POLKTON CHARTER TOWNSHIP

RECREATION PLAN

2018-2023
POLKTON CHARTER TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN
2018-2023

TOWNSHIP BOARD
Bill Sahlberg, Supervisor
Connie Langeland, Clerk
Robin Liszewsik, Treasurer
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:
This Plan document was prepared utilizing the information and mapping made available from the Amended 2015 Polkton Township Master Plan and 2011-2016 Recreation Plan.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION


The first review for the Recreational Master Plan began with the Sheridan Park Committee members who reviewed the previous Master Plan and inserted revisions and planned public park enhancements as the key consideration for both Sheridan Park and South Evergreen Schoolhouse.

The addition of South Evergreen Schoolhouse is new since the 2011-2016 Recreation Plan. The South Evergreen Schoolhouse is the last remaining one room schoolhouse within the Township proper. A grassroots committee comprised of Township residents was formed to save this historical building. The Township agreed to purchase the schoolhouse if the committee could raise the $20,000 needed to purchase the building and .75-acre parcel where the schoolhouse sat. In June 2015 donations for the purchase of the schoolhouse had been met and the building and land were purchased and turned over to the Township. In January 2016 a First Right of Refusal was obtained from a neighboring 40-acre parcel to be used by the South Evergreen Schoolhouse for future park plans. In December 2016 a 1-acre parcel was purchased from adjoining property to connect the schoolhouse property to the 40-acre future parcel.

To date the restoration of the schoolhouse has been accomplished by the original grassroots committee with Township funds used for day-to-day maintenance, e.g. utilities, lawnmowing, snow removal, etc.

Sheridan Park has grown since 2010 with groomed walking trails; parking lots at the west and south side of the park, a state-of-the-art suspension bridge, and first-class pavilion near the west side parking lot. Much of the activity that has made the park what it is today (including the pavilion) has been accomplished through volunteers, donations and Township funds. This park has become well known throughout the surrounding communities and is used daily by the citizens of the City of Coopersville, surrounding communities and Polkton Township.
CHAPTER 2
COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The majority of the community description sections were taken, with Township permission, from the Amended 2015 Polkton Township Master Plan. This was done in order to maximize the time put into the essential tasks of the Recreation Plan.

Location

"Polkton Charter Township is located in the northeastern portion of Ottawa County and consists of approximately 39 square miles of land area. The City of Coopersville is situated in the east-central portion of the Township. Polkton is bounded on the north by Muskegon County's Ravenna Township, on the west by Crockery Township, and on the east by both Wright and Tallmadge Townships. The Grand River forms the Township's southern boundary. Allendale Township lies directly south of the Grand River, adjacent to Polkton Charter Township's southern boundary.

Interstate Highway 96 traverses the central portion of the Township in an east/west direction providing the principal access route to the community. This artery links the Grand Rapids Metropolitan area with the Muskegon/Grand Haven areas. Polkton Township is situated approximately 15 miles northwest of downtown Grand Rapids and 12 miles from Lake Michigan."

The location of Polkton Charter Township is shown below.
Natural Features

Geology and Topography
"The bedrock of Polkton Charter Township consists of the edges of bowl-like rock formations that fill the Michigan basin. The oldest/deepest rock is the Coldwater shale formation. Overlapping this shale is the Marshall sandstone formation. Overlying these rocks is a mass of glacial drift deposited by receding glaciers. This material ranges from less than 100 feet to more than 300 feet in thickness. The un-consolidated material as well as the Marshall Formation contains aquifers that are used for domestic water supplies.

Variations in the surface relief within Polkton Township are generally not pronounced. Because of this, the area's topography is well suited for agricultural purposes. The highest point in the Township is approximately 750 feet above sea level and is found in Section 1 in the extreme northeast. From this point, the land generally falls off to the south and southwest toward the Grand River where elevations are approximately 590 feet above sea level.

The most significant factor affecting the topography of the Township is the Grand River and its associated watersheds. The river forms the entire southern boundary of the Township as it meanders to the west toward Lake Michigan. Over time, the river and its tributaries have cut steep slopes and ravines into the otherwise gentle landscape. Many of the slopes associated with these ravines exceed 12%. Several of the ravines and 12 stream valleys drop 50 feet in a very short distance. Many of the slopes associated with the ravines are extremely fragile and pose severe, although localized, limitations on development."

Surface Water Features and Drainage
"All of Polkton Charter Township lies within the Grand River Drainage Basin and all storm water eventually flows into the Grand River. The eastern half of the Township is drained by Deer Creek which originates in Section 1 near the Township's northern boundary with Ravenna Township. Beaver Creek contributes to the Deer Creek watershed. It enters the Township in the northeast from Wright Township and converges with Deer Creek just north of the City of Coopersville. The western half of the Township is included in the Crockery Creek watershed. Within this area numerous small streams drain in a westerly direction to Crockery Creek, located in Crockery Township. The southern portion of the Township drains almost directly into the Grand River through a number of small rivulets. Formal county drains provide control of drainage within the Township. The Ottawa County Drain Commission, Polkton Charter Township and property owners have roles in maintaining this drainage system. Portions of the Township nearest the Grand River and upstream along Deer Creek are within the 100-year floodplain of the Grand River."
Upstream, the 100-year flood level roughly coincides with the 598.5-foot contour elevation. Downstream, the 100-year floodplain coincides approximately with the 594-foot contour. Due to its relatively narrow extent (50 to 1000 feet in width), only a limited amount of land area is contained within the Grand River's floodplain. Narrow floodplains also exist along Deer Creek and many of the smaller streams in the Township. The width of floodplains along the upper drainage network of the Township generally ranges from 100 to 200 feet. Along Deer Creek, flood plains range from 400 to 600 feet in width within Coopersville to as wide as 1,000 feet in width where Deer Creek converges with the Grand River.

The Grand River and most of the creeks may flood the low-lying areas along their banks in times of heavy rainfall and during the springtime snowmelt. These flood prone areas have several planning implications, such as consideration for the placement of structures, the placement and design for new roads, bridges and culverts, and the location of recreational and other open space areas.

At the present time, very little development has occurred within the areas of the Township that are flood prone. As a result, little flood damage has been experienced. The Township has, however, participated in the National Flood Insurance "Emergency" Program since 1994. The hydrographic features have had a definite bearing on existing land use and their consideration is of primary importance in developing a future land use plan that makes use of and promotes the continuation of existing drainage patterns.

Every effort should be made to preserve and maintain the floodplain, the woodlands, and pasture lands along the streams in their natural state. In so doing, the potential long-term adverse environmental and economic impacts that development of these fragile corridors brings can be avoided.

