

City of Belding Parks and Recreation Plan 2022 - 2026



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Chapter I Introduction & Purpose of Plan

Community park and recreation plans serve a variety of purposes. They guide local decision-making regarding park and recreational opportunities and enhancements. A thorough plan for a community's park and recreational facilities contributes greatly to the vitality of the community. Completion of a park and recreation plan also establishes the five-year eligibility for recreation grants administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Therefore, this plan is intended to meet the requirements and provisions set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for the development of community park, recreation, open space, and greenway plans.

This is a five-year plan that reflects the desires of the City of Belding community. Public input was gathered via a community survey and conversations with community leaders. The Belding Recreation Advisory Committee, who is charged with matters concerning recreation in the city, provided project direction as the project steering committee. The inclusive, community-based planning process provided a formal framework for the City to consider, develop, and establish their future park and recreation goals and action plan.

The City of Belding is excited to have a park and recreation plan that reflects the community's needs and desires. The plan will direct the future development of park and recreation facilities, amenities, and services over the next five years and beyond. By coming together, the community has worked hard to determine how best to continue to use its resources to support the park and recreational amenities.



Chapter 2 Community Description

Location

The City of Belding contains 4.9 square miles and is in the northwest corner of Ionia County. It's close to the borders of Kent County and Montcalm County. The closest cities are Greenville, Rockford, Ionia, Lowell, and Grand Rapids. Major roads in the city are M-44, Bridge Street, and Ellis Street. M-91 is another major corridor that lies due west of the City's boundaries. The Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail is a major nonmotorized facility that runs southwest to northeast in the City. Since the City is 25 miles northeast of Grand Rapids, it is beginning to see some minor population growth that follows the trend in the Grand Rapids metropolitan region. A location map is on the next page.

Physical Characteristics

Topography

The land is characterized by a gently rolling landscape and occasional low-lying wetland areas. Steep riverbank slopes exist along some portions of the Flat River. Many of the steep slopes along the river valley create attractive views. The majority of the city lies between 744 and 785 feet in elevation.

Hydrology

The predominant water feature in Belding is the Flat River. The Flat River serves both economic and recreational needs of the residents. Recreational activities such as fishing and boating are easily enjoyed with the close proximity of the river. The river is a designated Michigan Natural River under the authority of Part 305, Natural Rivers of PA 451 of 1994. There is also an abundance of wetlands in the City. They provide fish and wildlife habitat, serve as natural filtration systems for surface water entering the river, and offer an attractive, aesthetic amenity to the area's quality of life. The unique system of wetlands and the river in the City provide fishery habitats of regional significance.

Vegetation

Mature trees are common throughout the City, lining streets and found on many residential lots. City parks and state-owned land are heavily wooded, like Lightning Bend and Flat River Valley State Game Area. Natural vegetation is varied and ranges from ash, willow, poplar, and elm in lowland areas, and beech, maple, and hemlock associated in steep slope and seasonal wetland areas. Vegetation found in the City is predominantly maple, linden, oak and ash tree species and evergreen varieties including white pine spruce, and fir used in residential landscapes.

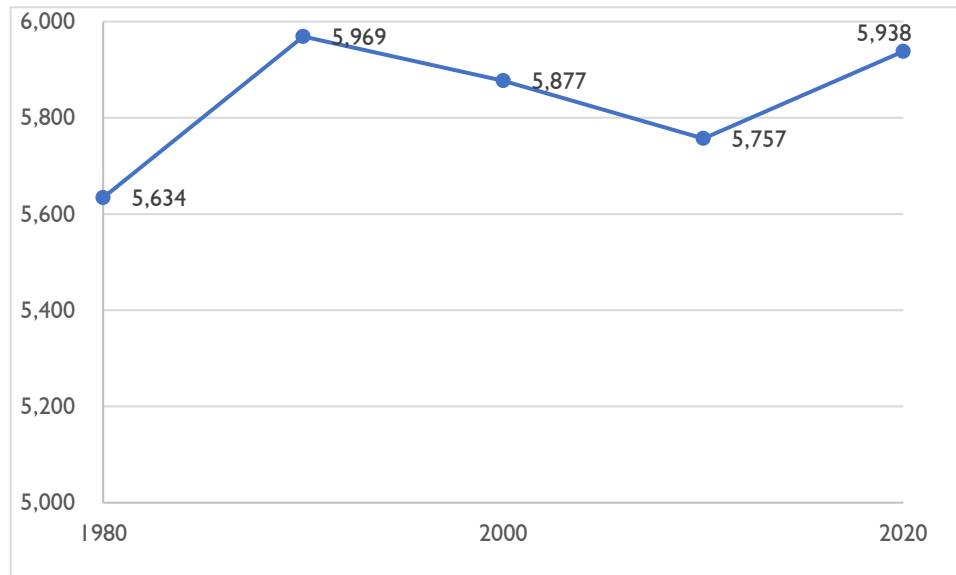
Land Use

The City of Belding is predominantly a residential community. The central business district is in the heart of downtown. Business and Industrial uses are primarily located on the south side of the City. Industry is also located on the northwest corner of the City. A variety of residential land uses are found throughout the city limits. Single-family homes are the most common residential use.

Demographic Information

The total population for the City of Belding for the 2020 census is 5,938 people. It has remained fairly stable in the last twenty years, fluctuating by less than 1,000 people in the last 50 years.

Figure 2.1 City of Belding Population 1980 - 2020



Year Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980 - 2020

The following are population and housing trends in the City of Belding that may influence the recreation needs and desires of the community:

- **Age.** In 2019, The median age of residents in Belding was 34.1 years. The population age composition has changed over the last several years to the community having more younger residents than older residents. The retired population has shrunk considerably. The two largest population groups in Belding are those under 18 years of age (28.6%) and 20–40 years of age (28%). This means more of the recreation facilities and programs should favor younger age groups and families.
- **Education.** In 2019, 88.5% of the population has a high school graduate degree or higher, while only 11.8% of the population has a Bachelor's degree or higher.
- **Household Size.** In 2019, the average household size for Belding was 2.52. This is slightly smaller than the Ionia County average of 2.63, but larger than the State of Michigan average of 2.49.
- **Occupancy.** Over 95% of houses are owner-occupied, while less than 5% of the housing was vacant. This is higher than the rates of owner-occupied houses in Ionia County (93.7%) and Michigan (88.4%). This shows that people are vested in their houses and community, meaning that they will be likely looking for local, nearby recreational opportunities.
- **Home Value.** In 2019, the median home value was \$93,300 in Belding, which was less than the median home value of \$130,100 in Ionia County in 2019. The median home value in Michigan in

2019 was \$154,900. This trend may support recreational opportunities that are available to households of modest means.

- **Income.** In 2019, the median household income for Belding residents was \$41,812. The median household income for households with two incomes and no kids was \$62,868. This means that a majority of recreational activities should be for households with modest income means.
- **Labor Force.** In 2019, 91.9% of the civilian labor force living in Belding was employed, and 37.9% of the total population not in the labor force. This means that a majority of the workforce was employed, yet there is a portion of the population that is retired. Recreational activities offered in Belding should include be developed with universal design features and include passive recreation.
- **ALICE.** This is the acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed – the households that earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living. While conditions have improved for some households in Ionia County, many continue to struggle. According to the 2021 Michigan ALICE Report, of the 2,223 households in the City of Belding, 52% are below the ALICE threshold.



Chapter 3 Administrative Structure

The City Council is comprised of five members that are elected at-large to four-year terms, with two elected one year and three others on alternate years. The Mayor is elected every two years after the election by the Council Members and chairs of the meetings. Current members of the City Council and the Mayor are: Bruce Meyers (Mayor), Mike Scheid, Jorel Davis, and Bonita Steele. The Mayor Pro Tem position is currently vacant. The role of City Council and Mayor regarding parks and recreation facilities and programs is to approve planning and development within the City, establish the annual fiscal budget, and over the selection and management of the City Manager.

The City Manager is appointed by the City Council, and is responsible for the implementation of City Council policies and budgets including parks and recreation, through management of staff. There are 38 full-time and 45 part-time city employees. The City Manager or designee serves as the liaison between the Recreation Advisory Board and the City, answers park related questions from the public, and coordinates recreation programs. There is no dedicated staff to oversee park and recreation facilities and programs in the City. The implementation of facility developments in the parks is the responsibility of the City Manager. Park maintenance is the responsibility of the Public Works Department. The City of Belding's Organizational Chart is found on the next page.

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City Parks Budget

City Parks are funded by a variety of sources including the city general fund, the capital improvement fund, and state and local grants. The 2021 annual budget for parks operation and maintenance is \$170,296 and the projected annual budget for the following year is \$175,000. The City was recently awarded a DNR grant for improvements at Lightning Bend Park is awarded, and will contribute \$430,000 of local funds to the site.

Recreation Advisory Board

The Recreation Advisory Board is an advisory panel to the City Council. The Board was established on April 6, 1976 following ordinance number 332. The members of the Board are appointed by the City Council. One member elected by the Board serves as the Chair. The Recreation Advisory Board provides an advisory role in park and recreation facility planning, development, maintenance, and programming. The Board is responsible for the overall development of the Parks and Recreation 5-year Plan, and is submitted to the City Council for final approval. The Board advises the City Council and City Manager on matters concerning recreation in the City and makes recommendations on the location of sites for parks and recreational areas to the City Council. The board also recommends such measures as it deems necessary and proper for the betterment of the city recreation program.

Chapter 4 Recreation Inventory

This chapter provides an overview of the park and recreation facilities and programs available in the Township and an accessibility assessment.

Accessibility

Per the Michigan Department of Natural Resources guidelines, an assessment of the accessibility of each park to people with disabilities is required in this recreation plan. This assessment considers the accessibility of both the facilities themselves (as appropriate) as well as the access routes to them. The accessibility grading system is based on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) through a five-point system as defined in Table 4.1

Table 4.1. MDNR Grading System for Accessibility

Accessibility Grade	Definition
1	None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
2	Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
3	Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
4	The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
5	The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

City of Belding Recreation Facilities

The following section contains information about the park and recreational facilities located in the Township. The methods used to determine site accessibility and inventory were based on a compilation of information from the previous recreation plan, verification through site visits, information provided through Township officials, and knowledge provided through other local entities.

Belding Parks and Recreation Areas

The following list of parks including the park name, size, description of general use and amenities, and accessibility evaluation, per the national accessibility classification standards that are listed on the previous page. All parks are located with the City of Belding.

Armstrong Park

Developed with riverside boardwalks and seating in the 1920's, it has been decades since any capital improvements have occurred in the park. Decades ago, the Park facilities had fallen into disrepair and were removed. The site has no facilities and is undeveloped. Amenities and facilities include Flat River Frontage.

Accessibility Score: 1

Central Riverside Park

Located along the Flat River and in the central business district of the City, the 5-acre park contains many developed facilities. The park is the hub of recreation within the community. Amenities and facilities include soccer fields, 2 tennis courts, a skate park, playground equipment, 2 picnic shelters, 2 basketball courts, a sand volleyball court, 10 trail-side exercise stations, the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail and trailhead, restroom facilities, drinking fountains, and parking. The next page contains a conceptual image of the Park's master plan. The map is a visual representation of the long-term vision of the facilities and amenities that could be located in the park, but there would need to be significant investment for this to occur. Any major future improvements would be reviewed by the Belding community.

