

# HOLLY TOWNSHIP

2017-2021 PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN

Draft · February 9, 2017





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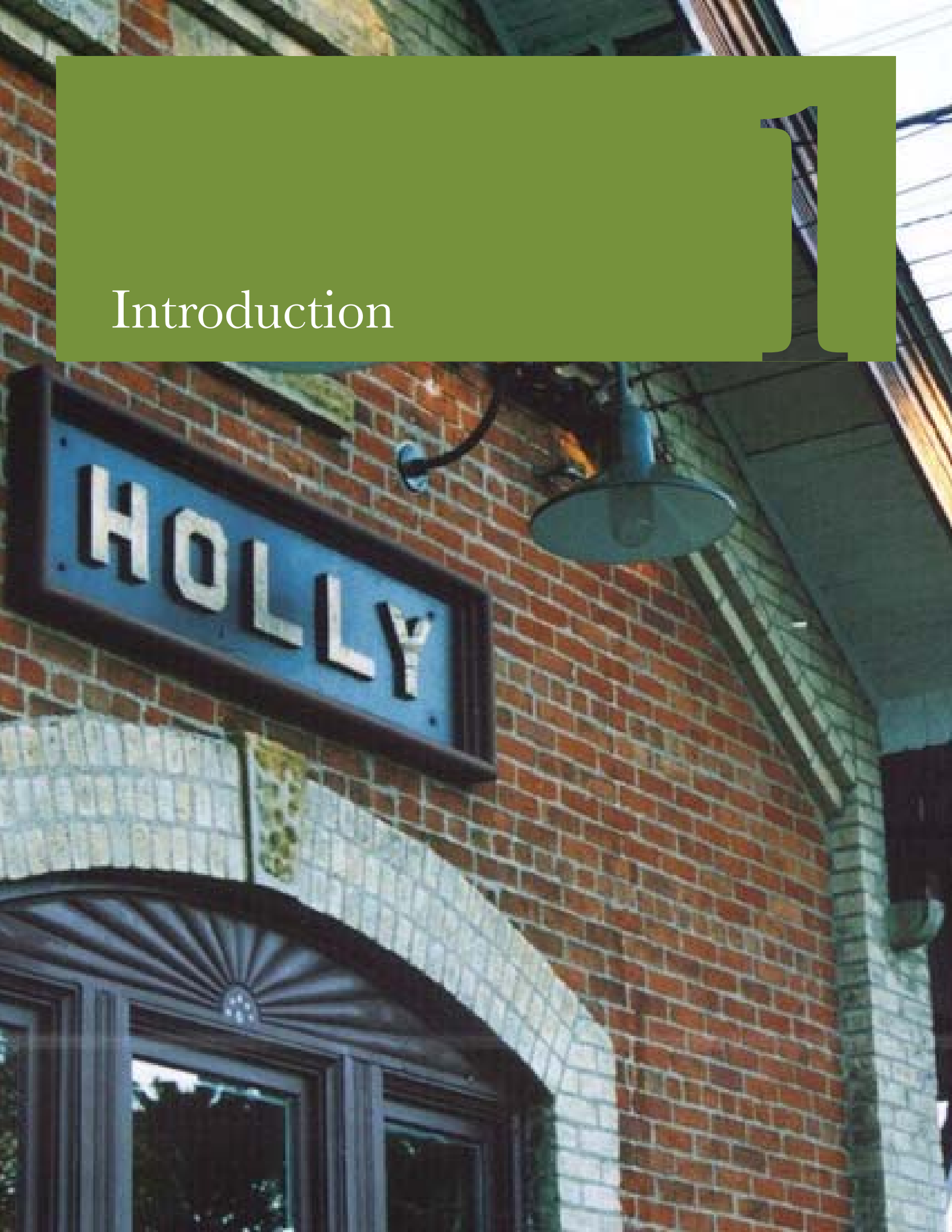
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# Introduction

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Holly Township is a recreational wonderland overflowing with opportunities for healthy living within an active and vibrant community; located in Oakland County with over one million residents, Holly Township continues to have a rural nature. Over eighteen (18%) percent of Holly Township is owned by the State of Michigan through State Park or State Recreation Area lands. Most Holly Township residents have a view of farms, fields, forests or water from their homes.

Holly Township, with thirty-four (34) lakes and two (2) rivers, is an all season recreational paradise cherished by its residents that admire or use those natural features. Local citizens have consistently supported recreational opportunities through their time and tax dollars. Holly Township residents consider Holly Township and its beauty a “sanctuary” from the busy world around it.

The Holly Township Parks Commission receives one-half (1/2) mill of taxpayer approved funding to maintain and operate parks under its jurisdiction. The Holly Township 2040 Master Plan and the Holly Township Zoning Ordinances, citizen vetted documents; add more protection with each iteration to preserve natural features, protect open space, perpetuate scenic beauty and promote watershed management.

The Holly Township Board of Trustees is a new provider of parks and recreational opportunities; owning one established park received in 2013, and three (3) other viable pieces of land that have the potential to become Township parks. The Holly Township Board of Trustees did not intend on becoming a park provider. In 2004 the Holly Township Board of Trustees leased land it owned to the Holly Township Parks Commission for a park. The Holly Township Parks Commission chose to no longer operate the property in 2013 and returned the property to the Holly Township Board of Trustees. The Holly Township Board of Trustees wanted to ensure that the parks were operating under the best available practices as it recognizes the fundamental importance of recreational areas to its citizens.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan process has been used to learn, explore and understand the wants and needs of its citizens. Holly Township is delighted to discover the existence of an accepted Master Plan model to aid in that journey. The Master Plan development process has provided a measurable appreciation for the advantages of recreation areas and trails to Township residents who use and enjoy the recreational areas.



The Holly Township Board of Trustees has developed this 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plan by following the “Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open space, and Greenway Plans” (IC192- Rev. 12/20/2016) by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and following a thorough process of inventory, analysis, and public input. This Recreational Master Plan is a road map for the parks and recreation decisions to be made over the next five years and possibly beyond, making Holly Township eligible for grant programs administered by the MDNR. The process of preparing the plan has given the Holly Township Board of Trustees a better understanding of its residents’ needs and desires for parks, recreation, and open space. The plan contains the following components:

## **Community Description**

The Community Description is simply intended to describe the jurisdiction and focus of the recreation plan.

## **Inventory of Existing Recreational Opportunities**

The Recreation Inventory is a compilation of all township, village, regional, state and private parks and recreation facilities that are understood to be commonly used by Holly Township residents. Significant information was collected using the internet, phone interviews, field observations and in-house Holly Township documents.

## **Description of the Planning Process**

The methods that were used to assess the community’s parks, recreation and open space needs.

## **Administrative Structure and Funding**

The Administrative Structure and Funding section contains a description of the Holly Township government organization. Current and projected expenditures are also discussed.

## **Goals and Objectives**

After a review of the various factors that led to the formation of the particular goals and objectives, such as natural and man-made features, demographic characteristics, citizen input, land use patterns, and the recreation inventory analysis overall goals were selected. This section includes a summary of non-park specific recommendations that are not developed to the point of individual site development plans, but rather outline the current understanding of park functions, opportunities, and challenges for the future.

## **Action Plan and Conclusions**

The action plan is intended to detail the actions the Holly Township Board of Trustees wishes to take over the next 5 years in order to improve recreational opportunities for the residents and visitors. This includes the establishment of goals and guidelines to improve operations and policies and establish a baseline for capital improvements. The Township of Holly is basing its recreational improvements and service decisions on multiple criteria developed from the information gathered during the creation of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Each facility review also includes the capability of the land and its surrounding resources and the availability of funding.



# 2

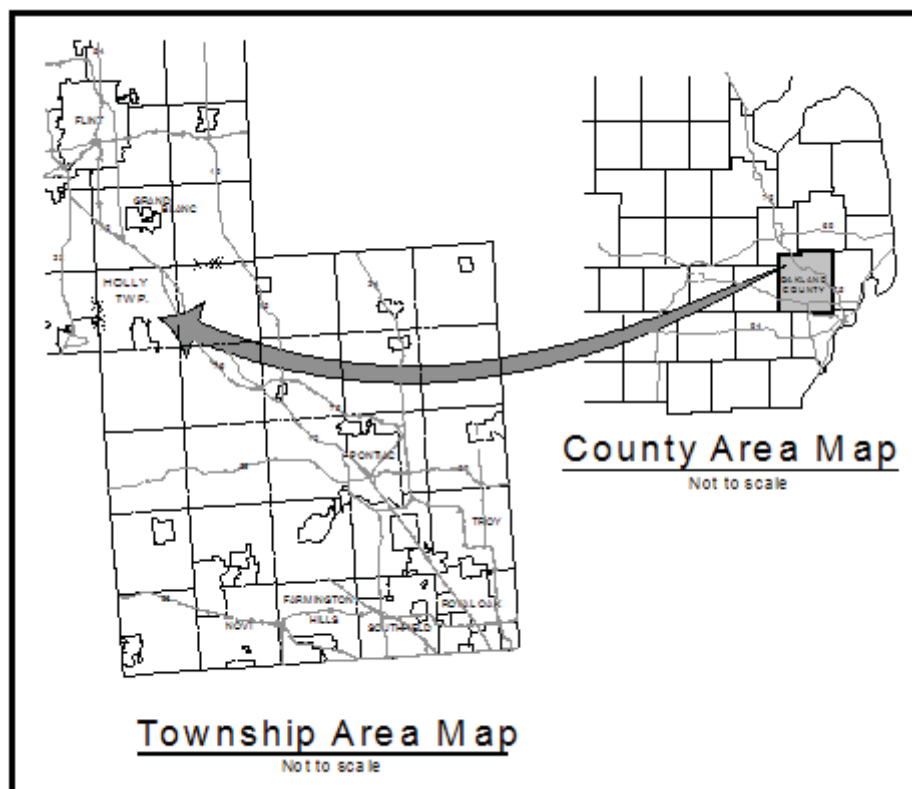
## Community Description



# Location

Holly Township is located in the northwest corner of Oakland County as depicted in Map 1 below, fifty (50) miles north of Detroit and fifteen (15) miles south of Flint. The Township is comprised of approximately thirty-six (36) square miles and is bounded on the east by Groveland Township and on the south by Rose Township, both in Oakland County. It is bounded on the west by Fenton Township and the City of Fenton and on the north by Grand Blanc Township, all in Genesee County. The Village of Holly is located in the southern portion of the Township and is approximately two and one half (2.5) square miles in size.

**Map 1: Regional Location**



# Access

## ROADWAYS

Although I-75 runs along the eastern edge of Holly Township, access into the Township is one of its greatest assets. I-75, connecting northern Michigan with southern Florida, links Holly Township directly with Detroit and Flint as well as the Upper Peninsula. The only interchange from I-75 however, is located at Grange Hall Road at the eastern border of the Township. The Dixie Highway cuts across the north-east corner of the Township providing access to a few east-west roads. Dixie Highway becomes State Highway US-24 within Genesee County and connects the Township with Grand Blanc and Flint to the north. US-23, running through adjacent townships is approximately two (2) miles to the west, connecting Holly with Toledo, Ann Arbor, and several statewide east-west arteries.

Access north-south within the Township is provided by Fish Lake Road, Fagan Road, and North Holly Road which traverses the Village of Holly. North Holly Road continues northward, connecting the Township to I-75 and Grand Blanc. South of the Township, East Holly Road provides an additional connection to I-75, while Milford Road provides access to Milford and M-59 and I-96.

East-west access across the state is satisfied by I-96, I-69 and I-94. I-94 traverses the southern portion of the state, connecting Detroit, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Kalamazoo and Chicago. It is approximately sixty (60) miles south of Holly Township, accessed by US-23. I-96 ties Detroit to Lansing, Grand Rapids and the west-central coast of Michigan. It is thirty-five (35) miles south of Holly and again, is accessed by US-23. I-69, fifteen (15) miles north of Holly, runs from Port Huron on the east, through Flint, and is a primary route to Lansing.

Within the Township, Grange Hall Road is the major east-west route linking Holly Township and Village with Holly State Recreation Area to the east and the City of Fenton to the west. Thompson Road, in the north-western corner of the Township, provides an additional connection to US-23. It is generally more difficult to traverse the Township when traveling east and west, than when traveling north and south. This is particularly true in the northeastern half of the Township.

## RAILROADS

The Canadian National Railway crosses through the lower part of the Village of Holly and the Township, running northwest of Detroit. The CSX Railroad also has a line that runs north-south through the Township traversing the Village of Holly. Both of these railroads haul mainly freight.

## AIRPORTS

Complete airport facilities are available at Flint's Bishop International Airport in Flint. Business-oriented flights are also available at Oakland International Airport to the south. Private airfields or landing strips are located in adjacent townships. Detroit Metropolitan Airport is approximately sixty (60) miles south.

# Natural Resource Inventory

## INVENTORIES

The Holly Township Offices hold a comprehensive set of natural resource maps, prepared by the Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Division, at the request of the Township. Outlined in a series of color maps throughout this section are: water resources, wetlands and watersheds; land resources including topography, septic suitability, woodlands and tree rows and natural features from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory. A discussion of the method of ranking of these natural features, noted in the Oakland County Potential Conservation/ Natural Areas Report, is provided in the Appendix of this document.

In 2004, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory identified the most natural, unaltered examples of natural plant communities in Oakland County, three (3) of which are located in Holly Township. A five (5) acre prairie fen located at Cady Lake, a one hundred three (103) acre dry-mesic southern forest located within Seven Lakes State Park, and a (6) acre prairie fen, also within Seven Lakes, were recognized as warranting protection at the county level.

## GEOLOGY

Holly Township is situated within one (1) of two (2) broad zones in the southeast Michigan area; the hilly zone. The largest surface geological form in Holly Township is the area of till plain, closely followed by the morainic form. The outwash plain accounts for the least area. Landforms are the result of prehistoric glacial movement and deposits mainly of sand and gravel.

## SOILS

General soil mapping indicates that there are four (4) broad soil types in Holly Township. These have been defined as follows:

- **Marlette-Capac-Houghton:** Nearly level to hilly, well drained to very poorly drained loamy and mucky soils; on till plains and moraines and in bogs.
- **Riddles-Marlette-Houghton:** Nearly level to steep, well-drained, moderately well drained, and very poorly drained loamy and mucky soils; on moraines and till plains and in bogs.
- **Fox-Oshtemo-Houghton:** Nearly level to hilly, well drained and very poorly drained loamy, sandy, and mucky soils; on outwash plains, beach ridges, and moraines and in bogs.
- **Oshtemo-Spinks-Houghton:** Nearly level to steep, well-drained and very poorly drained sandy, and mucky soils; on outwash plains, beach ridges, and moraines and in bogs.

The most prevailing soil types is the Marlette-Capac-Houghton with the Oshtemo-Spinks-Houghton and Riddles-Marlette-Houghton soil types forming the next two (2) soil type classifications, respectively. There is one (1) very small area of Fox-Oshtemo-Houghton along the southeast portion of the Township. The Village of Holly and the most intensively developed portions of the Township, lie within the Marlette-Capac-Houghton soil type and the area of outwash plain. Neither of these natural features is supportive of septic tank development.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LAND COVER

In 2009, a Green Infrastructure Vision was developed for Oakland County in order to identify areas in the landscape that are in need of local protection and link the remaining valuable ecological lands. These lands include large natural areas, important wildlife habitats, wetlands, riparian corridors, and areas that reflect key elements of Oakland County's biological diversity. This locally driven initiative gathered input from a wide variety of stakeholders.

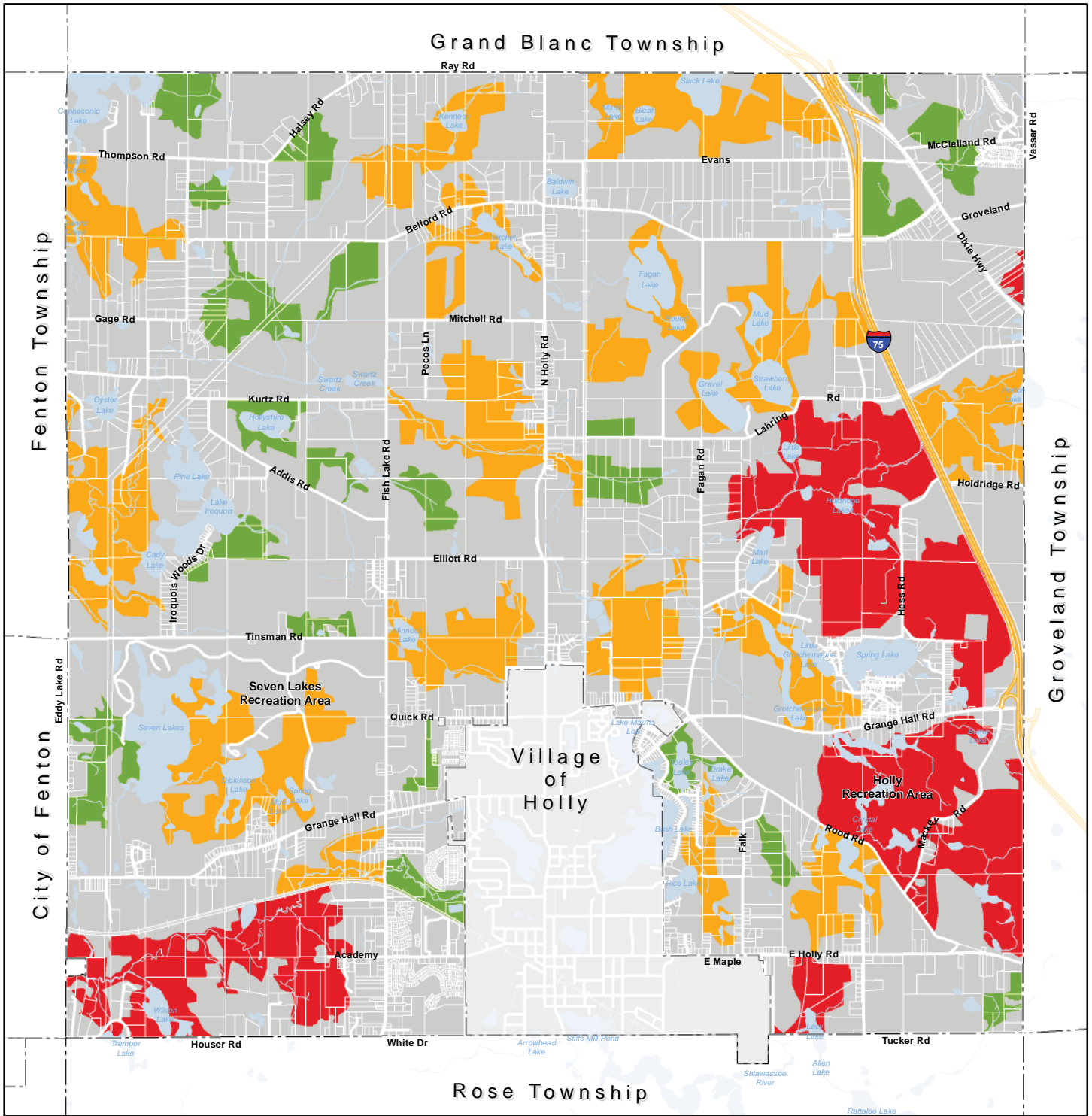
### What is Green Infrastructure?