**Surface Water Quality**

"According to the State of Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality Water Bureau 2008 report, Deer Creek, Beaver Creek, and Little Deer Creek are not attaining water quality standards necessary to support a warm water fishery designation. These bodies of water do not contain sufficient dissolved oxygen to support a warm water fishery, and contain pollutants such as phosphorus, mercury, and PCB's (polychlorinated biphenyls) in amounts that also do not support a warm water fishery. Causes for these pollutants and low levels of dissolved oxygen have yet to be specifically determined, and the State DEQ plans for more detailed studies in 2011. At that time, local actions will be identified that can aid in implementing steps to improve water quality.

The Grand River, which receives periodic discharges of raw sewage from the City of the storm water ponds that are associated with the Ottawa County Farms Landfill are required to comply with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which is monitored for compliance by the State. Water
samples are analyzed quarterly as required by the Natural Resources Environmental Protection Act. Surface water runoff is monitored also.

Runoff from both agricultural and non-agricultural lands is another potential source of water pollution. Effective January 1, 2008, fertilizers used for non-agricultural purposes in Ottawa County must contain 0% phosphorus. The purpose of the ordinance banning lawn fertilizers is to maintain and improve water quality by reducing algae blooms excessive aquatic plant growth in the surface waters of the County."

**Groundwater**

"Ground water quality in the area of the Ottawa County Farms Landfill is monitored by several wells installed by the operator of the landfill on property owned by Ottawa County Farms."

Vegetation
"The vegetation patterns in Polkton Charter Township quite closely reflect local topography, hydrology and soils patterns. The rich loamy soils have been cleared and used for farming, while the poorer soils and steep slopes have been left undisturbed. Included in the naturally vegetated, undisturbed portions of the Township are those areas that generally have one or more characteristics such as slope and wetness that make them less than desirable for development purposes.

The natural vegetation is quite varied and ranges from ash, willow, and poplar in the lowlands to oak-pine wood lots in rolling, gravelly, sandy soils and beech-maple-hemlock in the loamy to sandy steep slopes and seasonal wetland areas. Areas of Hawthorne can also be found in some of the idle farmlands that have reverted back to a more natural condition."

The Land Cover Map illustrates land cover, including woodlands, scrublands and wetlands.

Soils
The Soil Limitations and Ground Water Sensitivity Map illustrates soils which place restrictions on the placement and function of on-site septic systems. Most of the soils in Polkton Charter Township have severe restrictions for the operation of septic systems. A comparison of the Prime Farmland Map and the Soils Limitations Map will show that generally prime farmland soils are not suitable for septic systems.

Prime Farmland Soils
"A large percentage of Polkton Charter Township consists of prime farmland soils as illustrated on the following page map. These are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as soils which are best suited for feed, forage, fiber and oil seed crops and which produce the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and economic resources. Certain areas may be prime farmland only when well drained or not flooded during the growing season."

Land Cover
Much of Township acreage is in agriculture with wooded vegetative concentrations along the Grand River, Deer and Beaver Creeks. Building coverage is clustered along US-96, around the City of Coopersville and along the Grand River (mostly residential). Ottawa County Landfill, private landfills and the City of Coopersville waste water treatment occupy about one section in the Township immediately south of the City of Coopersville.
LAND USE PATTERNS

"Polkton Township lies west of the Grand Rapids metropolitan area and the City of Coopersville is located within the physical boundaries of the Township. The Grand Rapids metropolitan area, and to a larger degree the City of Coopersville, will play ever increasing roles in shaping the trends that will influence the future development of Polkton Township.

The total land area of Polkton Township consists of 38.6 square miles or 24,750 acres. The predominant land use is agriculture with scattered woodlands and open lands. Single family houses exist primarily along county roads. Institutional uses such as churches, cemeteries, and the Township hall can be found on the Community Facilities Map in the Appendix. Commercial and industrial uses are located close to the City of Coopersville and the I-96 interchange. The following is an analysis of existing land uses and zoning in the Township."

Agricultural Land Use
"The primary land use in the Township is agriculture. Agricultural lands include cropland, pasture, farmsteads, lands occupied by farm outbuildings, confined feeding operations, and ornamental trees and shrubs. Crops grown in Polkton Township include wheat, hay, corn, soybeans as well as fruits and vegetables. Within the Agriculture (AG-1) zoning district, farms and farming activities are permitted, as well a number of uses that are permitted by a special land use permit such as farm markets, commercial riding stables, and single-family farm dwellings.

Existing AG-1 zoning extends from Leonard Street north to the county line at Wilson Street, stretching from the Township's eastern border to the Township's western border. The AG-1 zone is bisected and split into two different areas by the City of Coopersville, the I-96 Interstate freeway, and a narrow strip of residential, commercial, and industrial zoning located along the freeway. Agricultural land use is also the predominant land use currently existing in neighboring communities along the Township's borders."

Residential Land Use
"The four residential zoning districts within the Township are Single Family Residential (R-1), Waterfront Residential (R-2), Medium Density Residential (R-5), and Medium to High Density Residential District (R-6). Areas of the R-1 Single Family Residential District are located in three different locations within the Township; two of these areas are close to the City of Coopersville. One of these zones is located to the west of the City of Coopersville between the I-96 Interstate Expressway and the former Central Michigan Rail Road tracks. In this area, single-family homes are located along Cleveland Street and State Road, along
88th Avenue south of Cleveland Street, and along 88th Avenue north of Cleveland Street to a distance of one-half mile. Large undeveloped parcels remain within this area of R-1 zoning."

A second area of R-1 zoning begins ¼ mile feet north of the northern border of the City of Coopersville." It proceeds along the 64th Avenue corridor north to Taft Street and along the Roosevelt Street corridor east to 48th Avenue. This area of the Township has within it several small subdivisions and private road developments. Newer homes have likely been built in this area due to a location within close proximity to Coopersville schools as well as near attractive rural settings. Large undeveloped parcels also remain within this area of R-1 zoning."

"A third area of R-1 zoning is located to a depth of approximately one-eighth mile adjacent to the north side of the Leonard Street corridor running from the Township's eastern border with Tallmadge Township to the Township's western border with Crockery Township, with the exception of the Eastmanville plat."

"The portion of the Township located from Leonard Street south to the Grand River is zoned as the R-2, Waterfront Residential District. Numerous private roads exist in this area of the Township. This zone also accommodates two of the Township's newer subdivisions, Trail Creek Pass site condominiums and Lamont Farms. Trail Creek Pass is located west of the manufactured housing community on 84th Avenue. Lamont Farms is a subdivision located south of Leonard Street near the Township's eastern border, and north of the Grand River. It is an extension of growth centered on the neighboring settlement of Lamont in Tallmadge Township.

