Introduction
The purpose of this Parks and Recreation Plan is to inventory existing recreational opportunities and facilities available to residents of Lenawee County, identify problems and future needs, and establish a plan which addresses identified problems and assures adequate recreational services and facilities in a programmed systematic manner for both the present and expected future population. The plan is intended to be a policy guide for Lenawee County officials in developing efficient recreational services and facilities.

This recreation plan evaluates the comprehensive recreational needs of the residents of Lenawee County for playgrounds, neighborhood and community parks, regional parks, and recreational opportunities; and prescribes a plan that accommodates and fulfills these needs.

The Lenawee County Parks and Recreation Commission is responsible for development of this plan with the assistance of Region 2 Planning Commission staff acting as consultant to the Commission. The Commission assisted in the inventory of existing recreational facilities and programs and provided invaluable assistance in plan preparation and policy recommendations. The Commission consists of five members representing the County Board of Commissioners and the general public. Two members of the Parks Commission are also members of the Lenawee County Planning Commission.

It is appropriate that the plan is periodically reevaluated to ensure an up-to-date document that meets the needs and desires of Lenawee County. Recommended procedures for reevaluation of the Plan shall be that the Parks and Recreation Commission reevaluate the contents annually, particularly considering whether the goals and objectives are being met, and that the five-year short-range plan is kept current.

The 2020-2024 edition of the Lenawee County Parks and Recreation Plan was developed in accordance with the Guidelines for the “MDNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Parks and Recreation” as revised by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in November 2018.
Lenawee County

Administrative Structure

Legal Administrative Structure
Under the present system, as outlined in P.A. 156 of 1917, the Recreation and Playgrounds Act, the County Board of Commissioners created the Lenawee County Parks and Recreation Commission which consists of five members. This Commission is responsible for planning, development, preservation, administration, maintenance, and operation of parks and recreation facilities. Thus, the Commission, whose sole responsibility is parks and recreation, can coordinate decisions and programs on a county level as well as make contractual arrangements and coordinate with local units of government for the development and maintenance of park lands and recreational facilities in communities and/or neighborhoods across the county.

The following table illustrates the administrative structure for county park development and recreation planning:

The County Parks and Recreation Commission’s personnel structure consists of part-time seasonal employees, caretakers, and volunteers. Lenawee County does not employ a full-time parks director. Rather, the parks and recreation program is under the supervision of the County Administrator. The Parks and Recreation Commission is comprised of five (5) members; four County Board of Commissioners and one at-large member.

Funding
A successful recreation program usually relies on many sources of revenue such as general tax dollars, grants, revenue sharing funds, donations, crowdfunding, fundraisers, as well as gifts from citizens. Annual parks revenues in Lenawee County between 2014 and 2018 averaged $42,000. That average includes both state and federal grants, rents, contributions, and donations, as well as other miscellaneous revenues including an annual appropriation from the County’s general fund.
Lenawee County

Lenawee County parks expenditures include both personnel and non-personnel expenses. Annual expenditures between 2014 and 2018 averaged almost $36,000. Parks and recreation funds have been utilized primarily for maintenance and upkeep of the county’s six park facilities. The largest expenditure categories are grounds upkeep and building repairs and maintenance. Having revenues in excess of expenditures has allowed Lenawee County parks to create a small fund reserve that can be used for emergency repairs or a larger park improvement.

![Graph #1-2](image)

Parks Revenue & Expenses

Community Description

Lenawee County is located in southeastern Lower Michigan south of the I-94 corridor between Detroit and Chicago. Nearby urban areas include Toledo, Ann Arbor, and Jackson (see Map 1-1).

Lenawee County is characterized by an urban corridor extending from the City of Adrian to the Village of Clinton. In addition to this urbanized area, there are 10 other cities and villages in the County (see Map 1-2). The Clinton-Tecumseh-Adrian (C-T-A) Urbanizing Corridor includes the townships of Adrian, Clinton, Madison, Raisin, and Tecumseh; the Village of Clinton; and the cities of Adrian and Tecumseh. According to 2017 population estimates, 56,583 people live in the Corridor, accounting for 58% of the County’s population. The Irish Hills-Devils Lake (IH-DL) Recreational Area includes the villages of Addison, Cement City, and Onsted and the townships of Cambridge, Rollin, Rome, and Woodstock. According to population estimates, 13,926 people live in the Area, accounting for 14% of the County’s population. The remaining...
townships, villages, and cities comprise Rural Lenawee County. According to estimates, 27,806 people lived in Rural Lenawee County, accounting for 28% of the County’s population. (More detailed information regarding the demographics of Lenawee County can be found in Appendix A).

