

Cedar Creek Township Community Park & Recreation Plan



Little Cedar Creek - Cedar Creek Township

Cedar Creek Township Community Park & Recreation Plan November 2022 – 2027

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Robert (Bob) Wright, Board Representative

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Parks & Rec Committee

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Chuck Luttrull

Heather Jarvis

Beth A. Barnard

Cindy Briggs

Ron Aerts

Bill Jeffries

Andy O'Riley

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 Introduction and Purpose of the Plan.....

CHAPTER 2 Cedar Creek Township Description.....

CHAPTER 3 Governmental & Organizational Structure.....

CHAPTER 4 Recreational & Historical Inventory.....

CHAPTER 5 Budget.....

CHAPTER 6 Planning & Public Input Process.....

CHAPTER 7 Goals & Objectives.....

CHAPTER 8 Next Steps.....

APPENDICES

Cedar Creek Township Parks & Recreation Mission Statement and Points of Order

Newspaper Notice of 30-Day availability of Draft Plan for Public Comment & Review

Newspaper Public Hearing Notice

Planning Commission Resolution of Approval & Minutes (Including Public Hearing)

Township Board Resolution of Approval & Minutes

Chapter 1

Introduction and Purpose

Cedar Creek Township Community Park & Recreation Plan

The Township of Cedar Creek, Muskegon County, Michigan has had a 5-acre existing plot situated behind the Township Hall since 1861. In 1999 Ruth and Wes Lomax donated 1.38 acres to the Township to be used for recreational purposes. That same year two youth-size softball fields along with a basketball court were placed on the property. There is a walking trail, which has not been maintained, surrounding the original property, and no playground equipment on which children may play.

In 2019, the Township purchased an additional 7.44 acres which were adjacent to the existing property for the express purpose of increasing the Community Park size and potential.

This Community Parks and Recreation Plan serves several specific purposes:

- 1) It functions as a roadmap in the planning and development of a fully functioning and well-thought-out community park for people of all ages and abilities.
- 2) A well-developed Community Parks & Recreation Plan helps toward the advancement of a thriving and vibrant community.
- 3) It helps provide the Parks & Recreation Committee with very specific Goals and Objectives.
- 4) It assists the Board in its annual financial planning.
- 5) It provides the Township Master Plan with a more inclusive plan for its 5-year outlook.

- 6) Having a well-developed Community Parks & Recreation Plan in hand allows the Township to apply for specific grants that would otherwise not be possible.

Once adopted, a Parks & Recreation Plan must be reviewed every 5 years. This Parks & Recreation Plan is intentionally being developed to be placed on a reviewing schedule close to that of the Cedar Creek Township Master Plan.

Questions in the 2022 fall Master Plan Survey sent to all citizens of the Township addressed certain park-specific concerns. This helped provide a solid basis on which to build our plan.

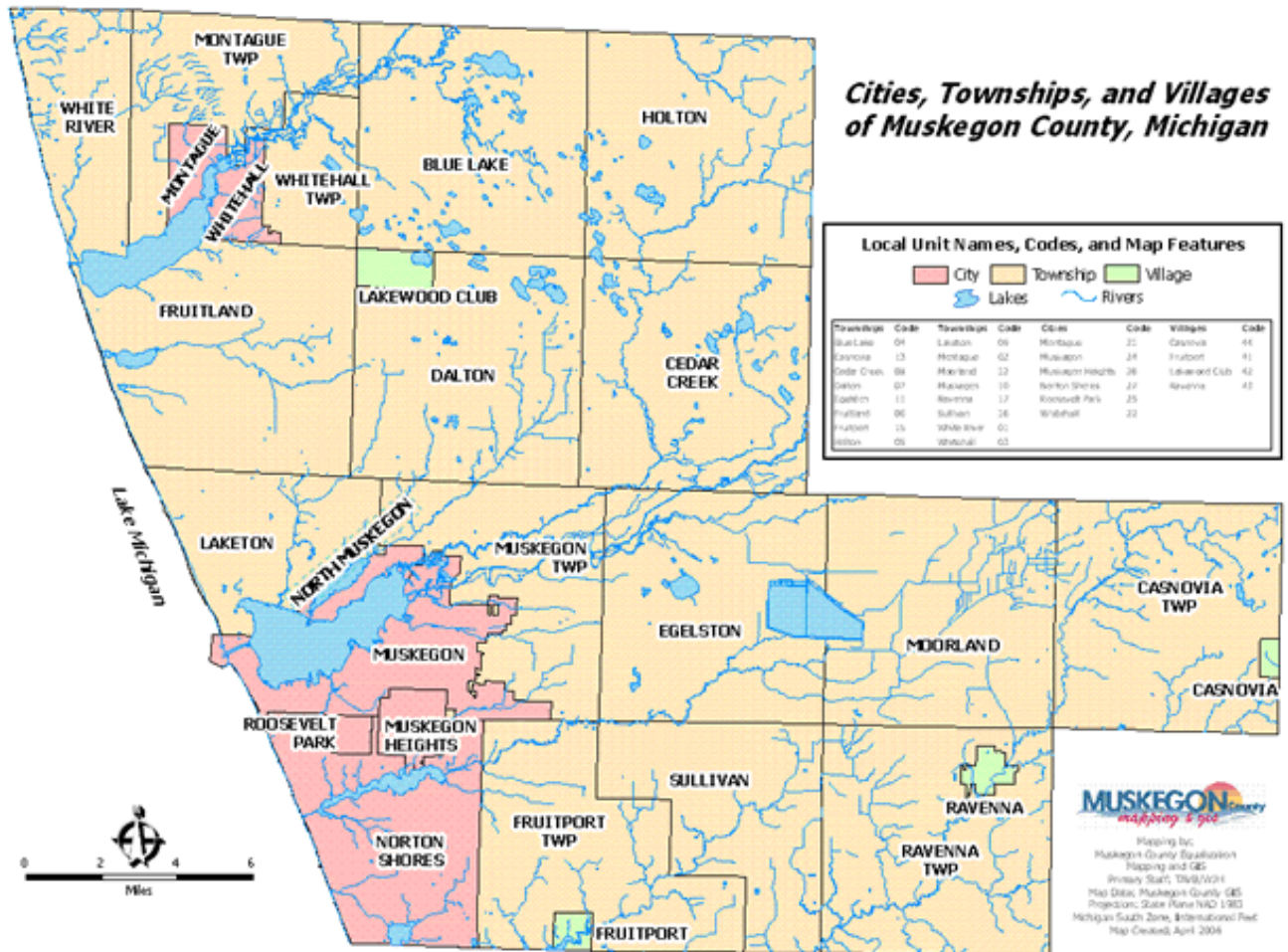
In reviewing this document, it should be noted that all planning is being done at this time to take into consideration the needs of children and adults of all abilities. Cedar Creek Township endeavors to ensure that everyone can use and enjoy the park to the absolute best of their physical ability. We hope that the Community Park Plan reflects our citizens' desires for a more robust Community Park to enhance life within Cedar Creek Township.