Two areas in the Township are reserved for the R-5 Medium Density Residential District which permits single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings if served by public water or sewer, home occupations, family day care homes, and State licensed adult foster care family homes. These areas are the Eastmanville plat at 68th Avenue and Leonard Street and a strip of land stretching from 48th Avenue west to 64th Avenue, extending north a quarter mile from the Township's boundary with the City of Coopersville.

The R-6 Medium to High Density Residential zoning district allows for manufactured housing, multi-family dwellings if served by public water or sewer, and single-family dwellings. There are not any areas currently zoned to the R-6 District. Although a manufactured housing community is located on the west side of 84th Avenue, approximately a quarter mile north of the Grand River, the community is a legally existing non-conforming use in an area zoned R-2 Residential-
Sensitive area."

**Commercial Land Use**

"The Township reserves two zoning districts for commercial uses: Neighborhood Commercial (C-1) and General Commercial (C-2). The Planned Unit Development district (PUD) also permits commercial uses. C-1 zoning is located in one location. This is south of Arthur Street at the location of the Township hall.

C-2 zones exist at the intersection of 68th Avenue and Arthur Street to the immediate south of the Township hall property, the location of a building currently operating as a commercial business. A second is a location 1,500 feet south of Garfield on the east side of 68th Avenue and is currently being used as an auto body repair shop.

An area that includes a Commercial Planned Unit Development District (C-PUD) and two Planned Unit Development parcels is located at State Road and 72nd Avenue between I-96 and the former Central Michigan Rail Road tracks. This space is currently occupied by a farm supplies and equipment store, a propane dealership, a fastener retail, and an all-terrain vehicle business. A significant portion of this area to the east of the farming equipment store currently sits vacant."

**Industrial Land Use**

"Industrial land uses in Polkton Township are permitted in the I-Industrial District. Three areas in the Township are currently zoned for industrial use. The first is located along the east side of 68th Avenue at the I-96 Interstate Expressway interchange bounded by the expressway to the north and the landfill to the south. This land is currently used as a truck fueling station, and a steel fabrication business. The actual zoning of this property is Industrial Planned Unit Development. (I-PUD)

A second area is located at the 48th Avenue/I-96 Interstate Expressway interchange. This site is currently being used as a propane dealership. Surrounding land use in neighboring communities in this vicinity include a small commercial complex on the north side of the interchange in Wright Township which includes a boat sales marina.

A third area of industrial use which is zoned I-PUD is located in a triangular area bounded by I-96, Arthur Street and 76th Avenue extended. Current uses in this location include a residence, a towing business and an office building,"
Schools
"The Coopersville Public School District encompasses Polkton Charter Township and the surrounding area, including the City of Coopersville. The public-school complex is on the east side of Coopersville. Two private schools (elementary) are also located in the Township." (St. Michael's, and Lamont Christian School)

Ottawa County Farms Landfill
"Republic Services, Inc. owns and operates the Ottawa County Farms Landfill that is located between Interstate I-96 and Garfield Street, east of 68th Avenue. Republic Services owns approximately 835 acres of land, of which, 321.54 acres is the area defined within the landfill permit boundary.

Landfill operations at this site began in 1982. The landfill is permitted to dispose of Type 2 waste which includes non-hazardous/non-toxic waste from residential, commercial and industrial facilities. At current disposal and compaction rates, it is anticipated that the life of the site is through year 2072.

No hazardous or toxic waste is handled by the operation. The site and operation is inspected monthly by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)."

City of Coopersville Waste-water Treatment Lagoons
"The City of Coopersville operates a wastewater treatment plant. The lagoons for this plant are located within the boundaries of Polkton Township between the I-96 Expressway and Garfield Street, a half mile east of 60th Avenue on approximately 65 acres of land."

Future Land Use
"The larger portion of the Township remains in Agricultural uses, with residential, commercial and industrial generally clustered around the City of Coopersville and the freeway interchanges. Residential Sensitive Area is placed all along the Grand River corridor."

A current Future Land Use Map is on the following page.
Transportation Facilities

"The street system forms the most basic framework for growth and development of a community. By providing a means for internal and external circulation, it serves the community by helping shape the intensity of land use. Thus, this costly and long-lasting element becomes one of the most dynamic forces of the community. The street system serving Polkton Township can be classified as follows:

Controlled Access Interstate
Interstate 96 performs little or no land service function but instead is devoted to the task of moving large volumes of traffic at relatively high speeds.

Rural Arterials (inter-county primary)
This class of street, which includes 2.8 miles of 56th Avenue serves major movements of traffic within or through the area. Mainly designed to move traffic, the secondary function is to provide land service. This class of street typically interconnects major state arterial highways.

Rural Arterials (county primary)
This class of street is similar to the inter-county primary and serves to move traffic within and through the area. Mainly designed to move traffic, the secondary function is to provide land service. In theory, this class of street serves shorter distance traffic and provides a more limited degree of continuity than the inter-county arterial. There are 28.99 miles of county primary roads in Polkton Township, including 48th avenue and 68th avenue south of Arthur, Cleveland, Leonard, and State Road south of Cleveland.

Collector Streets
These streets provide internal traffic movement within specific areas and connect those areas with the major and minor arterial system. Generally, they are not continuous for great length. There are currently 27.63 miles of paved local "collector" streets and 34.18 miles of gravel surface collectors.

Local Subdivision Streets
The sole function of these streets is to provide access to immediately adjacent property. There are 1.64 miles of subdivision streets in Polkton."
SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

TABLE 1


*Population Growth Over Time.* Table 1 illustrates the growth in population of Polkton Township from 1970 to the year 2010. The year 1970 shows a loss in population due to annexations by the City of Coopersville that occurred in the 1960’s. The fairly large increase in population during the decade from 1980 to 1990 reflects a trend that was typical in this decade in many areas of Michigan due to large numbers of persons locating to suburban and rural areas outside urban areas. Slower growth over the next two decades is a combination of land use policies in Polkton Township that result in preservation of farm land, and the recession which had a significant impact on new housing starts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Numerical Change</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>-113*</td>
<td>-5.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>2,027</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>3.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>2,284</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>12.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2,423</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
*Reflects population loss due to annexations by the City of Coopersville

*Population Growth Comparisons.* Table 2 compares population growth in Polkton Township with growth occurring in adjacent communities and Ottawa County as a whole from 1990 to 2010. From 2000 to 2010 Polkton Township experienced a 3.8% increase in population, below the 10.7% increase in population experienced by Ottawa County.