Accessibility Score: 2

Demorest Field

Located in the west part of the City, the 30-acre park contains several recreational ball fields. The park is used daily throughout most of the year by youth and adult leagues. Shuffleboard tournaments are held on the shuffleboard court. Amenities and facilities include 2 adult softball fields, 4 youth ball fields, a pony ball field, a running track, playground equipment, restroom and concession facility, shuffleboard court, picnic facilities, Silk Trail Natural Trail access, and accessible parking.

Accessibility Score: 3

East Riverside Park

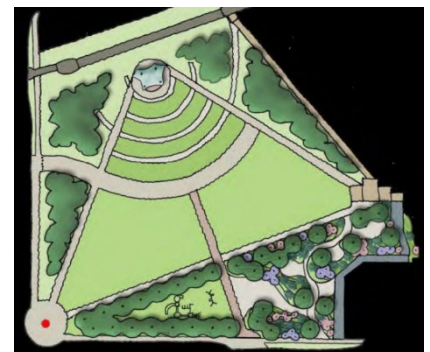
Located on the east side of the City along the south side of the Flat River, the 1.5-acre park is nestled within a neighborhood. The pavilion is from a previous City Water Works facility, and the boat launch has a removable dock/pier. The park gardens are sponsored by the Silk City Nature Association. The paved trail extends from the park to Ashfield Street. Amenities and facilities include a picnic pavilion, accessible restrooms, playground equipment, accessible boat launch, access to the Flat River, Silk City Nature Trail, and accessible parking.

Accessibility Score: 3

Gathering Place

Located on the south bank of the Flat River, southwest of Central Riverside Park and west of downtown, the 4.8-acre park is largely undeveloped. The open field is a former industrial site. In 2016 a park master plan was completed. The park has become the home of the Belding Beatnik Bazaar, an event that is held on many weekends during the spring and summer. Amenities and facilities include: a mural, benches, part of the Silk City Nature Trail, and Flat River Access. The image of the park is a conceptual design, and shows what could be possible within the boundaries of the area.

Accessibility Score: 3



Lightning Bend Preserve

Located in the northeast section of the City, the 138-acre nature preserve on the north side of the Flat River is the largest recreational facility owned by the City. The western 38 acres of the park were acquired with the assistance of a MNRTF grant in 2013. The Preserve includes nearly a mile of river frontage on the Flat River and a wood forest with three small ponds. A future bridge across the river is envisioned connecting the Preserve to the East Riverside Park. Amenities and facilities include an accessible picnic shelter, rustic, accessible toilets, miles of hiking trails, dedicated mountain bike trails, an 18-Hole Disc Golf Course, Flat River Access, wooded forest and natural ponds, and accessible parking. An image from the park master plan is found on the following page.

Accessibility Score: 2

Water Street Park

Located in the west part of the City, the 2.25-acre park is on the south side of the Flat River. The park is within a neighborhood. Amenities and facilities include playground equipment, picnic tables, benches, a part of the Silk City Nature Trail, a boat launch, Flat River Access, restrooms, and accessible parking.

Accessibility Score: 2

Silk City Natural Trail

The paved path along the Flat River is a pleasant facility within the City, and also provides a non-motorized connection to many parks across the City. The trail connects to the regional Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail. The goal is to have all City parks connected via this trail and to provide linkages to the M-44 business district, the schools, and neighborhoods, becoming vibrant part of the community's identity. Amenities and facilities include the paved trail, picnic tables, benches, wildlife observations/fishing deck.

Accessibility Score: 3

Other Recreational Assets

The Denny Craycraft Veterans Freedom Park

The park is owned and maintained by a 501c3 non-profit organization, and is led by volunteers. Located at 100 Depot Street, adjacent to Central Riverside Park, this park has been funded by donations from community members and local businesses. Amenities and facilities include a WWI War Memorial, WWII War Memorial, Korea War Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial, Desert Sheild/Desert Storm Operations Memorial, Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Memorial, and benches.

Community Gardens

Located across from Woodview Elementary, the community garden plots were developed in 2012. The Community Partnership is a collaboration among the Garden Group, the Belding Area Schools, and the

City of Belding. The garden supports local families, the Food Pantry, and God's Kitchen Belding. The community project has received many awards and accolades. The project started with 16 garden beds, including 2 accessible beds, and one designated for a local pantry.

Candlestone Golf Course

Located on 200 hundred acres in the north west section of the City, this privately-owned facility offers an 18-hole championship golf course and cross country ski trails in the winter.

Schools

The City of Belding is served by the Belding Area Public Schools District. Most the District's facilities are in the City and offer many recreational facilities available to residents. The Belding Area School District is comprised of approximately two thousand students. Special school sponsored programs such as concerts and plays, as well as sporting events, are often the focus of community entertainment and enjoyment.

Belding High School

Located in the southeast section of the City, the High School campus was constructed in the mid 1970's on a twenty-four-acre site. Outdoor amenities include a fenced baseball field, baseball practice area, lighted football/soccer field with bleachers, softball diamond, track with a second practice football field, and parking. Indoor amenities include two gymnasiums with locker rooms, weight room, wrestling room, Performing Arts Center, Commons Area, and indoor track. These facilities are made available for public use and youth athletics to the extent possible.

Belding Middle School

Once the site of the old high school, the Middle School has also been recently renovated. Although the site is limited, the school has an outdoor basketball court, outdoor play structure, indoor gym facilities, additional indoor activity spaces, and cafeteria with stage.

Ellis Elementary School

Situated on a 7-acre site in the northern section of the City, the school offers an indoor gym with stage area, indoor full music facility adjacent to stage, outdoor experiential learning area, outdoor playground area, T-Ball/kick ball sized play field, and small soccer field. Additional land is available at this site for the potential development of play fields.

Orchard Hills Elementary School

The school is located on a 15-acre site in the west section of the City. Recreation facilities include a playground area, a 12-acre woodlot with trails, two outdoor basketball courts, two small ball fields, an exercise/fitness area, and an indoor gym.

Woodview Elementary School

The school is located on the west side of town. The facilities available include a gym with locker rooms, indoor music facility adjacent to stage, outdoor playground areas, outdoor basketball court, T-Ball /Kick Ball sized field, and additional open space.

Trail Assets

M-44 Sidepath

MDOT owns the sidepath on M-44 that runs from Orchard Street and Water Street.

Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail

The Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail runs throughout the City, from the northeast to the southwest. The trail runs through the communities of Greenville, Belding, and Lowell. Though most of the trail surface is unpaved, the stretch that runs through the City of Belding was paved with asphalt in 2014. The route through the city is also part of the larger Fred Meijer Mid-West Michigan Trail Network that connects many communities in west and mid-Michigan.

Regional Park and Recreation Facilities

Ionia Recreation Area

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources owns the recreation area which offers a wide variety of outdoor activities including a day use beach and picnic facility, camping, dog trial area, hiking, and other activities.

Flat River Game Area

The Flat River Game Area incorporates several square miles of property and includes land available for hunting, fishing, and snowmobiling.

Ionia County Fairgrounds

Located in the nearby City of Ionia, the Fairgrounds offers the annual fair, concerts, and special events.

Bertha Brock County Park

Bertha Brock is an Ionia County Park. It is located west of the City of Ionia. Facilities include winter sledding, picnic facilities, play area, ball diamonds, and primitive camping.

Pickerel Lake County Park

Owned by Kent County, Pickerel Lake offers nature trails and boardwalk across the lake and wetlands area.

Fallsburg County Park

Fallsburg is a Kent County Park located in the Lowell area. The park is located on the Flat River with a historic covered bridge, picnic shelters, play area, ball diamonds, restrooms and parking.

Wabasis Park and Campground

Wabasis Park is a Kent County Park located near Greenville. The park is on Wabasis Lake and has modern and primitive camping, nature center, beach swimming, boat launch, play area, ball diamond, basketball court, restrooms, and parking.

Townsend Park

Townsend Park is a Kent County Park located in Canonsburg. The park is located on Bear Creek. It offers hiking trails, ballfields, picnic facilities, restrooms, and parking.

Double R Ranch

A privately-owned campground with over 150 sites located in Otisco Township.

Snows Lake Campground

Privately-owned facility with over 300 camping sites in Bushnell Township.

Existing Recreation Programs

The City of Belding does not sponsor recreational activities or leagues. Recreational programs are provided primarily by non-profit organizations staffed and operated by local citizens, and by Belding Area Schools Community Education. Programs offered by others include the following:

Belding Youth Baseball/Softball League

This organization provides summer youth baseball and softball programs for youths from six to sixteen years old.

Belding Rocket Football League

This organization administers the summer and fall youth football program.

SAY Soccer

SAY Soccer provides youth soccer programs in the Belding area.

Candlestone Inn Golf Leagues

Various men's and women's golf leagues are available to the public through the privately-owned course. These leagues operate throughout the spring, summer, and fall.

Belding Shuffleboard Club

A volunteer-based shuffleboard club that provides free weekly lessons to the community, weekly tournament play for club members, and tournaments.

Belding Area Schools Community Education

Community Education offers Enrichment Classes to the community. These classes are scheduled through Community Education and utilize school facilities. Programs include: dog obedience classes, tae kwon do, walking track, co-ed volleyball, open gym, and gymnastics classes.

Previous Michigan Department of Natural Resources Grants

The following is a list of past DNR grants that have been awarded to the City of Belding.

Project No. 26-00308

Project Year: 1972

Project Title: Central Riverside Recreation Park

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$62,658.29

Elements: Picnic area, group shelter, tot lot, 3 tennis courts, croquet court, badminton court, ice rink, parking, lighting, site improvements, landscaping, sewer and water.

Project No: BF90-279

Project Year: 1990

Project Title: Center Riverside Park-Ph I

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$31,000

Elements: Basketball court, lights, fitness trail, 1 volleyball court, 2 horseshoe courts, playground equipment.

Project No: CM00-128

Project Year: 2000

Project Title: Demorest Field

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$210,000.00

Elements: Pony baseball diamond, youth baseball diamonds, paved parking lot, walkways, site preparation, park sign.

Project No: TF01-139

Project Year: 2001

Project Title: Belding Pathway

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$211,640.00

Elements: Site preparation & removals, sand fill, retaining walls/railing sheet piling, 10' pathway, benches, trash receptacles, boardwalk and overlook along river, pathway signs, landscaping.

Project No.: TF05-052

Project Year: 2005

Project Title: Silk City Nature Trail

Project Status: Closed

Grant Amount: \$166,400.00

Elements: Site preparation, pathway, retaining walls, curb cuts, railings, fishing/observation decks, signage, renovated Water St. parking lot.

Project No.: TF10-048

Project Year: 2010

Project Title: Lightning Bend Preserve Addition-Acquisition

Grant Amount: \$226,700.00

Project Status: Closed
Elements: Acquisition of 38 acres

Project No: TF12-073
Project Year: 2012
Project Title: Silk City Nature Trail Extension
Grant Amount: \$264,800.00
Project Status: Closed
Elements: Pathway, retaining wall, overlook, benches, signage.

Project No: TF17-0061
Project Year: 2017
Project Title: Silk City Nature Trail Gathering Place Connector
Grant Amount: \$192,300
Project Status: PA Executed
Elements: Development of the new Gathering Place Park in downtown City of Belding. The project will include a 650-foot extension of the Silk City Nature Trail along the Flat River and connection to the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail, a fishing and wildlife observation deck, interpretive and pathway identification signage, benches and landscaping.