Green infrastructure is the interconnected network of open spaces, natural areas, and waterways. This network supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to health and quality of life. It also focuses on conservation values and the services provided by natural systems in concert with, instead of in opposition to, land development.

### Benefits of Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure provides a mechanism to identify and blend environmental and economic factors creating a multitude of social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits.

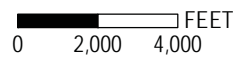
- Provides a sense of place and a unique identity
- Decreases cost of public infrastructure (i.e. stormwater management & water treatment systems)
- Increases both active and passive recreational opportunities
- Increases property values
- Helps preserve the unique quality of life
- Maintains the naturally functioning ecosystems
- Helps to attract new businesses and well qualified workers



December 15, 2016

# Map 2: Michigan Natural Feature Inventory

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan

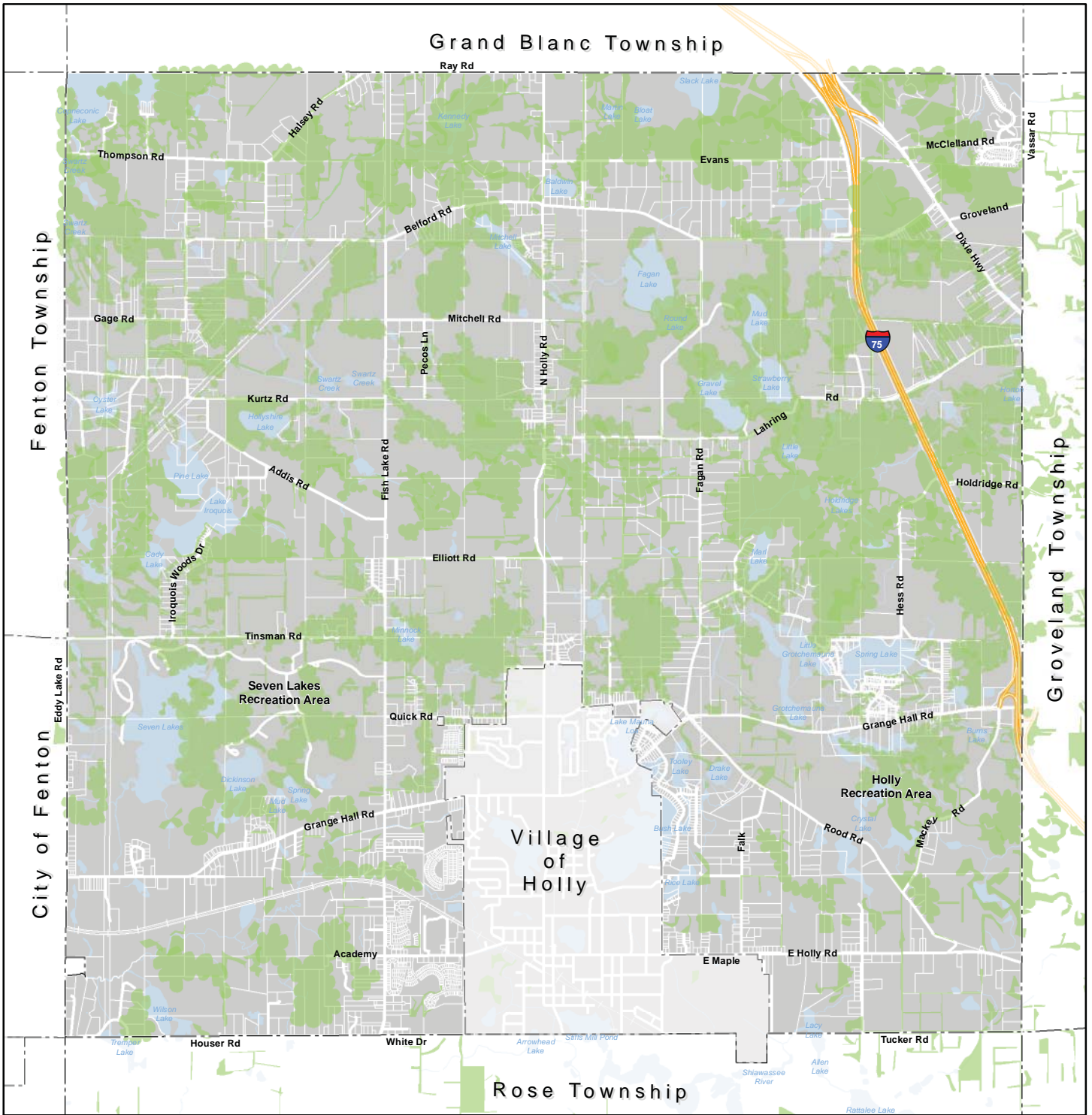


- Priority One
- Priority Three
- Priority Two
- Water Bodies



Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a. Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012

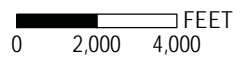




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## Map 2: Woodlands and Tree Rows Map

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan



- Tree Rows
- Water Bodies

Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a. Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012

## WATER RESOURCES

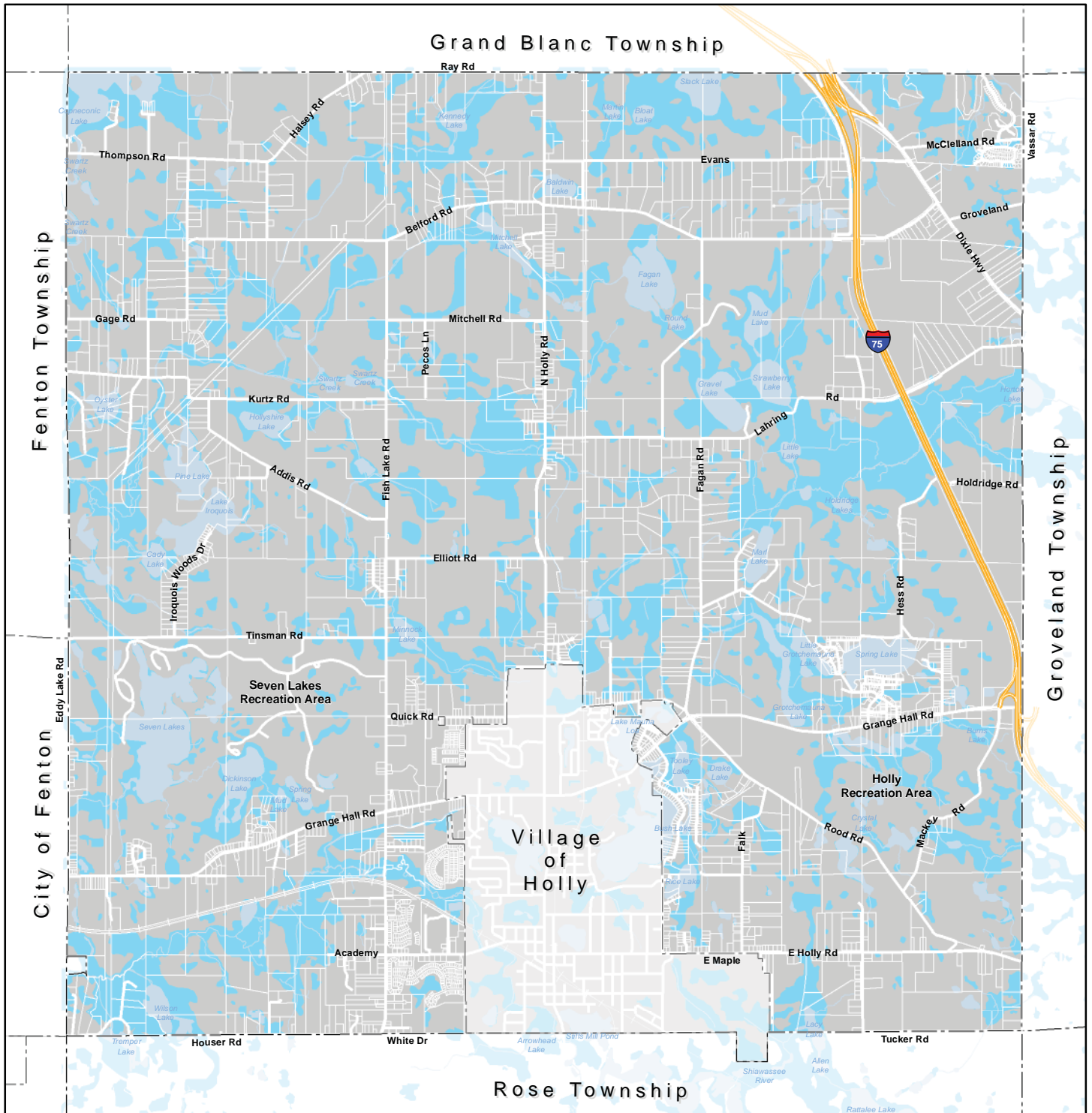
Holly Township has abundant water resources including lakes, wetlands, and streams. More than thirty-four (34) lakes of varying size are scattered extensively throughout the Township, occupying six percent (6%) of total land area. Large areas of wetlands surround the many water bodies as well. The Shiawassee River traverses through the southern portion of the Township, and Swartz Creek is located in the central northern portion.

It is estimated that only three hundred seventy (370) acres or twenty-two percent (22%) of pre-settlement wetlands remain today. Lowland forests total two hundred thirty (230) acres and upland forests three hundred seventy (370) acres, both less than ten percent (10%) of what originally existed in the Township. The Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services Division in conjunction with Rose Township, the Oakland Land Conservancy, the Michigan Nature Conservancy, and the Michigan Nature Association developed the Rattalee Lake Greenway Project which identifies the Rattalee Lake wetlands area as one of the few remaining pre-settlement landscapes in Oakland County. A small portion of this area is located in Holly Township east of the Village of Holly at the southern boundary of the Township within and surrounding Holly Park #2.

Given that water supply for Township residents is provided with individual wells, groundwater protection measures are essential to protecting public health, safety, and welfare. Although Wellhead Protection programs generally involve public well systems, other programs can be implemented. The Township currently has site plan review standards which regulate stormwater runoff, erosion control, and hazardous chemicals stored at sites. Enforcement of these regulations is necessary to meet ground water protection objectives. Sites which include storage of hazardous materials or waste, fuels, salt, or chemicals should be designed to prevent spills and discharges of polluting materials to the surface of the ground, groundwater, or nearby water bodies. Other alternatives include:

- Educational efforts to inform citizens of septic system maintenance needs, and potential on-site pollution from failing septic systems.
- Involvement of the Township Engineer and Fire Department for review of any use with on-site hazardous waste storage.
- Setback standards (100 feet) for septic system drain fields from wetlands, lakes, rivers, or other water bodies.
- Groundwater recharge areas should be protected from potential contamination.
- Coordination with state and county programs.
- Site plan review standards to continue to include information on hazardous waste and containment plans.
- Adoption of a wellhead protection ordinance that manages the sources of pollution for ground water resources.

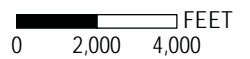
Consideration must be made to areas with existing groundwater concerns. Water quality information has been provided with this plan and indicates areas with high contamination levels of arsenic and chloride in some areas of the Township. Educational efforts pertaining to these issues are also of importance to the Township and current and future residents. This information should also be continually updated to ensure that the delineations are accurate.



December 15, 2016

# Map 4: Wetlands

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan



- Wetlands
- Water Bodies
- Surrounding Municipalities



Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a. Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012

## DRAINAGE

Township drainage is composed of an interrelated system of the following natural and man-made features:

- Natural drainage courses and water bodies such as rivers, floodplains, wetlands, and lakes, some of which are under the MDEQ jurisdiction.
- Established County drains which are under the jurisdiction of the County Water Resources Commissioner's Office.
- Roadside ditches which are under the jurisdiction of the Road Commission of Oakland County.

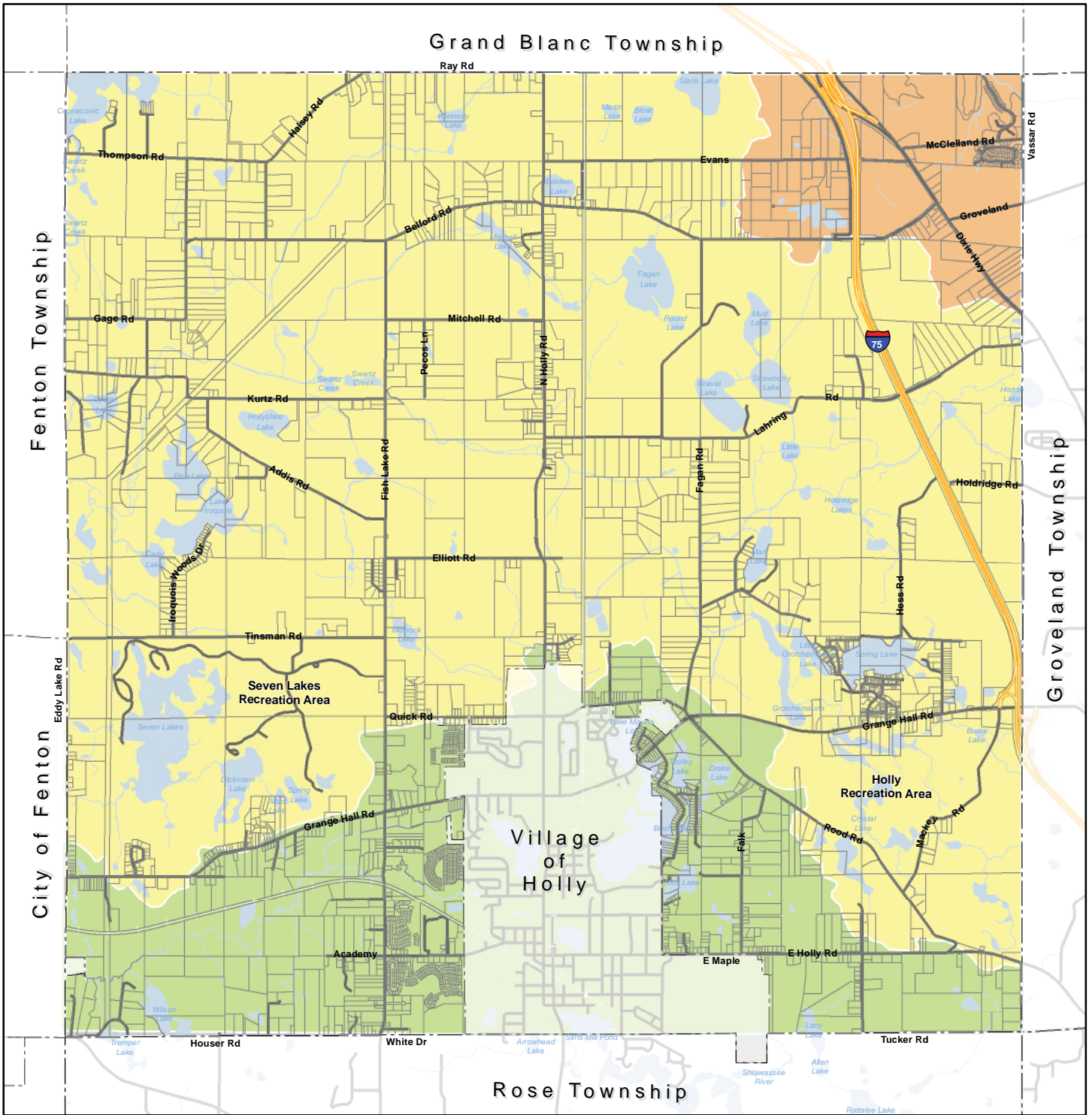
The management of the above combined drainage elements are not coordinated by any one (1) of the three (3) involved governmental bodies, therefore, careful monitoring must take place and problem areas must be identified so that the proper management agency can address problems in a prioritized manner. The Township can also ensure that development in areas with lakes and wetlands is done in a sensitive manner with a great effort to minimize impacts upon these natural systems and to encourage the use of Best Management Practices, such as bioswales and rain gardens. Furthermore, as road improvements under the Road Commission for Oakland County's jurisdiction occur, coordinated drainage improvements can also be addressed.