The members of the Parks & Recreation Committee, The Planning Commission, and the Cedar Creek Township Board are pleased to present the following Community Park & Recreation Plan.

Chapter 2

Community Description

Location



Cedar Creek Township is 36 sq. miles and is located in the northeast section of Muskegon County, Michigan. The Township borders Newaygo County on its eastern boundary. According to the 2020 United States Census, the population of the Township is 3,192.

Physical Characteristics

Topography / Land Use

The Township is incredibly picturesque during all four seasons. This is in large part due to its vast forested canopy. Many of the residents in the Township own very large parcels, which contributes to its natural state. There is also an abundance of designated forest land. Depending upon where the homes are located in the Township, there are long setbacks for many of the homes. The center of the Township is primarily State and Federal land, which means that there are plenty of outdoor recreational activities to do such as hiking, fishing, motor sporting trails, horseback riding, and hunting. The Township also enjoys beautiful rivers, streams, and a number of small lakes, which affords the public opportunities to canoe, kayak, fish, and swim. Snowmobiling is also a big winter activity in the Township.



A significant portion of the roads in Cedar Creek Township are primary roads and are maintained by the County. All of the main-artery roads leading into the Township fall under the primary road category and are thus well-maintained and allow easy access to the Township Hall. The Township Board has a regular maintenance plan and policy for its secondary roads.

There is no industry in the Township, modest commercial business, and a small amount of agricultural land. The Township is primarily

a bedroom community in nature in that its citizens predominately travel to Muskegon, Fremont, or Grand Rapids for employment. The housing varies from extremely modest to near the million-dollar range.

The Township is a Zoned Community and has a blight ordinance. The smallest lot size is 25,000 sq. ft. or just slightly larger than one-half acre. The Township is zoned for Low-Density Residential at 1-1/2 acres, High-Density Residential at 25,000 sq. ft., Large Lot Residential at 5 acres, and Agriculture at 10 acres.

Hydrology

Cedar Creek contains a number of small lakes. The largest of these is Hornings Duck Lake, which is approximately three-fourths of a mile long and half a mile wide. Mud Lake and Clear Lake lie to the west of Hornings Duck Lake. The Muskegon River crosses the southeast border of the Township. The Little Cedar Creek flows into Cedar Creek, which is part of the Muskegon River Watershed. Also, important to note, is the Hydrological Study being conducted by the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly to analyze the Maple River, which flows into Cedar Creek and Muskegon River. This study will have a significant impact on the Township concerning social, environmental, and economic factors. This particular study brings together a host of local, state, federal, and tribal entities. The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians is involved in this project due to the discovery of an indigenous rice plant.

The Muskegon River offers two access points at which people may launch small boats, kayaks, or canoes. The access off Brickyard Road is very limited; however, the access off Holton Duck Lake Road affords visitors much easier access to the water as well as parking. This property is owned by the State and offers no amenities.

