pad Dog park equipment go see put
 Kathryn park upgrades
 playground equipment lot parks add
 trail Also new great Better Ravish park need Lake Boat Launch
 nice really area around time s kids trash play equipment pavilion
 New playground equipment community improvements Smith Park Buchanan
 equipment kids kids play McCoy Creek Recreation think Kathryn

5. If you or someone you know has a disability or physical limitation, are there any specific improvements you would suggest for City or Township parks to make them more accommodating?

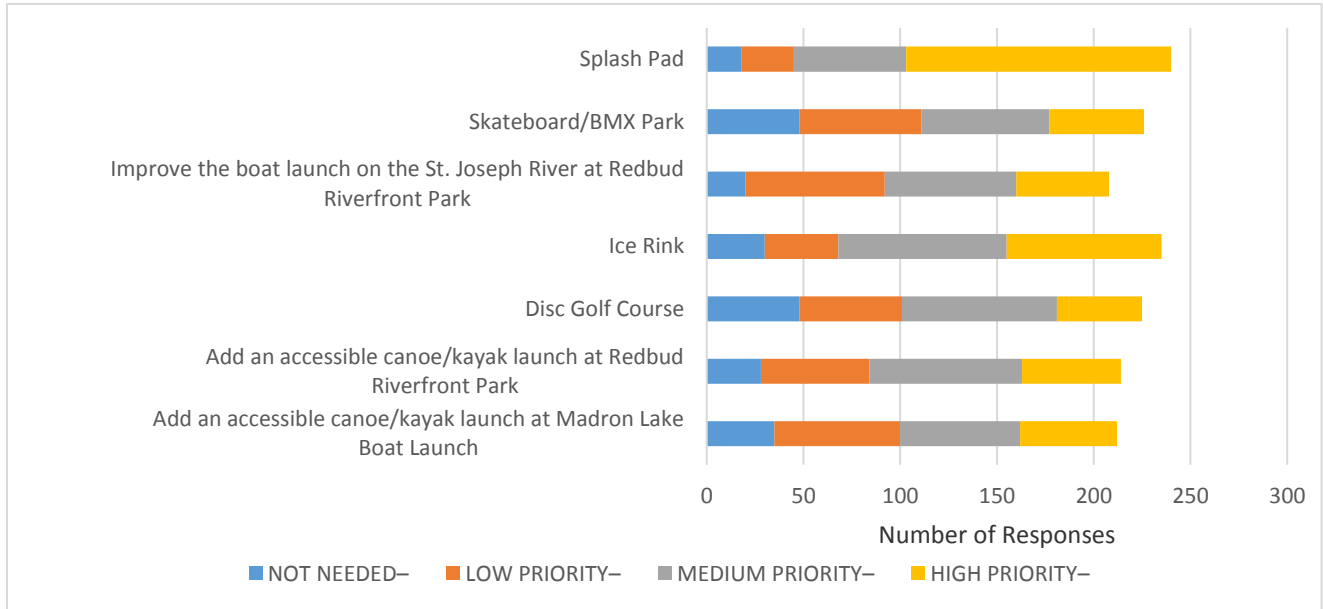


6. The City would like to update the playground equipment at several parks. Please select the priority of updating the playground equipment at each park. If unsure or no opinion, please skip this question.



The highest priority for updating playground equipment is Kathryn Park followed by Mc Coy Creek Recreation Area.

7. Let us know if you would like to see any of the following improvements or new recreation opportunities in the Buchanan community.

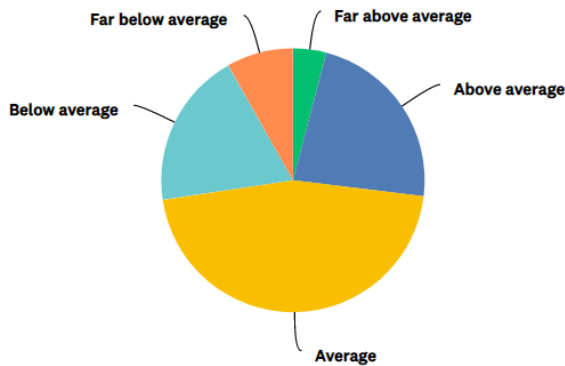


Most respondents placed highest priority on splash pad and ice rink for new opportunities. This is followed by improved boat launch and an accessible canoe/kayak launch at Riverfront Park and disc golf.