The Township’s growth (3.8%) was the fifth smallest in comparison to surrounding communities from 2000 to 2010. Sullivan Township, Wright Township, and Chester Township all experienced a negative growth. Ravenna Township was the only Township with positive growth (1.7%) to have a smaller increase than Polkton Township. The city of Coopersville, Crockery Township, Robinson Township, and Tallmadge Township all experienced slightly larger yet modest increases in population of 9.3%, 4.7%, 8.9%, and 10.1% respectively. Allendale Township saw a significant increase in population with a growth of 58.8%. This increase in population is largely due to the presence of Grand Valley State University.
## TABLE 2

**POLKTON TOWNSHIP & SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES**

*Population Growth Comparisons (1990 – 2010)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Coopersville</td>
<td>3,421</td>
<td>3,910</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>4,275</td>
<td>9.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polkton Township</td>
<td>2,284</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>2,423</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allendale Township</td>
<td>8,022</td>
<td>13,042</td>
<td>62.58%</td>
<td>20,708</td>
<td>58.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester Township</td>
<td>2,133</td>
<td>2,315</td>
<td>8.53%</td>
<td>2,017</td>
<td>-12.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crockery Township</td>
<td>3,599</td>
<td>3,782</td>
<td>5.08%</td>
<td>3,960</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson Township</td>
<td>3,925</td>
<td>5,588</td>
<td>42.37%</td>
<td>6,084</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tallmadge Township</td>
<td>6,293</td>
<td>6,881</td>
<td>9.30%</td>
<td>7,575</td>
<td>10.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wright Township</td>
<td>3,285</td>
<td>3,286</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>3,147</td>
<td>-4.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ravenna Township (Muskegon County)</td>
<td>2,345</td>
<td>2,856</td>
<td>21.33%</td>
<td>2,905</td>
<td>1.70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sullivan Township (Muskegon Co.)</td>
<td>2,230</td>
<td>2,477</td>
<td>11.07%</td>
<td>2,441</td>
<td>-1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa County</td>
<td>187,768</td>
<td>238,314</td>
<td>26.92%</td>
<td>263,801</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau
TABLE 3

Ages of Population
POLKTON TOWNSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Grouping</th>
<th>2000 Percentage</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010 Percentage</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2000-2010 % Change</th>
<th>2000-2010 Change as % of Whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 Years</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>-14.6%</td>
<td>-1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 17</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>-7.7%</td>
<td>-2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 20</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 to 24</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 44</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>-14.4%</td>
<td>-4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 59</td>
<td>486</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>589</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 to 84</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 and older</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.08%</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>125%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2,423</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Puneces of Population. Table 3 shows the ages of the population in Polkton Township comparing the year 2000 to 2010. A slight decrease occurred in the age groups of under 5 years, 5 to 17 years, and 25 to 44 years, with each group decreasing -14.6%, -7.7%, and -14.4% respectively. This decrease may indicate smaller numbers of young and school age children, due to smaller numbers of those in the typical child bearing years. The largest age group in 2000 was the 25 to 44 years age group; the largest age group in 2010 was the 45 to 59 years age group, indicating a somewhat aging population.
# TABLE 4

## Income and Employment

**POLKTON TOWNSHIP, OTTAWA COUNTY, & HOLLAND-GRAND HAVEN**

**METROPOLITAN STATISTICAL AREA (MSA)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Polkton Township</th>
<th>Ottawa County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number</strong></td>
<td><strong>Percent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population 16 Years and Over</td>
<td>1,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>1,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>1,199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Household Income</strong></td>
<td>$62,533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median Family Income</strong></td>
<td>$71,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per Capita Income</strong></td>
<td>$25,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with Poverty Status</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Holland-Grand Haven MSA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Number</strong></th>
<th><strong>Percent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In labor force</td>
<td>126,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>110,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>16,012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Income and Employment.** Table 4 provides information on income and employment in Polkton Township compared to Ottawa County as a whole as reported by the year 2010 US Census. Additional employment data in Table 4 is as reported by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics for the year 2014.

Unemployment in Polkton Township during the time of the 2010 US Census was somewhat less than that of the County, with Polkton Township experiencing a 4.6% unemployment rate compared to the County’s 6.0%. Median Household Income, Median Family Income, and Per Capita Household Income tended to be slightly higher than the County average. Families with poverty status in Polkton Township (8.97%) were moderately higher than Ottawa County’s 6.5%. Poverty status for the year 2014 is defined by the US Census Bureau as an income of $23,850.00 or less for a family of four.

Polkton Township is located within the Holland-Grand Haven Michigan Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA); the boundary of the MSA is the boundary of Ottawa County. Unemployment in this MSA in June of 2014 was reported to be at 12.68%, a significant increase from the 5.8% reported in the year 2007. Clearly, residents of the MSA, which includes residents of Polkton Township, are experiencing the effects of the past several years of economic challenges in the State of Michigan.

**Employment by Occupation.** Table 5 (next page) provides a breakdown of employment in Polkton Township by occupation, industry, and class of worker. The occupations providing the greatest number of jobs for residents of Polkton Township are those in management, professional, and related occupations. The occupations providing the fewest number jobs are those of service occupations, and those in natural resources, construction, and maintenance. The industry employing the largest number of persons is educational, health, and social services followed by manufacturing. Private wage and salary workers make up the largest number as a class of workers.

The 2007 US Census of Agriculture reports that 183 total farms, as defined by the US Census, existed within the 49404 (Coopersville) zip code. Of these, 116 were fully owned by one owner, 60 were owned by part owners, and seven were leased. Of these farms, 79 farms consist of 1 to 49.9 acres; 98 consist of 50 to 999 acres; and six farms consist of 1,000 or more acres. Of the 183 farms, 140 had farm sales less than $50,000; 19 had farm sales of $50,000 to $249,999; and 24 had farm sales of $250,000 or greater.
### TABLE 5

Employment By Occupation, Industry, and Class of Worker

POLKTON TOWNSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2010 Number</th>
<th>2010 Percent</th>
<th>2000 Number</th>
<th>2000 Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed civilian population 16 years and over</td>
<td>1,199</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1,146</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management, professional, and related occupations</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service occupations</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales and office occupations</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production, transportation, and material moving occupations</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale trade</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and warehousing, and utilities</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational, health, and social services</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other services (except public administration)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class of worker</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private wage and salary workers</td>
<td>954</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government workers</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid family workers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, 2010
Table 6

Housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Polkton Township</th>
<th>Ottawa County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupied Housing Units</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>94.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied housing units</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>85.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter occupied housing units</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant housing units</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Housing Units 893 102,495

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010

Housing. Table 6 illustrates a breakdown of housing by ownership in the Township and compares it with the county. Of the 893 total housing units in the Township, 847 (94.8%) were occupied, while 46 (5.2%) were vacant. The Township’s occupied housing rate was above the county average, while the Township’s vacancy rate was below the county average. Of the 847 occupied housing units in the Township, 763 (85.4%) are owner-occupied while 84 (9.4%) are renter-occupied. The rate of owner-occupied housing in the Township is higher than the county average, while the rate of renter-occupied housing in the Township is lower than the county average.