Because of these considerations and recent changes in legislation, more care needs to be given for drains in the Township in the future.

## TOPOGRAPHY

In Southeast Michigan, slopes of twelve percent (12%) or more should generally not be developed because of their uniqueness in the area. Holly Township has considerable areas of twelve percent (12%) slopes, distributed throughout the Township, quite a few of which are part of a wetland environment. This is most significant for water quality pollution of water bodies from urban runoff.

Careful planning around slopes is necessary to minimize erosion, to maintain grade and soil stability, to control amounts and velocities of runoff, and to maintain the community's aesthetic resources. The existing landform shall be made a part of land use planning and design. The primary objective is the preservation of the natural contours, vegetation and drainage patterns. Grading and site preparation shall be kept to a minimum.

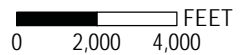


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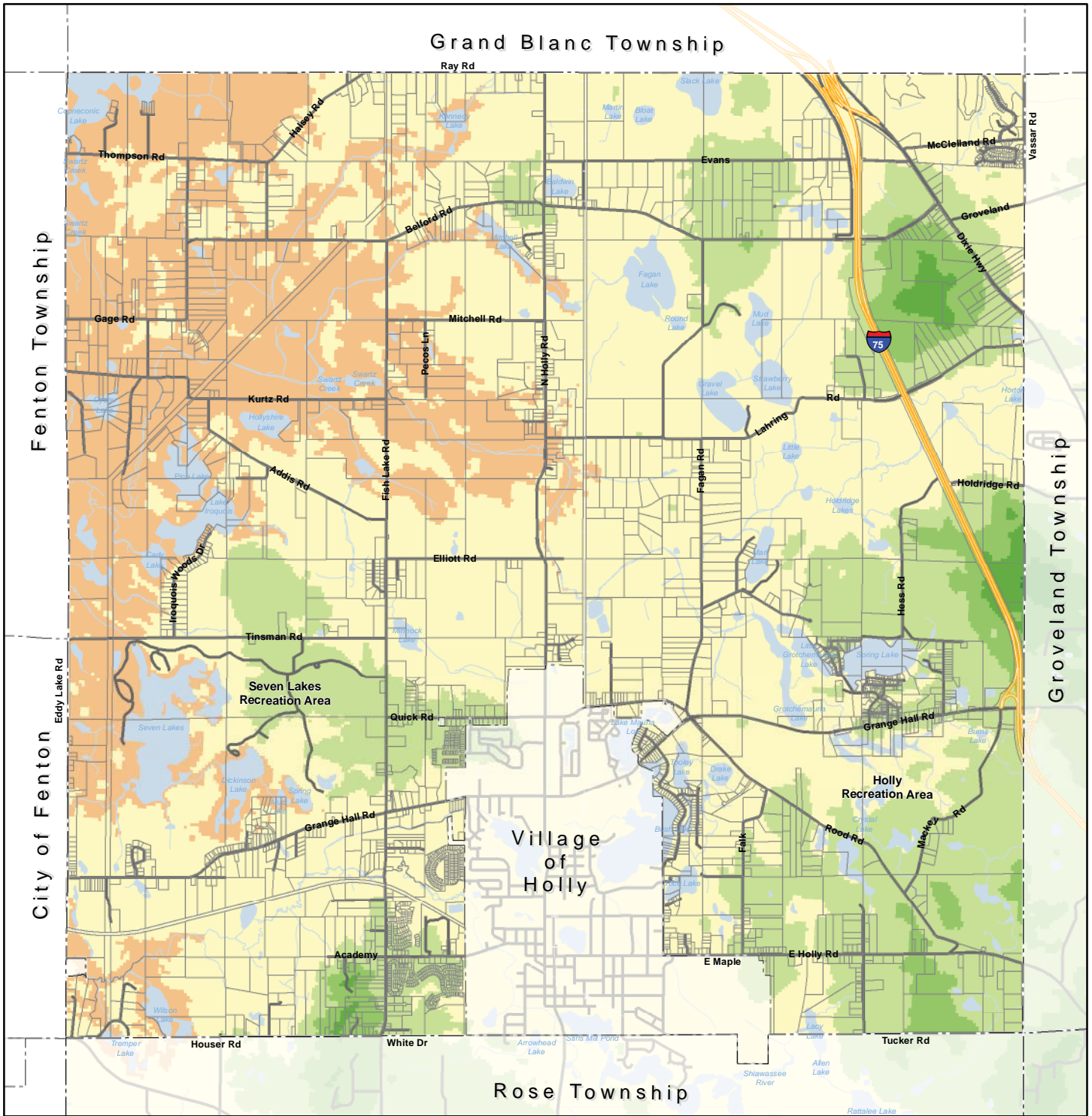
# Map 5: Watersheds

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan

- Shiawassee River (Shiawassee River Watershed)
- Swartz Creek (Flint River Watershed)
- Thread Creek (Flint River Watershed)
- Water Bodies
- Surrounding Municipalities



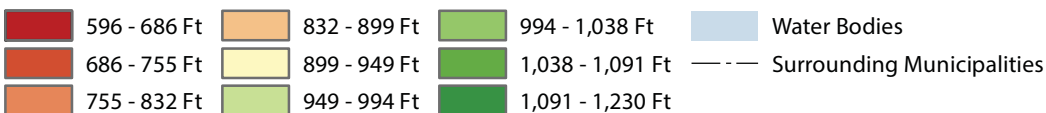
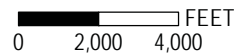
Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a.  
Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012



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# Map 6: Topography

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan



Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Geographic Framework, Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a. Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012

# Population and Housing

## POPULATION TRENDS

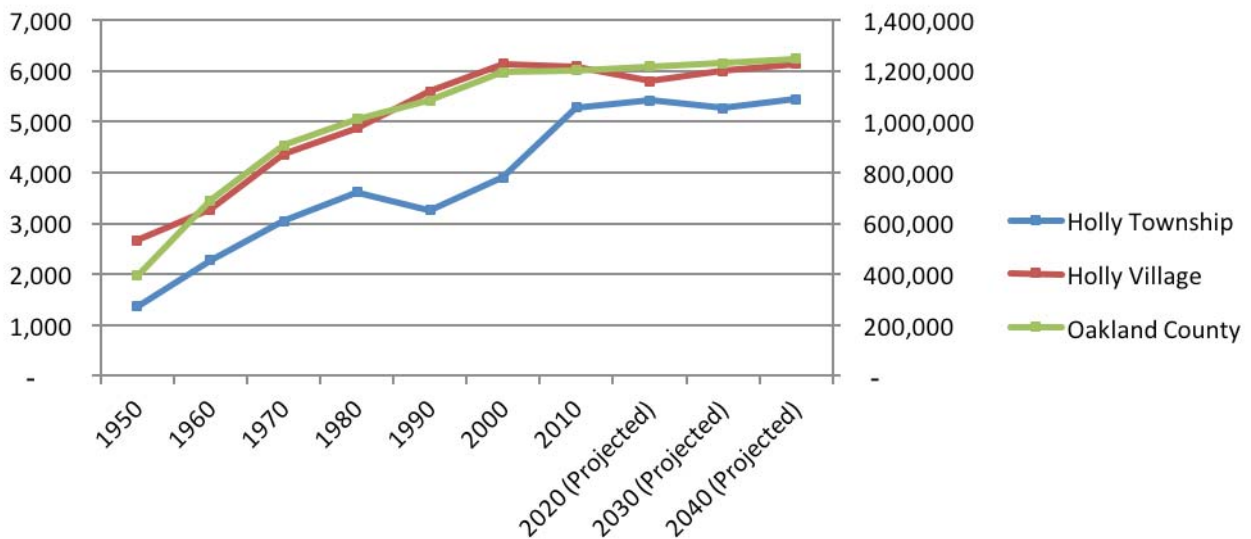
Holly Township and the Village of Holly are located in a historically high growth region within the state of Michigan. The Township has quadrupled in population since 1950, and the Village has mirrored this growth trend by tripling in population during that same time frame. Figure A and Table 1 depict the growth trends and population numbers of both the Village and Township, and compare Oakland County from 1950 to 2010, including population projections for 2020, 2030, and 2040. Many of the following tables include statistics for the total area of Holly Township (36 square miles), as well as the Village of Holly and Holly Township excluding the Village.

**Table 1:** Population Trends – Holly Township, Village of Holly, and Oakland County

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030	2040
<b>Holly Township (excl. Village)</b>	1,367	2,282	3,041	3,612	3,257	3,902	5,276	5,418	5,267	5,440
<b>Village of Holly</b>	2,663	3,269	4,355	4,874	5,595	6,135	6,086	5,801	5,997	6,132
<b>Oakland County</b>	396,001	690,259	907,871	1,011,793	1,083,592	1,194,156	1,202,362	1,218,449	1,230,755	1,246,863

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and SEMCOG 2040 Forecast produced in 2012.

**Figure A:** Population Trends – Holly Township, the Village of Holly, and Oakland County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and SEMCOG 2040 Forecast produced in 2012.

The Township experienced a surge in population between 1950 and 1960, where the population more than doubled. Both the Village and Township experienced double digit growth rates over the next 40 years, with only the Township dipping in 1990 to a negative growth rate before returning to a 20 percent growth rate in 2000, and 35 percent growth rate in 2010. The first ten years of the 21st century saw the Village of Holly and Holly Township return to growth rates that had not been seen since the 1960s, though this trend is projected to level off and stabilize by the years 2020, 2030, and 2040. This is consistent with what has been seen regionally and nationally, and are in relation to decreasing household sizes and the aging baby-boom population.

Age characteristics for Holly Township and adjacent communities are depicted below in Table 2. At a median age of 41.1 years, Holly Township is less than one year older than the median age of Oakland County. With the average median age for the surrounding local region being 41.34 years, Holly Township reflects general conditions. Figure B displays the age characteristics for the population in Holly Township and how it has fluctuated over the course of the past four (4) year period. Since 2010, the median age has increased by nearly two (2) years, 39.2 years in 2010 to 41.1 years in 2013. This is in part due to a one (1) percent increase in the sixty-five (65) year and older group, while those eighteen (18) years of age and younger have only increased by 0.3 percent since 2010. This increase in median age and slight change in age distribution is more indicative of county, state, and federal population trends, smaller family sizes and an aging baby-boom population; although, as seen in Table 2, more than one-third of the Holly Township population consists of households with children, an above average statistic in comparison to the local region and both Oakland and Genesee County.

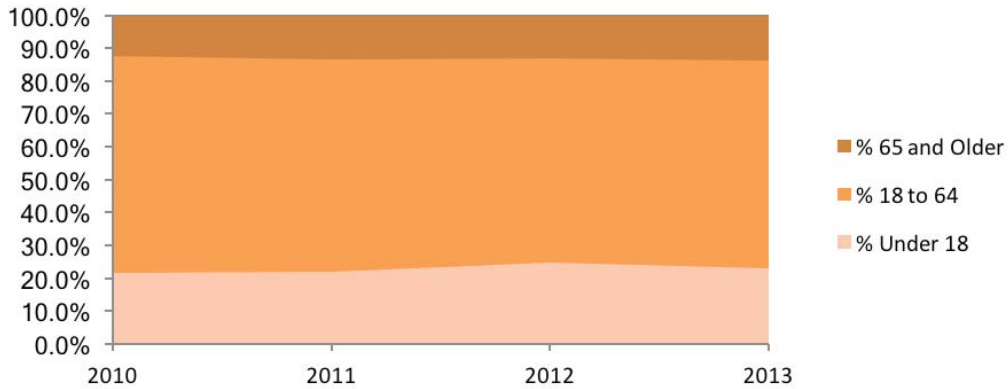
**Table 2:** Age Characteristics – Holly Community and Related Areas in Oakland and Genesee County, 2013

	Holly Township	Holly Village	Rose Township	Groveland Township	Oakland County	Grand Blanc Township	Fenton Township	Fenton City	Genesee County
<b>Total Population</b>	5,286	6,125	6,298	5,522	1,213,406	37,060	15,408	11,656	421,575
<b>Age Characteristics</b>									
Median Age (years)	41.1	36.8	46.3	43.4	40.5	37.1	42.5	37.4	38.8
% Under 5	5.1%	4.4%	3.8%	8.0%	5.6%	6.2%	4.6%	7.4%	6.3%
% Under 18	23.1%	27.8%	19.8%	24.9%	23.1%	25.9%	23.7%	23.8%	24.5%
% 65 and Older	13.7%	11.9%	13.1%	11.6%	13.7%	12.7%	13.5%	14.5%	14.2%
<b>Total Households</b>	1,861	2,269	2,369	1,923	486,332	14,358	5,844	4,815	165,669
% Households with Children	35.9%	39.4%	29.8%	35.8%	31.7%	33.6%	33.6%	30.7%	31.5%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

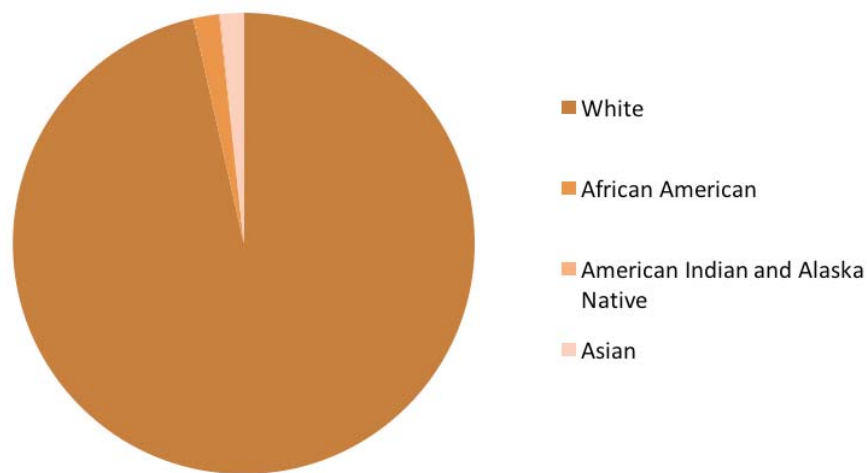


**Figure B:** Population by Age – Holly Township, 2010 to 2013



Sources: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates for each year between 2009 and 2013

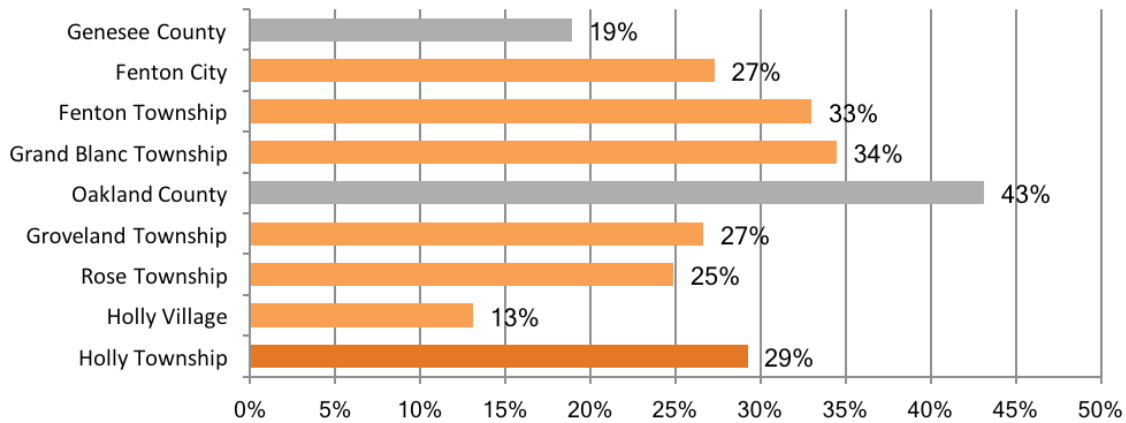
**Figure C:** Racial Composition – Holly Township, 2013



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

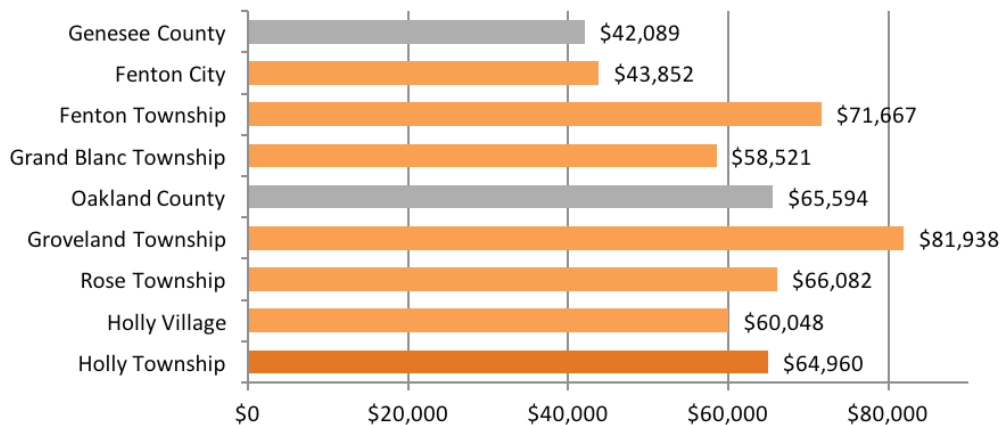
In regards to racial composition, Holly Township's population is 96.1 percent white, compared to Oakland County's population of 79.2 percent white, and Genesee County's population which is 77.3 percent white. African-Americans are the second largest racial group in Holly Township at 1.8 percent of the total population, virtually equal to Rose Township and Fenton City. While Holly Township is a primarily homogeneous community, it isn't dissimilar to the composition of its surrounding neighbors.