Since Cedar Creek Township is a part of the Muskegon Watershed, the Township qualified for a grant of trees underwritten by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Committee. We were able to plant flowering trees along the walking path in our Community Park and some additional trees on our Transfer Station property. Not only will the trees assist with eliminating erosion, but the trees also help purify the air in our Community Park as well as enhance its beauty.



West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Committee Watershed Tree Planting Grant provides flowering trees for the Cedar Creek Community Park Walking Trail.

The Township owns several parcels of property that are specifically designated as access points on several lakes for public use. These parcels are not currently maintained by the Township due to a lack of heavy equipment and workforce. The Township has never maintained them, nor does it have a plan to do so as of this date.

Land Cover

The Manistee National Forest is located in the west-central portion of the Township and covers a substantial amount of acreage.

Homeowners are encouraged to keep as many of the trees on their property as possible to keep the rural and forested nature of the Township intact. Whenever possible, homeowners are also encouraged to allow for a deep setback from the road to ensure privacy and maintain a wooded setting. The trees, rivers, and streams are a significant part of the aesthetics of Cedar Creek Township.

A Cedar Creek Township fall season is stunning with all its vibrant colors. Winters are breathtaking with the snow-laden tree canopies. Our Springs herald the renewal that only can be found in areas where nature can almost be heard unfurling its new growth. And, Summers afford us all that welcome opportunity to enjoy the lush verdant trees, grass, and blue skies that so renew our spirits.



Clear Lake in Cedar Creek Township, Photo by Lori Colegrove

In preparation for this document, we conducted an unofficial survey of citizens as they came into the Township Hall to carry out their business. We simply asked them why they lived in Cedar Creek Township, or what brought or kept them here. To sum it up, “Driving into Cedar Creek is like a deep breath of calming fresh air.” Most comments were very similar to that sentiment or feeling.

Demographic Information

Cedar Creek Township is a desirable place in which to live attracting new homeowners both now as well as during the pandemic. This was witnessed through the increased number of building permits requested during these last several years. While the Census numbers indicate that the population is 3,192 citizens, that number came as a surprise to us; everything we saw internally pointed to an increase in the population. The 2020 estimated Census was 3,284 citizens, which is more in line with the actual number. The only thing that we can attribute the lower number to is a reticence or distrust in filling out census information during the pandemic. Other than showing an actual increase in new home permitting, this observation is, however, totally subjective on our part.

The beautiful rural nature of the Township also contributes to its lack of social offerings for its residents. Except for the golf course, there are no restaurants, movies, bars, or buildings where people/families may gather together for family reunions, birthdays, graduations, or other social functions. There is one small church in the Township.

Cedar Creek has been in existence since 1861, and the citizens are proud of its rural character. With that said, much has changed since then and it takes more than beautiful trees to make a healthy

and vibrant township. We can conclude that most people stay in or move to Cedar Creek Township because of its rural nature. It is likely that unless they are employed by the Holton Public School System (Holton Township) or they have a home-based business, which the Township Government does not track, there is little in the way of local employment opportunities within the Township proper. The 2020 Census shows that the mean travel time to work for respondents was 24.8 minutes, which substantiates this conclusion.

According to the 2020 estimated Census (3,284), the median age of residents in Cedar Creek Township was 45.0 years, as compared to 39.8 years in Muskegon County and 39.8 in Michigan. We can tell from census breakdowns by population age groups that there is a trend toward young families: 640 - Children 14 and Under, 1,224 Adults ages 25-54, and Seniors 60 and Over – 886. Other categories are High School – College Age – 245, and Empty Nesters – 289. The number of women who gave birth in Cedar Creek at 9.6% was nearly double that of Muskegon County and Michigan, both of which were 5.2% and 5.3% respectively.

The housing market within the Township is beginning to change. The 2020 Census shows that 47% of the homes are \$100K or less, 31% are between \$101-\$200K, 13% are between \$201 - \$300K, 6% are between \$301 - \$400K, 0% are between \$401 - \$500K, and 3% between \$501 - \$1M, 0% were over \$1M. We know that since the Census, several higher-end homes (between \$300K - \$800K) have been or are in the process of being built.

The median home value in Cedar Creek Township at the time of the 2020 Census was \$107,900. This was about 80% of the value of the homes in Muskegon County and 2/3 of the value of the homes within the State of Michigan.

The 2020 Census does not provide a clear picture of Housing within Cedar Creek Township. It lists 1,440 single housing units in the Township; however, it stops counting as of 2017. We know that this number has increased throughout this timeframe. Our

estimates reflect that this number has increased by 54 new homes according to our internal annual reporting from 2017 – 2021.

Approximately 90% of the homes are occupied by their owners, which commonly provides more neighborhood stability.¹ In general, most homeowners tend to feel an investment in their community and are likely to stay for longer periods. We have quipped that Cedar Creek Township is much like the theme song from Cheers, “Where Everybody Knows Your Name.” Cedar Creek is just small enough that its citizens know most people or their neighbors, and family and friends are an important part of the fabric of society.