Vacant housing units within the Township increased from 24 units in the year 2000 to 46 units in the year 2010. Within Ottawa County as a whole, vacant unit increased from 5,194 units to 8,720 units. Increases in vacant housing units may be attributable to the economic downturn between 2000 and 2010, which may have resulted in foreclosures, lack of purchases of new or existing housing stock, and lack of renters.
TABLE 7

Housing Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1939 or Earlier</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 - 1959</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960 - 1969</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970 - 1979</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 1989</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 2000</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2007</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>*5</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>948</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Imperial Municipal Services
*denotes numbers through June 2014

Age of Housing Units. Table 7 shows ages of housing structures in Polkton Township. Of the 948 total housing units, nearly half (45%) were built prior to 1970. Since 1970, the remaining 55% have been built. The slower rate of construction in the year 2008 and following are largely due to the recession.
CHAPTER 3
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE and RECREATION BUDGET

ADMINISTRATION
The Township Recreation Committee consists of two sub-committees that are made up of five members each. The sub-committees are referred to as the Sheridan Park Committee and the other the South Evergreen Schoolhouse Committee. Each committee is represented by a Township Board member, and at least one Planning Commission member, with the remaining members made up by Township residents. The Recreation Committee was formed for the purpose of planning for both short- and long-range parks and recreation needs in the Township and making recommendations to the Township Board regarding these matters.

The Polkton Charter Township Board is the primary decision-making body in the Township. Members include a supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and four trustees. The Recreation Committee members are appointed by the Township Board. The Board approves or disapproves recommendations of the Recreation Committee.

In 2009 the Recreation Committee prepared the first Township Recreation Plan following the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park Recreation Open Space and Greenway Plans as outlined by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Funding for the creation of the Township Recreation Plan was allocated through Township General Funds. In addition, the Recreation Committee oversees recreation needs in general for the Township, manages Sheridan Park and the development of South Evergreen Schoolhouse property. The Committee collaborates occasionally with the City of Coopersville and Ottawa County in recreational projects and seeks out grant funding sources for recreation improvements or activities.

The Township does not currently have a Parks and Recreation Department nor does it fund parks and recreation personnel. The maintenance and improvements of all Township grounds including the Township hall, Eastmanville Cemetery, Sheridan Park and South Evergreen Schoolhouse are funded on a contractual basis through the Township Public Improvement Fund.

Administrative duties for these facilities are shared by the Township Board.

The Committee(s) are responsible for arranging for maintenance of both recreational facilities. A combination of volunteer help and out-sourced contracting services are used.
The Planning Commission can influence recreation and open space issues in many ways: The Polkton Charter Township Planning Commission participates in planning for the preservation of open spaces in the Township and can require that developers include recreation elements such as pocket parks, trails, and sidewalks in their plans when building in the Township. It can also approve zoning ordinance amendments that limit the degradation of the landscape in new developments, preserving open space and natural areas.

**Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The Township cooperates with its neighboring governmental entities in the following recreationally-related areas:

- It works with surrounding western Townships in Ottawa County in the planning of the North Bank Trail through the Township.
- The City of Coopersville and the Coopersville Public School District provide the majority of recreational activities, such as league play.
- The City of Coopersville has been invited to send a representative to Polkton Charter Township Recreation Committee meetings.

**Operating Budget and Funding**

The Township Recreation Committee had an actual budget in 2016-2017 of $36,500 funded through the Township Public Improvement Fund. In 2018-2019 its projected budget will be $34,000. This budget will fund park maintenance and specific recreational projects for both Sheridan Park and the South Evergreen Schoolhouse.

The Township Recreation Committee has access once a year to the Sheridan Park Endowment Fund (established in 2008) which provides up to 4% of its fund principal for upkeep and improvements to the Park. Based on an initial $100,000 endowment, this averages $4,000 annually, depending on return on the principal investments. The Fund is administered through the Coopersville Area Community Foundation.

In 2009-2010, the Township received a $17,000 grant for construction of a pedestrian bridge at Sheridan Park and another $4,618 for Park benches, signs, nutrition education and promotions from the Ottawa County Wellness Coalition.

In 2013 a citizen group was formed to explore saving the last remaining one room schoolhouse located in the Township, the South Evergreen Schoolhouse. By 2015 enough donations had been received to purchase the property and the schoolhouse. The Township has assumed responsibility for the ongoing operating costs of the schoolhouse. The budget for the schoolhouse maintenance for 2018-2019 is $17,500 paid from the Township’s Public Improvement Fund.
Volunteer Work and Funding

In addition to monetary funds, much work at Sheridan Park and the South Evergreen Schoolhouse has been accomplished by volunteer labor and funds. Developing and maintaining trails, clearing brush, installing site furniture and signs, writing funding grants, renovation coordination efforts, etc. are all performed by dedicated volunteers. The Boy Scouts, students at Coopersville Schools, and other community groups have also done various construction projects.
CHAPTER 4
GRANT HISTORY

Grant History in Recreational Improvements

Sheridan Park
The Township applied for grants to fund the pedestrian bridge construction and was successful in receiving an Ottawa County Wellness Coalition grant in conjunction with the Ottawa County Health Department for $17,000 in 2009. In addition, $4,618 was available for site furniture, signs, nutrition education and promotions.

Construction of this project was completed by 2010. The Township continues to add trail amenities.

Grants from Coopersville Area Youth Advisory Council (CAYAC) have been sought and received annually. The latest grant in 2017 was awarded for the amount of $1,475 to be used towards the purchase of picnic tables.

South Evergreen Schoolhouse
Donations continue to be a primary source of income for restoration projects. As received, donations are held at Grand Haven Area Community Foundation until needed.

A CAYAC grant for $1,200 was received for outhouse restoration. This restoration was completed in Fall 2017.