**Figure D:** Population 25 Years of Age and Over with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher – 2013



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**Figure E:** Median Household Income – 2013



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

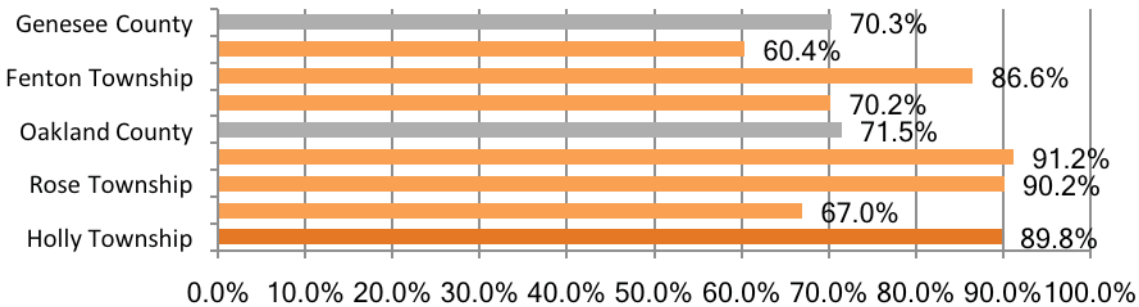
Figure D highlights the percentage of 25 year olds or older in Holly Township and adjacent communities, who have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher. The median percentage of the population with a Bachelor's degree or higher in the local region is 28 percent, one (1) percentage lower than Holly Township's 29 percent which is the third (3rd) highest level in the area outside of county level statistics. When measuring the percentage of the population who have pursued post-secondary education, the percentage of 25 year olds and over rises dramatically to 62 percent.. While this rate is ten (10) percentage points below Oakland County, it is seven (7) percentage points higher than that of Genesee County.

Figure E depicts median income levels in regards to the local region around Holly Township. Holly Township is above the average median income for the area and is virtually even with Oakland County at approximately \$65,000, and more than \$20,000 above the median income of Genesee County. At only an estimated ten (10) percent unemployment rate in 2013, Holly Township was the second lowest after Fenton Township (8.3 percent).. Holly Township also claimed the lowest percentage of families living in poverty status, at two (2) percent; the next closest competitors were Rose Township at two-point-two (2.2) percent, and Fenton Township at seven (7) percent.

## Housing Characteristics

The percentage of owner-occupied housing in Holly Township, approximately 89.8 percent, is higher than every surrounding community listed in Figure F, except for Groveland Township and Rose Township. The 89.8 percent figure is approximately 10 percentage points higher than the average median owner occupied housing percentage for surrounding communities. Holly Township has one of the stronger owner-occupied housing populations in the area.

**Figure F:** Owner Occupied Housing and Median Rent – 2013



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

The median housing value, inversely related to median rent, is below the median housing value for surrounding communities. At approximately \$150,000, \$20,000 below Oakland County, Holly Township has the fifth (5th) highest median housing value in comparison to the surrounding area. Whereas the median rent in Holly Township is higher than all adjacent communities, including Oakland County, comparatively at \$919.

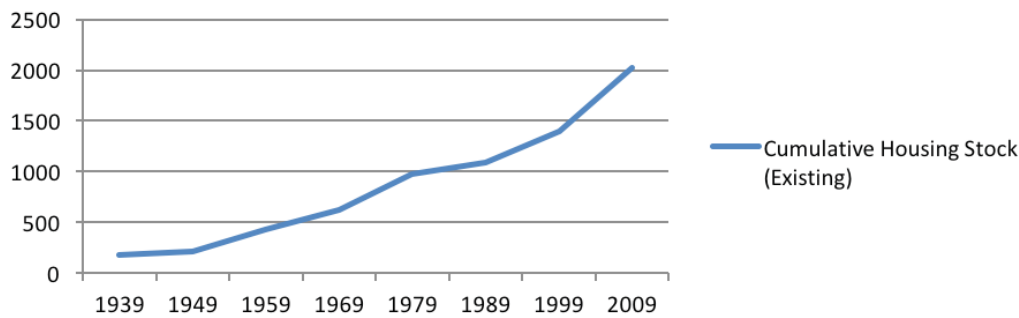
Half of the existing housing stock in Holly Township was constructed before 1970. The greatest percentage of new housing stock, 31 percent, was built between 2000 and 2010. Within Holly Township, the Village possesses the majority of the older housing stock with a large portion of the units constructed prior to 1939. Figure G depicts the age composition of the housing stock in Holly Township. Figure H describes the change in housing types from 2000 to 2010, and describes the composition of housing types within Holly Township. Of the listed housing types, single family homes make-up the largest number of housing types in the community. Although, over the previous ten (10) year period, townhouses/attached condos and mobile homes/manufactured houses experienced the most dramatic growth trend. Specifically, mobile homes/manufactured homes saw a 495 percent increase, and townhouses/attached condos saw a 2,367 percent increase. In contrast, duplexes and Multi-Unit Apartments experienced large losses in the 2000 to 2010 period, respectively losing 67 percent and 45 percent of their previous totals.

**Table 3:** Housing Tenure, Median Rent, and Median House Value – Holly Township and Related areas in Oakland and Genesee County, 2013

	Holly Township	Holly Village	Rose Township	Groveland Township	Oakland County	Grand Blanc Township	Fenton Township	Fenton City	Genesee County
<b>Occupied housing units</b>	1,861	2,269	2,369	1,923	486,332	14,358	5,844	4,815	165,669
% Owner-occupied	89.8%	67.0%	90.2%	91.2%	71.5%	70.2%	86.6%	60.4%	70.3%
% Renter-occupied	10.2%	33.0%	9.8%	8.8%	28.5%	29.8%	13.4%	39.6%	29.7%
<b>Median Rent (2013 dollars)</b>	\$1,251	\$761	\$795	\$1,012	\$919	\$744	\$891	\$781	\$711
<b>Median House Value (2013 dollars)</b>	\$150,400	\$84,400	\$179,400	\$196,100	\$170,500	\$130,800	\$173,500	\$105,800	\$91,700

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

**Figure G:** Age of Housing Stock



Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

**Table 4:** Housing Types – Holly Township in 2000 and 2010

Housing Type	2000	2010	Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2010
Single Family Detached	1,359	1,517	158	12%
Duplex	21	7	(14)	-67%
Townhouse / Attached Condo	6	148	142	2367%
Multi-Unit Apartment	11	6	(5)	-45%
Mobile Home / Manufactured Housing	20	119	99	495%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>1,797</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>27%</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, and 2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

# Economic Base

## EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Holly Township has a diverse job base as seen in Table 5. The Village and Township virtually split the employed concentration of the population, with the Village holding a slight edge at 2,711 employed residents over the age of 16. Four out of every ten (10) employed residents work in the management, business, and science and arts sector; Another three (3) out of ten (10) hold sales and office occupations. Holly Township and Village have the largest sales and office sector in the area, comprising 28 percent of the employed population. The sector with the highest concentration of jobs is management, business, science and arts at 39 percent.

The largest employers in the Holly Community include: Delta Tube and Fabricating Corp., Holly Schools, Camp Ohiyesa, Rose Hill Center, the Holly Convalescent Center, and the Michigan Renaissance Festival. There are a variety of other places of employment, but the list in Table 6 represents what key employment assets the community has. The largest employers are all involved in the base economic sector, including manufacturing, education, health services, and tourism. These industries serve not only the local population, but provide an influx of revenue from outside the community.

**Table 5:** Occupational Employment

	Holly Township	Holly Village	Rose Township	Groveland Township	Oakland County	Grand Blanc Township	Fenton Township	Fenton City	Genesee County
<b>Civilian employed population 16 years and over</b>	2,583	2,711	2,818	2,492	581,100	16,050	7,088	5,620	158,199
Management, business, science, and arts	39%	28%	35%	44%	47%	45%	42%	31%	30%
Service	15%	17%	19%	17%	15%	15%	15%	20%	20%
Sales and office	28%	27%	26%	20%	25%	24%	23%	23%	25%
Extraction, construction, and maintenance	6%	8%	11%	11%	5%	5%	6%	8%	8%
Production, transportation, and material moving	12%	20%	9%	9%	9%	11%	13%	17%	16%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

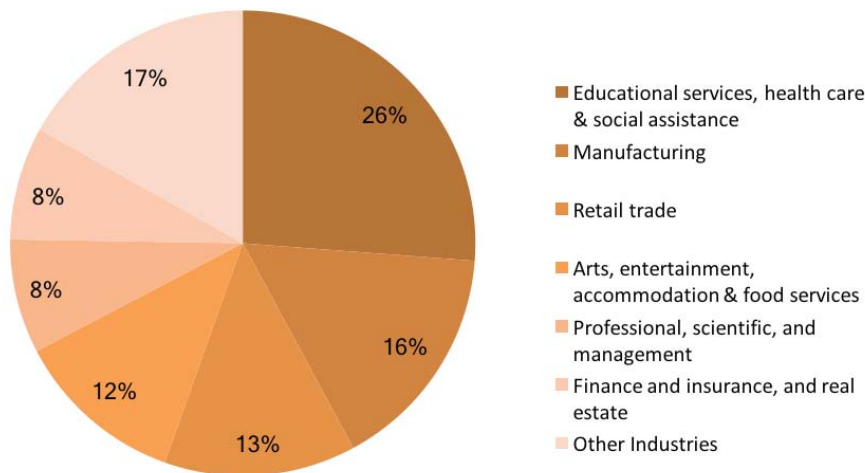
**Table 6:** Major Employers – *Holly Community, 2015*

Company	Specialty
Delta Tube & Fabricating Corp	Tubing-Metal-Fabricators
Karl Richter Campus School	Schools
Holly High School	Schools
Holly Academy	Schools
Benjamin H Sherman Middle School	Schools
Camp Ohiyesa	Camps
Rose Hill Center	Mental Health Services
Holly Convalescent Center	Nursing & Convalescent Homes
Michigan Renaissance Festival	Carnivals

Source: Reference USA Database, 2015

Labor force characteristics for the Holly Township are presented below in Figure H. The figure shows that over one quarter of Holly Township’s employed residents work in educational services, healthcare, and the social assistance sector. A significant portion of residents work in manufacturing, retail trade and arts, entertainment, accommodation and food services. White collar positions comprise of 42 percent of the industry employment, while blue collar work represents 16 percent of industry employment in Holly Township.

**Figure H:** Employment by Industry – *Holly Township, 2013*

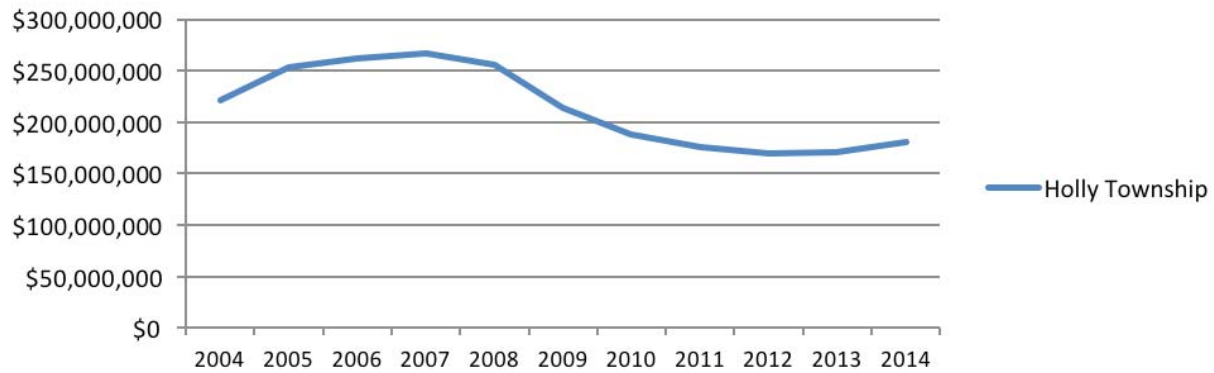


Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

## TAX BASE

After peaking in 2007 at \$446.3 million, Holly Township's total State Equalized Value (S.E.V.) of real and personal property continuously dropped for the following five (5) years, consistent with the nation's economic recession. The total value loss bottomed out in 2012, when it fell to \$270.1 million, 37 percent below the value recorded in 2007. However, the S.E.V. has been steadily increasing since then, reaching \$285.8 million in 2014, \$259.7 million representing taxable value. This value is both higher than Groveland Township and Rose Township. Of the \$285.8 million, residential real property represents the largest percentage of the value at 84 percent. Figure I and Table 7 depict the S.E.V trend of Holly Township since 2004 and its comparison to surrounding communities, while Table 8 analyzes real property by class.

**Figure I:** State Equalized Value – Holly Township, 2004-2014



Source: Oakland County Department of Equalization Reports from 2004 to 2014

**Table 7:** State Equalized Value and Taxable Value – 2014

	Holly Community	Holly Township	Holly Village	Rose Township	Groveland Township	Oakland County
Equalized Value	\$285,895,670	\$180,228,610	\$105,667,060	\$248,445,980	\$214,295,210	\$55,084,607,293
Taxable Value	\$259,751,110	\$160,037,570	\$99,713,540	\$218,893,500	\$188,883,890	\$50,048,650,087

Source: Oakland County Equalization Reports from 2004 to 2014

**Table 8:** Equalized and Taxable Value of Real Property by Class – Holly Community, 2014

	Agricultural Real	Commercial Real	Industrial Real	Residential Real	Total Real
<b>Parcel Count</b>	51	236	42	4,907	5,236
<b>Equalized Value</b>	\$6,467,220	\$33,028,720	\$4,723,730	\$225,920,250	\$270,139,920
Equalized Value (% of total real property)	2.4%	12.2%	1.7%	83.6%	-
<b>Taxable Value</b>	\$4,843,190	\$31,405,060	\$4,254,220	\$203,424,270	\$243,926,740
Taxable Value (% of total real property)	2.0%	12.9%	1.7%	83.4%	-

Source: Oakland County Equalization Reports from 2004 to 2014

## AVERAGE COMMUTE TIME

As depicted in Table 9, the Holly Community captures the largest percentage of employed residents with one (1) out of five (5) working within the community. The rest of the employed residents commute to surrounding job centers, with the largest percentage, 41.6 percent, traveling to work places that are not located in nearby job centers. And of the 5,100 employed residents listed in Table 10, nearly 88 percent drive alone in a car, truck, or van while only 10 percent carpooled. The distribution for means of commuting travel to work is reflective of surrounding area trends. However, average commute times to work for Holly Township residents is third (3rd) highest in comparison to surrounding communities, and four (4) minutes longer than that of Oakland County residents as a whole. This is indicative of a population that, in general, works outside of the Township in other job centers in the area.

**Table 9:** Locations where Holly Community's Employed Residents Work – 2010

Where Residents Work	Workers	Percent
Holly Community	945	18.5%
Flint, Genesee County	325	6.4%
Fenton, Genesee County	305	6.0%
Troy	295	5.8%
Waterford Township	240	4.7%
Auburn Hills	230	4.5%
Grand Blanc Township, Genesee County	195	3.8%
Pontiac	190	3.7%
Rochester Hills	140	2.7%
Detroit	115	2.3%
Elsewhere	2,120	41.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,100</b>	



**Table 10:** Means of Commuting to Work and Commute Time for Residents — *Holly Township, 2013*

	Holly Township	Holly Village
<b>Workers 16 years and over</b>	2,551	2,586
Car, truck, or van -- drove alone	88.1%	87.6%
Car, truck, or van -- carpooled	9.8%	8.2%
Public transportation	0.0%	0.0%
Walked	0.5%	1.8%
Other means	0.0%	1.1%
Worked at home	1.6%	1.3%
Average commute time to work	30.2	30.4

Source: US Census Bureau, 2009-2013 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

# Jurisdiction and Focus

Currently Holly Township has four (4) possible recreation areas under its ownership with only one (1) of those actively managed as a park by the township. Township recreational inventory shows abundant recreational opportunities and desires in Holly Township beyond those provided. This Parks and Recreational Master Plan is intended to define a set of best practices and goals as identified by the public and stakeholder input.

The jurisdiction of this plan focuses solely on Holly Township and was prepared primarily for the use of the Holly Township Board of Trustees in evaluating current and future needs for active and passive recreation within its borders. It is also intended as a regional recreation planning tool, particularly for cross-jurisdictional planning; significant efforts have been made to coordinate this plan with the plans of surrounding municipalities, and also with the plans of other recreation providers in the township. The plan is focused on all aspects of public recreation within Holly Township, including trailways, active recreation areas, passive recreation and natural areas. When used in conjunction with the Holly Township Master Plan, which includes a green infrastructure element, it assists in prioritizing opportunities to protect and preserve undeveloped or minimally developed wetlands, riparian lands, forests, woodlands, and other natural features. The Recreation Master Plan is an additional economic development and quality of life tool for Holly Township and its residents.

Oakland County as a whole is densely populated with over 1,200,000 people, while Genesee County to the Northwest has over 425,000 (both 2010 U.S. census). Local businesses depend heavily on outside visitors and Holly Township is promoted as a recreational destination. The motto for Holly Township is “Up North in Oakland County” and we take pride in providing the nearby recreational playground for our residents, and the hundreds of thousands of people in the surrounding area. Holly Township was for many decades dominated by large family farms, some in the thousands of acres, which limited development. As those farms are now being broken up or sold the Township planning efforts have been focused on development that is the least disruptive to our citizens and the natural beauty of the area. The enhancement of the vast recreational resources is considered an integral part of the future of Holly Township and its citizens and supports our unique community vibrancy.

