

Charter Township of Garfield

Grand Traverse County, Michigan

2012 - 2017

Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Amendment 1:

Silver Lake Recreation Area Development Plan

And

Amended Acquisition Program





INTRODUCTION

The Charter Township of Garfield has developed this first amendment to the 2012 5-year parks and recreation master plan as a descriptive development plan for the Silver Lake Recreation Area at 1785 East Silver Lake Road and to amend the Township's land acquisition map in light of recent developments.

The *Silver Lake Recreation Area Development Plan* is intended to establish milestones for desired improvements to the park as identified via the public involvement process when the 2012 park plan was created.

The plan contains the following components:

- Development Plan Map
- Development Plan Map Descriptions
- General Policy Discussion
 - Tree Plantings / Invasive Species Removal
 - Park Lighting
 - Water Resources
 - Reservations

The *Amended Acquisition Plan* is intended to replace pages 47 and 58 of the adopted Five-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Amendments relative to these pages reflect a change in the protection status of the Verizon Wireless parcel (reference number A22) and a desire to acquire additional property to increase the recreational value of the Boardman Valley Nature Preserve by acquiring additional property suitable for a parking area and small park (A21, J. Dean Templeton Trust).

Silver Lake Recreation Area

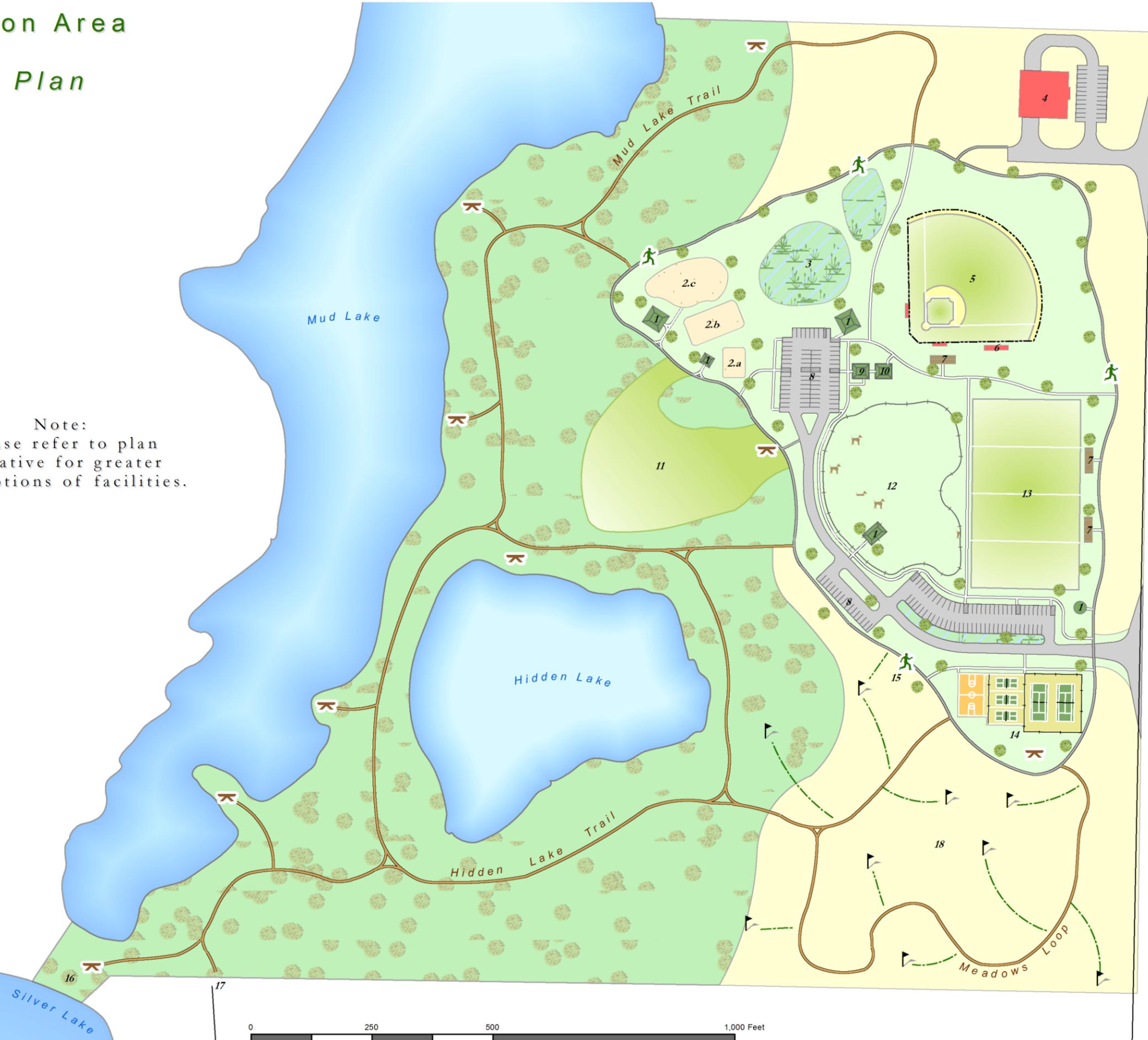
Park Development Plan

Legend

-  Exercise Station
-  Disc Golf Hole
-  Picnic Table / Bench
-  Asphalt Pathway
-  Concrete Sidewalk
-  Natural Surface Pathway

- 1. Picnic Shelter
- 2a. Playground - 2-5 years
- 2b. Playground - 5-12 years
- 2c. Outdoor Gym - Adult
- 3. Drainage Area
- 4. Fire Station 12
- 5. Little League Field
- 6. Batting Cages
- 7. Observation Deck
- 8. Parking Lot
- 9. Restrooms / Utility Building
- 10. Storage Barn
- 11. Sledding Hill
- 12. Off-Leash Area
- 13. Multi-Purpose Field
- 14. Courts
- 15. Exercise Station
- 16. Natural Beach Area
- 17. South Park Entrance
- 18. South Meadow

Note:
Please refer to plan narrative for greater descriptions of facilities.



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DEVELOPMENT PLAN DESCRIPTIONS

The following describes existing and planned amenities at the Silver Lake Recreation Area. The majority of the improvements facilities described below were identified through the Public Involvement efforts of the Master Plan (see pages 33 and 34).