The Committee continues to seek grants for projects from Grand Haven Community Foundation, Coopersville Area Foundation, Coopersville Area Youth Advisory Council, the Loutit Foundation and other grant sources as they come available.
CHAPTER 5
RECREATION INVENTORY

The following inventory lists all of the public, private, and school recreational facilities and programs available to Polkton Charter Township residents. The inventory lists those opportunities both within the Township, and beyond the Township's political boundaries. In general, opportunities inventoried are within 30 minutes driving time of Township residents.

Polkton Charter Township Facilities

Sheridan Park
Donated to Polkton Charter Township in 2003 by Dr. Harold Sheridan, this natural area of 57 acres is currently under development. It lies partially in the City of Coopersville boundary and is adjacent to the Polkton/Coopersville Cemetery. It includes the confluence of Deer Creek and Beaver Creek, as well as 20 acres of higher ground (which was farmed at one time). Phase One development consisted of parking along 64th Avenue, a pedestrian entry along Cleveland Street, mowed trails, a pedestrian suspension bridge, trail signage, a sledding hill, benches and picnic tables.

A second point of access was made in collaboration with the adjoining Coopersville-Polkton Cemetery property in 2017. This access point supports up to 7 parking spots and ready access to the upper portion of the park.

A 30' X 45' picnic pavilion was built and completed in 2017 near the 64th Avenue parking lot. This pavilion supports several amenities such as electricity, picnic tables, ADA accessibility and outdoor grills.

South Evergreen Schoolhouse
Located at 8780 Leonard Street on 1.84 acres, it is the last one-room schoolhouse left in Polkton Township. The schoolhouse and .74 acres were purchased by Polkton Township in June 2015, with an additional 1.1 acres adjoining the property purchased in December 2016. Restoration of the schoolhouse is done primarily through donations received and held at the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.

City of Coopersville Public Recreation Facilities

City Neighborhood Parks
- **Main Street Park.** Coopersville's Main St. Park has benches, picnicking, and a small sledding hill.
- **Grove Street Park.** Grove St. Park has a softball field and flag football field complete with lighting.
City Community Parks

Coopersville Sports Complex. The Sports complex is home of two Little League baseball fields, a soccer field, a softball field, and basketball hoops for pick-up games, horseshoe pits, an archery range and a new multi-purpose skating rink. One baseball field and the soccer field have night lighting.

Veterans Park. The Park is adjacent to the Sports Complex. It has a picnic pavilion with restroom facilities.

School Facilities within Township Boundaries

All of Polkton Township is located in the Coopersville Area Public School District (CAPS). The district serves seven Townships and the City of Coopersville. The district maintains all instructional facilities at a main campus in Coopersville. Within the Township, Lamont Christian School and St. Michael's Catholic School provide private elementary education. Lamont Christian is located on Leonard near the southeastern boundary of the Township and St. Michael's is located on 88th Ave.

Coopersville Public School District

The District encompasses Polkton Township and parts of the surrounding Townships. It provides the majority of active recreational facilities for many Township residents. The public-school complex is located in the City of Coopersville (east side). Following is a list of the recreational facilities located at each school within the complex.

Community Recreational Fields

High School
Two softball fields, one practice football field, eight tennis courts, one football/track stadium, two baseball fields, auditorium and one gymnasium

East Elementary
Four basketball half-courts, small soccer field, one playground with paved games, and one gymnasium.

South Elementary
One play structure (which includes an accessible area with accessible equipment), one small soccer field, Averill Ballfield and one gymnasium.

Middle School
This school currently houses sixth through eighth grades. Facilities include one basketball court, four soccer fields and one gymnasium.
Private Recreational Facilities within or near Township Boundaries
The following is an inventory of those privately-owned recreational facilities located within or near the Township's boundaries.

Conestoga Grand River Campground  Highlands Golf Club
Pigeon Creek Golf Course  Western Green Country Club
Sand Creek Golf Course  Terra Verde Golf Course

Public Recreational Facilities within or near Township Boundaries
The following is an inventory of those publicly-owned recreational facilities located within or near the Township’s boundaries.

Spring Lake Community Fitness and Aquatic Center (school)
Meadows Golf Course (GVSU)

Regional Facilities Located Within and Near the Township
Polkton Charter Township is unique in that a number of important regional recreational facilities are located within the Township boundaries. While not technically described as local facilities, their presence in the Township provides opportunities for recreation not usually available on a local level. These facilities are described below.

Natural Resource/Open Space Areas
Crockery Creek Natural Area (in Crockery Twp). This 331-acre natural area includes frontage on both the Grand River and Crockery creek. About 2 miles of hiking and cross-country ski trails meander along wooded ridges and wetlands as well as through floodplain forest and open hardwoods.

Bur Oak Landing. This open space land is 261 acres that is divided into two parcels separated by 90th Avenue East Bur Oak Landing (116 acres) and West Bur Oak Landing (145 acres). Bur Oak Landing includes 1.4 miles of Grand River frontage, wetlands, upland and floodplain forest and a large bayou. Facilities are limited to fishing, hiking and cross-country skiing.

Eastmanville Bayou. Located across the Grand River from Polkton Township, is a 157-acre open space with 1.75 miles of Grand River frontage and 1.5 miles of Eastmanville Bayou. Proposed improvements include a 40-car parking lot, small boat launch ramp on the bayou, walkways, picnic sites, interpretive displays, canoe/kayak dock and rustic toilets.

Ripps Bayou. This 172-acre site is located in Polkton Township and is only accessible by boat from Grand River. The site is surrounded by private property and there is no road access. It includes a large bayou in the woods with no development.
County Parks

**Grose Park.** Grose Park consists of 40 acres and is located northeast of Polkton Township. It provides a variety of recreational opportunities for the entire family including swimming, fishing, and sand volleyball and picnicking, as well as one mile of hiking trails along a creek.

**Eastmanville Farms.** This 229-acre property, located on the Grand River, was established as a county 'poor farm' to provide housing and services for indigent residents. A master plan for the former farm proposes development of a park with equestrian trails and facilities, development of an educational farm and general recreational usage including river access. It currently offers 3.5 miles of equestrian and hiking trails and a parking lot.

**Deer Creek Park.** This 2 acre property, tucked away at the mouth of Deer Creek as it joins the Grand River is a shady retreat for fishing and picnicking. A small boat launch offers easy access to the Grand River.

**Non-Motorized Trails**
Facilities included in this portion of the inventory are regional in nature.

**Musketawa Trail**
The Musketawa Trail is a 26-mile paved (12' wide) all-season linear park constructed on an abandoned rail line between Marne and the eastern edge of the City of Muskegon.