8. Are there any other recreation facilities or activities not offered currently or listed above that you would like to see in the Buchanan community?

Bike Paths	11.27%	8
Dog Parks	4.23%	3
Kayaking/Canoeing	4.23%	3
Pickle Ball	2.82%	2
Playgrounds	12.68%	9
Pool	7.04%	5
Rock Climbing	4.23%	3
Splash Pad	4.23%	3
Untagged	56.34%	40

9. In your experience, how do you feel the City and Township rate for providing maintenance of the parks and recreation areas?



Most respondents feel the City and Township’s maintenance is average (46%) with 27% feeling it is above (23%) or far above average (4%).

10. List any other ideas or comments you have regarding parks, trails, recreation and open space in Buchanan City and Township.

Better Information	4.35%	3
Community Gardens	5.80%	4
Good Work	14.49%	10
Lighting	2.90%	2
Mountain Bike/Hiking	1.45%	1
Splash Pad	5.80%	4
Trail Extension	1.45%	1
Winter Activities	4.35%	3
Untagged	39.13%	27

McCoy Creek Trail 5-Year Plan

YEAR	PROJECT	COST ESTIMATE	POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES	PROJECT DETAIL
2022	Maintenance of Phases I, II,	\$10,000	Private, City	Volunteers and City DPW provide maintenance for a safe and attractive trail. (weeding, tree trimming and removal, etc.
2023	Phase III	\$492,000	Private, City, Grants	The project would extend the City of Buchanan Trail System from E.B. Woods to River Street/Walton Road Bridge over the St. Joseph River to River St. Joe Brewery
2024	Phase III	*See above cost estimate for Phase III	Private, City, Grants	Continue work to complete Phase III
2025	Phase IV	\$500,000	Private, City, Grants	Extension of Phase II into the Fen then to Bakertown Road, linking up with US-12 Connection to the Berrien County Non-Motorized trail from Niles to New Buffalo
2026	Phase IV	*See above cost estimate for Phase IV	Private, City, Grants	Continue work to complete Phase IV

Phases of McCoy Creek Trail

Phase I: 2008, Schirmer Parkway to City Commons

Phase II: City Commons to McCoy Creek Recreation to Native Prairie Fen Loop

Phase III: Shirmer Parkway Trail Entrance to River St. Joe Brewery

Phase IV: The Fen to Bakertown Road (Future Expansion)

Park System Financing Options

Day to day operations and maintenance, and execution of the five year capital improvements schedule require significant financial resources. A number of alternative funding sources are examined below.

General Fund Support

Property taxes through the City's General Fund Budget have traditionally been the principle means of support for the City's Park and Recreation Budget. It is hoped that strong General Fund Support will continue in the future. However, as a non- mandated City function, The BARB is vulnerable to cutbacks during periods of financial challenges for the City. Realistically, the potential for significant increases in General Fund Support to finance new initiatives is limited.

User Fees

User fees are not a significant source of operating revenue at the present time. User fees including park admission fees, league registration fees, etc. can effectively offset a portion of annual operating costs but are not a realistic source of funding for capital improvements.

General Obligation Bonds

Under Michigan State Law, municipalities can issue General Obligation Bonds against anticipated tax receipts. The advantage for park and recreation development is that larger amounts of funds can be committed to satisfy the costs of major facility development. The disadvantages of issuing General Obligation Bonds are that they commit the City to a long payback, usually 15 to 25 years, with interest charges on borrowings.

Millage

A voted millage for parks and recreation services is an extremely stable source of financing park operations and facility development. A dedicated parks millage is often the only reliable mechanism to finance significant facility expansion and development in a timely manner. Millage generated revenue can also supply local matching funds requires to access state and federal recreation grants.

Revenue bonds

In some instances, recreation facilities will generate revenue for operations and income stream sufficient to retire principle and interest on revenue bonds. Before this method of capital financing is chosen, it is imperative to develop a detailed analysis of costs and debt retirement.

Gifts and Donations

Although gifts are an unpredictable source of funds, they can play a vital role in the development of a park system. The board should seek and encourage gifts of land, money,

materials and services from local residents, service organizations, business and industry. The BARB should identify and market specific projects and programs within the Plan, which may have appeal to private donors.