1. PICNIC SHELTERS

Three of the five picnic shelters indicated on the plan are in existence. Two additional shelters are planned, one near the playgrounds and another near the multi-purpose field.



2. PLAYGROUND / OUTDOOR GYM AREA



Two playgrounds (designed for 2-5 and 5-12 aged children) indicated on the plan have been built. Some comment received during the development of the Master Plan recommended that these playgrounds may be safer and more enjoyable if the wood mulch is replaced with “rubber mulch.”

The third area in this vicinity is envisioned as an outdoor gym, or “fitness zone.” Outdoor gyms provide opportunity for adult health and wellness via a variety of exercise equipment built to withstand the rigor of weather. Because the equipment utilizes the user’s body weight for resistance, it allows for both a safe and effective workout regardless of the age or fitness level of the users. In this location, the outdoor gym provides an opportunity for users to watch their children in the playgrounds while exercising. A high priority will be placed on establishing ADA-accessible fitness units alongside traditional units to ensure opportunity for all members of the community. As such, a wheelchair-friendly surface will also be required.

A significant amount of shade tree plantings should occur in this area in the immediate future to provide for a cooler exercise environment. Comment also requested adding an additional picnic shelter and additional trash receptacles in this area.

3. DRAINAGE AREA & RAIN GARDEN

The north drainage basin appears to have been grossly overbuilt for the amount of stormwater runoff that is generated by the north parking lot. Accordingly, it may be possible to decrease the size of this basin to reclaim some parkland for recreational use. The Township may consider establishing a rain garden within this basin to provide an example to the community of how modern stormwater systems can look and function. Alternately, it may be possible to establish a fishing pond within this basin.

4. FIRE STATION 12

Fire Station 12 was completed in 2011. The firehouse will continue to evolve into an important park neighbor by providing a sense of security to park users, and also from a recreational standpoint by offering firehouse walkthroughs for park goers. The planned network of pathways will provide ready access between the park and Station 12.



5. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD



Historically used as a T-Ball field (an amenity lacking in the area), the field will be renovated to continue to serve T-Ball leagues but also act as a regulation-size Little League Field. To accommodate this, the playing surface must be shifted to the northeast while the existing backstop remains where it is today. An outfield fence must also be installed for the field. Quality dugouts will greatly increase the player experience while using this facility. In addition to an

elevated viewing platform (see 7., below), additional bleachers, benches, and other seating should be installed as demand for field time increases. Grass hillside seating will also be an option due to topography.

6. BATTING CAGES

Room exists to establish one or two batting cages along the right-field line of the ball field, providing an opportunity for simultaneous training and ball play.



7. OBSERVATION DECKS

Taking advantage of existing topography, a number of elevated observation decks are planned adjacent to sports fields. These platforms will be level with the adjacent sidewalks or pathways and will provide an ADA-accessible opportunity to watch sporting events.

8. PARKING

A new, eastern parking lot was built in 2012 adjacent to the multi-purpose field. Even though expanded, parking availability is anticipated to remain relatively tight as the park grows in popularity and demand for its resources increase. Past bad habits of vehicle parking on the grass alongside the driveways must be discouraged to avoid damage to the irrigation system; methods likely include a combination of signage, physical barriers, and enforcement by the Sheriff's Deputies who patrol the park. The Township should encourage frequent, common users such as sports teams to carpool to the park to conserve parking spaces.

9. RESTROOMS / UTILITY BUILDING

No changes are planned to the existing restrooms, which are anticipated to adequately serve the park over the life of this plan. This structure also houses the electrical controls for the park and irrigation system.

10. STORAGE BARN

An additional utility barn is proposed near the restrooms to provide storage space for sports equipment. This barn should be designed to enclose the well head, but must allow access to the well for future maintenance.



11. SLEDDING HILL

Already a popular spot for sledding, the Township may consider formalizing this area into a dedicated sledding hill in the winter months. Careful consideration must be given to user safety if this sledding area is formalized, possibly including padded buffer walls to keep sledders within the designated hill area and away from trees.



12. OFF-LEASH AREA

Desire for a dog park was one of the most popular comments received in the public input phases of the Master Plan. This fenced off-leash dog area will be a popular regional amenity, and is also anticipated to reduce the recurring problem of people walking their pet off-leash in other areas of the park (which is prohibited by ordinance).



Planning and construction of this area should be a collaborative effort with local dog park enthusiasts, who can assist the Township in design and help develop a procedural policy for the park. This off-leash area is intended to be self-policing by the users.

Consideration must also be given to providing a water source, perhaps most efficiently with a small well and hand pump. The woodland that this area encloses should be maintained, but appropriately thinned and managed.

13. MULTI-PURPOSE FIELD

Constructed in 2012, this large area is designed to accommodate demand for all field sports such as rugby, football, lacrosse, and soccer. However, because it is also meant for the general public for casual uses such as kite flying or Frisbee tossing, the Township must take care to regulate league and club use to allow for adequate opportunity for public use.



14. COURT AREA – BASKETBALL, PICKLEBALL, TENNIS

Observations of park use have resulted in the planned reduction of one of the two existing basketball courts. In place of the basketball court, and also expanding towards the tennis court, three Pickleball courts will be installed. The existing two tennis courts will remain unchanged.

15. EXERCISE STATIONS



In addition to the Outdoor Gym described above, a series of exercise stations are planned along the paved walking loop to provide an opportunity for well-balanced physical fitness. Typically, the participant will proceed from one exercise



station to the next and perform the exercise illustrated at each station.

16. NATURAL BEACH AREA

The beach area provides a small but important opportunity for the public to access Silver Lake for swimming and recreation, which was one of the most requested improvements stated during the public input process of the 5-Year Master Plan. Presently, the remainder of shoreline is private property other than the DNR boat launch on East Silver Lake Road, where swimming is prohibited. The soils in the area may require a hard-surfaced walking path to maintain good access from the park.