Trail uses include hiking, biking, roller-blading, snowmobiling and horseback riding. Several trailheads with parking are located in Ottawa County. Eventually this trail will join with other proposed regional trails.

**North Bank Trail**
The North Bank Trail is a proposed 18-mile non-motorized, multipurpose pathway located generally along the former Grand Trunk Railroad right of way and will extend from Spring Lake to the Coopersville area and link with other regional trails. Phase One (2010) is a 1.5-mile segment that will extend from Spring Lake trail at Fruitport Road to the west edge of Crockery Township. 2018 phase two should be completed into Nunica. By 2020 the trail should extend to the west border of Polkton Township.

**Recreational Programming**
Polkton Charter Township offers no recreational programming itself, as it has no recreation department. Programming is offered by the City of Coopersville Recreation Department that serves the area's youth regardless of residency. Popular organized recreational offerings available to area youth are baseball, archery, softball, soccer, hockey, rocket football, football and swimming. Many of the recreational programs and community education programs utilize the
Coopersville School District Facilities and staff.

An extensive youth and adult enrichment programming is offered by the Coopersville Public School District through Leisure Enrichment Services.
CHAPTER 6
COMMUNITY BARRIER-FREE COMPLIANCE

Because the Township has only recently had recreational facilities, compliance with current Federal accessibility requirements and recreational guidelines has not been an issue. However, for each project at Sheridan Park or South Evergreen Schoolhouse accessibility is foremost in the Township plan, particularly as it is expressed in the Federal guidelines for Outdoor Recreation.

Existing parking and site amenities at the main entrances are either already accessible, or plans are made to include accessibility access. Trails are currently simply cut through existing vegetation, and current master planning efforts will continue to address accessibility concerns.

Sheridan Park currently has limited sidewalk accessibility access. As funds are available this type of pathway will be extended to give greater access to visitors that require this type of access to enjoy the park and its amenities.

The Township will continue to provide physical barrier free accessibility with all its future improvement projects.
CHAPTER 7
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Existing Public Improvement Facilities

Polkton Charter Township has two locally maintained Public Improvement facilities; Sheridan Park and the South Evergreen Schoolhouse

Sheridan Park
Donated to Polkton Charter Township in 2003 by Dr. Harold Sheridan, this natural area of 57 acres is currently under development. It lies partially in the City of Coopersville and is adjacent to the Polkton/Coopersville Cemetery. It includes the confluence of Deer Creek and Beaver Creek, as well as 20 acres of higher ground (which was farmed at one time). Since its inception, Sheridan Park has added a parking lot along 64th Avenue as well as with adjoining property to the south of Sheridan Park and Coopersville-Polkton cemetery; approximately 2 miles of mowed trails are maintained that includes, a pedestrian suspension bridge, trail signage, a sledding hill, benches and picnic tables.

In September 2017 a pavilion was built and put into use. This pavilion has ADA compliant sidewalk access, cement floor and electricity. There are no full side walls with this pavilion. Six picnic tables (including one ADA compliant table) are planned to be installed in 2018.

South Evergreen Schoolhouse
Located on 1.84 acres, this is the last one room schoolhouse left in Polkton Township. The schoolhouse and .74 acres were purchased by Polkton Township in June 2015, with an additional 1.1 acres of adjoining property being purchased in December 2016.
Restoration of the schoolhouse is done thru donations received and held at the Grand Haven Community Foundation. Maintenance of the building and property is supported by the Township.
General Goals for Sheridan Park and South Evergreen Schoolhouse

1. Enhance the recreational opportunities of Sheridan Park and the South Evergreen Schoolhouse property for year-around recreation for all area residents including the elderly and people with disabilities.

2. Expand the boundaries of these Township recreational properties for future development.

3. Maintain cooperative and collaborative relationships with other local governmental units and agencies to provide additional recreational facilities for Township and City of Coopersville residents.

4. Improve non-motorized connections to various recreational facilities, schools and residential areas in order to provide safe, pleasant and satisfying recreational experiences.

5. Preserve and protect natural, scenic and environmentally sensitive areas.

Specific Park and Recreation Goals and Objectives

In order to plan for future needs the Sheridan Park Committee and South Evergreen Schoolhouse Committee have developed goals and objectives to enhance the properties and their use by Township residents and visitors. The goals are long-range in nature and are intended to be flexible enough to accommodate future change. The objectives are short-range in nature and focus on specific program and development decisions to be made in the next five years. Neither the goals or objectives are meant to be cast in stone, but to guide the intent of the future actions. Time and attitude changes make flexibility essential if the Township is to be responsive to its constituents.

Sheridan Park

The goals and objectives for Sheridan Park are to enhance its amenities to meet the needs of the residents. Sheridan Park has groomed trails that are used daily for walking or cross-country skiing. With the addition of the pavilion it is planned that the park use will expand to include weddings, family reunions, and generally larger gatherings.

To reach this goal, the committee will add certain amenities such as picnic tables, outdoor grills, additional pit toilets and security cameras in 2018.
It is planned that a maintenance bridge will be replaced in 2019. Currently this bridge is part of a shipping container. In addition, expansion of the current parking lot is planned to accommodate larger groups that may use the park. Also, the addition of bike racks will make the park a destination for bicyclists.

There will be a review in 2021 to determine the need for additional features that will enhance the use of the park, based upon actual usage information. (e.g. connectivity to bicycle trails within the township/county, user input, etc.)

The standards provided by the MDNR and NPRA also establish service areas or number and type of parks that should be available to residents within a certain distance of their homes. This report does not apply the service area concept to the Township due to the scattered nature of the population. There is more than adequate acreage in the Township devoted to open space and natural areas, primarily on the southern border near the Grand River. These are mostly County-owned parks and serve to meet the MDNR and NPRA standards.
South Evergreen Schoolhouse
The South Evergreen Schoolhouse park was established in 2015 with the purchase of the schoolhouse and property. It is located in R-2 zoning. The goal has been to save the last remaining one room schoolhouse within the Township, and to restore the building as it was when it was an active school from the mid 1800’s to its closing in 1959. In 2016 additional adjoining property was purchased along the west property line. It is to be used for a parking lot and to create a means of reaching a 40-acre parcel of land adjoining the southern property line. This 40-acre parcel currently has a first right of refusal attached to it for the South Evergreen Schoolhouse.