A strong vision and sustained commitment by both township leaders and active community members has enabled Holly Township to dedicate considerable resources to recreation.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, Holly Township is seeking to continue the development of its recreational programs and facilities, ensuring it can satisfy not only the community’s current recreational demands, but those of the future as well. This Recreation Master Plan is a critical component in the continuous improvement process, providing direction to guide community leaders toward the township resident’s desired future amenities.

While the focus of this plan is the development of parks and recreational opportunities within Holly Township, it also provides information on the larger community context, providing connections and opportunities for cooperation between the Township and other jurisdictions that may provide regional amenities for an even larger user group. Holly Township’s long history of partnership and cooperation with the adjacent Townships, the Village of Holly and the Holly Area School District demonstrates the desire to protect the valuable natural resources of the area, while still providing the quality recreational experiences that both residents and visitors desire.

# Inventory of Existing Recreational Opportunities

# 3



The Recreation Inventory is a compilation of all township, village, regional, state and private parks and recreation facilities that are understood to be commonly used by Holly Township residents. Significant information was collected using the internet, phone interviews, field observations and in-house Holly Township documents.



# State Parks and Recreation Areas

Holly Township has two primary state recreation properties that encompass 18% of the total Holly Township land area.

## HOLLY STATE RECREATION AREA

Holly State Recreation area consists of 7,817 acres of land, shared with Groveland Township. Winter and summer sports are equally provided for; including camping, cross country skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, boating, fishing, hiking, horseback riding trails and disc golfing. The recreation area includes one hundred sixty-one (161) modern and semi-modern campsites and two (2) mini-cabins. The Rolston Rustic Cabin, is located within the park lands near McGinnis Road; built in 1938, the cabin is located on a small pond and is available for rent year-round. The newly built, family-friendly cabins have private access to Wildwood Lake offering two bedrooms, a kitchen, living area and a bathroom. Larger cabins are also available; the first modern cabins with indoor plumbing. These cabins are the result of an ongoing partnership between the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Department of Corrections' Prison Build Program, offering inmates the opportunity to learn building trade skills that can assist them in reintegration into society.

Beaches and shoreline on McGinnis, Heron, Wildwood or Valley Lake allow for boating and fishing opportunities as well as access to adjacent trails that link many recreational opportunities. The Holly-Holdridge Mountain Bike Trail was designed, and is currently maintained, by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association. These trails are some of the best in southeastern Michigan. The twenty-five (25) miles of trail is broken into various loops that accommodate all age and skill levels, from beginner to expert.

- North Loop - 2.25 miles of beginner trail
- West Loop - 4.75 miles of intermediate trail
- East Loop (Gruber's Grinder) - 18 miles of advanced trail
- Tech Loop (option on the west loop) - 1 mile of technical terrain including a 3 foot drop, log climbs, skinnies and jumps

The Holly Cloud Hoppers, a 65 member radio controlled airplane club, uses property in Holly Recreation Area as an air field.

## SEVEN LAKES STATE PARK

Seven Lakes State Park is a relatively new park, opening in 1977. The 1,444 acres that make up the Seven Lakes State Park included a combination of farmland, rolling hills and forests; this backdrop allows for a multitude of activities for visitors; activities including trails for hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing and snowmobiling. The two hundred thirty (230) acres of water that give the park its name provide swimming, boating and fishing. Hunting, picnic areas, volleyball, basketball, softball, playground equipment and horseshoe pits are also available. A seventy-one (71) site campground, which opened in 1992, sits on the edge of Sand Lake and provides a private beach for campers only. Plans for expansion include acquiring property along the northern and eastern boundary line in order to round out the property line. Current facility plans include expanding the existing campground.

# County Parks

There are no Oakland County Parks in Holly Township. However, there are county parks in three of the surrounding townships.

## **GROVELAND OAKS COUNTY PARK**

Groveland Oaks County Park is 400 acres of park land focused towards family camping and swimming recreation with 600 modern and primitive campsites in addition to picnic areas, waterslide, and swimming beach. Groveland Oaks is open seasonally.

## **ROSE OAKS COUNTY PARK**

Rose Oaks County Park preserves 640 acres of gently rolling open meadows and wooded uplands, including approximately 200 acres of valuable wetlands and frontage on several glacial lakes within the site. Oakland County Parks and Recreation has constructed natural area accessibility improvements as part of a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant at Rose Oaks County Park. Improvements include the development of universally accessible boardwalks, trails, fishing piers and a wildlife viewing platform.

## **SPRINGFIELD OAKS COUNTY PARK**

Springfield Oaks County Park features 331 acres and is home to the annual Oakland County Fair, historic Ellis Barn, two outdoor arenas, a golf course and a Community Service Garden. A large activity center and multi-purpose room for banquets, seminars, reunions and parties are also available by reservation.

# Holly Township Parks Commission

An elected board of seven Township and Village residents operates Holly Township Parks and Recreation with a voted ½ mil operating budget. The Commission board has 1 full time director and 2 part time employees. All Holly Township Park Commission facilities are within the Village of Holly.

## **HOLLY TOWNSHIP BEACH**

Holly Township Beach consists of two and one half (2.5) acres offering swimming, picnicking, shuffle board, sand volleyball, and playground areas. The beach is located on Bush Lake within the Village of Holly and is open seasonally.

## **HARVEY SORENSEN PARK**

Harvey Sorenson Park is located on the south side of East Holly Road within the Village of Holly and extends into Rose Township. Sorenson Park offers softball fields, a picnic area, nature center, and five kilometers of trails within its ninety-five acres.

# Village of Holly Parks

The Village of Holly has five local parks, totaling 20 acres, including Lakeside, Crapo, Cyclone, Water Works, and Ganshaw parks. Most parks offer picnicking and playground areas, with ball fields provided at Cyclone and fishing available at Morris Fein Arboretum. The Village of Holly also coordinates the “Run for the Dickens” road race each December, the area’s second most popular road race after Flint’s Crim Festival of Races.

**Table 11:** Recreational Facilities

Activities	Holly State Rec. Area	Seven Lakes State Park	Groveland Oaks County Park	Holly Twp. Park and Beach	Holly Twp. Sorensen Park	Lakeside Park	Crapo (Village)	Cyclone (Village)	Morris Fein (Village)	Mount Holly (Private)
Camping	161	71	600			✓				
Picnic Areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Shelters	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓			
Playground	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			
Ball Diamond	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		
Swim Beach	✓	✓	✓	✓						
Canoe/Boat Launch	✓	✓	✓							
Canoe/Boat Rental	✓	✓	✓							
Hiking Trail	✓	✓	✓		✓					
Horse Trail	✓									
Nature Center					✓					
Fishing	✓	✓	✓						✓	
Hunting	✓	✓								
Downhill Ski										✓
X-C Ski	✓	✓	✓							✓
Sledding		✓								
Snowmobiling	✓									
Ice Skating						✓				



# Public Access Boat Launches

Public access boat launches, operated by the State of Michigan and the Village of Holly, are available throughout Holly Township.

**Table 12:** Boat Launches

Name	Location	Restrooms	Parking	Water Acres
Heron Lake	Holly Recreation Area	YES	48	132
Crotched Lake	Holly Recreation Area	NO	10	14
Dickinson Lake	Seven Lakes State Park	NO	20	44
Holdridge Lake	Holly Recreation Area	NO	10	16
Big Seven Lake	Seven Lakes State Park	YES	12	170
Bush Lake	Village of Holly	NO	N/A	N/A

# School Facilities

Outdoor recreation is also available at the local schools in Holly Township on an individual basis. The Holly Area Public School District, serves five townships, with five of their seven schools within Holly Township. The outdoor athletic fields and courts are accessible to the public when not in use by classes and Holly High School has a large indoor swimming pool that is also available for public use during designated times. School facilities offering recreation opportunities include the following:

**Table 13:** School Recreation Areas

Name	Location	Activity
Benjamin H. Sherman Middle	Village of Holly	Soccer fields, playground
Patterson Elementary	Village of Holly	Playground (under expansion)
Adelphian Junior Academy (Private)	Village of Holly	Playground
Holly Academy (Charter)	Holly Township	Playground
Holly Elementary	Village of Holly	Updated Playground
Holly High School	Holly Township	Football, soccer, tennis, trails
Wellspring/Karl Richter Campus	Village of Holly	Soccer, indoor walking, gym, auditorium

# Private Recreation Areas

## **CAPTAIN'S CLUB AT WOODFIELD**

Open to the public for a daily fee, the 18-hole "Captains Club" course at The Captains Club at Woodfield in Grand Blanc, Michigan features all the hallmarks of Michigan golf. Designed by Raymond Floyd, the Captains Club Golf Course opened in 1993; part of the course is in Holly Township and borders the Woodfield Preserves recreational area.

## **YMCA CAMP COPNECONIC**

YMCA Camp Copneconic is a year-round camp and retreat center nestled on the shores of Lake Copneconic in Fenton, Michigan with more than one half of the camp property in Holly Township. In close proximity to Detroit and Flint, Camp Copneconic provides for convenient access to a serene natural environment among bustling metropolis. The camp slogan is "An up north feel ... that's close to home!" offering year-round camping with a full staff, in a pristine and comfortable location. Events include: Resident Camp, Day Camp, School Programs, Youth Retreats and Special Events.

## **MICHIGAN RENAISSANCE FESTIVAL**

The Michigan Renaissance Festival is an interactive outdoor event that focuses on recreating the look and feel of a fictional English village called Hollygrove during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I in the latter half of the 16th Century. A large number of patrons regularly attend the festival in costume further fleshing out the streets with nobles, pirates, Vikings, wizards, rogues, fairies, and an assortment of fantasy characters. The festival includes many nationally known Renaissance festival stage acts, juggling shows, sword fighting shows, lane acts, a two-hour feast performed twice daily, three full contact joust shows performed daily, and activities and games for children of all ages. The festival is owned by Mid-America Festivals.

The festival began operation in 1979 but in 1985 organizers moved the festival to Holly Township on 100 acres of property between I-75 and Dixie Highway, one mile north of the Mt Holly Ski & Snowboard Resort. The property is part in Holly Township, part in Groveland Township, and to honor this fictional village, the name was changed to "Hollygrove". Roughly 30 acres have been developed for the actual festival site with 15 acres within the "village" walls and accessible to patrons. The property includes two large parking areas, two lakes (Horton Lake and Walton Lake), and wetlands. Permanent structures and stages have been built over the years and the festival has been expanded steadily to accommodate an estimated annual attendance of 250,000 people.

## **MT HOLLY SKI & SNOWBOARD RESORT**

Mt Holly is nestled on the border with Holly Township in Groveland Township. Mount Holly has seven chairlifts including Southeastern Michigan's only high-speed detachable quad, four rope tows, and two SunKid Wonder Carpets.

Mt Holly has a complete Alpine and Snowboard equipment rental, expertly groomed trails, and world-class ski and snowboard instructors. Its spacious Bavarian lodge provides two cafeterias, a fireplace room, a lounge with two additional fireplaces, and a full service ski shop.

Mt Holly has 19 trails ranging from beginner to advanced in difficulty, and two snowboard parks with an assortment of terrain features.

## **GENESYS ATHLETIC CLUB**

As part of the Genesys Hospital campus the Genesys Athletic Club (GAC) is one mile north of the Holly Township border in Grand Blanc, Michigan. It is a member's only facility that has many Holly Township residents as members.

The GAC has 75 fitness machines, over 10,000 square feet of group studios, three pools, an indoor golf center, 16,800 square feet of gymnasium space including an NBA sized basketball court, a ¼ mile indoor track, eight racquetball courts, eleven indoor tennis courts, and 3.1 miles of outdoor walking trails. The locker rooms include a whirlpool tub, cold dip, steam room and sauna.

## FLINT/HOLLY KOA

Located next to the east Holly Road exit from I-75 just outside Holly Township, this private campground offers 167 RV spots, 15 rustic cabins and 3 camping lodges. It features a pool, zipline, planned activities and proximity to Holly State Recreation Area.

# Headwaters Trails

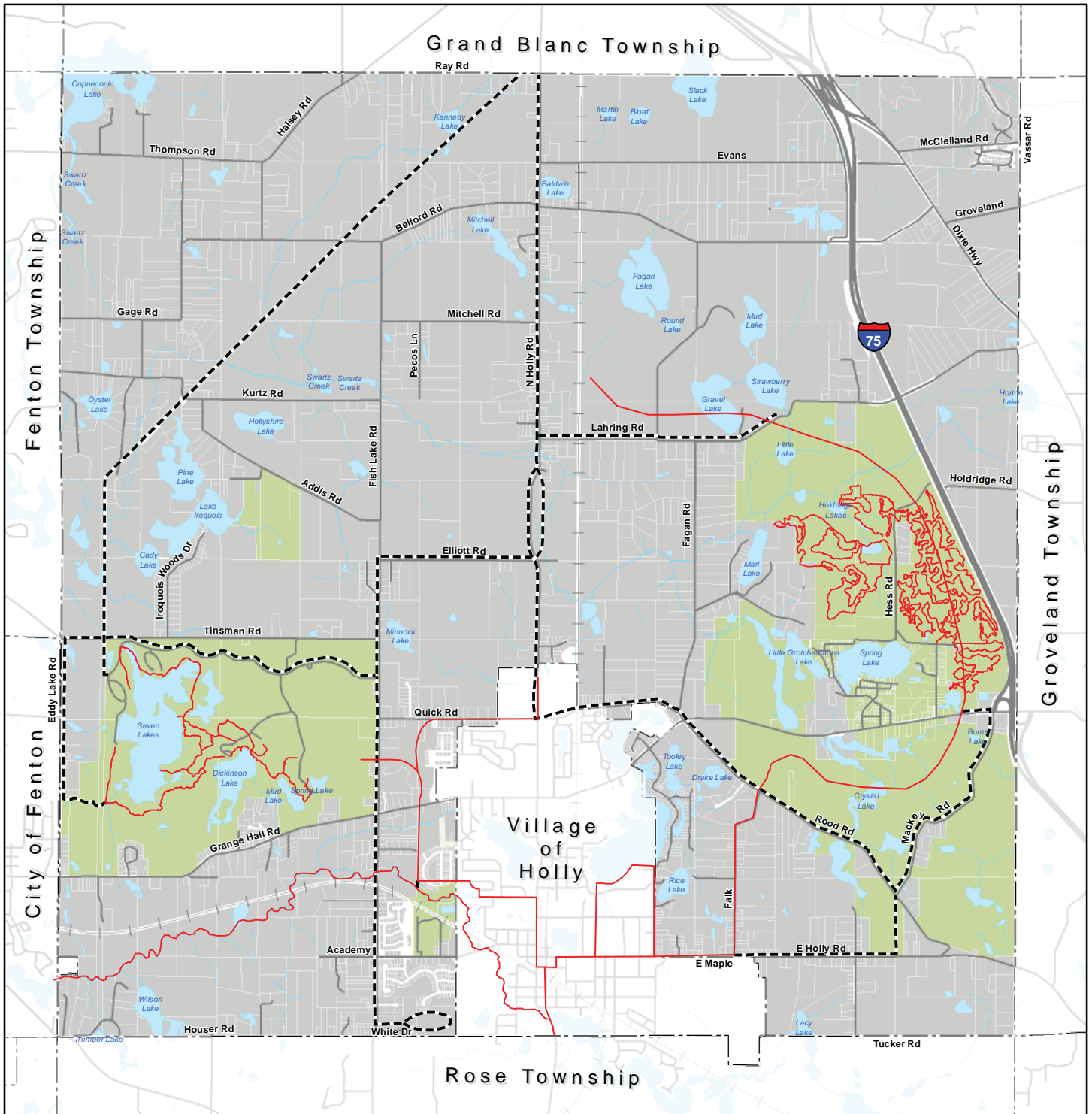
Headwaters Trails Inc. is a non-profit group of volunteers dedicated to the promotion of trails in Northwest Oakland County. It was established in Holly in 1995 and has continued to represent the public interest in trails, natural corridors and non-motorized recreation since then. Monthly meetings are open to the public and assistance for workdays are aided by volunteers coming from a 20 mile radius. Members attend the Trails, Water & Lands Alliance meetings organized by Oakland County Planning and Economic Development Services, and remain in touch with Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance (MTGA) to coordinate planning efforts.

The overall purpose for Headwaters Trails Inc. is to:

- Develop non-motorized land and water trails;
- Connect points of historical, cultural and natural interest;
- Providing linkages with neighboring communities;
- Establish close-by opportunities for healthful exercise; and
- Aid in attracting economic development by enhancing the area's quality of life.

As a 501(C)3 Headwaters Trails can mobilize private support for activities endorsed by local municipalities. In this respect it has obtained a planning grant for land trails from the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan; a signage grant from Saginaw Bay WIN for the Shiawassee River Heritage Water Trail; an REI grant for development of a trail-head for that trail; a Mott grant matched by the Village of Holly to construct a pedestrian bridge to the canoe/kayak access point in that trail-head; and a National Geographic grant, matched by Holly Township, to construct a pedestrian bridge over the Shiawassee at a point where the land trail and the water trail intersect. Headwaters Trails has also privately raised money to purchase an acre of river frontage in Holly Township on Fish Lake Road, a key access point to the Shiawassee River.