The BARB should also explore the establishment of an independent foundation with 501(c) (3) tax exempt status. The creation of an endowment fund organized and authorized to accept gifts and bequests, could provide a strong financial base for funding special projects in the future. Future assets from an endowment fund can become a viable source of local maturing funds, necessary to access state recreation grants.

Private Partnerships

Opportunities for joint development projects with the private sector, on City land, should be continuously explored. Partnerships of this type can be structured to provide a steady income stream to the City while also providing meaningful recreation opportunities to the community.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The federal funding program is administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) that provides 50% matching grant funds for projects that meet “outdoor” recreation needs of the City. The funds can be used for land acquisition, facility design, and development. Appropriations for this federal program have declined dramatically in recent years.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

The purpose of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) is to acquire lands or rights to land for public recreation use, to protect land because of its environmental importance or scenic beauty, and to develop public recreation facilities. Funds from the program are derived from oil, gas, or other mineral lease or royalty payments. The primary goals of the program include protection of the State’s natural resources, public access to water bodies, and improvement of urban recreation opportunities and stimulation of the State’s economy through recreation related tourism and community revitalization.

There are no minimum or maximum dollar amounts to acquisition projects. Development projects with costs between \$15,000 and \$500,000 are eligible for consideration. Local grant proposals must guarantee a local match of “at least” 25% of the total costs.

The MNRTF is the primary source of grant funds in the State today with over \$20 million available annually on a statewide competitive basis. Approximately 25% of the total is authorized for development projects with the remainder devoted to land acquisition.

MDNR Recreation Passport Program

Michigan Inland Fisheries Cooperative Grants Program

The program was established in 1986 and is administered by the Fisheries Division, MDNR operating on an annual appropriation of \$200,000. The program is intended to assist local units of government, conservation clubs, and individuals wishing to undertake projects which contribute to the enhancement of Michigan's inland fishery.

Specific criteria which must be met in order for a project to receive favorable consideration include the following:

- Project must be consistent with MDNR Fishery Division
- Project must have public support
- Project must be initiated in the calendar year the grant is awarded
- Project must benefit a positive cost-benefit ratio
- Project must provide evidence of land control for proposed project area

Individual grants of up to \$20,000 are available. Applicants must match the grant amount with in-kind services and/or cash.

Waterways Fund Program

The Waterway Fund Program administered by the MDNR assists local governments in providing increased public access to the State's water resource. Eligible projects include harbors of refuge, docking, and boat launch facilities. Funding from the program is derived from the State gasoline tax, MDNR revenue producing operations, watercraft sales tax, and registration fees.

Grants-in-Aid for the construction of recreational boating facilities, equal 50% of the total project costs, are made to local units of government. Eligible costs include engineering and construction. The sponsoring municipality seeking a grant must own the land and agree to operate and maintain the completed facility.

Public Notices/Adoption Related Documents

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

IN THE MATTER OF

PUBLIC HEARING
and COMMENT PERIOD

CITY AND TOWNSHIP
OF BUCHANAN, MI
RE: BUCHANAN COMMUNITY
RECREATION PLAN

COMMENT PERIOD
DECEMBER 26, 2021 - JANUARY 24, 2022


JOINT PUBLIC HEARING
7:00 P.M. JANUARY 24, 2022

STATE OF MICHIGAN
County of Berrien

Randy Hendrixson being duly sworn, deposes and says the annexed printed copy of a notice was published in the Berrien County Record, a newspaper printed and circulated in said State and County, published in the English language for the dissemination of legal news, having a bona fide list of paying subscribers and established, published, and circulated at least once a week without interruption for at least 1 year in said County, and that said notice was published in said newspaper on:

December 23,

A.D. 2021, that he is the agent of the printers of said newspaper and knows well the facts stated therein.


Randy Hendrixson

Subscribed and sworn to before me on this
23rd day of December A.D. 2021

LEGAL NOTICE

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
AND PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

Buchanan City and the Township of Buchanan, Berrien County, Michigan will hold a Public Comment Period for the Buchanan Community Recreation Plan from December 26, 2021 to January 24, 2022.

The plan will be available for review during business hours the municipal halls of the City of Buchanan (302 N Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107) and the Township of Buchanan (15235 Main St, Buchanan, MI 49107). The plan is also available for review on the Internet at <https://www.cityofbuchanan.com/>.

Written comments can be submitted by email to hamiltonm@swmpc.org or by mail to 302 N Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107 ATTN: CLERK and must be received by January 24, 2022.