Chapter 5 Planning & Public Input Process

Planning Methods

The City of Belding Parks and Recreation Plan was initiated to provide direction for future park projects, administration, and ongoing operation and maintenance. The timetable for review and approval began with a kickoff meeting with the Recreation Advisory Board (the project steering committee), and ended with local support of the plan in early 2022. Community input was gathered by talking to members of the Recreation Advisory Board, focus groups with community leaders, and by the public completing the community survey.

Numerous tools can be used to determine the recreational needs of a community. One way to assess a community's needs is to compare metrics or data. Another way is to use a systems planning approach to identify local issues, priorities, and levels of service that can be determined via a community survey to inform the planning process. Both of these methods are employed in the City of Belding Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Comparison to Park Metrics

The recreation classification system and facility development standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association has data on different types of parks, their desired site characteristics, size, and service area. The following tables provide a comparison with recreation development standards and classifications systems to help inform the planning process:

Mini-Park	
Use	Specialized facilities that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens.
Service Area	Less than ¼ mile radius
Desirable Size	1 acre or less
Acres per 1,000	0.25 to 0.5 acres per 1,000 population
Desirable Site Characteristics	Within neighborhoods and in close proximity to apartment complexes, townhouse development or housing for the elderly.
City of Belding Mini-Parks	Water Street Park

Neighborhood Park / Playground	
Use	Area for intense recreational activities such as field games, court games, crafts, playground apparatus area, skating, picnicking, wading pools, etc.
Service Area	¼ to ½-mile radius to serve a population up to 5,000 (a neighborhood).
Desirable Size	15+ acres
Acres per 1,000	1 to 2 acres per 1,000 population

Desirable Site Characteristics	Suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood population geographically centered with safe walking and bike access. May be developed as a school park facility.
City of Belding Neighborhood Park	East Riverside Park

Community Park	
Use	Area of diverse environmental quality. May include areas suited for intense recreational facilities, such as athletic complexes, large swimming pools. May be an area of natural quality for outdoor recreation, such as walking, viewing, sitting, picnicking. May be any combination of the above, depending upon site suitability and community need.
Service Area	Several neighborhoods. 1-to-2-mile radius.
Desirable Size	25+ acres
Acres per 1,000	5 to 8 acres per 1,000 population
Desirable Site Characteristics	May include natural features such as water bodies and areas suited for intense development. Easily accessible to neighborhood served.
City of Belding Community Parks	Central Riverside Park Demorest Field Lighting Bend Reserve

Regional Park Preserve	
Use	Area of natural quality for nature-oriented outdoor recreation such as viewing and studying nature, wildlife habitat, conservation, swimming, picnicking, hiking, fishing, boating, camping, and trail uses. May include active play areas. Generally, 80% of the land is reserved for conservation and natural resource management with less than 20% used for recreation development.
Service Area	Several communities. 1 hour driving time.
Desirable Size	1,000+ acres; sufficient area to encompass the resource to be preserved and managed.
Acres per 1,000	Variable
Desirable Site Characteristics	Diverse or unique natural resources such as lakes, streams, marshes, flora, fauna, and topography.
Regional Park Preserves near City of Belding	Ionia Recreation Area

Systems Planning

Community Survey

Conducting a survey can also help determine a community's needs when using the systems planning approach to park and recreation development. The community survey was conducted during the fall of 2021. The results of the survey are found in the Appendix. Based on the results of the survey, the following highlighted issues and results were used to guide the development of the goals, objectives, and action plan.

- Respondents indicated that parks, trails, and open spaces were very important to their household's quality of life.
- Maintaining the existing parks was the most important way to continue to provide park and recreation facilities for respondents.
- Central Riverside Park was identified as the park most in need of improvements.
- Many respondents indicated that restrooms, picnic shelters/pavilions, lighting, and playground equipment were the facilities most in need of repair.
- Paved, multi-use trails were the preferred trail type to be built if the City considers investing in future non-motorized infrastructure.
- Respondents felt that areas recreation programming could be improved to better serve the community.
- The top five recreation amenities that the respondents would like to see in the community were, in order of preference: walking trails, outdoor water recreation (like a splash pad), children's play equipment, a dog park, and trailhead with restrooms.
- Respondents indicated that security could be improved to deter and address vandalism and illegal activity that is occurring at local parks.

Focus Groups

The planning process also included engaging with three unique focus groups. The first Community Stakeholders focus group was comprised of community leaders and City of Belding leadership staff that work to address park and recreation issues. The second focus group was made up of community members who actively use the trails and sidewalks in Belding, and they addressed questions related to biking and walking infrastructure. The third focus group was a Belding High School leadership class that had students in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. A focus group summary report that summarizes the discussion is found in the Appendix. Highlights of the focus group report is listed here:

- Diversity of parks/trails amenities available and activities offered was a strength.
- Participants talked about how people in the community enjoy using the parks. There is a lot of community pride in the City parks.
- Park safety and vandalism is an ongoing issue. Suggestions to address this included having cameras that where in hard-to-reach places to catch the people who are doing this and having more community members out using the parks to deter the vandalism.
- Participants enjoy the nature that can be experienced, seen on trails.
- Students enjoy the skate park because their friends hang out there.
- Trails are popular for students to walk with friends and family, and are a destination because they are scenic.

- Identified Needs
 - Maintenance for many things – various park facilities, groundskeeping, trails. Many aspects of the parks and trails are falling into disrepair.
 - Participants noted that a paid Parks and Recreation Director would be helpful to manage and oversee park and recreation facilities and programs.
 - Trail map would be helpful for those on the trail and on a website to help people plan trips.
 - Wayfinding signs within parks and on trails
 - Lighting to and on trails

Parks and Recreation Analysis

Combining the results of the systems planning approach that includes the results of the survey and focus groups, and the park metrics comparison, the City of Belding should continue to focus its efforts on the maintenance needs of the park and recreation facilities and programs of the community. New facilities could be added, but it should be done in a strategic way that follows the goals, objectives, and action program found in this plan. Additionally, the community should consider how it should best use its limited resources to support Belding parks and recreation.

Public Meeting and Plan Adoption

Following preparation of the Plan, citizens were provided an adequate opportunity (at least 30 days) to review and comment on the plan prior to the official recommendation by the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board and adoption by the City of Belding City Council.

A draft of the Plan was submitted to the Recreation Advisory Board and staff for their review and comments. A notice was published in the local newspaper (Daily News Greenville) on December 17, 2021 notifying the public of the availability of the plan to provide them the opportunity to review and comment. The Plan was available for public review at City Hall and the City's website. Suggestions received to improve the Plan were incorporated into the document, which was then revised and finalized.

The Recreation Advisory Board made a motion to recommend adopting the plan to Belding City Council on January 10, 2022. The City of Belding City Council adopted the Plan on January 18, 2022.



Chapter 6 Goals and Objectives

Considering community input and the existing conditions of City of Belding, the following goals and objectives were developed to form the foundation of the Plan. The goals are intended to help the community aspire to accomplishing big ideas. The goal statements are general, and are considered attainable through focused efforts. The objective statements are more specific and may be regarded as milestones to achieving the goal.

1. Maintenance

The City of Belding Parks and Trails will be well-maintained and enhance the community.

- a. Create a Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement and Deferred Maintenance Plan that will be used to identify the cost, resources needed, and priority level to systematically address park and recreation maintenance needs for City facilities and programs.
- b. Pursue funding opportunities to address park and recreation maintenance needs.
- c. Develop volunteer network to support City maintenance efforts that can help in small ways like litter clean-up days and spring and fall clean-up events.
- d. Any new facilities installed or infrastructure improvements will meet ADA standards and strive for universal design.

2. Security

The City of Belding parks, trails and recreation facilities will be safe for residents and visitors.

- a. Engage the City of Belding Police Department to identify ways to develop park surveillance and/or a security program.
- b. If vandalism occurs, address it soon after it occurs.
- c. Work with community members and leaders to educate them about the issues and determine how they might be able to help.

3. Leadership

The community will have a point-person to lead and manage park and recreation programs, facilities, and issues.

- a. Pursue a Parks and Recreation Director paid position that could lead the development of park and recreation programs and facilities and address related challenges.
- b. Consider unique ways to fund the position, including re-establishing the co-op position that was shared with Belding Public Schools.
- c. Consider a parks millage to provide additional funding to provide foundational support for this effort.

4. Non-Motorized Infrastructure

Develop a connected network of trails, sidewalks, and other non-motorized infrastructure to link the City's parks, waterfront, schools, neighborhoods, and business districts to support recreation and healthy lifestyles.

- a. Continue non-motorized planning efforts to connect segments into a connected system.
- b. Pursue maintenance opportunities on paved trails and sidewalks.
- c. Improve wayfinding signage along the trail, including street signage at trail/street crossings.
- d. Ensure that all facilities are built to ADA standard and strive for universal design.

Chapter 7 Action Program

The following section details the strategic actions and the general direction that the City of Belding will take to maintain and improve the park and recreation facilities and programs in the community. A description of each action is provided to indicate a basis for action, identify relevant goals, and provide a plan for such action. In addition, strategic actions should meet with all ADA requirements, where appropriate. Although a five-year time period will not be sufficient to accomplish all of the goals and objectives, the action program is intended to prioritize projects that may be achievable within five years.

The recommendations in the section are intended to be flexible and the following list of projects is not exhaustive. Future circumstances, such as funding and available opportunities, will likely influence the time and duration of projects. The following recommended actions are based on the input received from the community survey, focus groups, City of Belding officials and staff, and an inventory of existing conditions.

Parks and Recreation Leadership

The City of Belding and the Belding Public School system used to partner in paying for a Parks and Recreation Director. That person was in charge of community-wide programming for youth and adult sports leagues, they helped direct the growth and maintenance needs of the parks and trail system, and they managed the daily issues of the park and recreation facilities in the City. Years ago, this unique approach to providing a park and recreation leadership position in Belding was stopped, and the time has come again to consider how this role can be reestablished. Focus group participants indicated that this person could help alleviate the burden volunteers have to currently bear to keep the youth athletic programs going. Having a paid position would allow the community to take a stream-lined approach to handling the park and recreation issues of the community. The City is struggling to find resources to pay for this position out right, as it already has a tight budget. If the community can provide a contribution for the position in the short-term, the position may be able to generate enough revenue in the coming years to contribute to its own funding.

Non-motorized System

Respondents to the community survey indicated that they were interested in more paved trails. Focus group participants felt that Belding had a unique opportunity with a regional trail running through the heart of the community that it was not yet capitalizing on. More could be done to help route visitors through the community and to amenities like local restaurants or stores. Belding could become a regional biking destination or hub, helping diversify its economic base. They also said that more should be done to provide a connected loop or “backbone” trail system within the City, as the existing non-motorized network is fragmented and unconnected.