Because the beach area is located a significant walking distance from the parking lots, users are anticipated to come primarily from the neighborhoods to the south and/or users who may have completed a run or workout on the park's trail system and fitness equipment and are looking to cool off. Some families will likely walk from the parking area for picnic and swimming opportunities.

Care must be given to keep this area open to park users without disturbing adjoining properties. As such, this area will remain in a primarily natural state, with only minor weed removal and cleanup contemplated. Additional signage should be installed here to identify hours, property boundaries, and potential hazards such as unstable soils and the drop-off into the lake.

17. SOUTH PARK ENTRANCE

The Lake Drive road right-of-way abuts the south property line of the park. This south entrance will be maintained in its current state to provide non-motorized access to the park from the adjacent subdivision.

18. SOUTH MEADOW

Due to topography and sandy, unstable soils, the south meadow area will be maintained primarily for foot trails and open space. A small disc golf course may be possible within this area provided that it is appropriately designed to discourage players from walking off-trail and up and down the small hills.



GENERAL POLICY DISCUSSION

DEVELOPED / NATURAL AREAS OF PARK

In both current and planned states, most active recreation areas are concentrated within the eastern portion of the park (particularly those areas within the paved walking loop). Areas that lie west of the developed land should remain in a more natural state as a contrast to the developed land. The natural areas provide a useful buffer to the residential neighborhoods and give users the opportunity to enjoy a variety of recreational experiences. Trails within the natural area will be maintained in good condition, with attention given to poison ivy control.

TREE PLANTINGS / INVASIVE SPECIES REMOVAL

As time and budget permits priority should be placed to establishing a variety of vegetation for shade, aesthetics, and buffering. All plantings should be native to the region. To encourage deep root growth new trees should be located out of the path of regular irrigation system watering, or the irrigation system modified accordingly. Trees subjected to regular (bi-weekly) watering do not develop deep root systems.

Prior to the planting of new trees effort must be made to eradicate the population of spotted knapweed near the restrooms. This invasive species emits a chemical that inhibits the health and growth of other plantings.

Though the Silver Lake Recreation Area does not have a significant problem with other invasive species the park should be frequently monitored and problem species quickly removed.

PARK LIGHTING

Presently, the only lighting within the park is security lighting on the restroom facility. As the park is available for use from two hours before sunrise to two hours past sunset, additional lighting to illuminate the parking areas and paved walking loops is desirable. This lighting should be of a low-intensity and warm color so as not to disturb neighboring property owners. Intense lighting of the multi-purpose field or tennis courts is not appropriate.

WATER RESOURCES

The Silver Lake Recreation Area contains or has frontage on three separate water bodies; Silver Lake, Mud Lake, and Hidden Lake.

As described above, continued use of a natural existing beach area has been identified for the park's Silver Lake frontage. A hard-surfaced pathway will be installed to improve access to this frontage.

In current form, Hidden Lake is very shallow, perhaps 1-4 feet deep on average. Presumably the shallow depth comes from decades of aquatic vegetation growth, death, and infill.



Opportunity may exist to dredge this lake and establish a dedicated kids fishing pond. Prior to any dredging soil sampling would be necessary to determine if past agricultural use of the property has contaminated this pond.

Mud Lake is also quite shallow, but offers opportunities for wildlife watching. A series of benches, observation decks, and picnic tables along the shores of this lake would be beneficial.

The Township has heard reports that the sediment within Hidden Lake and Mud Lake can be hazardous to persons or animals entering the ponds. Therefore, postings should be installed to warn park users of the dangers of wading into the ponds.

RESERVATIONS

The following reservations recommendations either exist or should be implemented to ensure the most enjoyable experience for all park users. To allow for efficient policy changes from time to time these recommendations should be adopted by resolution of the Township Board rather than incorporated within this document.