The City of Buchanan Commission and the Township of Buchanan Board of Trustees will also hold a Joint Public Hearing on the draft plan on January 24, 2022, at 7:00 pm, at the Buchanan City Hall, 302 N Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107. At this meeting, the public will have the opportunity to give oral and/or written comments and also ask questions regarding the plan. All interested parties are urged to attend.

Buchanan Area Recreation Board
Berrien County, Michigan
A Resolution to Recommend Adoption of the
Buchanan Community Recreation Plan
2022-2026

Whereas, a plan which addresses the future use and development of parks, recreation areas, open spaces and greenways has been developed for the Buchanan Community by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) with assistance from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, and

Whereas, the planning process included public input opportunities such as a community survey and BARB monthly meetings, and

Whereas, the plan has been developed to meet the recreational needs (based on data and public input) of the community, and

Now, Therefore, be it resolved, the Buchanan Area Recreation Board recommends that the City of Buchanan Commission and the Township of Buchanan Board of Trustees adopt the **Buchanan Community Recreation Plan 2022-2026.**

Motion made by: Dan Viganksy

Second by: Megan Weedon

Yeas: Rachel Plank, Wendi Heyliger, Jen Popielski, Dan Vigansky, Ashley Hanson, Megan Weedon

Nays:0

Absent: Brittney Frantz, Sean Denison

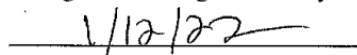
Abstain: 0

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED

Secretary: Megan Weedon **Date:** 1/12/2022

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a Resolution adopted by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board at their regular meeting on January 12, 2022.


Secretary


Date



**PUBLIC HEARING, JOINT MEETING WITH BUCHANAN CITY
COMMISSION AND BUCHANAN TWP BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY COMMISSION**

MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2022 – 7:00 PM

CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

The entire Joint 5-Year Recreation Plan is available on the City website and can be found at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/4baehab8> . Printed copies are also available at Buchanan City Hall.

I. City Call to Order Joint Meeting

Mayor Denison called to order at 7:00 P.M.

II. Township Call to Order Joint Meeting.

Supervisor Cole-Crocker called to order at 7:00 P.M.

III. City Roll Call

Present: Mayor Sean Denison, Mayor Pro Tem Mark Weedon, Commissioner Cameron Downey, Commissioner Larry Money, Commissioner Patrick Swem.

Absent: None

IV. Township Roll Call

Present: Supervisor Mindy Cole-Crocker, Township Trustee Lynn Ferris, Treasurer Rachel Plank, Clerk Wendi Heyliger

Absent: Brad Huebner

V. City Approve Agenda

Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Downey to approve the agenda. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

VI. Township Approve Agenda

Motion made by Heyliger, seconded by Ferris to approve the agenda. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

VII. City Open Public Hearing

Motion made by Swem to the City of Buchanan Joint Public Hearing on the draft "Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan", to accept public comment regarding the plan, Seconded by Weedon. At 7:02 PM.

Yea: Denison, Weedon, Downey, Money, Swem.

Nay: None

VIII. Township Open Public Hearing

Motion made by Plank to the City of Buchanan Joint Public Hearing on the draft "Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan", to accept public comment regarding the plan, Seconded by Ferris. At 7:02 PM.

Yea: Cole-Crocker, Ferris, Plank, Heyliger.

Nay: None

Public Comments were made.

Dan Vigansky Wanted to say thank you to Marcy Hamilton, the time limit was very constrained on this. Heyliger and Plank were a lot of help on this, with lots of time going into proofreading the plan. Dan is very excited to be working with the township collectively.

Juanita Lewis New Resident to Buchanan, happy to be here. Believes we can all work together.

Marcy Hamilton with Southwest Michigan Planning Commission- Been a pleasure to work with the City and Township on a Joint Plan. SMPC serves Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren Counties. Buchanan City and Township are one of the few that chose to work with their neighbors on Joint Plans and wanted to commend the City and Township on that effort. No other communities in Berrien County have done a joint plan. Offered Congratulations to City and Township.

Mayor Denison thanked Marcy Hamilton for all her work making this happen.

IX. City Close Public Hearing

Motion made by Denison, seconded by Swem to close the City of Buchanan's joint public hearing on the draft 'Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan". At 7:08 PM.

Yea: Denison, Weedon, Downey, Money, Swem.