Trails can be a great way for people to exercise and increase their well-being. Belding has sidewalks in some neighborhoods, and a sidewalk gap assessment could be done to assess where new sidewalks are needed and what older ones need repair. Residents know that the Silk City Nature Trail provides a safe, accessible, flat, paved surface that they can rely on. Friends can meet for a social walk. Families can enjoy the trail together walking, scooting, or rolling. The mobility impaired can enjoy a ride around the trail or

use it to reach some destinations within the City. Some segments of the Silk City Nature Trail also connect with the Fred Meijer Flat River Vally Trail, and residents can travel along the path to reach destinations beyond the City’s limits. Future events could even be held at the existing trail or future facilities to provide a common place for the community to gather and celebrate. Consideration should be made to keep the existing trails in a safe, smooth condition.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Upkeep - Maintenance & Vandalism

One of the biggest issues that all focus groups and the community survey respondents talked about was addressing the maintenance needs of the park and recreation facilities in the City of Belding. Though Belding has a number of lovely parks and the Silk City Nature Trail, the maintenance of these facilities has not been consistently addressed in recent years. The paved trail spurs in the City’s non-motorized system have fallen into disrepair and need resurfacing. Each of the City parks has a number of facilities that need upkeep and grounds that need to be maintained. Goose dropping plague many of the parks that run along the Flat River. Though the parks are a sense of pride in Belding – “A gem in the rough” one focus group member said – much needs to be done to repair and upgrade the amenities. The City could develop a prioritized list of the repairs, and then systematically address the issues over the next several years.

Along with this issue is the growing problem of vandalism that is plaguing the park system. A new level of disrespectful behavior and illegal activity began occurring in the Spring of 2020 during the COVID-19 lockdown when many kids were out of school. Local leaders continue to be troubled by this and are looking for ways to stop the disruptive, mischievous activities.

Table 7.1 Parks and Recreation Action Program is on the next page.



Table 7.1 Parks and Recreation Action Program

Improvement	Relates to Goal	Priority
Central Riverside Park		
Relocate riverside/far pavilion	1,2	High
Install security measures	1,2,3	High
Update restrooms	1,2	Medium
Install wayfinding signage within park	1	Low
Install lighting along trail	1,4	Low
Install signage to deter the feeding of geese, ducks, and other wildlife	2	Medium
Demorest Field		
On-going field maintenance	1,2,3	High
ADA accessible picnic shelter	1	Medium
Concession stand maintenance	1	Low
Parking lot resurfacing	1	Medium
Lighting along trail	1,4	Low
Install accessible playscape		Medium
East Riverside Park		
Move/renovate pavilion	1,2	Medium
Wood trail maintenance	1,4	High
Install accessible path to playground	1	Medium
Install signage to deter the feeding of geese, ducks, and other wildlife	1	Low
Gathering Place		
Reading gardens behind Library	1	Medium
Open play lawn	1	Low
Lightning Bend Preserve		
Use DNR grant money to complete Master Plan recommendations	1,4	High
Water Street Park		
Install accessible boat ramp and launch	1	High
Food truck electrical hook ups	1	Low
Expanded Art in the Park	3	Low
Trail resurfacing	1	Medium
Fishing Dock	1,4	Medium
Install signage to deter the feeding of geese, ducks, and other wildlife	2	Low
Non-motorized Infrastructure		
Wayfinding signage along the trail to park and other community destinations	1,4	Medium
Trail resurfacing	1,4	High
Connection from Ashfield Street to Lightning Bend Preserve	4	Low

APPENDIX

City of Belding Park and Recreation Plan Community Engagement Report November 2021

Includes:

Community Survey Results
Focus Group Summary
Student Work Document

City of Belding Park and Recreation Plan Community Survey Results Report

City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board Meeting
November 15, 2021

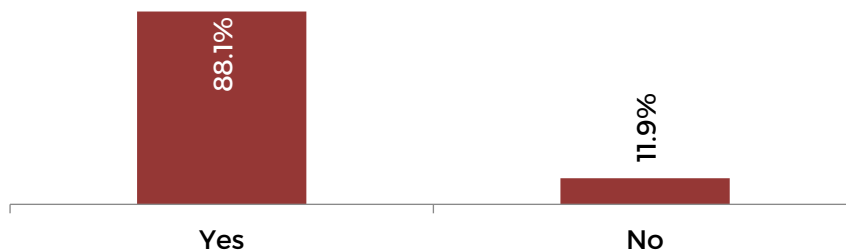
INTRODUCTION

In October 2021, the City of Belding Park and Recreation Plan Community Survey was issued to gather public input on the state of park and recreation amenities and programs in the City. There were 297 responses to the survey, which provide quantifiable data to help inform the goals and information in the plan. The following are highlights from the results of the survey.

RESULTS

1. Do you live in the City of Belding Post Office service area?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	88.1%	259
No	11.9%	35
If you do not live in the City of Belding Post Office service area please indicate where you live.		38
Answered	294	
Skipped	3	



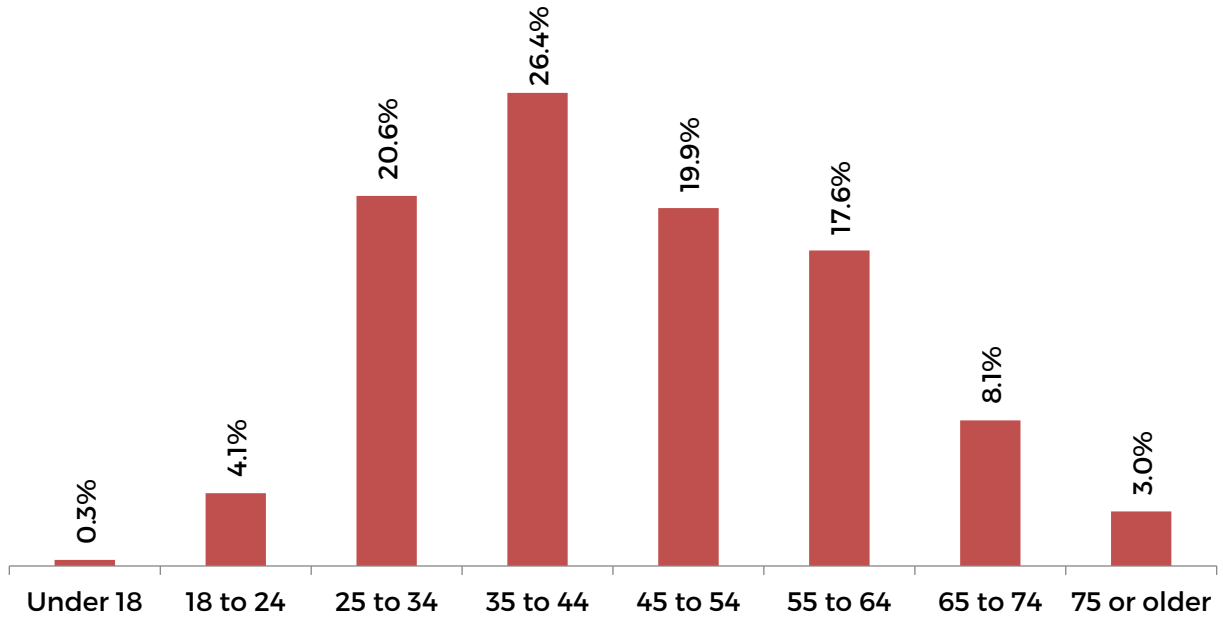
Other Responses

1. Greenville
2. Lowell
3. Lowell, MI
4. Ionia
5. 49525 - Plainfield
6. Orleans Township
7. Ranney Rd
8. Smyrna, zip 48809
9. Orleans

10. S Carolina
11. Orleans
12. Pearl st
13. Greenville
14. 1155 N. State Rd.
15. Ann St
16. Orleans Township
17. Hawley hwy.
18. Orleans
19. 215 pineview dr
20. Crosswinds Manor Apartments
21. Grand Rapids
22. Sheridan
23. Off of Bricker Rd.
24. Rockford (Grattan Twp), just moved from Belding city limits
25. Broas st
26. Rockford
27. Fenwick. Grew up in Belding and kids attend Belding.
28. Greenville
29. Pearl and center st
30. Greenville
31. Lowell
32. Orleans
33. Ionia, but my kids go to belding and enjoy the parks
34. Greenville
35. 48846
36. Just outside of Belding
37. Post office area as in you believe a zip code is same as city boundaries?
38. Montcalm Avenue

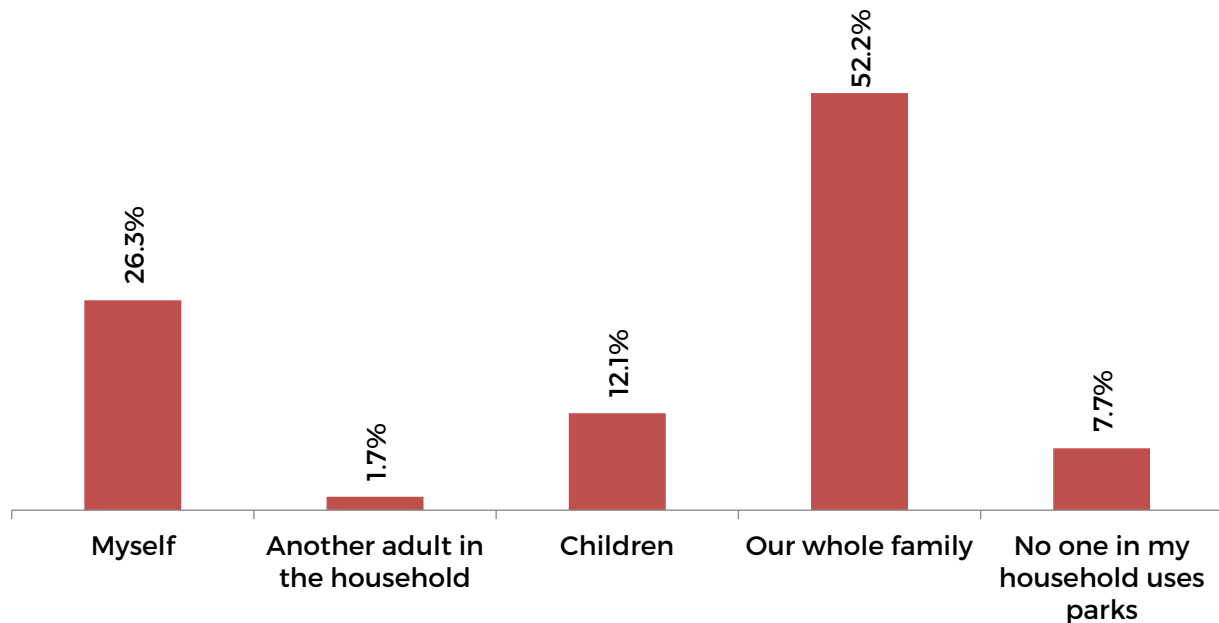
2. What is your age?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Under 18	0.3%	1
18 to 24	4.1%	12
25 to 34	20.6%	61
35 to 44	26.4%	78
45 to 54	19.9%	59
55 to 64	17.6%	52
65 to 74	8.1%	24
75 or older	3.0%	9
Answered	296	
Skipped	1	