Land Use
The most current source of data on land use is the *Lenawee County Comprehensive Land Use Plan*, which was adopted in 2002. That plan calls for ‘Intensive Development’ within the Clinton-Tecumseh-Adrian (C-T-A) Urbanizing Corridor as well as within the vicinity of the cities of Hudson and Morenci and the villages of Addison, Blissfield, Britton, Deerfield, and Onsted. ‘Open Space Development/Recreation’ is called for around the lakes located in the northwestern corner of the County. ‘Low Intensity Development’ is proposed predominantly at points around the periphery of the C-T-A Urbanizing Corridor; the ‘Open Space Development/Recreation Area’; the City of Morenci; and the villages of Addison, Cement City, Clayton, and Onsted. ‘Intensive Agriculture’ is called for in the southeastern portion of Lenawee County from Macon Township in the north to the City of Morenci in the south. Greenways are proposed along major waterways. Large areas of parkland are also identified throughout Lenawee County (see Map 1-3).

Over half of the population in Lenawee County is concentrated in the C-T-A Urbanizing Corridor. Because public sewer facilities are available in much of this area, the Corridor contains some of Lenawee County’s most intensive concentrations of residential, commercial and industrial land uses. The incorporated villages and cities outside of the Corridor also contain high-density residential, commercial and industrial uses but not at the intensities found within the urban core. In some instances, the County has witnessed signs of urban sprawl as low-density residential development occurs in rural areas. The Irish Hills-Devils Lake (IH-DL) Recreational Area and the rural townships primarily contain agricultural and low-density residential land uses. However, there are small pockets of commercial and industrial use in these areas. Generally, future land use in Lenawee County is expected to retain the existing pattern of development. Most of the high-density residential, industrial and commercial development is likely to take place in the C-T-A Urbanizing Corridor and incorporated cities and villages. Low-density residential development is likely to take place in rural townships.

Topography
The topography of Lenawee County was determined by the movement of the continental glaciers. One element of topography is elevation which indicates the altitude of the land above sea level expressed in feet. When studying a relatively small area, such as Lenawee County, the actual measurements of elevation above sea level are not as important as the changes in these levels throughout the area. It is these changes in elevation that provide a feeling for the contour of the land as it rises and falls throughout the County.

The Thumb Upland, of which Lenawee County is a part, was formed as the glaciers moved south and retreated north across Michigan. This upland extends from the Ohio-Indiana line northeast to Huron County which is located at the tip of the Thumb of Lower Michigan and borders Saginaw Bay and Lake Huron. Lenawee County lies at the southern portion of this upland and has elevations ranging from about 700 feet above sea level in the extreme southeastern corner of the County, to an elevation of slightly
more than 1,200 feet in Woodstock Township. Elevations in the Irish Hills area of the County range from 1,000 feet to 1,200 feet above sea level.

Generally, the County is relatively flat to moderately hilly as a result of uneven deposition of glacial material. The portion of the county extending from Fairfield Township in a northeasterly direction to Macon Township is a gently sloping or nearly level plain. The portion of the County extending diagonally from Medina and Seneca townships to Clinton and Tecumseh townships is composed of rolling hills, while the northwestern portion becomes heavily rolling with a number of lakes and peat swamps. The most rugged topography occurs in the townships of Woodstock, Cambridge, Franklin, Rollin, and Rome. Prominent ridges also are located along the ancient beaches of the glacial lakes in the eastern area of the County.

**Water Features**

The largest watershed in Lenawee County is the River Raisin, which drains eastward into Monroe County and Lake Erie. It contains an area of approximately 595 square miles, or more than 78% of the County. The Bean Creek watershed, which drains into Ohio, contains approximately 135 square miles or about 18% of the County. A smaller area of about 24 square miles, approximately 3% of the County, mostly in Riga Township, drains in Monroe County and Ohio via manmade drainage ways and small creeks.

Surface water features can be classified in three major types in Lenawee County: 1) lakes, ponds, and reservoirs; 2) streams and rivers; and 3) wetlands. The 252 lakes and ponds cover a total area of 5,496 acres and were formed largely as a result of the depressions (kettle holes) left during glacial periods. These depressions were filled with groundwater to the level of the surrounding water table. Lakes and ponds are the major surface water reservoirs that either collect or release water to inlet and outlet streams. Streams and rivers are surface water features that are primarily responsible for drainage. Waters from precipitation, runoff, lake outlets, and the groundwater inflow, drain through a series of small minor tributaries, streams, and rivers that eventually lead to major rivers or the Great Lakes in this part of the County. Wetlands are similar to lakes and ponds in their formation and water source. They are also surface depressions (vernal pools), but because of their relative shallowness, they constitute a different type of environment from lakes. Source of water for wetlands include: flow from the water table, precipitation, inlet streams, and accumulation from poorly drained lands. Fens are unusual, and increasingly rare, wetlands that receive water from underground alkaline springs rather than from precipitation. Lenawee County is home to the Ives Road Fen Preserve, a unique 700-acre preserve.