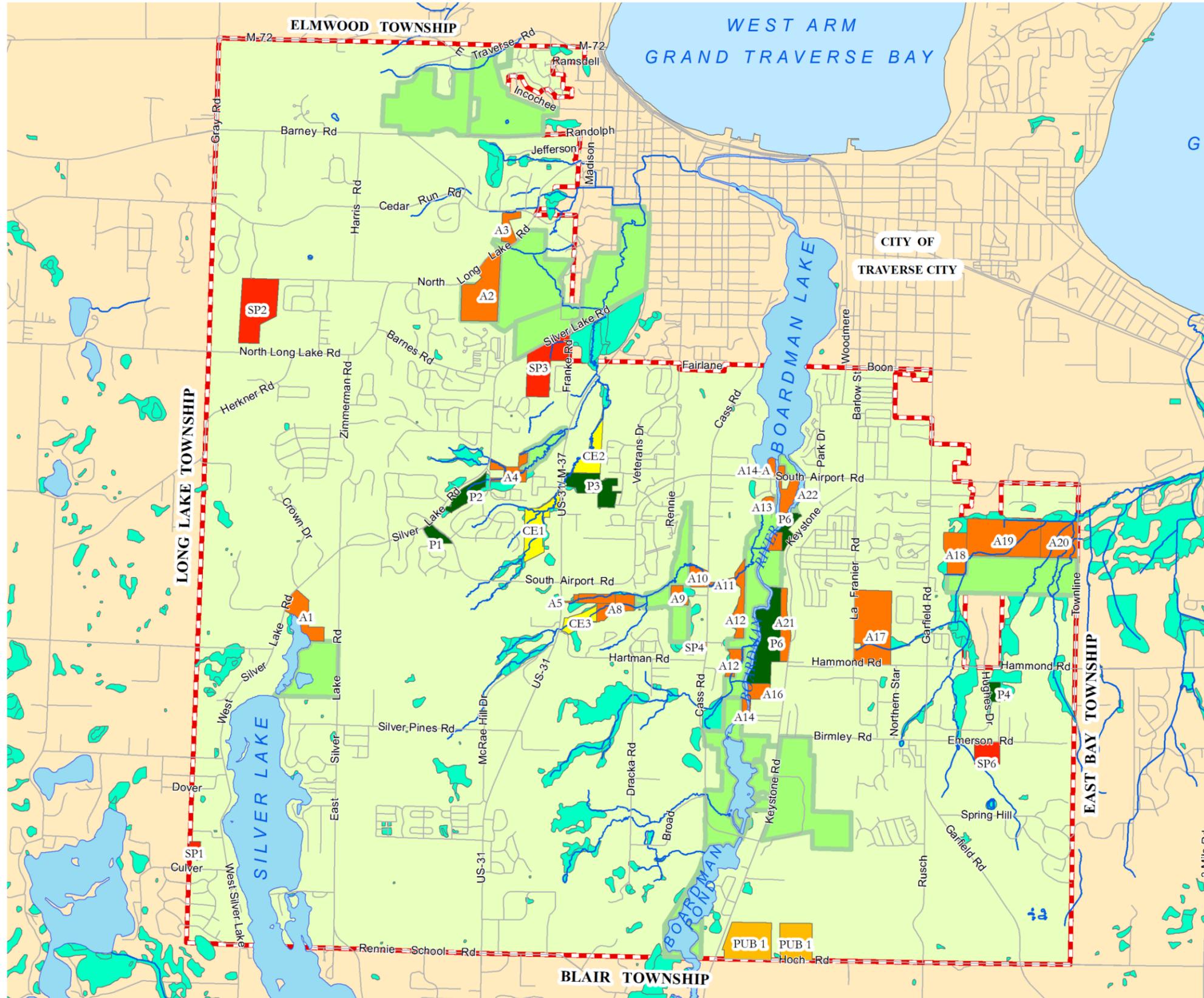
1. RESERVATIONS – LEAGUES

- a. Require reservations for regular league or club use and practice.
- b. Ensure adequate public opportunity to use facilities outside of regular reservation times (i.e. multi-purpose field).
- c. Require the designated league play area to be positioned to maximize open area for other users (i.e. a football field takes up significantly less than full multi-field area, and could be shifted to one area of the field).
- d. Ensure adequate parking exists so that vehicles do not park outside of designated parking areas. Require leagues to provide estimated traffic generation counts. If a league is anticipated to regularly generate traffic in an amount greater than 50% of available spaces, then that league is not likely an appropriate partner to the park.
- e. Permit leagues to use existing and future utility structures to store equipment.
- f. Adopt appropriate league fees which will contribute to maintenance costs