Nay: None

X. Township Close Public Hearing

Motion made by Cole-Crocker, seconded by Plank to close Buchanan Township's joint public hearing on the draft 'Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan". At 7:08 PM.

Yea: Cole-Crocker, Ferris, Plank, Heyliger.

Nay: None

XI. Joint New Buisness

A. City of Buchanan to Consider a Resolution to Adopt the Buchanan Community Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Downey, to Approve Resolution #2022.01/240 to adopt the "Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan" as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

B. Buchanan Township to Consider a Resolution to Adopt the Buchanan Community Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

Motion made by Plank, seconded by Heyliger, to Approve Resolution #2022-06 to adopt the "Joint Five-Year Recreation Plan" as presented. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Discussion opened with Plank, echoing the comments about Marcy, as well as City Manager Grace. Township happy to be involved.

XII. Township Public Comment

None.

XIII. Township Executive Comments

Public Hearing, Joint Meeting with Buchanan City Commission and Buchanan TWP Board of Trustees, Regular Meeting of the Buchanan City Commission Minutes

Page 2 of 6

Cole-Crocker thanked everyone for coming out, as well as thanking City Manager Grace and Marcy Hamilton. Stating this is a huge endeavor and will bring people in to enjoy our parks. Believes it's a fantastic move for the City and Township to work together.

XIV. Township Adjourn- End of Joint Session, Regular meeting of the Buchanan City Commission Continues.

Motion made by Plank, seconded by Ferris, to adjourn the Buchanan Township Board of Trustees Meeting. Roll call vote carried unanimously. *(Regular meeting of the Buchanan City Commission continues.)* At 7:09 PM.

XV. Recognition

None

XVI. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

Dan Vigansky- Concerned about a written comment that was turned in. Voiced his concern about closed session.

XVII. Consent Agenda *(can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)*

A. Approve Expenditures for January 24, 2022, in the amount of \$85,417.63.

B. Consider Approving Minutes for the January 10th, 2022, Regular Meeting of the City Commission.

C. Consider approving Minutes from the January 12, 2022, Special Meeting of the City Commission.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Downey to approve the consent agenda, as presented, including the approval of the 1/24/2022 bill run in the amount of \$85,417.63. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

XVIII. Scheduled Matters from the Floor *(if any)*

XIX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

A. Treasurers Report- *Treasurer Stephanie Powers will give a brief report and will introduce Tim Bailey of Bailey Investments Group and LPL Financial for Honor Credit Union. Consider the request to move 2 million dollars in the city investment account to an indexed annuity with 4% growth and no downside on returns.*

Powers gave a brief report to the Commission.

Weedon wanted an update on the new current software. Powers stated it's fantastic, there is a lot to it and we are still learning how to use its full ability.

Weedon also asked for an update with Plante Moran assisting at City Hall with the finance department and audit. Powers believes with the audit starting today that the assistance will be completed by the end of February.

Powers introduced Tim Bailey to talk about the investment account. Bailey is the advisor on the investment accounts for the city.

Swem asked about "no downside on returns" and wanted to make sure this is compliant with the city's investment policy.

Bailey explained how the account works.

Grace said it is compliant with the investment policy.

Swem would like to see a side by side with investment account of what the city is currently at and what Bailey is proposing. Commission decided to table the item till the Special Meeting on January 31, 2022.

B. Community Development Director Report- Rich Murphy will discuss two additional economic development incentive programs:

1. *Redevelopment Liquor Licenses-* Director Murphy, Manager Grace, Assessor Cole, and Building Inspector Lewis have been working together, along with the City Attorneys, to try to make the City of Buchanan eligible for additional liquor licenses through a special "redevelopment liquor license" program offered through the State of Michigan. Murphy shared details regarding the program and asked for Commission support in the form of a resolution-- Consider Approving a Resolution to Create a City Redevelopment Project Area, which is proposed to encompass the entire City. [Note that an establishment would still need to satisfy zoning requirements for any specific location wanting to utilize a liquor license]. This process is the first step for the path forward. As a municipality we're doing everything we can to provide the tools, but the State must approve it and the applicant. But they can't do either one unless we have the tools for redevelopment.

Motion made by Swem, Seconded by Weedon, to adopt Resolution # 2022.01/241 which authorizes the creation of a City Redevelopment Project Area.