The median income for the Township is \$51,042 with 49% of its citizens earning less than \$50K. Further numbers indicate that 14% of children 18 and under, and 2% of seniors fall within the poverty guidelines. The 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines for Michigan were \$12,880 for a single individual and \$26,500 for a family of four. The ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employed) numbers seem to show that a large percentage of individuals, 27%, do not fall within the poverty guidelines yet are struggling to keep afloat, especially with the current rate of inflation. These numbers would also indicate that with these income challenges, there is likely not a lot of disposable income for things other than necessities. It would, therefore, be important to have an area within the Township where children, adults, and seniors can have a place to gather, relax, and play with little to no additional cost attached to it.

The 2020 Census indicates that 93.3% of the adults in the Township hold a high school diploma or high school equivalency or have attended some college. The next category shows that 6.3% of the adults have achieved a bachelor’s degree or higher. According to the Census, no one obtained a post-graduate degree.

¹ 23 Scientific Reasons Why Owning is Better than Renting, By [Cassy Parker](#), Credit Donkey 2019

The Township is predominantly White at 93%, Black at 2%, with 0% identifying as Native American, 1% identifying as Asian, 0% as Islander, 1% as Other, 2% as Mixed Race, and 0% as Hispanic.

Cedar Creek Township has a significant Veteran population, according to the 2020 Census, with 16.2% holding veteran status. At the time of the census, 7 citizens served during WWII, 8 served in Korea, 206 served in Vietnam, 18 served in the 1990s Gulf War and 67 served in the 2001 Gulf War. The Veteran Status in Cedar Creek is nearly double that of Muskegon County and Michigan. These numbers could, of course, have changed at the time of this writing due to any number of factors.

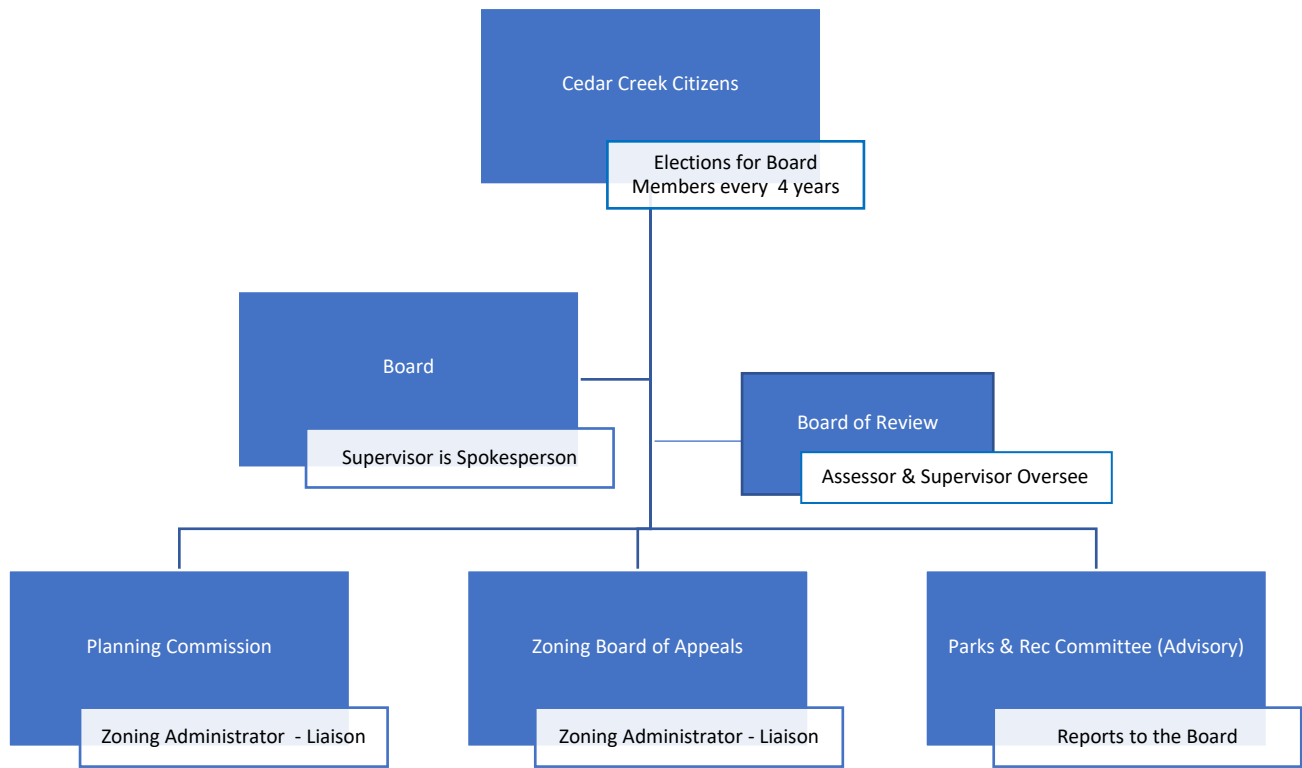
Chapter 3 - Governmental Organizational Structure

Township Organization

The Cedar Creek Township Board is comprised of five members who are elected for four-year terms. Board membership includes the supervisor, clerk, treasurer, and two trustees. The Board has the authority to authorize park and recreation facilities and equipment and to acquire and regulate open space land.