2. RESERVATIONS – FACILITIES

- a. Establish time-slot reservation policy for picnic shelters rather than allowing all-day reservations for one fee. For example, start with 2-3 hours for \$X, then charge hourly rates
- b. Identify one or two pavilions which may not be reserved to adequate opportunity for first-come, first-served use.





Green Infrastructure Plan Map

As Amended January 2013

Legend

Green Infrastructure Plan

- Acquisition Property ("A")
- Conservation Easement ("CE")
- Currently Protected Property ("P")
- Publicly Owned Property ("PUB")
- School Park ("SP")
- Existing Public Parkland

Wetlands

- Wetlands
- Stream



Prepared by: Garfield Township Planning Dept - January 2013
Data Source: Garfield Township, 2013



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space development can protect and enhance the green infrastructure, while often creating useable nature areas for Township residents. When evaluating any application for land use development, the Township should analyze the existing natural characteristics of the development site, as well as the relation of those natural features to surrounding properties, to identify and encourage the preservation of these natural features.

Table 4, below, identifies priority properties that have been identified for acquisition or protection through a conservation easement. **The Green Infrastructure Plan map** (see page 58) shows the location of each priority property, as well as other natural features such as streams and wetlands. As time permits, the Township should perform greater analysis of other green infrastructure elements such as significant woodlands. As noted above, though a particular property may not be indicated on the plan, efforts should be made to protect green infrastructure at all scales.

Map Index	Name	Method of Protection
A1	Silver Lake Connection to W. Silver Lake Road	Acquisition
A2	Commons State 40, Ransom Parcel	Acquisition
A3	Oleson PUD Open Space and Wetlands	Donation
A4	Oleson, Schmude Wetlands	Acquisition
A5	Applebees Parcel	Acquisition, Access Emnt
A6	Commerce Center Wetland	Donation , Access Emnt
A7	City-Owned Boardman Parcel	Acquisition
A8	Hanson Parcel	Donation
A9	Traverse Software	Acquisition
A10	Cass Road Self Storage	Donation or Cons. Emnt, Access Emnt.
A11	Miller Creek Corridor; BVNP / Miller Creek Connector	Donation or Cons. Emnt, Access Emnt.
A12	BVNP Parcels	Acquisition
A13	Logan Valley Pond	Donation or Cons. Emnt
A14	Misc. West Boardman River Parcels	Acquisition
A14-A	Logan Valley Development	Acquisition
A15	Misc. East Boardman River Parcel Easements	Easement
A16	Fraser Parcel	Acquisition
A17	Future East Side Community Park?	Acquisition
A18	SVEC, McClain, Godziewski Parcels	Acquisition
A19	Airport Approach	Donation
A20	Boyd	Acquisition
A21	J. Dean Templeton	Acquisition
A22	Verizon Wireless	Conservation Emnt / Acquisition
CE1	Lewis, Church, Outlet Mall, Tireland Parcels	Donation or Conservation Emnt
CE2	Sleder Wetlands	Donation or Conservation Esmt
CE3	C D F, Chelsea Park	Donation, Acquisition via PUD, Cons. Emnt
P1	S. Airport Road	Protected
P2	Silver Lake Road Conservation Easement	Protected
P3	Lowes Wetlands	Protected
P4	Hughes Drive	Protected
P6	Misc. Ongoing Acquisitions	Protected
PUB 1	Future East Side Community Park?	Publicly Owned (BPW)
SP1	Silver Lake Elementary School	School Park
SP2	TC West High School	School Park
SP3	TC West Middle School	School Park
SP4	Former Sabin Elementary Playgrounds	Donation
SP6	Traverse Bay Christian School	School Park

Table 4 – Green Infrastructure Program