Restoring the schoolhouse will serve the Township with a picture of what life was like during the period after the Civil War through the mid 1900’s. Recognizing that the schoolhouse may not be a full-time attraction on its own the proposed 40-acre parcel to the south could serve as a unique park that would be used for a variety of activities such as walking trails, cross country skiing, family outings, sporting events, etc.
South Evergreen Schoolhouse progression.
FIVE YEAR ACTION PLAN

As previously pointed out there are several recreational facilities in and around Polkton Township. However, Table 6 counted school facilities as meeting many of the required numbers of recreational facilities---particularly ballfields.

School facilities made up the majority of the recreational fields available to residents of the Township. These facilities are not always available to the public. They may be unavailable during school hours, used by school athletic programs, or just limited to certain activities. This view distorts the true availability of recreational facilities for public use.

The needs that Polkton Township plan to address are:

Sheridan Park Development
From the very beginning Sheridan Park was planned to be an open space, passively developed area. To continue to meet this vision the following is planned.

- Additional picnic areas and support facilities such as sidewalks, bridges, benches, etc.
- Expansion of ADA accessible trails.
- Continued preservation of natural areas and open space.
- Development of formal maintenance program and
- Replacement of the north maintenance bridge
- Install cement slabs where parking lot handicap parking is located
- Create additional parking north of the existing west parking lot

South Evergreen Schoolhouse
South Evergreen Schoolhouse is the last one room schoolhouse in Polkton Township that has not been otherwise converted to a private residence or torn down. The building has been left in disrepair for many years and although structurally sound there are a number of things that need to be done to bring it back to how it was when it was used as a schoolhouse.

Following are key maintenance projects planned over the next five years:

- It is planned to have the windows rebuilt, electrical work inspected and updated to current building codes, in 2018.
- In 2019, it is planned to add security to the property against vandalism, have the well inspected and repaired to working order, and retrofit the interior of the schoolhouse as it was when it was an active school.

- In 2020, it is planned to continue working on the interior of the building as well as bring plumbing up to code and build a parking lot along the west side of the property.

- In 2021 the chimney is planned to be restored, the septic inspected and upgraded as needed, and interior work continued.

Smaller projects would also be done over this five-year time frame, such as bicycle racks, picnic tables, as needed maintenance, etc.

**Trail Connector Developments**

Public comments have clearly emphasized the desire of citizens to keep the Park as an open space, passively developed area. This should include:

- Continue to support the expansion of the regional non-motorized (bicycle) trail system in conjunction with the City of Coopersville and Ottawa County trail planning efforts.
  - Accessible trail connection from Nunica to the City of Coopersville’s trail system south of Cleveland Street.

Sheridan Park has initiated a trail access to its southern border in the City of Coopersville along Cleveland Street. To improve access to the local community, the Township has worked collaboratively with the Coopersville-Polkton Cemetery and the City of Coopersville to provide a safe, accessible connection to the residential development south of Cleveland Street. This has allowed another access to the park for surrounding residents.

Cooperation and participation with North Bank Trail planning efforts:

- Efforts on the regional North Bank Trail have continued to bring a county wide trail system nearer to the Township. Eventually the trail will run through Polkton Township, then east to the Musketawa Trail. Ottawa County leads the effort with the support of local governments.

- Monitor County road improvement projects on 68th Avenue (a County primary) and 64th Avenue, that may facilitate a long-term north-south non-motorized, Class I (off- road) connection to the proposed Grand River Greenway Trail just south of the Grand River, as well as north to the Musketawa Trailhead.

- Development of trails and trail connections within the Township has been supported as early as the Public Open House at Sheridan Park.
in July of 2010. In addition, the 2015 Township Master Plan does support a bicycle path along 68th Avenue and recommends that this feature be included in any future improvement to the corridor.

Land Acquisition
One of the goals of the Township Master Plan of 2015 is the sensitive protection and development of existing natural resources. In Polkton Township, the most obvious of these resources tends to be its waterways and woodlots. To this end the following properties are under consideration for purchase or conservation easement by the Township.

Sheridan Park
- For habitat and resource protection:
  There is roughly 15 acres of land directly north of Sheridan Park, along Beaver Creek. It is forested and hilly, sloping to the creek. It contains a spectacular bluebell understory and is fragile due to its slopes and floodplain. Until now, it has been difficult to develop as housing without significant access improvements. Should residential construction occur, there would most likely be severe damage to the land resource. Private development here would negatively impact the bluebells understory, and would change the character of the Park on its north boundary.

- For protection from the impacts of future residential developments surrounding the Park:
  Private land directly east of Sheridan Park is zoned for medium density residential use, and is currently leased for farming. The largest area of high ground in the Park is adjacent to this private land, and is an open field being maintained as a walking meadow.

  Construction of housing units within a few hundred feet of the park boundary would significantly change the character of the Park as a rural, natural area. Purchase of this private land or purchase of a conservation easement on it, might maintain the integrity of the park's character in its eastern half.
The same concern could be noted for the southwest corner of the Park along Cleveland Street, where development of a few residential buildings would impinge on the character of the Park along its southern-limits.

**South Evergreen Schoolhouse**

- For habitat and resource protection:
  Since the initial purchase of the South Evergreen Schoolhouse and property an additional adjoining 1-acre parcel was also purchased in 2016. This additional acre allows for the expansion of a parking lot at the schoolhouse as well as access to property located south of the schoolhouse. Expansion of the schoolhouse property will increase the kinds of activities that can be offered to the community. To this end a forested 40-acre parcel of land has been made available with a first-right-of-refusal is currently in place.
- The schoolhouse is located in residential zoning (R-2). Without these 40-acres this property will someday be housing and not a natural landscape that could be enjoyed by the surrounding community.

**Future Park Land Development:**

- Evaluate need and location of future park land for active recreation facilities. Because of the active use of Coopersville School district athletic facilities and the City of Coopersville Sport Complex for school functions and public recreational programming, more active recreational facilities for team play will be increasingly desired. The Township should explore the possibility of additional fields within Township boundaries.

**Summary**

The Five-year Action Plan is based upon a strong foundation of citizen input. In addition, the Recreation Committee had established goals prior to the drafting of the 2018 Recreation Plan. The 2018 Five-year Plan reflects the following priorities:

1. Continued development of walking trails and support facilities at Sheridan Park;
2. Continued development of the South Evergreen Schoolhouse;
3. Acquisition of additional park land to protect the Park character as it comes available;
4. Development/coordination of pedestrian connections from the Sheridan Park into the City of Coopersville
5. Continued support of the North Bank Bicycle Trail efforts.
6. Continued refurbishing of the South Evergreen Schoolhouse building and grounds.
Additional Exhibits
Sheridan Park:
South Evergreen Schoolhouse:

This is a photo of the South Evergreen Students that attended the South Evergreen Reunion in 2000.