The Planning Commission is comprised of five individuals. The Planning Commission's role is to help direct the physical planning of the Township, both concerning current issues as well as with an eye toward long-term planning. The Planning Commission and the Township Board are involved in the park and open space planning process. There is a Cedar Creek Township Parks & Recreation Committee. This volunteer committee meets to discuss potential plans for park-related issues and makes its recommendations to the Board. The committee is advisory in nature only.

The Township office is open Monday – Wednesday from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm. The Supervisor, Treasurer, and Clerk work during those office hours. The Township employs a part-time Zoning Administrator, an Assessor, contracts a Building Official as well as Plumbing and Mechanical Inspector, and an Electrical Inspector. The Treasurer and Clerk each have a deputy. The Supervisor has a part-time Deputy, whose position is shared with the Building Department. The Township employs one part-time maintenance person and two part-time attendants for work at the Transfer Station & Recycling Center.



Chapter 4 Recreation Inventory

Recreational & Historical Background

Cedar Creek Township owns 13.6 acres of potential recreational property. In 1999, Ruth and Wes Lomax donated property to the Township for the specific purpose of creating youth softball fields. That goal was accomplished during the 2001-2002 season. That same season, a basketball court was also erected. The two fields were named after Ruth Lomax and Harold Bean. A Walking Trail was installed in 2003 and in 2004 ten wooden exercise stations were installed along the trail. That same year Maple Island Log Homes donated two log benches at each end of the walking trail.

In 2019, the Parks & Recreation Committee with the blessing of the Board met with Prein & Newhof Architects and Engineers to request a potential plan for park development.



Above is a concept drawing of the proposed Cedar Creek Township Community Park. The current ball fields have been routinely maintained; however, there have been no additional updates to them.

The Cedar Creek Community Park has long been plagued with an invasive species of cactus, *Opuntia cespitosa*, commonly known as the prickly pear cactus, which is native to Michigan. While it is lovely when it is blooming, it is, as its name implies, incredibly prickly, and the very last thing that belongs on a playground.



In 2021, the Board authorized treating the grounds. The Board authorized the installation of underground sprinkling. This served a dual purpose: firstly, water is the primary source of destroying cacti, and secondly, the park is aesthetically much more pleasing when the grounds are green.

As far as designated Township activities for our youth, other than making the softball fields available for youth softball leagues and general running around on the fields, there are currently no other structured or available activities. No Fees are assessed for use of the Community Park.

We are finally getting closer to a playground. In October 2022, the Board authorized the purchase of an all-inclusive playground structure for the Community Park. The Parks & Recreation Committee met to determine the type of equipment and the location on which it should be placed. The playground equipment is scheduled to be delivered during the 2022-23 winter season and will be installed by the Sinclair LLC/GameTime Engineers during the Spring 2023 season.



Left is a concept drawing of the playground equipment authorized for purchase by the Cedar Creek Township Board with the help of a GameTime Grant.

Each spring, Cedar Creek citizens and Holton Lady Red Devils (Girl's Youth League Softball) families gather to do a spring ball field clean-up in preparation (all volunteer) for the softball season. The fields are busy throughout the spring and well into the fall. Cedar Creek Township does not charge for the use of the fields.



Cleaning up is part of the community spirit that goes into getting ready for the softball season. There are always plenty of leaves when you live in a wooded community.

Three school systems--Holton Public Schools, Oakridge, and Reeths-Puffer serve the families of Cedar Creek Township; none of the schools are located in the Township. The softball fields are, in



Parent / Child Softball game on the Cedar Creek Township Fields

large part, used by the girls' softball league, which is affiliated with Holton Public Schools. The School System is not able to accommodate the league due to the demand placed on their own fields. Approximately 80% of the students from Cedar Creek Township attend Holton Public Schools.

It should be pointed out that the walking trail has not been well maintained. This is partly due to the issues with the cactus and a lack of a designated caretaker and a specific long-term plan since its installation.

All individuals and families of all abilities are welcome and encouraged to use the Cedar Creek Township Community Park. On occasion, reservations may be necessary for the use of the softball fields during the spring and fall season when softball leagues use the fields.

In the spring of 2021 and the fall of 2022, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission wrote a grant to plant trees for those communities who live along the watershed. Cedar Creek Township was able to have a combination of flowering and pine trees planted along a portion of the walking trail, which was in the planning stages for upgrading. This is extremely important as there is no safe walking place in the Township because so many of our roads are primary roads. The speeds are fast and many of the roads are very curvy, making it unsafe for pedestrian traffic.