Headwaters Trails Inc. intends to continue its productive relationship with Holly Township in the creation of a network of land trails: north toward Grand Blanc, northwest to Seven Lakes State Park and on to Fenton in Genesee County, south into Rose Township where links to Rose Oaks and Highland Oaks County Parks exist, and east to Holly State Recreation Area and the Holly-Holdridge Mountain Biking Trails. Holly Township is strategically located as the hub for these trails. Initial planning steps have occurred and the full establishment of biking, hiking, walking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and nature observation pathways will become more viable when included in this Master Plan.



December 19, 2016

## Map 7: Trails and Pathways

Holly Township, Oakland County, Michigan

- Private and Public Open Space
- Water Bodies
- Trail and Pathways
- Future Trails and Pathways

0 2,000 4,000 FEET



Base Map Source: Oakland County GIS, 2014 and Michigan Center for Geographic Information, Version 14a. Data Base: Oakland County Data, 2012



## **NORTH OAKLAND HEADWATERS LAND CONSERVANCY (NOHLC)**

NOHLC is a non-profit, accredited land conservancy serving the headwaters of four major rivers, which includes Holly Township containing the main branch of the Shiawassee River and the Swartz Creek, a tributary of the Flint River. They collaborate with local municipalities to preserve nature and water quality for future generations. Through strategic land acquisition it makes access to key sites possible with the aid of easements and land purchases. NOHLC intends to continue to work with Holly Township to accomplish the goals outlined in this Master Plan. NOHLC currently own three sites in the township.

## **LOST LAKE NATURE PRESERVE**

The Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy in cooperation with the Six Rivers Land Conservancy recently acquired 538 acres in total, 353 acres in Holly Township. The preserve includes mature forests and a variety of wetlands, a rare prairie remnant, and two lakes. Slack Lake (52 acres) and Bloat Lake (7 acres) are kettle lakes; part of a larger complex ecosystem that includes the property's wetlands and emergent/submergent marshes. To date, 175 plant species have been identified within the Lost Lake Nature Preserve.

The preserve management planning process includes multiple public trail systems and education with demonstration projects and research. The public access to the preserve will be from Holly Township. Holly Township has been working with both the Grand Blanc Township government and the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy to coordinate future plans for this property.

# Holly Township Board of Trustees Recreation Areas

The Holly Township Board of Trustees has chosen to create recreation areas within the township in addition to the parks provided by the Holly Township Park Commission. **These four sites are the primary focus of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan document.** Each is strategically located throughout the township. All decisions regarding each of the following properties will be made by the elected Holly Township Board of Trustees. The Holly Township Board of Trustees has remained committed to expanding recreational opportunities and promoting healthy lifestyles for its residents.

## HOLLY HERITAGE FARMSTEAD

This fifteen (15) acre property was purchased by Holly Township in 2003 and lies in the middle of the township (section 16), a beautiful site that deserves and requires protection. On the property are two farmhouses (1890's north and 1850's south) and a post and beam barn, also from the 1800's. The property has 800 feet of frontage on Swartz Creek and ½ mile of road frontage on North Holly Road, a major north/south connector between the Village of Holly and I-75. At the time of the purchase, the Holly Township Board of Trustees also indicated the wish to build a future township hall complex on a part of the property. The 1850's south house was the site of early Holly Township government offices.

This a multi-purpose piece of property. Presently the property is managed through the Holly Township Board of Trustees by the Holly Heritage Farmstead Foundation, a 501(C) 3 non-profit group of volunteers. This property has two primary elements, displaying the life of Holly farm families in the 1800's and preserving the importance of farming to future generations.



*Post and Beam Barn at Holly Farmstead*



*The North House (1890's)*



*The Greek Revival South House (1850's) awaits its exterior renovation*

The Holly Heritage Farmstead Foundation promotes numerous activities throughout the year. The biggest is Plow Days during the 3rd weekend in May. During this festival, area antique tractor clubs not only get to show off their tractors along with a draft horse team, but also to use them to prepare the north field for planting.

The plowed fields are then planted with corn and pumpkins to be used during our annual Halloween celebration. Multiple types of antique farm equipment are used and demonstrated along with weaving, rope making, maple syrup making, bee management, chickens with eggs, and ice cream made on-site. It is a wonderful, well attended annual event.

Fall brings an antique car, truck and tractor show as a compliment to the weekly car cruise in the Village downtown. Throughout the year the property is used by local groups.



*Antique Saw Demonstration*



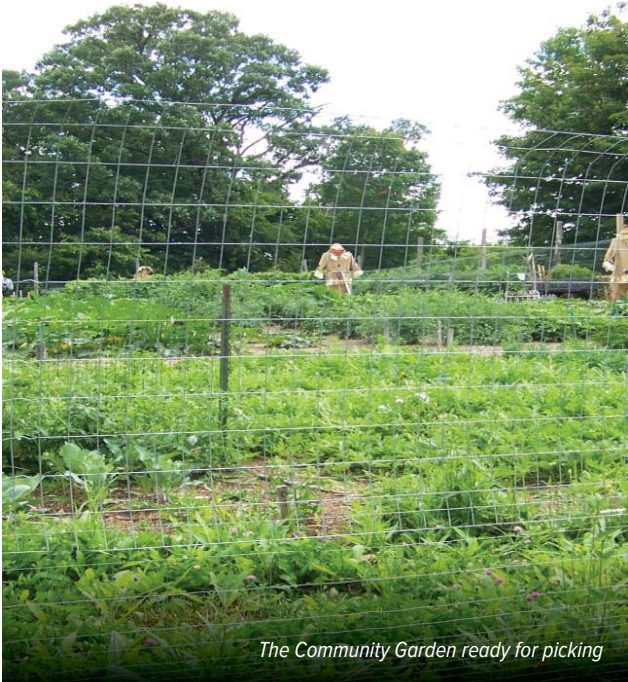
*Hay Wagon ride during Plow Days*





The Farmstead is also home to the Holly Community Garden and Food Bank garden. The garden plots are sold out each year with the number of plots increasing annually. The Farmstead provides all of the water to the community gardeners and food bank garden. Area farmers and greenhouses supply much of the fertilizer and plants for the Food Bank garden; this section of the garden is devoted to donating food to area food banks and in 2013 donated 4409 pounds of food locally. The Food Bank Garden is operated by volunteers and assisted by the Oakland County Weekend and Weekday Alternative for Misdemeanants (WWAM) crews through the Holly Heritage Farmstead Foundation.

The volunteers worked in cooperation with a local bee keeper whom provided a hive to pollinate the plants and will allow the gardeners to keep all of the honey. Soybeans were grown that will be used to produce tofu to help ensure a protein source for vegetarians. A Farmer's Market is planned for 2018.



## SHIAWASSEE PATHWAYS RECREATION AREA

This 20-acre parcel was donated to the Holly Township Board of Trustees and lies on the south central part of the township in section 33. This property has over 1300 feet of frontage on the Shiawassee River and is a wilderness area. Holly Township rebuilt a bridge that crosses the Shiawassee River for the exclusive use of walking and biking. The bridge was a major component of a proposed Holly Township trail system. This area is also used for fishing, bird and wildlife watching and dog walking.

Holly Township has been expanding and improving the trail with the eventual hope of connecting the Village of Holly with Seven Lakes State Park.

In 2015, a property west of our existing Shiawassee Pathways Recreation Area was listed for sale by the longtime family owners. Holly Township in collaboration with the non-profit group Headwaters Trails Inc. purchased the 13.73 acre property. This addition has over 1000 feet of frontage on the Shiawassee River and when combined with the existing Shiawassee Pathways property, Holly has placed nearly 35 acres and one-half a mile of river frontage forever in the public trust.

This extraordinary property has retained its wild and natural appearance, is surrounded by the Village of Holly and Holly Township is still growing but already multitudinous single family housing development. When combined with the Village of Holly's adjacent land this area has substantial potential for providing the residents an easily accessed and usable recreational resource.

Holly Township's partnership with Headwaters Trails Inc. has two facets. First, they already own a 1½ acre parcel of land across the river from this parcel with road frontage on Fish Lake Road that they are intending to use for the creation of a public canoe/kayak landing and parking area.



Second, the property also included a lovely 1910 era bungalow and two garages with frontage on Fish Lake Road that abuts their proposed landing property. Headwaters Trails Inc.– although, a well-established organization to the Holly community – has no permanent base of operations. Holly Township has facilitated an agreement with Headwaters Trails Inc. to allow them to purchase the buildings and approximately one acre of the land to assist them in fulfilling their mission. Headwaters Trails Inc. will be looking for grants to help with their purchase of the home, garages and +/- one acre of property. They have already provided the township with a significant down payment. The home will be used as a meeting area and with an established kitchen and toilet and shower facilities on site is a compliment to the landing project. The two garages can be used for the storage and distribution of rental canoes and kayaks and with the direct river frontage provides an extraordinary opportunity for expansion while providing a safe and secure area for the storage of the equipment. The one acre of property that will be under the ownership of Headwaters Trails Inc. is full of mature hardwoods and will create a lovely well shaded area for picnicking.



## WOODFIELD PRESERVES

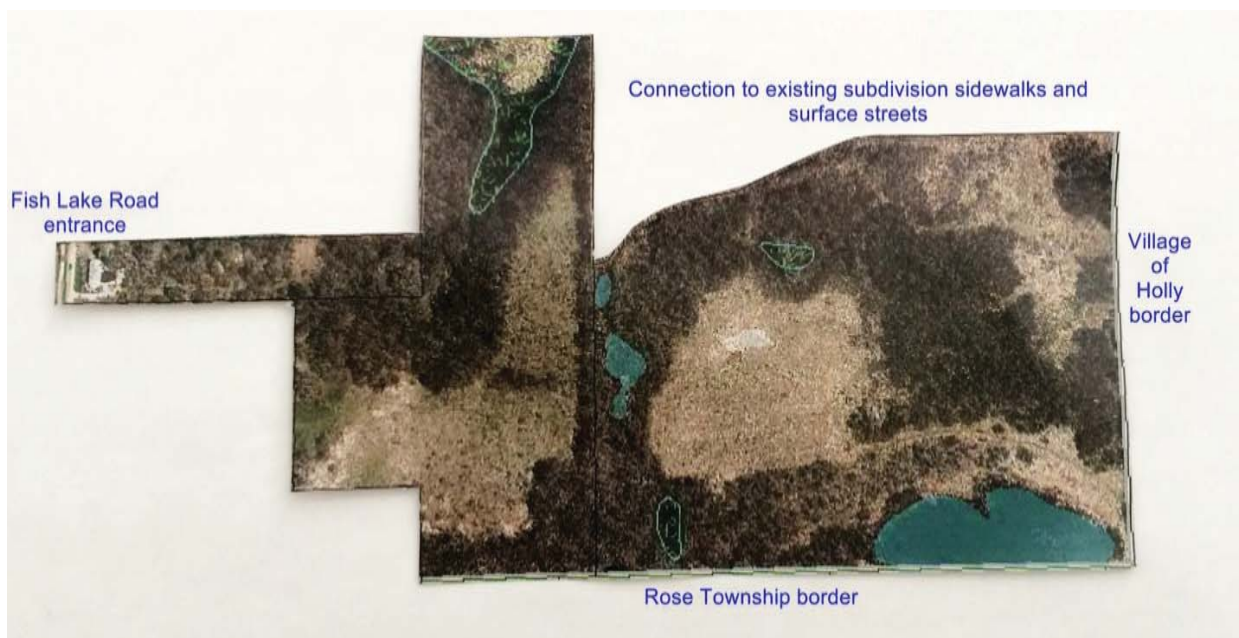
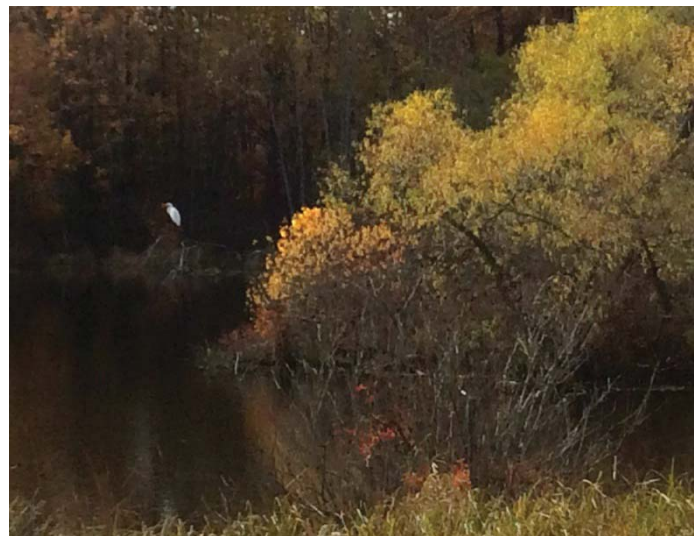
This 80-acre property is under the control of the Holly Township Board of Trustees as a part of a friendly settlement of a land development lawsuit. It sits on the northeast corner of the township in Section 01. The surrounding property is densely populated by a new condominium development. The Holly Township Board of Trustees has the option of conveying the property to a land conservancy or retaining the parcel. The property can only be used for passive activities like hiking and picnicking and includes a mix of wetland and deciduous forest.

## BOUNDARY MEADOWS

Through two separate land purchases Holly Township has obtained this newly acquired 49 acres of land on the south boundary of the township. This property borders the Village of Holly on the east and Rose Township on the south. There is one house on the property that we will ultimately remove. Otherwise the property is undeveloped and was formerly rolling farmland. It does include some water resources on a pond and has a small apple orchard.

It is lovely to walk through and is filled with wildlife, particularly birds around the pond.

Holly Township has already expressed its dedication in this document to a hiking/biking system of trails within the township. This property is particularly well suited to become a southernmost trailhead for the trail system and its purchase confirms the seriousness of the Township's obligation to trail planning and construction. With the evolving collaborative relationships with the municipalities that surround this property we collectively remain committed to the success of this plan.



# Private Open Space

Along with the private recreational facilities listed above, Holly Township through the planning process and the Zoning Master Plan, continues to require private open space in all new residential developments to further preserve natural features and provide opportunities for passive leisure pursuits and aesthetic appeal to new neighborhoods. The recent Riverside and Woodfield developments have been built with multiple neighborhood parks. All future developments will be held to the same high standards.

# Barrier Free Accessibility of Township Parks and Recreational Facilities

The passage of the American Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) requires all areas of public service, including parks and other recreation facilities, to have barrier-free accessibility. An evaluation of community parks and recreation facilities has been conducted as part of the inventory. In accordance with the MDNR standards, facilities were evaluated to determine if a person with any of the following criteria can safely and independently access and use the park or facility:

- Has limited sight or is blind
- Uses a wheelchair
- Has a hearing impairment or is deaf
- Uses a walking aid
- Has a mental impairment

A five-point evaluation system was used to rank each facility’s accessibility. The system is described below and the accessibility rankings can be found in Table 14 – Accessibility of Township Recreation Facilities.

**Level 1.** The park is not accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. The site includes little paved areas and the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.

**Level 2.** The park is somewhat accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Either the parking area or pathways are paved, but not both. Many of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are not easily accessible.

**Level 3.** The park is mostly accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Most of the parking areas and pathways are paved, and some of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are accessible but may not be completely barrier-free.

**Level 4.** The park is completely accessible to people with a broad range of physical disabilities. Parking areas and pathways are paved, and most of the facilities such as play equipment or picnic areas are easily accessible.

**Level 5.** The entire park was developed or renovated using the principles of universal design, a design approach which enables all environments to be usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation.

**Table 16:** Accessibility of Township Recreation Facilities

Recreation Facility	Accessibility Ranking
Holly Heritage Farm Area	2
Shiawassee Pathways	3
Woodfield Preserves	1
Boundary Meadows	1

# Comparison to State and National Standards

As required by the MDNR, Holly Township's park land and recreation facilities were compared to the minimum guidelines set forth by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA, 1983). Although the NRPA's guidelines were set over 30 years ago, the MDNR still recommends their use as standards to establish minimum community needs in terms of land area and number of facilities.

Caution must be exercised in the interpretation of these results given that these guidelines were set over three decades ago and may not represent current popular activities and trends. Each community, based on its own particular resources and resident preferences and demands, are encouraged to establish its needs and requirements so that the plan best suits the community's desires for recreation. Recreation needs are often better documented through public input rather than relying only on the national guidelines. The NRPA guidelines and the MDNR standards were considered in the development of the Action Plan but not weighted heavily.

Table 14 and the following discussion compares the amount of park land as it relates to the conditions of the Township and the MDNR standards based on the Holly Township 2010 Census population of 5,276. Park classifications used by the MDNR are defined as follows:

- **Mini-Park.** Mini-parks are typically specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as small children or senior citizens. As such, mini-parks are ideally located within a neighborhood or in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouses, or housing for the elderly. The service area of a mini-park is a one-quarter (1/4) mile radius and the typical mini-park size is 2,500 sq. ft. to 1 acre in size.
- **Neighborhood Park.** Neighborhood parks remain the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Neighborhood parks focus more on informal active and passive recreation, such as field games, court games, playground equipment, picnicking, etc. The service area of a neighborhood park is a one-quarter (1/4) to one-half (1/2) mile radius and the typical neighborhood park size is 5-10 acres. Holly's local schools are classified as neighborhood parks and provide the recommended acreage of this type of park.
- **Community Park.** Community parks serve a broader population than a neighborhood park. The focus of a community park is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. The service area of a community park is a one-half (1/2) to 3 mile radius and the typical community park size is 30-50 acres. The community parks operated by Holly Township are the Holly Township Park and Beach and Sorensen Park.
- **Regional Park.** Regional facilities offer a variety of active and passive recreational opportunities that help meet the need for local parks and balance the deficiencies in facilities. Regional parks are typically located on sites with unique natural features that are particularly suited for outdoor recreation, such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitats, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail use. Regional Parks include Holly State Recreation Area and Seven Lakes Recreation Area.
- **School Park.** School properties can fulfill the requirements for other classes of parks such as neighborhood, community, sports complex, and special use. The service area and size of a school park varies based on location of the school and community facilities and needs.