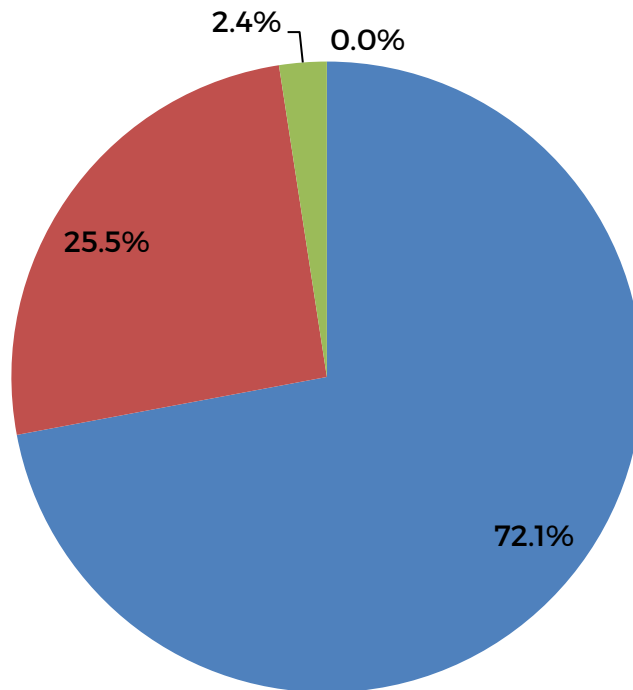
3. Who in your household is the most active user of parks?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Myself	26.3%	78
Another adult in the household	1.7%	5
Children	12.1%	36
Our whole family	52.2%	155
No one in my household uses parks	7.7%	23
Answered	297	
Skipped	0	



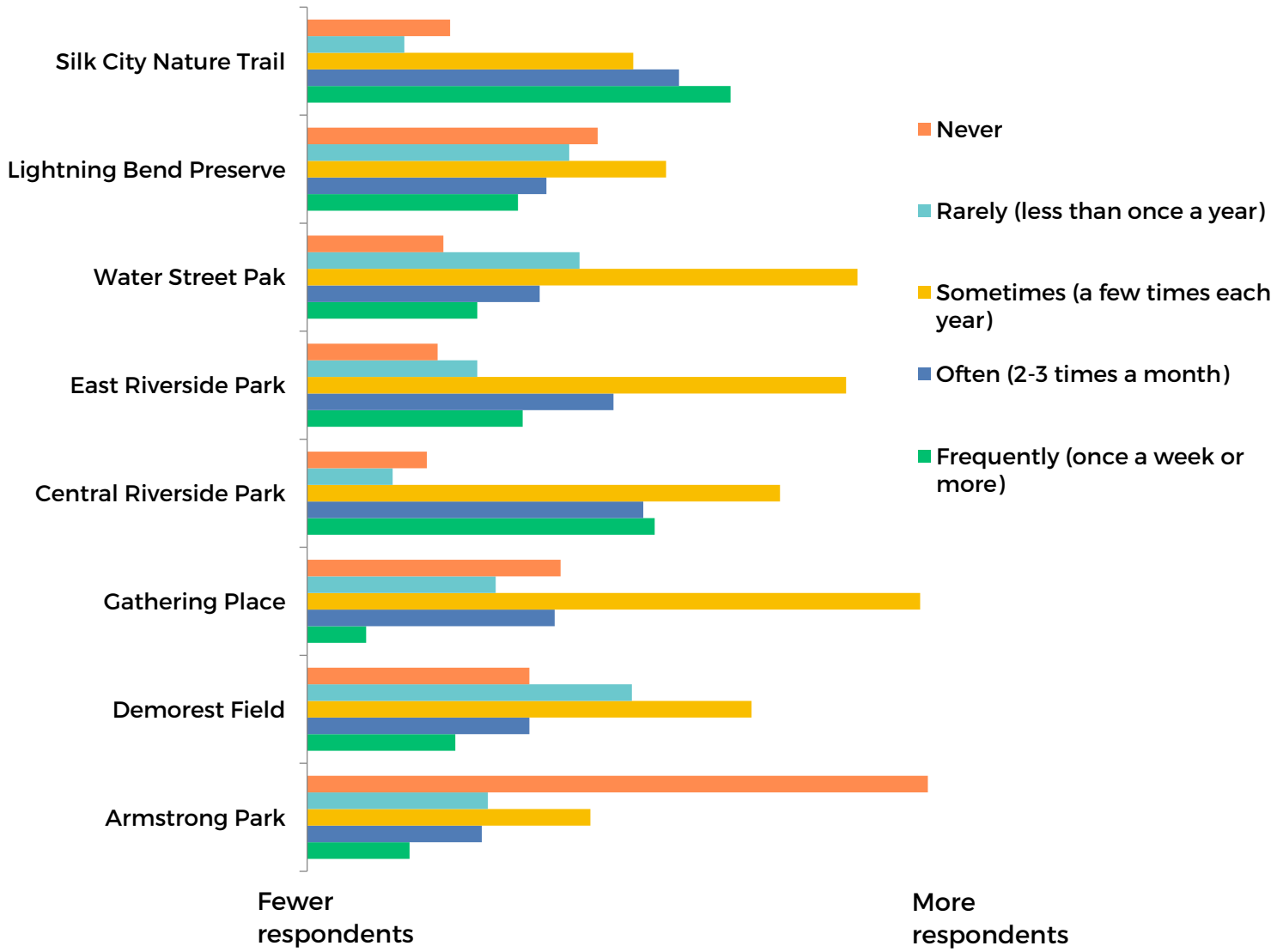
4. How important are parks, trails, and open space to you and/or your household's quality of life?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very important	72.1%	178
Somewhat important	25.5%	63
Not important	2.4%	6
No opinion	0%	0
Weighted Average	2.2	
Answered	247	
Skipped	50	



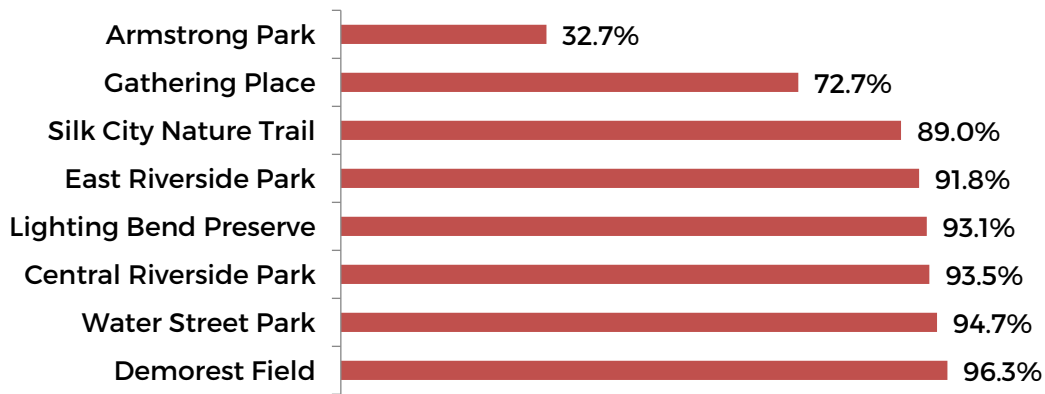
5. How often do you use the following parks and recreation facilities throughout the year?

Responses	
Answered	246
Skipped	51



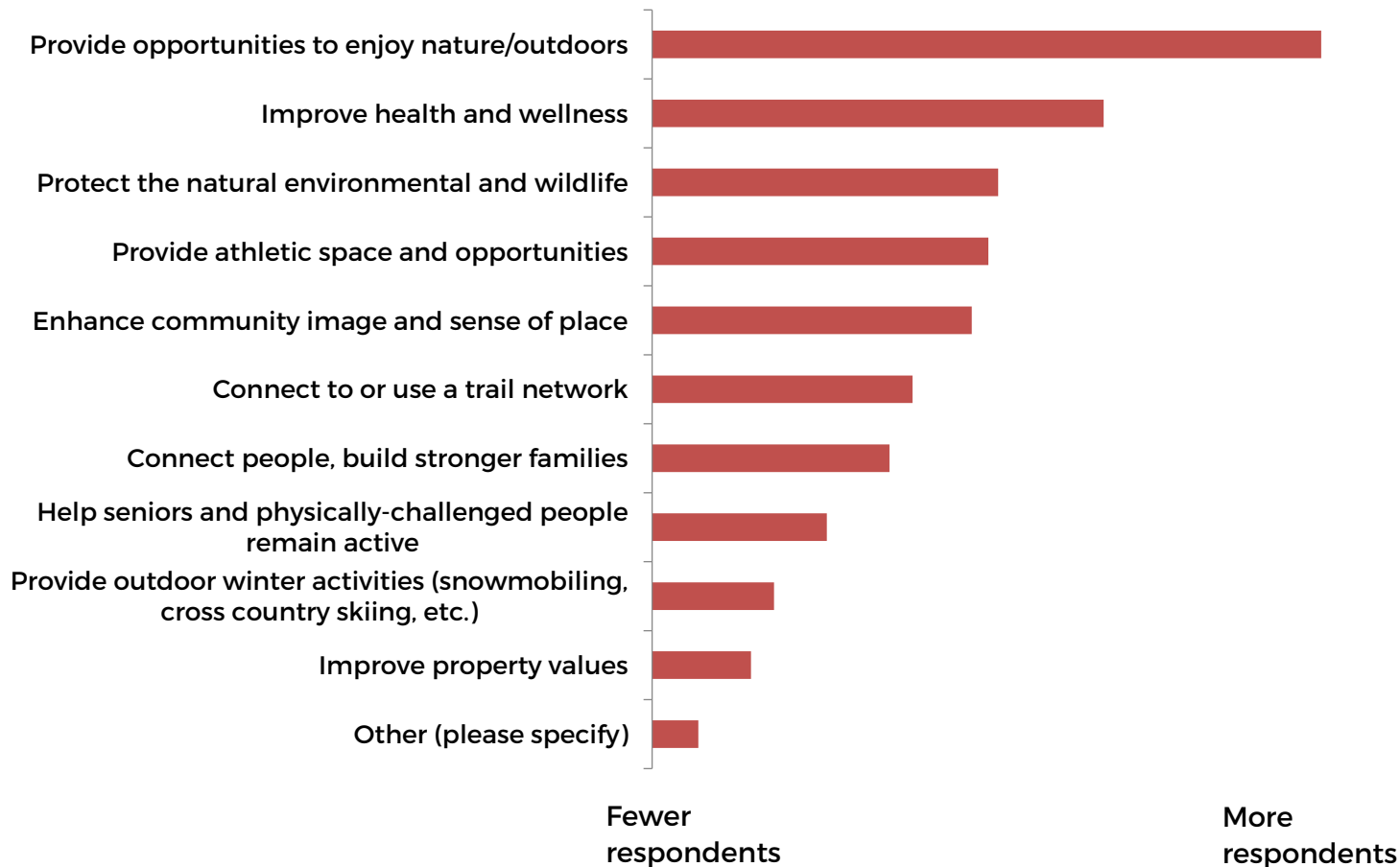
6. Which of these parks do you know the location of? Please check all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Demorest Field	96.3%	236
Water Street Park	94.7%	232
Central Riverside Park	93.5%	229
Lighting Bend Preserve	93.1%	228
East Riverside Park	91.8%	225
Silk City Nature Trail	89.0%	218
Gathering Place	72.7%	178
Armstrong Park	32.7%	80
Answered	245	
Skipped	52	



7. Which of the following benefits of parks and recreation are most important to you? (Please select your top three.)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Provide opportunities to enjoy nature/outdoors	82.2%	203
Improve health and wellness	55.5%	137
Protect the natural environmental and wildlife	42.5%	105
Provide athletic space and opportunities	41.3%	102
Enhance community image and sense of place	39.3%	97
Connect to or use a trail network	32.0%	79
Connect people, build stronger families	29.2%	72
Help seniors and physically-challenged people remain active	21.5%	53
Provide outdoor winter activities (snowmobiling, cross country skiing, etc.)	15.0%	37
Improve property values	12.2%	30
Other (please specify)	5.7%	14
Answered	247	
Skipped	50	