The Senior Millage Municipal Grant Fund allows municipalities to apply for a millage grant for their respective townships. In 2022, Cedar Creek Township applied for a number of items, one of which was 2 sets of cornhole boards. We were awarded the grant; however, it did not come until too late in the season to use it for the 2022 calendar year. Senior Corn Hole Tournaments will be an offering for next year.

Other Recreational Assets Located Within the Township

The following are recreational organizations and/or opportunities that are located within Cedar Creek but are not affiliated with the Township:

Stonegate Golf Club – This beautiful and challenging 18-hole golf course is surrounded by the Manistee National Forest. The Golf Club is open to the public and has a restaurant and bar.



Cedar Creek Motorsport Trail – The 24-mile single-track trail is open from April through November. No special permits are required. The trail is located in Cedar Creek Township in the Manistee National Forest.

Twisting Trails Sno-Braves Snowmobile Club – The club is a 501C-3 organization and is rented out for special events and outdoor activities. It is also a State recognized DNR trailhead.



Photo courtesy of Phillip Alvesteffer

Cedar Creek Alliance Church – The Church has a pavilion that they are willing to rent/loan for special events.



Obenauf Unit – 40 acres donated by the heirs of wildlife biologist, Dr. Walter Obenauf to the Muskegon State Game Area located in Cedar Creek Township. The property is home to a variety of wildlife living in a mix of mature forest and surrounding wetlands, including a self-sustaining brown trout population thriving in The Little Cedar Creek corridor.

A Legacy of Love – Heart carved in the tree by Walter Obenauf & Mary Dudley before marrying, circa 1929. Dedication of 40 Acres in Cedar Creek by the family of Dr. Walter Obenauf to the DNR in July 2019. This property is open to the public to enjoy.

Holton Duck Lake Road Public Access to Muskegon River - This is a great spot to launch a boat, kayak, or canoe to enjoy an afternoon or a day on the Muskegon River. A smaller public access to the Muskegon River is located on Brickyard Road. There are no amenities and parking is street-side.



Kayaking on the Muskegon River at the Holton Duck Lake Road Public Access Point.

With no Library in the Township, the Muskegon Area District Library (MADL) Bookmobile stops in the Township every two weeks – A library on wheels with all the services of the public library.



Chapter 5

Budget

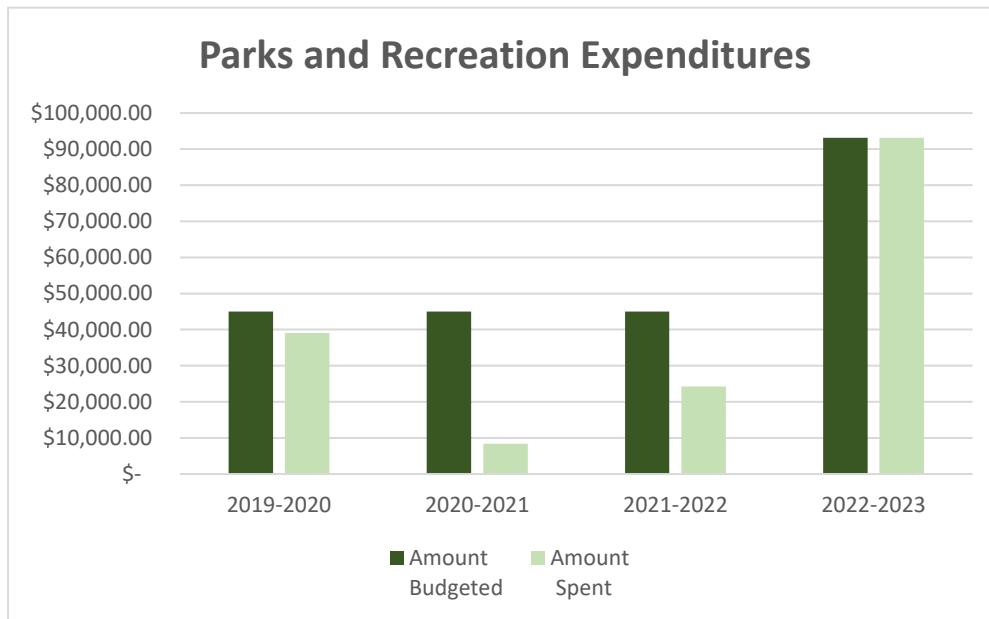
Year 19-20: Cedar Creek Township purchased 7.44 acres of land for the specific purpose of increasing its community park. The cost of the land was \$20K, plus land surveying, attorney fees, and a water well.

Year 20-21: New Electrical Service for the Park

Year 21-22: Irrigation and Power to Well

Year 22-23: All-inclusive Playground Equipment

Year	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent
2019-2020	\$ 45,000.00	\$ 39,029.50
2020-2021	45,000.00	8,370.00
2021-2022	45,000.00	24,276.12
2022-2023	93,159.11	93,159.11



Budget 2022-23 \$48,159.11 ARPA funds were used

The Township generally budgets \$45K annually for Cedar Creek Community Park.