**Table 14:** MDNR Public Park Land Acreage Analysis

Park Classifications	NRPA Guideline Minimum Acres <sup>1</sup>	Recommended Acreage for Holly Twp <sup>2</sup>	Public Holly Twp. Parks	Public Regional Parks	Surplus (Deficiency)
Mini-Parks	0.25	1.32	0	0	-1.32
Neighborhood Parks	1.0	5.28	25	0	19.72+
Community Parks	5	26.38	164	0	137.62 +
Subtotal	6.25	32.98	189	0.0	156.02 +
Regional Parks	10	52.76	0	9,261	9,209+
<b>Total</b>	—	<b>85.74</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>9,261</b>	<b>9,364.26 +</b>

1 Per 1,000 Residents.

2 Based on Holly Township 2010 Census population count of 5,276.

It should be noted that this analysis includes the property controlled by the Holly Township Board of Trustees and the two State parks located in the Township. Residents have access to additional parks and recreation opportunities through the Village of Holly, Holly School Districts, Holly Township Parks and Recreation Commission and nearby Oakland County Parks.

# Parks and Recreation Grant History

According to the MDNR, Holly Township has been the recipient of 3 recreation grants in the past. These grants are described in Table 16 below:

**Table 15:** MDNR Recreation Grant History

Park	Year	Project Number	Grant Amount	Project Description
Holly Township Park #2	1989	BF89-306	\$48,685	Construct two ballfields
Holly Township Park #2	1990	BF90-032	\$30,000	Construct nature trail and picnic area as Phase II development of township park.
Holly Nature Center	1996	TF96-036	\$180,950	Development of a nature center and the access road and parking in a township park to provide environmental education programming to the general public.





# Description of the Planning Process

# 4

Parks and recreation opportunities are an important factor in creating a high quality of life. Further, in order to be eligible for several major sources of funding for recreation improvements –both private and public – Holly Township must have a parks and recreation master plan approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) covering a five year time period.

The Holly Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed with input from the community at large via a community survey, public hearings held by the Planning Commission and Township Board of Trustees, and a visioning workshop. Major steps in the development of the Parks and Recreation Plan were as follows:

- **Community Profile.** Compiled a community description looking at the access, physical characteristics, and demographics of Holly Township. An inventory of existing recreational facilities was conducted. This created a picture of who Holly Township is.
- **Community Input.** A questionnaire was developed to gauge the needs and expectations of Holly Township residents. The questionnaire was included in a sample of summer tax bills in June, 2013.
- **Initial Draft Review.** Public hearings were held at the December 2013 Planning Commission meeting and on July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014 with the Holly Township Board. Following the public hearings, the Township acquired additional property that required the draft Holly Township Parks and Recreation Master Plan to be updated.
- **Community Visioning Workshop.** The Township held a Visioning Workshop in February 2016. Various groups were invited to attend including representatives from churches, schools neighborhood associations, homebuilders associations, Greenway groups, county representatives and Township stakeholders. In addition, flyers were distributed and a public notice placed in the newspaper to invite residents. Approximately 35 people attended the workshop, including citizens, Township officials, and others interested in future planning for the Township. The Workshop started with a brief overview of the evening’s agenda and a presentation of the role of Visioning in the Parks and Recreation Master Planning process. After this introduction, participants were separated and assigned a small group, each of which addressed the following topics: 1) Overall Community Character, 2) Land Use and Infrastructure, and 3) Natural Resource Preservation and Recreation. The small groups, entitled “break out groups”, were facilitated by members of the Township’s Planning Commission. The facilitators generated and guided the discussion, and recorded vision statements.
- **Updated Draft of Plan Issued for Review.** A Public Hearing and Review by the Holly Township Planning Commission was held on January 3, 2017 to begin the 30-day review and comment period.
- **Meeting of the Planning Commission.** A public hearing was held on February 7, 2017 to review the Holly Township Parks and Recreation Plan and receive public comment.
- **Meeting of the Township Board of Trustees.** The meeting was held on February 15, 2017 to hold a public hearing on the Parks and Recreation Plan and to adopt the Plan.

A summary of the community survey can be found in the Appendix of this document.



Administration  
and Funding

5

# Overview

Holly Township is administered by an elected five (5) member township board and operates on one (1) mill of taxpayer funding. Holly Township has a part-time Supervisor, a full-time Clerk and Treasurer, and two (2) trustees. The in-office staff includes a full-time deputy clerk, a full-time deputy treasurer, and a part-time code enforcement officer. The Holly Township Board of Trustees contracts all assessing and building inspections. Each elected official has statutory duties that they perform independently, although there is great collegiality and cordiality within the office. All five (5) board members have an equal vote on all matters.

Holly Township was chosen by Detroit News as the “most effective” government in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties.

## **BUDGET AND CURRENT FUNDING**

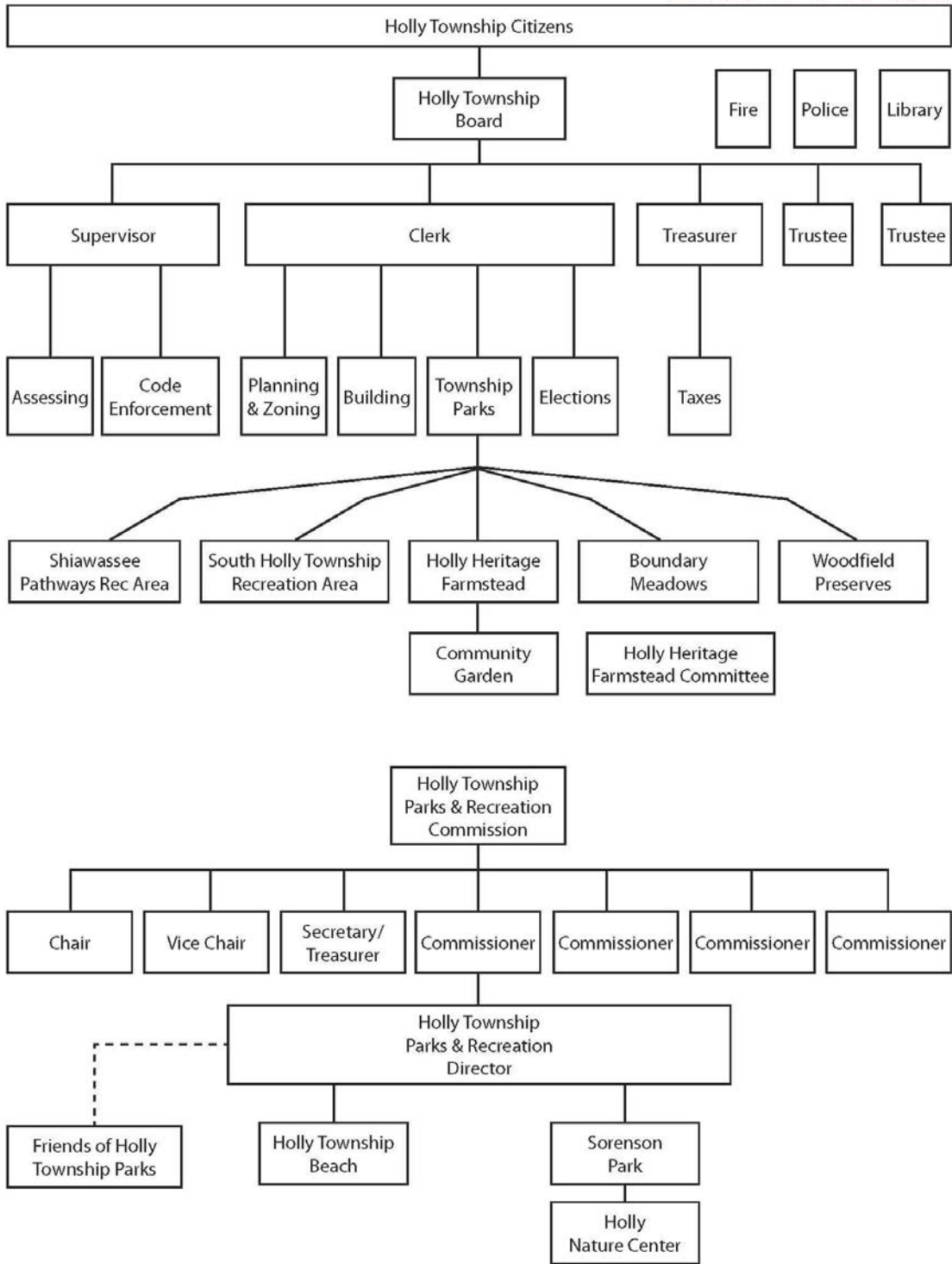
Holly Township’s finances have historically been well managed. Even through the most recent economic downturn, Holly Township continued to grow its fund balance. Although over 25% of the land in Holly Township is not taxed at the regular rate (state land, federal cemetery, or local park/school/government land), Holly Township remains committed to expanding recreational opportunities.

Recreational facilities itemized for Holly Township in this plan are under the direct supervision of the township board. There is no specific line item for recreation within the township budget as this is the first year of the plan. Expenses will be taken from the general fund and new considerations for recreational funding will be addressed during the next budget/fiscal year. The action plans described in this Master Plan will guide budget considerations. Approval of this Master Plan will enable Holly Township to apply for public and private grants to accomplish the goals and objectives.

The Holly Township Board of Trustees has chosen to provide additional recreational areas in the community where the need and public interest exists. Three of the four potential recreational areas were gifts to the township. Those who cherish the “Holly Township” lifestyle understand the value of public land and recreational opportunities and support this decision.

## **ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS**

Holly Township partners with volunteers for maintenance and programing at a number of the Township owned properties including the Holly Heritage Farmstead and the Shiawassee Pathways Recreation Area. Volunteers gather to clean these properties and hold events to educate the public on the history and nature of Holly Township.





# 6

## Goals and Objectives



## GUIDING PRINCIPALS

The following guiding principles were used for developing the goals:

- To insist on a community-wide attention to quality recreational facilities and user experience
- To enhance existing parks and facilities and to create new opportunities
- To expand the existing park system within finite and purposeful parameters
- To protect the natural beauty of Holly Township
- To provide health and wellness opportunities and improve quality of life
- To provide safe places for children and families to play
- To develop recreational areas in collaboration with community partners

## OVERALL GOALS

Goals become irrelevant if they are unobtainable. These goals are guidelines that must be referenced as Holly Township explores the new mission of becoming recreation providers. Each overall goal does not stand alone. They must be considered en masse to create the basis of effective decision making.

As Holly Township expands and develops the existing recreational parcels, or adds others, this will become the standard that future decisions must be evaluated against. These goals reflect the community input that was received and are consistent with the capabilities of the Holly Township government and the desires of its citizens.

### ***GOAL: MEET THE NEEDS OF THE AGING POPULATION AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVE RECREATION***

- Review the myriad physical challenges of the aging demographic; issues like low vision, hearing loss, and mobility challenges.
- Use inclusive design and visually connect spaces for people with hearing and visual impairments.
- Pay attention to the small details that provide additional comfort to those with a disability. Acknowledge that the greatest source of disability in America today is not caused by an accident, but aging.

### ***GOAL: PROVIDE RECREATIONAL AREAS THAT ARE OF THE HIGHEST QUALITY, PRESERVE OPEN SPACE AND HISTORY AND ARE WELL MAINTAINED AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS***

- Ensure that each decision reflects that it is the best we can do using local history elements in design and improvements; we are “Historic Holly”.
- Update areas as needed by using a constant review process against these goals, implement standardization of signage, trails, benches and waste receptacles.
- Analyze and improve accessibility constantly while maintaining, improving and fully utilizing existing areas before expansion.



**GOAL: CREATE A HEALTHY COMMUNITY BY PROVIDING ELEMENTS THAT PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE ACTIVE LIFESTYLES**

- Increase non-motorized transportation connections between parks, historical sites, schools, business districts and neighborhoods as reflected in our survey.
- Develop programs that promote walking, running and cycling activities.
- Collaborate with the Holly Schools, the Village of Holly of the other public and private park providers
- Include and consider the ages of all users. “Start em’ young and keep em’ busy” is a good philosophy.
- Promote and cross-promote all recreational opportunities

**GOAL: CREATE NON-MOTORIZED PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ALL RECREATIONAL PROVIDERS**

- Use Shiawassee River trail concept to create water and walking trail connections
- Park to park trails will encourage use of both trails and parks
- Coordinate with the Road Commission of Oakland County (RCOC), the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and other non-park providers
- Recreational inventory showed myriad providers, both public and private.

**GOAL: CREATE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT PROMOTE OUR BUSINESS DISTRICTS**

- Make connections with business owners to help them to help us.
- Quantify recreational financial impact on community.
- Coordinate with business friendly groups (DDA, Chamber, Kiwanis) to cross promote.
- Don’t just ask them for donations, include business owners in decision making.

**GOAL: CREATE REALISTIC FUNDING SOURCES FOR MASTER PLAN GOALS**

- Capital improvements will continue to be necessary, donations and grants are realistic options. We must assure that we are knowledgeable of and take advantage of all opportunities.
- Recognize these new responsibilities during budget hearings.
- A cost recovery policy must be written and implemented.
- Be resilient if denied. Try, try again.
- There must be full cost recovery for private events. Fees need to be evaluated to ensure costs are reflective of the value of the experience. Costs include preparation for the event, utilities, cost of cleanup and any repairs.
- Look for partners in and outside of Holly.

**GOAL: USE EXISTING COMMUNITY RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY AND DEMONSTRATE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- Identify, pursue, nurture and implement opportunities for collaboration.
- Evaluate cost effective opportunities for residents.
- Share desired services and facilities while minimizing duplication and competition.
- Continue to work with volunteer groups for operation of facilities when practical.
- Use newsletters and other communications to disseminate factual information.

**GOAL: RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES NEED TO BE AVAILABLE IN ALL SEASONS**

- Many summer activities can still be enjoyed year around, celebrate them together. Winter isn't just cold-Snow and ice can be a delight!
- Assure that as we develop plans and facilities that they are used throughout the year.
- Winter happens in Michigan; help our citizens embrace it and play outdoors in every season
- There are many benefits to winter recreation that must be supported and recognized.

**GOAL: WORK WITH OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS TO ADD HOLLY OAKS PARK**

- Meet with Oakland County Parks to express interest.
- Be certain that the park does not compete with existing facilities.
- Get community input and support.
- Coordinate with Village of Holly government and officials, and Holly Township Park Commission.
- Dream big and be creative.
- Look for cooperative funding opportunities.
- Assure that our park is different in both concept and execution from those around us.
- Consider "linear" park concept for land and water trails.

# 7

## Action Plans



By using the comprehensive planning process of trend identification, open houses, public meetings and surveys, Holly Township has established a framework for the Action Plan. The Action Plan describes site specific recommendations for enhancements and improvements to our recreational areas that are consistent with our goals, capabilities and principles. The timing of these projects may be influenced, altered or eliminated depending on economic conditions, available funding and/or grant awards. The spirit and intent of the project priorities are well defined and well intentioned.

Along with the success of recreational properties, Holly Township residents and the financial advantages to property owners, there is a significant economic impact on the community by visitors who travel to the area to use its many attractions. This awareness should result in the allocation of resources to market, manage and maintain these areas at the highest possible level.

Given several conditions as detailed below and the citizen feedback, the most appropriate role for Holly Township is to serve as a facilitator, and not a direct provider, of programs and services.

Those conditions include the following:

1. The willingness of others to organize and produce programs and services including the well-staffed Holly Township Park Commission and our large and well organized volunteer groups. We wish to provide the space and resources for special events, programs and services provided by others.
2. Continuing to provide the special niche recreational areas that are otherwise not available to our residents. We must continue to search for those opportunities that both fulfill a need, but also add value. Competing with other area parks, both public and private, serves no purpose to the community as a whole. Our intent is to complement existing facilities.
3. Holly Township is relatively recent park provider. Our oldest township owned recreation area has been under our management for less than one (1) year. While we continue to build the knowledge and skills to move forward we must remain deliberate in our actions.
4. The rural nature of the Townships four (4) properties makes them ideal for activities which are self-directed such as running, walking, gardening and spending time outdoors. Connecting them with trails and shared-use paths would add great value.
5. Resources should be allocated at the highest possible level to ensure that core programs and services are produced at a level which builds on their ability to attract users from other communities, which results in a positive economic impact on the community and creates a “pride in place” for our residents.

Of the four Holly Township owned properties discussed in this Master Plan document one (1) is an established park, although new to us, and one other has begun development as recreational area and is ready for expansion and improvement. The following are specific to the listed properties.



# Action Plan 1

## HOLLY HERITAGE FARMSTEAD-

Holly Township continues to improve the facilities on this parcel. The exterior work on the North house has been completed (new roof and paint). The barn exterior has also been painted and the new roof is on. The barn foundation and basement, a former milking parlor and livestock area, will require substantial work. The Holly Township Board of Trustees applied for private grants in 2013 to perform some of the barn foundation repairs.

The South house and its two accessory buildings will be beginning their exterior renovations in 2014 and the Holly Township Board of Trustees is expected to allocate funds for the next fiscal year to complete some of those improvements. The Holly Heritage Farmstead also provides the only public use space on the Swartz Creek, even though 6 miles of the river runs through Holly Township. The Farmstead Park, community gardens, and north field growing area have been so well received that we must turn citizens away. Big events such as “Plow Days” create congestion as display areas are competing with parking places.