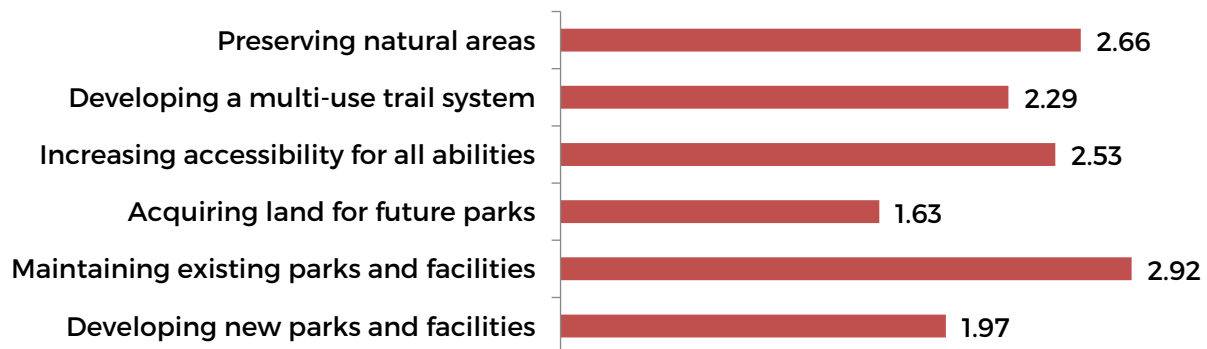


Other Responses

1. Fun space for community to come together
2. They do not do anything for me
3. Provides area for outdoor use, exercise and enjoyment for household pets
4. Disc golf
5. L
6. Dog park off the trail would be great for pet owners
7. Providing opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors
8. Quite honestly- get control of the teen drug dealing and drug use at the skate park and that would be the most enjoyable-- that park can't even be used by the good kids because parents know not to send their kids because they know there is no control down there. It's been going on for at least 10 years!
9. Playground equipment for kids
10. Splash park , children's activities
11. Children's play areas
12. Mental health is very important to consider as well, even in a park setting.
Nature provides a more than adequate dose of medicine for those in need of it
13. Trails for dog walking/running
14. We go to Lightning Bend pretty often to let our dog run off leash.

8. How important are the following in improving parks and recreation in the City of Belding?

Answer Choices	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	No Opinion	Total	Score	
Developing new parks and facilities	29.0% (71)	40.4% (99)	29.0% (71)	1.6% (4)	245	1.97	
Maintaining existing parks and facilities	92.7% (228)	6.9% (17)	0.4% (1)	0.0% (0)	246	2.92	
Acquiring land for future parks	14.4% (35)	40.7% (99)	37.9% (92)	7.0% (17)	243	1.63	
Increasing accessibility for all abilities	65.5% (161)	25.6% (63)	5.7% (14)	3.3% (8)	246	2.53	
Developing a multi-use trail system	49.4% (121)	34.3% (84)	12.2% (30)	4.1% (10)	245	2.29	
Preserving natural areas	72.4% (178)	22.8% (56)	3.7% (9)	1.2% (3)	246	2.66	
Other (please specify)					12		
Answered						247	
Skipped						50	



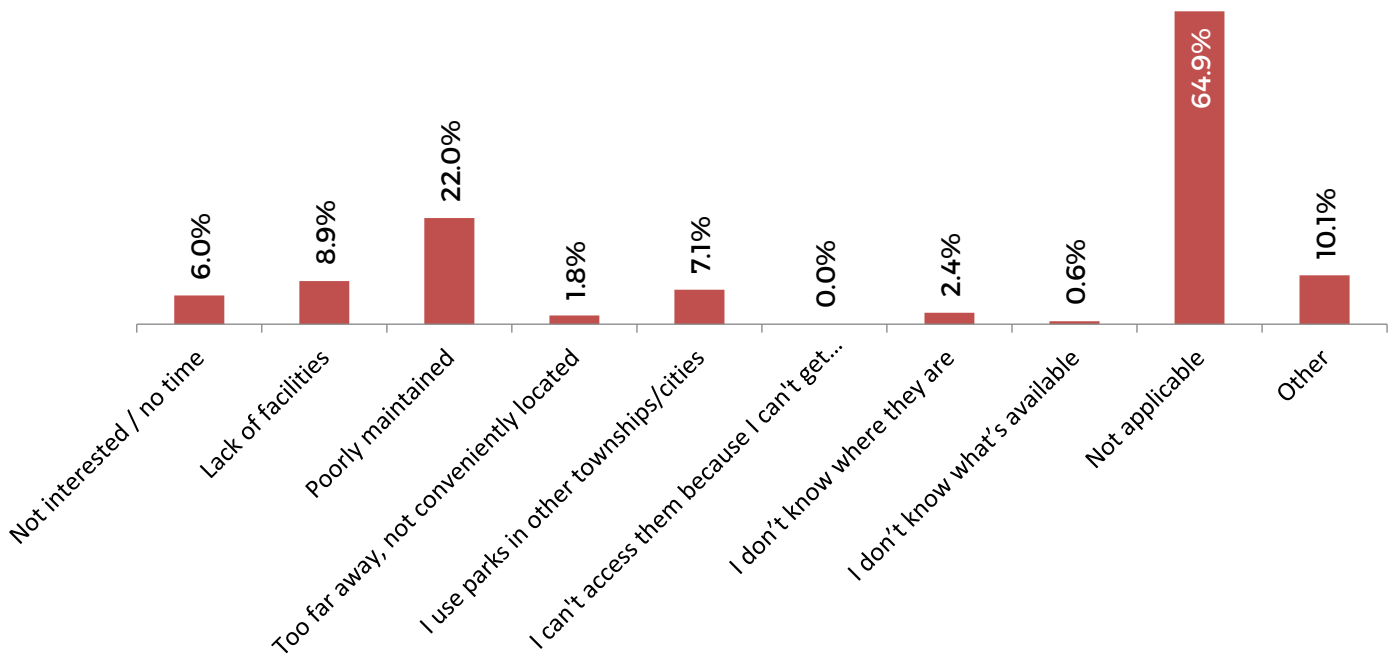
Other Responses

1. Thought Meijer and federal government provided the trail through Belding!
2. Make lightning bend the best disc golf course possible and itll attract so much tourism for disc golf
3. Disc Golf!
4. People need to take care of their trash properly.
5. We have too many in parks, and they are not maintained!
6. modern playground equipment
7. Maintaining cleanliness and safety and current parks. Redoing parking lot at Central Riverside Park.
8. Maintenance
9. Would be nice to have a splash pad here like the ones in Ionia and Greenville
10. Current parks need updates

- 11. Increase community garden space
- 12. Central Riverside park needs some attention. Buildings are very rough.

9. If you do not currently use parks and/or trails in the City of Belding, what is the reason? (Please select all that apply.)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Not interested / no time	6.0%	10
Lack of facilities	8.9%	15
Poorly maintained	22.0%	37
Too far away, not conveniently located	1.8%	3
I use parks in other townships/cities	7.1%	12
I can't access it because I can't get there	0.0%	0
I don't know where it is	2.4%	4
I don't know what's available	0.6%	1
Not applicable	64.9%	109
Other	10.1%	17
Answered	168	
Skipped	129	



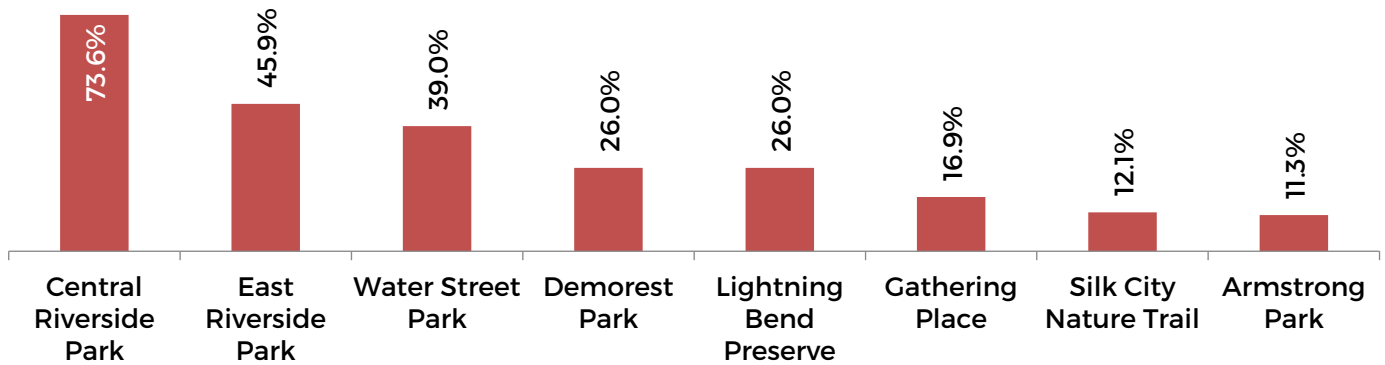
Other Responses

- 1. Lack of sufficient parking at Water Street Park in summer
- 2. LIKE TO SEE FLAT RIVER PROMOTED! Land on north side as a park for camping to promote Belding.

3. Drug use at riverside park and lightning bend
4. We have just moved to belding one month ago. When we get situated and settled we will be using the parks for relaxing and the trails for exercise.
5. The park by Leppinks is in horrible condition, tennis and basketball courts are horrible, there's goose poop all over especially on the walking path and the pavilion and picnic tables are in horrible shape, bathrooms never available.
6. Fenced area in a park to play fetch with dogs would minimize traveling to Lowell for their dog park.
7. I do use them
8. They need upgrading
9. Especially Demorest
10. Not the time and health reasons
11. Used for walking only...not maintained...geese are huge issue along with unsupervised kids
12. No kids!
13. Lightning Bend has too many drugs in it
14. The porta potty used this yr never cleaned or regularly dumped. They were filthy and stunk to high heaven.
15. I am interested in preservig natural resources
16. City keeps the restrooms locked during music in the park. Total embarrassment for bands traveling to Belding to perform only to find out, there's a smelly portapotty they must use. ent
17. We use them