Chapter 6

Planning & Public Input Process

This project has been a long time in the planning and consideration process. Cedar Creek citizens have wanted more than the two existing softball fields and a basketball court for entertaining its youth.

In January 2018, the Board formed the Cedar Creek Township Parks & Recreation Committee. Starting on January 23, 2018, the Committee began meeting on a monthly, or as-needed, basis to begin talking about what the Township might like to envision in the way of a Community Park for its citizens. The Committee began with a vision for a playground and branched out from there.

Discussions ranged from children not having a place to play when their siblings were playing softball, to needing a better and longer walking trail, pavilion, a dog park, more senior-related activities, and a larger more multi-functional field to be developed in the future.

The major stumbling block to these dreams and a small township – is financial resources. Cedar Creek Township has always been very fiscally responsible; however, a major park project would be a monumental financial burden should the Township decide to undertake this on its own. During its meetings, the Parks and Recreation Committee considered through their discussions what would be the most logical steps in achieving some of the goals without letting plans stagnate. The Committee kept detailed minutes of their meetings for reference, goal setting, and recommendations to the Board.

It should be noted that the Parks and Recreation Committee held its last meeting on March 19, 2019. It temporarily halted its meetings during Covid and resumed meeting again on October 5, 2022.

The purchase of the Lomax property was a major undertaking of the Parks and Recreation Committee. After considerable research, the

Committee recommended that the Board purchase the 7.44 acres of Lomax Property, which lies adjacent to the Township property. This property was ultimately purchased by Cedar Creek Township on May 28, 2019. This purchase helped to increase the Community Park vision and plans.

At the Board's recommendation, the Parks and Recreation Committee began working with the Architectural Firm of Prein and Newhof in Muskegon, MI to develop a Community Park Plan. Over the next several months, the Committee met with Matt Levandoski, Landscape Architect, and Collin Manns to inspect the site and determine project goals. We also included Dustin Drabek in the discussion, the Risk Control Representative from Michigan Township Participating Plan, which is our Township's insurance company.

One of the primary concerns of parents and citizens as noted in Chapter 4 was the invasive species of cactus, *Opuntia cespitosa*, which was prevalent in the Cedar Creek Township Community Park. An annual effort had been placed on eradicating the species by digging them up and exterminating them. Unfortunately, they were tenacious, and while somewhat minimized the only solution was irrigation in the area of the softball fields. Cacti do not respond well to consistent watering.

Since the cacti were a potential insurance liability issue for children and pets, the Parks & Recreation Committee suggested that the Board consider taking measures to install a well, electrical panel, and irrigation system. The Board called for bids, selected vendors, authorized the expenditures, and work ensued over the course of two years. As of the fall of 2022, it appears as though the issue with the cacti is much lessened. Time will be the true measurement of eradication.

One of the discoveries that we made during incidental conversations through our March 2019 Board of Review process, was that we did not realize just how many people were using the Township walking trail. This came up through natural conversation with the people

who attended the Board of Review. This strengthened the resolve that the walking trail badly needed repair and redesign. More emphasis was placed on this in our discussions with Prein and Newhof.

The Committee took into consideration the conversations of the families and friends of those who played softball on our fields. A major consideration was the lack of available parking. People were concerned about the numbers of people lining both sides of the street. Parking space was provided as a part of the concept proposal.

Ultimately, Prein and Newhof provided the Parks & Recreation Committee with two concept drawings for consideration. One drawing flipped the existing softball fields around to create a parking space between the fields and the other left the fields intact and placed the parking to the west of the softball fields. The Parks & Recreation Committee, while appreciating the wisdom of both proposals, felt that there was not enough merit in flipping the fields to warrant the cost involved in this undertaking. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the Board pursue the following concept proposal:



The Cedar Creek Township Board also following the recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Committee, purchased playground equipment from Sinclair LLC/GameTime. This company came highly recommended and offered a grant toward the purchase of the playground equipment. The Committee was able to find equipment that was in keeping with the rural theme of the Township and aesthetically pleasing. Budgeted, ARPA, and grant funds were used for purchasing the playground equipment, which will be delivered during the winter of 2022/23 and installed during the spring of 2023.

The Cedar Creek Township Planning Commission is in the process of conducting a 5-year review of the Township’s Master Plan. To that end, they included pertinent questions relevant to the Community Park Plan. These questions ranged from:

- How important are each of the following public facilities or services to you?

- *Improvements to existing parks?*

Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very unimportant	No Opinion
14.17%	47.22%	21.11%	7.22%	10.28.%

- *Purchase of land for new parks and neighborhood playgrounds?*

Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very unimportant	No Opinion
8.08%	28.13%	31.20%	17.55%	15.04%

- *A Community Center for public events to be made available for rental use by Township residents?*

Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very unimportant	No Opinion
6.48%	32.39%	26.20%	19.15%	15.77%

Respondents to the open-ended question in the survey specifically addressed these issues concerning the Community Park:

The following text is taken from the writers' own comments. No changes were made to their text.:

- Improvements to existing parks with grant \$ ok raise taxes no.
- Park improvement for family use, such as a playground and walking trail.
- Would like to see a paved path for joggers, bicycles, walkers—off roads for safety & peace and quiet.
- Improvements to existing park
- Sidewalk-walking paths with restrooms/porta johns – community pools – that support schools swim training. Farm market/Flea market...
- Activity Center for Seniors
- Walking, Bike Trails
- Community Events would be nice. Get neighbors out meeting each other.