Water resources have important recreational values for fishing, boating, and swimming, as well as the intrinsic natural beauty they possess. Streams in Lenawee County have been rated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources relative to their navigability by canoe. Factors which affect a canoe’s navigational ability are stream width, depth, vegetation, and physical obstructions such as bridges, dams, rocks, or fences.
Streams in Lenawee County have been categorized as “readily canoeable”, “canoeable with difficulty”, and “non-canoeable”. The length of the River Raisin from Tecumseh to Blissfield is designated by the DNR as “readily canoeable”, indicating that the river is at least 15 feet wide and is consistently deep throughout the year, being suitable for canoes as well as small motorized boats. Wolf Creek and the south branch of the River Raisin near Adrian are rated as “canoeable with difficulty”, indicating that dense vegetation plus seasonal variations in water volumes cause some difficulty in canoeing. The remaining streams in Lenawee County are designated as “non-canoeable”, due to their shallowness, narrowness, low water level, or degree of physical obstructions.

Maintaining good water is vital to the health and quality of life in Lenawee County.

Wildlife Habitats

Wildlife habitats are places where animals naturally live with the necessary food and shelter needed to survive. These habitats can be extremely sensitive, especially for aquatic life, because of the delicate natural balances of food supplies and predators. Altering any portion or element of the habitat can create severe consequences to all forms of life within the entire ecosystem.

A variety of wildlife can be found in Lenawee County. For example, the Department of Natural Resources manages habitats for eastern massasauga rattlesnakes, eastern wild turkeys, mallards, and osprey in the Onsted State Game Area, and habitats for small game including, pheasants, bobwhite quail, cottontail rabbits, deer, grassland songbirds, mallards, and eastern wild turkey, at the Lake Hudson Recreation Area. However, white-tailed deer are likely the most obvious species people come into contact with, especially along County roadways.

Aquatic habitats are those wildlife environments within or primarily associated with water. The quality and quantity of fish in lakes, streams, or marshes is determined by many factors including water temperature, velocity, and depth as well as the composition of the bottom and the quality of water including silt conditions, oxygen holding capacity, and chemical and mineral composition.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has rated streams for their suitability as fish habitats. Top Quality Warmwater Mainstreams contain good self-sustaining populations of warmwater game fish including: bass, bluegill, and northern pike. Mainstreams are over 15 feet wide and include the River Raisin, part of Wolf Creek, Fitts Creek, and Bean Creek. Second Quality Warmwater Mainstreams and Feeder Streams contain significant quantities of warm water fish, but game fish populations are limited due to poor water quality, a limited food supply, and conditions causing inadequate natural reproduction, such as: pollution, currents, and poor stream bed quality. Slater Creek is designated as a second quality warm-water mainstream, with feeder streams scattered throughout the County.

Soils

The soils in Lenawee County are probably one of its most significant natural assets. Rich soils deposited by Lake Erie, as it receded from its original boundaries, left some of the best farmland in the Midwest in the eastern and southern portions of the County (see Map 1-4). Soils in Class I, II, and III are best suited for crop production, with few, moderate, and severe limitations, respectively. Soils in Class IV and above are extremely limited for cultivation.
Lenawee County

- Class I soils are somewhat scattered but there are large concentrations on the eastern edge of the county north of Deerfield, and long the southern edge of the county east of Morenci.
- Class II soils are also distributed throughout the county but they are highly concentrated in the area east of the Ridge in the former lake bed. These are highly productive soils but tend to be wet unless properly drained.
- Class III soils are found scattered throughout in areas west of the Ridge. These are marginal soils for crop production.
- Very few soils are shown as Class IV and above. There are only two small concentrations east of the City of Adrian. Otherwise, they are found in very small areas in the Irish Hills.

Roads
The road system within Lenawee County is anchored by three United States Highways – US-223, US-12, and US-127. US-223 bisects the County in a northwest-southeast direction, US-127 provides north-south access along the western portion of the County, and US-12 traverses the north part of the County in an east-west direction. Michigan Highways supplement those three major roadways. There are a total of five state highways in the County: M-34, M-50, M-52, M-124, and M-156. M-34 and M-52 provide access to the urban center of Adrian. M-50 runs northwest-southeast, M-156 runs north-south between Morenci and Clayton, while only a small portion of M-124 extends into the County near Wamplers Lake. These major highways and State highways are further supplemented by a series of county arterial roads.

Map #1-1
Lenawee County Area Map
Lenawee County

Map #1-2
Planning Regions

LENAWEE COUNTY REGIONS

MUNICIPALITIES

\[\text{CITY AND VILLAGES}\]

REGIONS

\begin{align*}
\text{CLINTON-TECUMSEH-ADRIAN URBANIZING CORRIDOR} \\
\text{IRISH HILLS-DEVILS LAKE RECREATIONAL AREA} \\
\text{RURAL LENAWEE COUNTY}
\end{align*}

SOURCE(S):
- MICHIGAN GEOGRAPHIC DATA LIBRARY
- US BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
- REGION 2 PLANNING COMMISSION
Lenawee County

Map #1-3
Future Land Use

LEGEND

- Agricultural
- Intensive Agricultural
- Low Intensity Development
- Intensive Development
- Open Space Development/Recreation
- Greenways
- Parks
- Arterial Roads

Adopted: May 16, 2002

Source: Lenawee County Planning Commission, 2020

Parks and Recreation Plan, 2020-2024