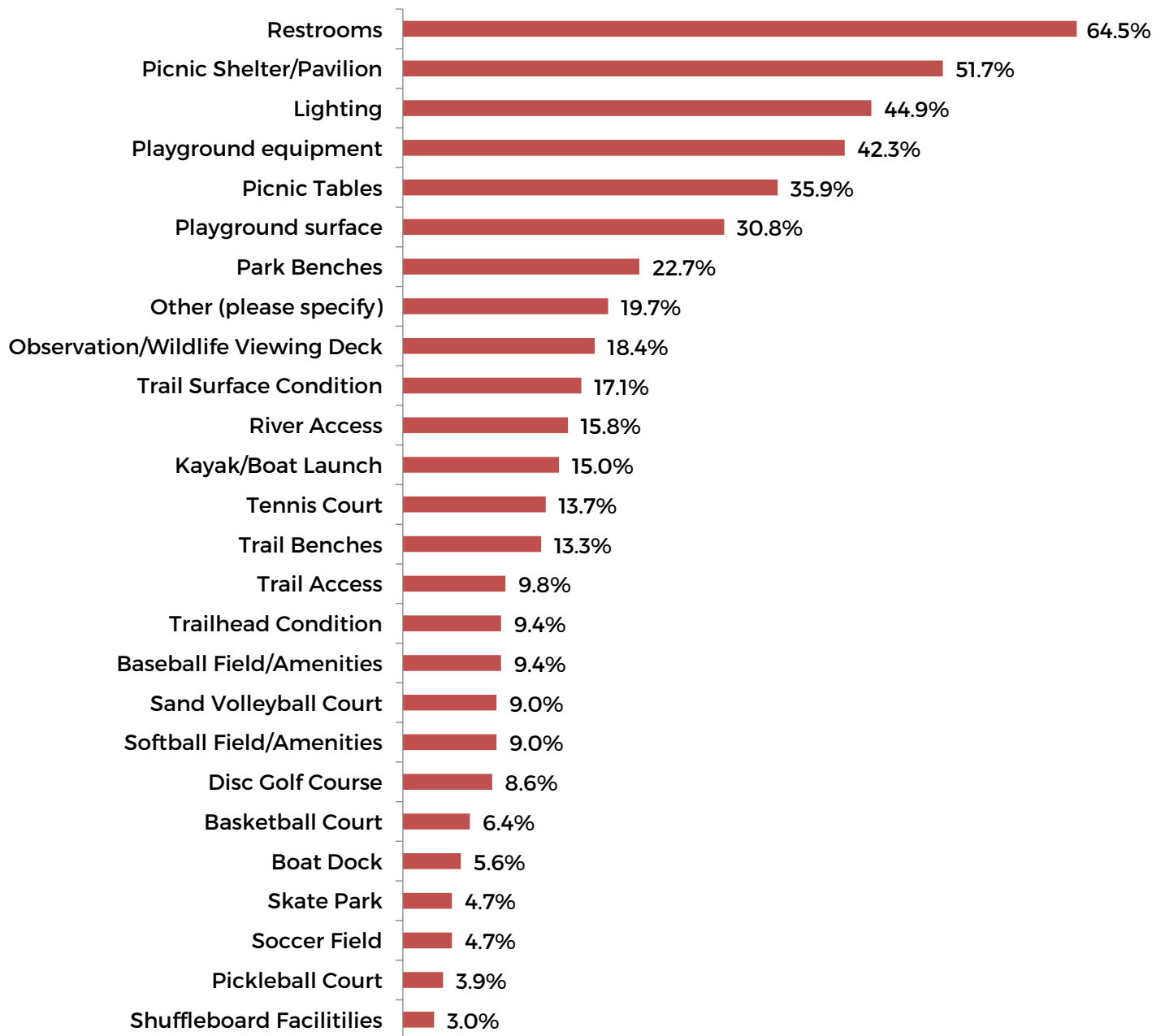
10. Which of the following parks do you feel are most in need of improvements? (Please pick up to THREE parks.)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Central Riverside Park	73.6%	170
East Riverside Park	45.9%	106
Water Street Park	39.0%	90
Demorest Park	26.0%	60
Lightning Bend Preserve	26.0%	60
Gathering Place	16.9%	39
Silk City Nature Trail	12.1%	28
Armstrong Park	11.3%	26
Answered	231	
Skipped	66	



11. Thinking about the park(s) you noted that needed improvement in Question 10, please indicate what improvement(s) are needed or desired.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Restrooms	64.5%	151
Picnic Shelter/Pavilion	51.7%	121
Lighting	44.9%	105
Playground equipment	42.3%	99
Picnic Tables	35.9%	84
Playground surface	30.8%	72
Park Benches	22.7%	53
Other (please specify)	19.7%	46
Observation/Wildlife Viewing Deck	18.4%	43
Trail Surface Condition	17.1%	40
River Access	15.8%	37
Kayak/Boat Launch	15.0%	35
Tennis Court	13.7%	32
Trail Benches	13.3%	31
Trail Access	9.8%	23
Baseball Field/Amenities	9.4%	22
Trailhead Condition	9.4%	22
Softball Field/Amenities	9.0%	21
Sand Volleyball Court	9.0%	21
Disc Golf Course	8.6%	20
Basketball Court	6.4%	15
Boat Dock	5.6%	13
Soccer Field	4.7%	11
Skate Park	4.7%	11
Pickleball Court	3.9%	9
Shuffleboard Facilities	3.0%	7
Answered	234	
Skipped	63	



Other Responses

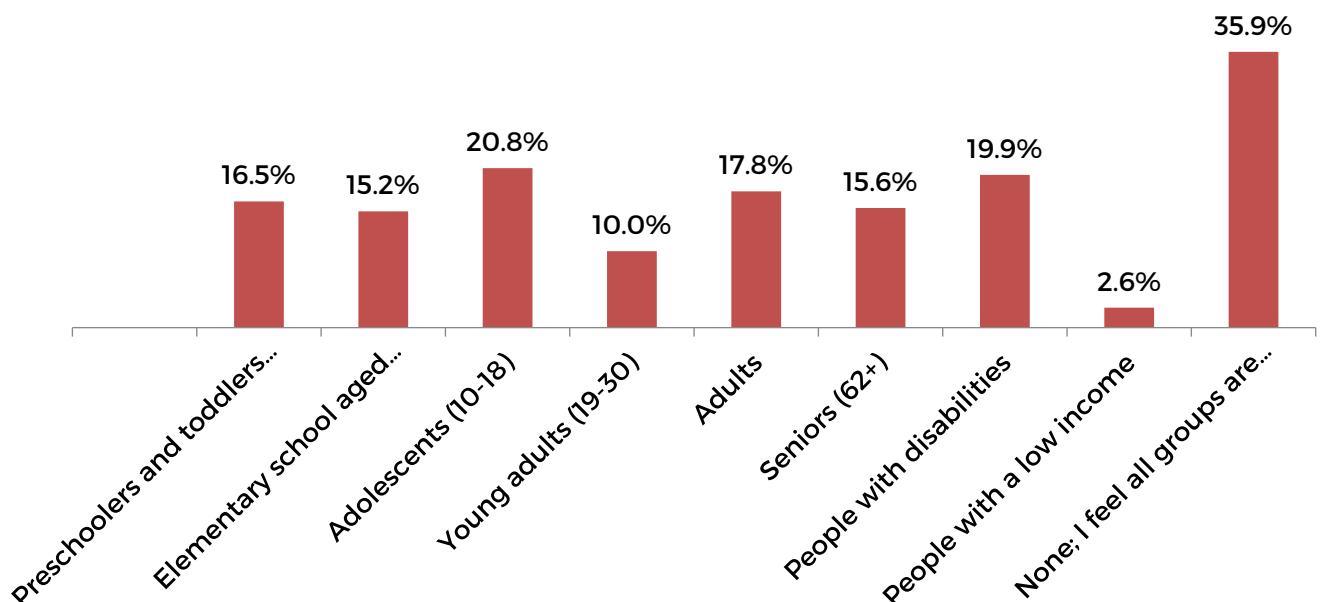
1. Fence at Demorest parking area
2. None need improvement
3. Parking lot at Demorest
4. Open the restrooms and partner with the HS for help cleaning the parks if the city can't afford it. Kids need community service hours or just fund it properly so employees can clean.

5. Barricades so morons can't drive their cars and trucks down the foot paths in lightning bend would be much appreciated!!!! I called the police when they ran me and my kids off the trail, but no one ever showed up to my knowledge.
6. The goose feces is a HUGE problem at Water Street
7. Promote fishing and RIVER use to help Belding grow.
8. Water park
9. Split rail fence needs sections replace. Parking lot needs attention. Doors to restrooms need painting. Restrooms need attention.
10. Police presence please
11. Clear the weeds especially in Central Riverside which I think is the most used park. Also, garbage all over which is caused by the people who use this park. Maybe improved signs such as "No Littering"?
12. Overgrown weeds and cracks in parks.
13. People/children need to respect and help keep these areas clean.
14. Splash pad is needed
15. Water street park has not had new bark in years! Weeds are growing in the middle of playground. Silk city trail needs retaining walls & fencing maintenance
16. The illegal activity control
17. Every couple of years the same type of survey goes around & not much is done. Please actually do something.
18. Keep goose poo cleaned up
19. Security
20. A dog park would be great
21. Please remove trash cans from right next to benches. Food, dirty diapers, Bees, dog poop. Who wants to sit near that? At least 6 feet away. Do you sit next to your trash can?
22. Decking
23. Poor maintenance. Weeds growing up everywhere
24. Splash pad - exercise equipment for adults etc
25. Trash maintenance
26. The parking lots
27. The parking lot! It's horrible!!!
28. Splash pad
29. Parking lot improvements
30. Concrete Tee Pads at the disc golf course at Lightning Bend
31. More landscaping and more trees/shade
32. Parking for when practices and sports events
33. Splashpad
34. Park maintenance is lacking in playground areas
35. Splash pad like every other town
36. The wood boardwalk is deteriorating and the trees keep getting washed away into the river. I'm afraid of the erosion over the next 5 years getting really bad.
37. Keeping clean
38. Parking lot at Demorest needs MAJOR help

- 39. Splash pad
- 40. Parking lot resurfacing
- 41. Parking lot
- 42. Everything
- 43. Need some sort of security cameras down there!
- 44. I put Armstrong Park, because I have no idea where it is. Lived in town my whole life.
- 45. Needles and need cameras
- 46. Exercise equipment along the trail. Seems very popular in other towns and trails

12. Within your family group, please indicate who is under-served by current recreation services and amenities? Please check all that apply.

Answer Choices	Responses	
Preschoolers and toddlers (under 5)	16.5%	38
Elementary school aged children (5-9)	15.2%	35
Adolescents (10-18)	20.8%	48
Young adults (19-30)	10.0%	23
Adults	17.8%	41
Seniors (62+)	15.6%	36
People with disabilities	19.9%	46
People with a low income	2.6%	6
None; I feel all groups are adequately served	35.9%	83
Other (please specify)	3.5%	8
Answered	231	
Skipped	66	

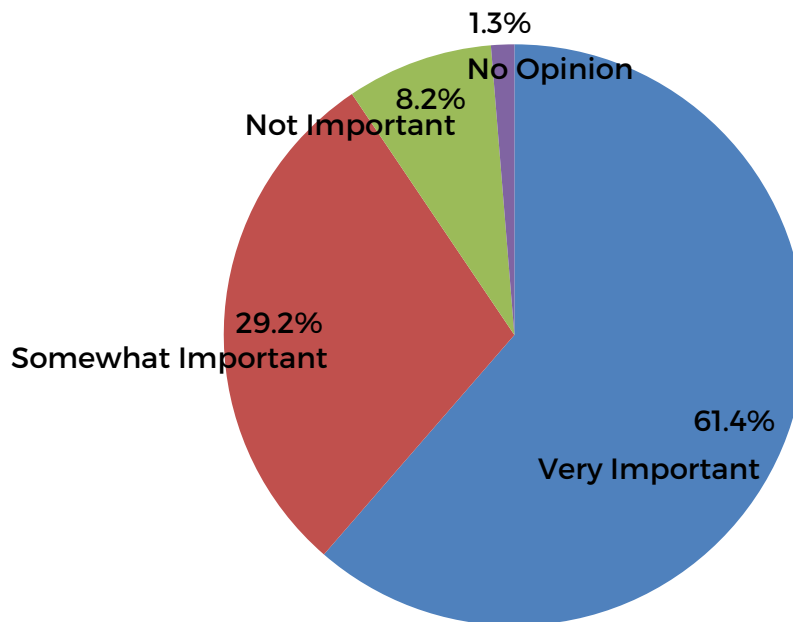


Other Responses

1. Pets. We need a REAL dog park.
2. BUSINESS NEED HELP FOR GROWTH
3. I feel so sorry for the teens who grow up in this town, there is nothing for them to do and the city/city council doesn't seem to care to get anything in this town for families to do, especially teens. We don't have any community center like Greenville does with activities for the kids. Always have to go to other towns for things to do.
4. dogs
5. Everyone
6. Dogs
7. I feel the parks are accessible to everyone, but just need some more TLC to make them more appealing
8. Pets