Yea: Denison, Weedon, Money, Swem

Nay: None

Abstain: Downey- Conflict

2. *Tax Abatements-* Director Murphy, Manager Grace, and Assessor Cole, along with generous assistance from Cornerstone Alliance, are working to have a tax abatement program ready to discuss in more detail during the February 14th City Commission meeting, but a brief preview explanation of the planned program will be discussed at this time.

OPRA is the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act- this provides a reduction in future taxes on improvements made on an eligible building in an established OPRA district. Murphy will be bringing the resolution to the commission to create the districts.

Murphy is trying to create buzz and find a sense of self for Buchanan, starting with building blocks to redevelop the city. There is interest in the city and he feels we need to keep doing what were doing and would like to hear the goals from the leadership on what they want to see next.

XX. Unfinished Business

None.

XXI. New Business

A. Consider Entering Closed Session to discuss matters subject to attorney-client privilege, pursuant to MCL 15.268 Sec. 8(1)(h).

1. *Draft Harassment and Discrimination Policy*
2. *Draft Land Redevelopment Program*
3. *Draft Parking Ordinance*
4. *DDA Loan Follow-up*

5. *USDA Project Follow-up*
6. *Architect Contract Follow-up*
7. *Zoning Questions Follow-up*
8. *Blight Enforcement Questions Follow-up*
9. *Draft Mobile Food Vending Ordinance*

Motion made by Weedon, seconded by Money to enter Closed Session to discuss matters subject to attorney-client privilege, pursuant to MCL 15.268 Sec. 8(1)(h) at 7:44 PM. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

B. Consider Re-Entering Open Session

Motion made by Downey, Seconded by Swem to re-enter Open Session at 7:58 PM. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

C. Consider taking action, if any, on items discussed in Closed Session

None currently.

XXII. Communications *(informational only, formal board action is not necessary for these items, unless so desired)*

None

XXIII. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

City Manager Grace made note of a written comment that was received prior to this meeting. There was a written communication that requested to be shared as a public comment at tonight's meeting. The communication was distributed to the Commission and there is a public copy available in the binder at the table. If anyone would like to review it, please do so or we would be happy to provide you with a copy. Thank you.

Dan Vigansky - would like to know why the written comment was not read.

Rhett Johnson - has been developing the properties at 402, 404, 408 Oak St. They have been working around the clock and happy to be in Buchanan.

XXIV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

Thanked everyone in attendance, welcomed new residents, thanked individuals sharing their comments and concerns, as well as new businesses investing in our community. It's an exciting time in our community. Regards to the procedures that are used for closed session, in Michigan we are subject to follow the OMA. There is a section of that legislative act that governs proceedings for closed sessions. When we discuss matters that are subject to attorney client privilege with the City Attorney as we did this evening, we go to a private location and discuss those matters. Those matters are not made public until a decision is going to be made. Anytime a decision is going to be made, they are made during open session with the public willing and able to participate. We are having conversations, but no decision are being made behind closed doors. Every decision that's made and any expenditure using city taxpayer money is done publicly. A big part of why we have some of those discussion in closed session, there a certain things that are not appropriate for legal reasons to discuss publicly. Confidentiality issues with staff or real estate transactions of developers, so very important things we work hard on to make sure it's in the best

interest of the Buchanan city residents. And again, we are always as transparent as possible. Anyone who has further questions on it, Grace would be happy to answer after the meeting. Thank you.

B. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Weedon- If you haven't had a chance to go downtown and visit the Sweet Shop, he cannot encourage you enough. Weedon took the family down and the kids were smiling the whole time and of course wanted everything. They have a lot of pride. Joe and Tom are excited to show you the business. Once again a lot of great things coming. It's a beautiful place and they have put their heart and soul into it. Please take an opportunity to go down and see it. Thanked Marcy and Heather for the 5 year-Rec Plan. It's fantastic to hear that we're the only one in the county working with their Township. Really enjoyed their presence and would be a great thing to see more often.

Commissioner Swem- Thanked Buchanan Township for all the work that went in the Joint Rec-Plan. As well as BARB, it's important to set an example for our neighbors to work together. Commended Murphy on his work on the Liquor License program, with Heather, Guy and Mindy. Appreciate everyone coming out.

Commissioner Downey- No comment.

Commissioner Money- Welcomed Juanita, thanked Murphy on all the work he's been doing downtown. Thanked Chief Ganus and Sargent Leonard for their presence downtown, as it seems to have made a difference. Thanked Mike Baker for doing a great job on keeping the roads clear.