## Barn Restoration

1

**Step 1:** The first project will be the reconstruction of the foundation. Both age and poor design caused the failure of the barn foundation on the west side. The new foundation work must be completed before we can move forward with any other work on the building. We have discovered that finding qualified barn restoration contractors in our immediate area is a tedious task. Central Michigan has provided us with contractors skilled in this work. The barn will be jacked up and the front ramp removed. A new stone foundation, matching the original, will be installed and the barn will be reset on the repaired foundation. The ramp will then be reconstructed.

Holly Township has discussed the foundation project with Barn Works Inc., visited the barn and is fully capable of completing the work.

**Expected Cost:** \$20,850

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/ or Donations

**Step 2:** Straighten the barn on each axis. High winds, heavy hay loads, the collapsing foundation and water infiltration have all caused to barn to sit upon its foundation in a slightly twisted and leaning manner. Although at this time this is not a fatal problem for the building it will only worsen with time and ultimately could cause the building to shift off of the foundation. We have found an individual that understands barn dynamics and has the expertise to correct them. This work cannot be done until the foundation deficiencies (step 1 above) are addressed. There are also beams and braces within the barn structure that may require repair and/or replacement.

**Expected Cost:** To be determined

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/ or Donations

**Step 3:** Replace all of the flooring in the barn. We have conceptualized a unique approach to the performance of this goal.

There are dead and dying Ash trees throughout Holly Township. Many were majestic monarch trees that towered over the surrounding land. We are considering a program where we would harvest the lumber from the dead Holly Township Ash trees. We would be able to provide the tree owner with a tax deduction. The tops and branches would be left for the property owner to use as firewood. If they did not need the wood we are certain there are others we could find that would be glad to cut and load the firewood. The trunk sections would be cut into lumber and kiln dried and then cut in to flooring. We are aware of a mill in Lapeer that performs this service for a very reasonable price.

All of the replacement flooring in the historic barn would have come from Holly Township trees, as did the entire barn when it was originally built. This concept would create increased citizen involvement in the barn, bring positive attention to the project and would be done in a sustainable manner. We hope this becomes an attractive answer to a future concern.

**Expected Cost:** To be determined

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

## Complete Exterior Restoration of the 1850'S Greek Revival South House

2

**Step 1:** There are 9 layers of roofing on the house, the original cedar roof covered by multiple asphalt shingles. It would appear that the 150 year old house has never had a layer of roofing removed, they have just been added onto as needed. This is creating a significant structural load on the framing, the home still has its original roof boards that have gaps to allow the original cedar shingles to breathe. The entire house needs to be stripped of shingles, re-decked, properly flashed and reroofed. There are many Holly area contractors capable of performing this work.

**Expected Cost:** \$15,000.00

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

**Step 2:** The outside of the home has been covered with a fiberboard siding. Where inspected the clapboards underneath appear to be in reasonable shape, the siding may have been the result of the owners avoiding the task of painting. Most of the original trim is still on the house however some needs replacement. Much of the siding can be removed from the ground allowing us to use volunteer labor to remove it. Currently the extent to which the clapboards will need replacement is unknown though all of the clapboards and trim will also have to be sanded, primed and painted.

**Expected cost:** Unknown until proper assessment can be completed.

**Step 3:** The back of the home is in very poor shape and was converted into a garage. It is built in a post and beam type construction. This area could be converted into an interpretive center to help explain the mission of the park and create an introduction to its history.

**Expected cost:** \$10,000.00

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

## Expand Farmstead Property

3

**Step 1:** There is an approximately 6 acre piece of landlocked property on the northeast side of the Holly Heritage Farmstead with 1200 feet frontage on the Swartz Creek. This property is presently only accessible from the Farmstead property. The property is primarily floodplain and would make a sensible and needed addition to the Farmstead.

**Expected Cost:** Would need appraisal at time of purchase

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

## Create Farmstead loop trail

4

**Step 1:** The present park configuration allows for a one mile perimeter trail that would be self-contained and safe for walking and be consistent with the Township goals. It would pass alongside three historic buildings and beside the only public space on the Swartz Creek before going around a wetland on the north property line. If the park were to expand with the property purchase mentioned above there would be additional water frontage to walk along. Most of the trail route is clear of trees. The primary cost is engineering the trail and its construction. It would be a lovely and well used asset.

**Expected Cost:** To be determined

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

Beyond those specific needs addressed above the following must remain on any list of future plans and improvements for the Farmstead.

1. Continued maintenance of historic buildings
2. Restore the outhouse and chicken coop near the South House
3. Provide signage, trash receptacles, and benches
4. Make park handicapped accessible
5. Create dedicated parking area
6. Add permanent bathroom facilities
7. Install energy efficient heat and lighting to allow year around use
8. Restore windows on both houses
9. Expand community/food bank garden as needed
10. Develop on-site farmers market



# Action Plan 2

## SHIAWASSEE PATHWAYS

This 20 acre property is a pathway crossing where a biking/hiking trail intersects the Shiawassee River. Construction of a walking/biking trail system has begun with the hope to connect the Village of Holly, the Adelpian Junior Academy, the Holly Academy Charter School and Patterson Elementary School with Seven Lakes State Park. There is also a “water trail” for canoeists and kayakers on the Shiawassee River between the Village of Holly and the City of Fenton; they converge in this beautiful spot. Holly Township, in part with a Kodak Greenways Grant and in association with the Headwaters Trail group, rebuilt the pathway bridge across the Shiawassee River.

In 2013 the Holly Township Board of Trustees applied for a private grant to improve the existing trail. The Township would like to have a trail crossing and be able to expand the area to have “trails within trails”. The Village of Holly was gifted an additional 16.5 acres of adjacent land; their property has an additional 1000 feet of Shiawassee River frontage. The Township of Holly would like to collaborate with the Village of Holly to expand the trail system on their property and share a recreational resource.

### Improve Existing Trail

1

**Step 1:** There is approximately 1000 feet of existing trail on the parcel. It has never been properly topped with gravel or blacktop and has overgrown with weeds since its establishment. The bridge crossing the Shiawassee River splits the property and trail into two halves, from the north and south property lines the trail will have to be vehicle accessible for bridge maintenance and access for emergency and fire vehicles. Additionally, the Village of Holly has underground water and sewer infrastructure crossing the property. The bridge is not meant to carry any vehicular traffic and has boulder bollards for protection.

**Cost:** To be determined

**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations





Looking west down the Shiawassee River from the Shiawassee Pathways

### Engineer and Finish South Trail Loop

2

**Step 1:** On the southeast side of the property the Village of Holly owns the adjacent 16.5 acres. With cooperation the Township and the Village of Holly could jointly build an additional 2500 feet of trail of which 1000 feet would be running alongside the Shiawassee River. This south loop trail would then cut through a combined field and forest area to return to the main trail.

**Cost:** To be determined  
**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

### Create Multi-Use Play Area

3

**Step 1:** On the north side of this property is a 2.5 acre area that is flat and treeless. This land was used by the developer that donated the land to us for a spoils area during site excavation. It was filled, leveled and replanted before the Township received possession. This parcel is easily accessible and sits on the border of the Village of Holly and a large subdivision, the remainder of the Shiawassee Pathways property is untouched and in its natural state. Many recreational activities require a level area and when used in combination with the above improvements makes this area a multi-use property close to thousands of residents. It will need to re-graded and replanted as necessary. A fence may be needed to keep out vehicles and create a safer play environment for users. This will establish the area for multiple recreational uses.

**Cost:** To be determined  
**Potential Sources of Funding:** Grants, Township Funds, and/or Donations

Beyond those specific needs addressed above the following must remain on any list of future plans and improvements for the Shiawassee Pathways Recreation Area.

1. Create dedicated parking area for walking trail users and kayakers/canoists
2. Provide signage, trash receptacles and benches
3. A picnic area would be well used on this property

# Action Plan 3

## PARK TO PARK WALKING/BIKING TRAIL

This is a concept based upon citizen input. The citizen survey made non-motorized trails a clear high priority and a park to park trail seems to be to number one recreational opportunity wanted by Holly Township citizens. It will be a massive undertaking. One proposed route would connect all of the schools (public, private and charter), Sorensen Park (Holly Township Park Commission), Holly Recreation Area and Seven Lakes State Park (State of Michigan), Rose Hill Center (private), Great Lakes Veteran Cemetery (Federal government), Holly Heritage Farmstead and Shiawassee Pathways (Holly Township Board of Trustees) with the Village of Holly and its businesses.

This concept would also be done in combination with the Shiawassee Water Trail that begins in Holly and being developed through to Lake Huron.

1. Determine funding sources for park to park trail
2. Contact all park providers to begin collaboration efforts
3. Begin public input process for this specific item-letters, public meetings and open houses
4. Combine with water trails to make Holly a multi-trail type community
5. Map out possible routes that show Holly's best side
6. Hire engineering firm
7. Work with Road Commission for Oakland County for road crossings and permits
8. Develop plan for affected property owners on the connections between parks
9. Gain public acceptance and support by expressing positives for property owners and community
10. Develop Fish Lake Road Canoe access area with dedicated put in/out area and parking
11. Purchase land on west side of Holly Township for take-out point for kayak/canoes
12. Advocate for "our" Holly Oaks County Park- a longitudinal park.

**Potential Sources of Funding: Grants, Township Funds, and/ or Donations**

# Appendix



## **CONTENTS:**

- Survey to Determine Public Input
- Notice of Availability of Draft Plan for Public Review and Comment
- Notice for Public Meeting
- Minutes of Public Meeting
- Resolution of Adoption by Holly Township Planning Commission
- Resolution of Adoption by Holly Township Board
- Post-Completion Self-Certification Report
- 2004 Oakland County Potential Conservation / Natural Areas Report

# June 2013 Community Survey

A questionnaire was developed to help us gauge the needs as expressed by our citizens. Three hundred total surveys were created; two hundred and fifty were randomly placed in summer tax bills (June 2013) for township residents. The additional fifty copies were made available in the office and at some public meetings.

Of the 300 created 49 were returned. The respondents were primarily taxpayers as those are the citizens that most commonly have contact with the township office and attend township meetings. All were returned anonymously. Those 49 represented 102 residents. The male/female split was nearly even at 50 males and 52 females. The ages of the respondent residents reflected an aging population.

10 or younger	12%
10-17	1.5%
18-29	6%
30-49	24.5%
50-65	28.8%
65+	27.2%

Although all are township residents, from the households that responded 29% lived in the Village of Holly and 71% lived in the surrounding township.

## **QUESTION: Which initiatives should Holly Township prioritize for future implementation? Check all that apply.**

*Percentages reflect survey responses*

1st	55.1%	Non-motorized trails
2nd	51.0%	Develop and improve existing facilities
3rd	34.6%	Develop more active recreation (canoeing, fishing, etc) opportunities
4th	32.6%	Develop more passive recreation (hiking, picnicking, etc) opportunities
5th	30.6%	Natural areas preservation
6th	28.5%	Develop more indoor recreation facilities (recreation center, active field complex, etc.)
7th	22.4%	Acquire waterfront land for water-based recreation
8th	20.4 %	Acquire land for future recreational development
9th	16.3%	Nature and historical programming
Other (please specify): NONE		

**QUESTION**

**If you checked non-motorized trails above, what initiatives should Holly Township be investing in as a priority? Check all that apply.**

*Percentages reflect survey responses-*

- 1st 81.4% A “park to park” bike and walking trail network
- 2nd 77.7% Improved trails in our parks
- 3rd 55.5% Nature trails
- 4th 29.6% Funding local trail projects that connect schools and neighborhoods
- 5th 14.8% Equestrian trails
- 5th 14.8% Mountain bike trails
- Other (please specify):NONE

**QUESTION**

**Indicate which of the following activities you or your family engage in. Check all that apply.**

- 18.3 % Baseball
- 18.3% Basketball
- 48.9% Bicycling – Road 4th
- 28.5% Bicycling - Mountain
- 46.9% Camping 5th-tie
- 42.8% Canoeing/Kayaking 7th
- 20.4% Children's Special Events
- 22.4% Cultural/Historical Programs
- 14.2% Dance
- 12.2% Day Camp
- 8.1% Dirt Biking/Jump Courses
- 8.1% Disabled Persons Programming
- 16.3% Disc Golf
- 20.4% Dog Park - Off Leash
- 44.8% Fishing 6th
- 22.4% Fitness Classes
- 14.2% Football
- 46.9% Gardening 5th-tie
- 10.2% Geocaching
- 28.5% Golfing
- 20.4% Health & Wellness Classes
- 59.1% Hiking/Walking 1st
- 14.2% Horseback Riding
- 30.6% Hunting
- 14.2% Ice Skating/Hockey
- 16.3% Natural Area Stewardship
- 26.5% Nature Programs
- 36.7% Picnicking 8th-tie
- 36.7% Playgrounds 8th-tie
- 22.4% Recreation Center
- 6.1% Rowing

28.5%	Running/Jogging	
20.4%	Roller Skating or Blading	
16.3%	School-based Programs	
18.3%	Senior Programs	
8.1%	Skateboarding	
14.2%	Skiing - Cross Country	
26.5%	Sledding	
8.1%	Soccer	
18.3%	Softball	
4.0%	Sports Tournaments	
51.0%	Swimming – Pool	3rd
55.1%	Swimming – Lake	2nd
16.3%	Tennis	
4.0%	Ultimate Frisbee	
12.2%	Volleyball	
14.2%	Volunteering	
32.6%	Water Park	
4.0%	None	
Other (please specify):		
2.0%	Snowmobiling	

**QUESTION**

**Within the past 12 months how often have you and your family used the recreational areas within Holly Township?**

*Some answered multiple times for multiple people which distorted the percentages-*

20.4%	Once or twice
18.3%	3-6 times
55.1%	More than 6 times
22.4%	Haven't visited within the past year



## COMMENTS

*Some surveys were returned with written comments.*

"Snowmobiles and ATV specific trails. Nothing else allowed-example non-motorized- and no hunting in these designated areas."

"The completion of a Linden, Fenton, Holly bike/hike path to include 7 Lakes S.P. +other public areas would be a nice addition."

"I feel going into great debt is not good at this time"

"We need more opportunities for SENIORS!! We need something like the Loose Center in Linden. Our seniors have little opportunities such as transportation or activities unless one lives at the Woodlands. It is very sad that we no longer have a Senior Center & Bus!!! Help!!!"

"We would very much like to see the present Township properties developed for use over the acquisition of properties for future development. A real draw would be multi-use trails similar to those near Milford/Kensington Metropark areas in order to let families walk/bike locally over having to drive to other areas for trails"

"We use Holly Rec, Seven Lakes & Holdridge Trail which I believe are all state land. I'm sure you are looking at minimizing duplication of what is already being offered through State of Mi."

"I feel it would benefit Holly Twp to add sidewalks. I walk a lot where I live and every time a car comes by it scares me. I also bike and see a lot of others biking and it's dangerous without sidewalks"

"Develop Fish Lake Landing on the Shiawassee"

"Complete Streets" should be considered on any road improvements. Dark Skies ordinance so we can see the sky!"

"Pave Tinsman Rd. (Fish Lake to Petts) or Eddy Lake to Iroquois. Based on traffic Oakland may pay (need to submit)."

"Please, Please consider in investing in a community rec & ed center- the Holly High pool is insufficient for families w/ young children"

"Weed management of Bush Lake-Clean up the drain area on south side/north side Bush Lake weir. Canoe take out at Fish Lake Road. Upgrade Bush Lake boat launch-safety getting boats in and out of water"

"I would like to ride my snowmachine in the village (responsibly)"

"I feel special interest groups have a much louder voice than the ordinary citizen. The facilities available should be conducive to everyone's use, not a specific age or group"

"Fix all the sidewalks so they are safe to walk. Could be a combined effort / city."

"Make pool more available to older people offering water aerobics, arthritis activities in pool etc. year round!"



*Holly Heritage Farmstead Barn after heavy snow*

**What the survey results indicate:**

1. Although more than 50% of the survey respondents were over the age of 50 there was no drop off in the number of activities listed between the age groups. Our residents continue to use and enjoy recreational opportunities throughout their lifetimes. This is a great sign for the well-being of our active “senior” population.
2. A pleasant finding is that 55% of the respondents have used recreational areas within Holly Township more than 6 times in the past year. More than 75% used them at some time during the past year. Those figures suggest that the Holly Township lifestyle includes physical activity in the township and confirms the value placed on those resources.
3. Outdoor recreation seems to be the clear choice of our respondents with the development of additional indoor recreation coming in 6th place in our initiatives question.
4. Non-motorized trails were an overwhelming first place with 55% approval. Of that 55% that wanted more non-motorized trails 81% wanted a park to park trail. This is certainly in part because of the long distance one must drive from Holly to use an improved walking/biking trail. Most Holly Township paved roads are very busy and the remaining dirt roads are not conducive to comfortable walking/biking activities.
5. There is certainly room for improvement within our existing parks for better trails as 77% made that a priority. The same has been indicated to us in public comments.
6. Improvement of our existing facilities was 2nd with 51% and this Master Plan process has us moving forward with some of those improvements.
7. When we asked what activity they engage in hiking/walking was first with 59% support. Fourth place was road bike riding with 48% support which remains consistent with the request for further trail improvements.
8. Second and third place were swimming activities, both indoors (51%) and outdoors (55%). There are 34 lakes in Holly Township so those answers are not surprising (fishing was sixth place with 44%). However, when asked if we should acquire additional land for water-based activities only 22% answered in the affirmative which indicates those needs are being met at this time.



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