The Parks & Recreation Committee is in the process of solidifying plans to work with Prein & Newhof for the representations for the walking trail with fitness stands and a parking lot so that we are better able to estimate the costs attached to the project. We have also spoken with Wirtz Electric to discuss the merits of solar vs. standard lighting. We have been advised that at this time standard lighting is the way to proceed. Wirtz will be working with Prein and Newhof to estimate project costs.

Once we have appropriate figures and Board sign-off, we will then apply for the Michigan SPARK Grant.

The Cedar Creek Community Park will be done in phases and should be considered an ongoing project.

Chapter 7

Goals & Objectives

Considering the size of the Cedar Creek Township, the existing Community Park, the use of the current park, and the very significant response to the questions concerning what citizens wish for the future of parks in Cedar Creek Township, it is clear that continued development and enhancement should proceed on the existing park.

Cedar Creek Township residents move into and/or stay in the Township because of its rural character. When selecting playground equipment, the Parks & Recreation Committee made certain to look for play structures that reflected that rural theme. They were, in fact, able to do so and made that recommendation to the Board.

As we integrate plans for the future of the Cedar Creek Township Community Park, the following goals and objectives are always at the forefront of the decision-making process:

1. Does the purchase or development enhance and/or reflect the nature of Cedar Creek Township?

In making a purchase of playground equipment, adult exercise equipment, or other outdoor recreational structure for the Community Park, is there a/an:

- a) Need?
- b) Budget Plan or Other Community Resource?
- c) Short-term and Long-term Maintenance Plan?
- d) Focus on keeping with the rural nature of the Township?
- e) Focus on meeting the needs of persons of all abilities?
Everything must be all-inclusive.
- f) Strategic Plan to use the Park to our best advantage to better serve the needs of the community?

g) Assurance that we are doing everything feasible to keep the park safe and clean at all times?

2. As we look for ways to ensure a more vibrant community, providing a place for Township residents to bring their families and friends in a safe and secure environment ranks at the top of the list in most communities.

It is important to:

- a. Maintain a current Recreation Plan that supports the improvement of the Community Park. The Parks & Recreation Committee must meet regularly and make recommendations on how to improve the park so that the document does not become stagnant. The plan must be reviewed/revised every five years.
- b. Contribute to the overall social well-being of the Township. Members of the community feel better when they know they have a central place to gather, even if they choose not to use it.
- c. Look to the future in ways that allow Cedar Creek Township to provide new opportunities for its citizens of all ages.
- d. Ensure that our Community Park, especially one so centrally located to the Township Government Offices, has the potential to lead to more community participation.
- e. Note once again, that Cedar Creek Township roads do not lend themselves to walking due to the high speeds at which cars travel and their curvy nature. A walking trail, which can be used for strollers, bikes, as well as trail walkers is important to the overall health and safety of the Township.
- f. Once again, it should be noted that all plans must be made with persons of all abilities in mind. Therefore, parking and structures must be ADA-compliant. If they cannot be

compliant, they should not be built or erected until such funds are available to make them such.

At present, in November 2022, there is not much in the way of accessibility or ease in parking that makes getting to fields or playground equipment less challenging. This needs to be addressed by reconfiguring parking and perhaps walkways to get to the playground.

- g. Continually look for better methods of reaching the citizens of the Township to share information about parks and programs.
- h. Secure grant funding and/or private donations for park development whenever possible.

Chapter 8

Action Program

The following section details the strategic actions and the general direction that Cedar Creek Township plans to follow concerning the Parks & Recreation Plan:

1. Have a structured Parks and Recreation Committee – Advisory only that meets regularly to be determined by the Committee.
2. Committee will make quarterly reports to the Board on the status of the park. Should there be a more urgent need, the Committee Chair will seek a meeting with the Board to discuss the concern/s.
3. Prioritize all goals for the Community Park by need, community desire, and budget.
4. Always consider inclusivity as a top priority when making decisions regarding the park, and community programming.
5. Create individual plans for specific park projects rather than looking at the park as a whole. Make individual work or action plans for each specific project. Make certain that all relevant parties are notified when the project applies to their department.
6. Consider the short-term goals as well as the long-term goals. How do they fit within the Township's Master Plan?
7. Are the goals of the Community Park in keeping with the goals of the community? What is the strategy for measurement of this?

8. Is there a long-term funding strategy? If not is there someone capable of helping to plan for one?

9. What about future surveys? Is there a Park Plan survey?

10. What about a plan for potential land acquisition if it is needed?