C. Mayor Comments

Thanked Fran and The Chamber for doing a phenomenal job. Thanked all of the staff for their hard work. Congratulations to Lily Wagner on becoming our new Miss. Buchanan, and thanked Jade Smith for her historic 2 year run of Miss. Buchanan; she did a great job and very proud of her. Thanked the Commission and the public.

XXV. Adjourn

Motion made by Weedon, Seconded by Money to adjourn the meeting at 8:12 PM. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

Kalla Langston, City Clerk

Mayor Sean Denison

City of Buchanan, Berrien County
A Resolution to Adopt the
Buchanan Community Recreation Plan
2022-2026
Resolution # 2022.01/240

Whereas, a plan which addresses the future use and development of parks, recreation areas, open spaces and greenways has been developed for the Buchanan Community by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) with assistance from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, and

Whereas, the planning process included public input opportunities such as a survey and BARB monthly meetings, and

Whereas, the plan has been developed to meet the recreational needs (based on data and public input) of the community, and

Whereas, a 30 day public comment period was held along with a public hearing to take comment on the plan, and

Whereas, the BARB has recommended the plan for adoption.
Now, Therefore, be it resolved, the City of Buchanan adopts the Buchanan Community Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

Yeas: Denison, Weedon, Downey, Money, Suter

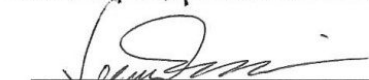
Nays: N/A

Absent: none

Abstain: N/A

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED

Date: 1/24/2022


Sean Denison, Mayor


Kalla Langston, City Clerk

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was certified at a Joint meeting of the City Commission of the City of Buchanan, Michigan, and the Board of Trustees, Township of Buchanan, Berrien County, Buchanan, Michigan held on Monday January 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.


Kalla Langston, City Clerk

**Township of Buchanan, Berrien County
Board of Trustees
A Resolution to Adopt the
Buchanan Community Recreation Plan
2022-2026
Resolution # 2022-06**

Whereas, a plan which addresses the future use and development of parks, recreation areas, open spaces and greenways has been developed for the Buchanan Community by the Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) with assistance from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, and

Whereas, the planning process included public input opportunities such as a survey and BARB monthly meetings, and

Whereas, the plan has been developed to meet the recreational needs (based on data and public input) of the community, and

Whereas, a 30 day public comment period was held along with a public hearing to take comment on the plan, and

Whereas, the BARB has recommended the plan for adoption.
Now, Therefore, be it resolved, the Township of Buchanan Board of Trustees adopts the Buchanan Community Recreation Plan 2022-2026.

Yeas: Cole-Crocker, Plank, Heyliger, Ferris
Nays: na
Absent: Heubner
Abstain:

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED
Date: 1-24-2022

Malinda A. Cole-Crocker
Malinda Cole-Crocker, Supervisor

Wendi Heyliger
Wendi Heyliger, Clerk

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was certified at a Joint meeting of the City Commission of the City of Buchanan, Michigan, and the Board of Trustees, Township of Buchanan, Berrien County, Buchanan, Michigan held on Monday January 24, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

Wendi Heyliger
Wendi Heyliger, Clerk



Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

January 25, 2022

Berrien County
Community Development Department
Dan Fette, Director
701 Main Street
St. Joseph, MI 49085

Dear Mr. Fette:

Enclosed please find a copy of the adopted Buchanan Community Recreation Plan: 2021-2026 for the Township of Buchanan and Buchanan City. This five-year plan reflects the community's commitment to comprehensive recreational planning that includes measures to protect natural resources through responsible use and provides opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to participate in healthful living.

Sincerely,

Marcy Hamilton

Marcy Hamilton
Senior Planner

376 West Main Street, Suite 130 • Benton Harbor, MI 49022-3651

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Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

January 25, 2022

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
John Egelhaaf, Director
376 W. Main Street, Suite 130
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Dear Mr. Egelhaaf:

Enclosed please find a copy of the adopted Buchanan Community Recreation Plan: 2021-2026 for the Township of Buchanan and Buchanan City. This five-year plan reflects the community's commitment to comprehensive recreational planning that includes measures to protect natural resources through responsible use and provides opportunities for residents of all ages and abilities to participate in healthful living.

Sincerely,

Marcy Hamilton

Marcy Hamilton
Senior Planner

376 West Main Street, Suite 130 • Benton Harbor, MI 49022-3651

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