13. How important is pedestrian connectivity (sidewalks, trails, pathways, crossings, etc.) to you and/or your household?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very important	61.4%	143
Somewhat important	29.2%	68
Not important	8.2%	19
No opinion	1.3%	3
Weighted Average	2.51	
Answered	233	
Skipped	64	



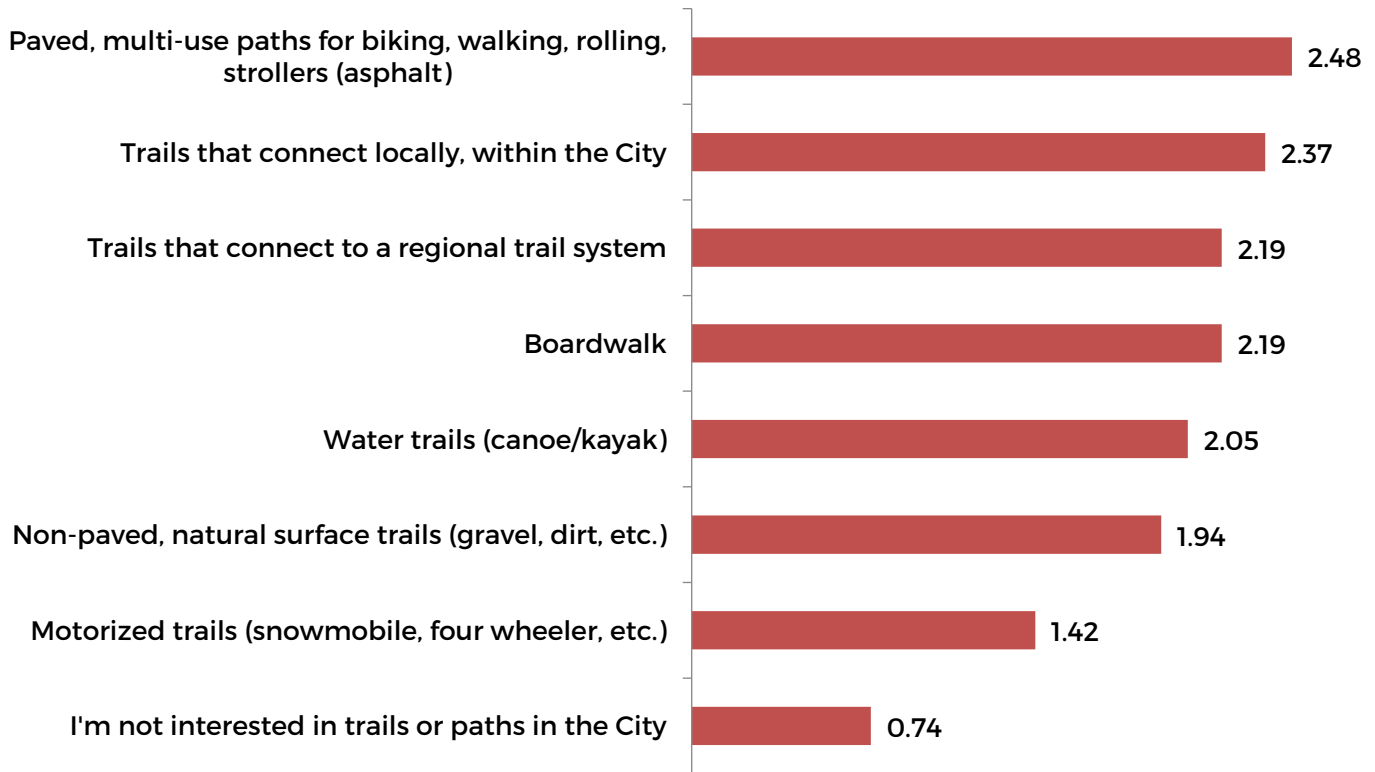
14. How should different types of trails or pathways be prioritized in the City of Belding?

Answer Choices	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority	I don't know	Total	Score	
I'm not interested in trails or paths in the City	5.2% (6)	13.9% (16)	30.4% (35)	50.4% (58)	115	0.74	
Motorized trails (snowmobile, four wheeler, etc.)	16.2% (37)	21.9% (50)	49.6% (113)	12.3% (28)	228	1.42	
Non-paved, natural surface trails (gravel, dirt, etc.)	23.0% (53)	53.9% (124)	17.0% (39)	6.1% (14)	230	1.94	
Water trails (canoe/kayak)	36.2% (83)	40.2% (92)	16.2% (37)	7.4% (17)	229	2.05	
Boardwalk	44.6% (99)	36.9% (82)	11.3% (25)	7.2% (16)	222	2.19	
Trails that connect to a regional trail system	39.9% (91)	43.0% (98)	13.2% (30)	4.0% (9)	228	2.19	
Trails that connect locally, within the City	53.3% (123)	34.6% (80)	8.2% (19)	3.9% (9)	231	2.37	
Paved, multi-use paths for biking, walking, rolling, strollers (asphalt)	58.2% (135)	33.2% (77)	7.3% (17)	1.3% (3)	232	2.48	
Other (please specify)					11	0.74	
Answered						235	
Skipped						62	

Other Responses

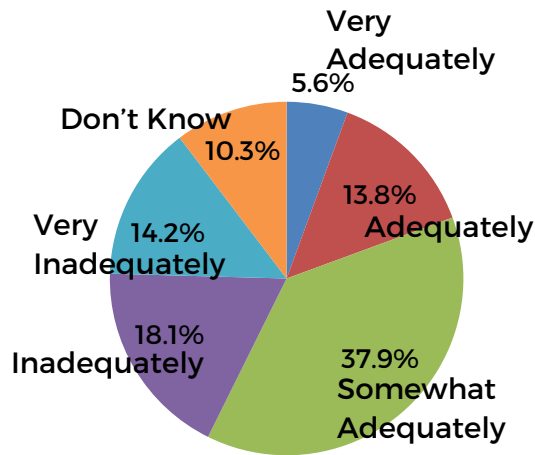
1. There should be motor vehicle trails and side-by-sides should be able to be used in the city
2. We don't need Motorsport trails in the city. We have massive amounts of local land around here for that.
3. N/A
4. I know all Ron Gunderson cares about are our trails, but we have to maintain what we have.
5. I'm very interested
6. Fenced in dog park
7. It would be great if there was a city-supported approached to getting sidewalks installed in neighborhoods that have never had them.
8. N/A
9. These are the most important to me

10. I'm interested in more family friendly parks, then trails
 11. Not applicable



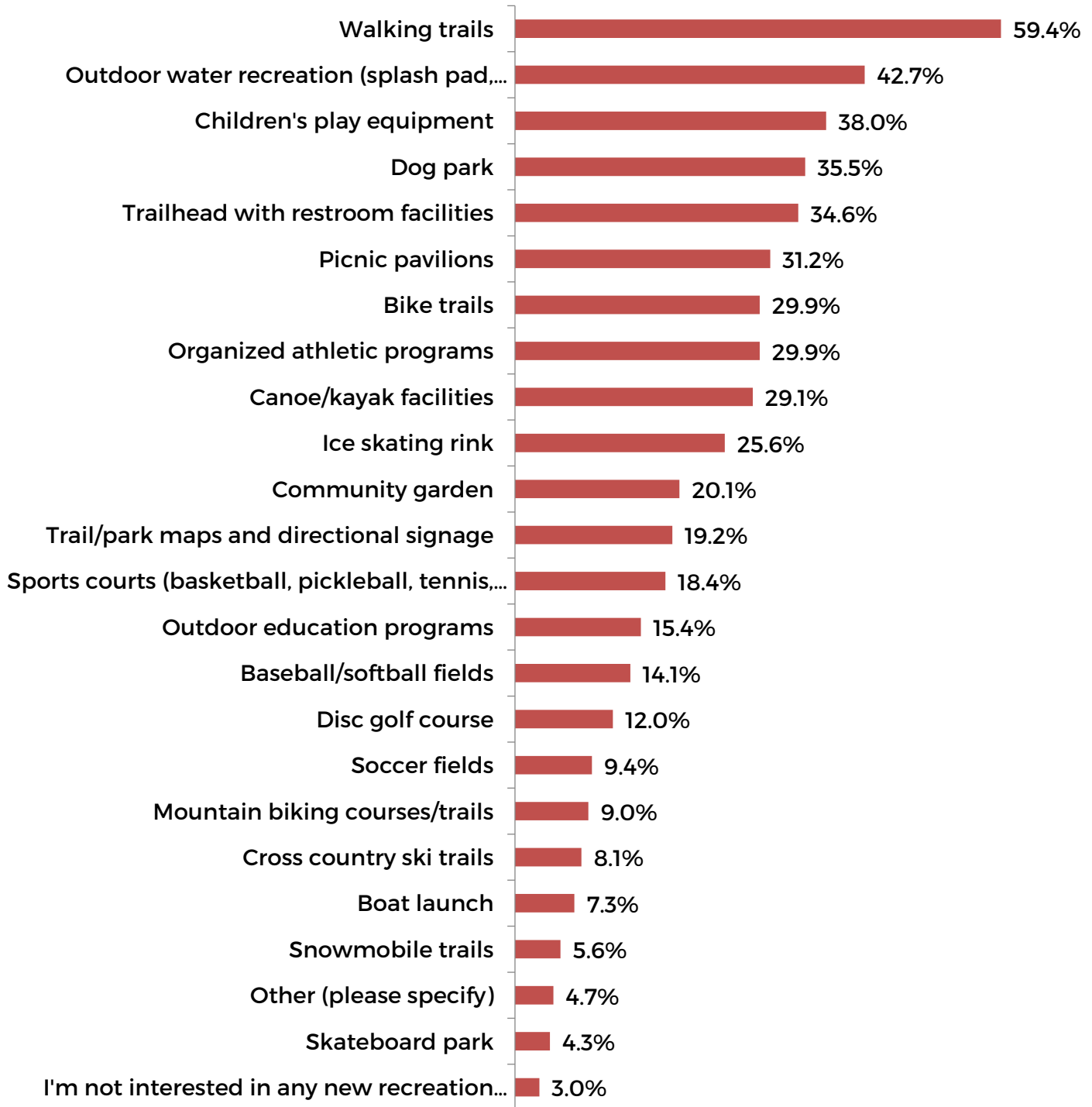
15. How adequately do you feel that the community is served by area programming (camps, sports leagues, outdoor education, etc.)?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very adequately	5.6%	13
Adequately	13.8%	32
Somewhat adequately	37.9%	88
Inadequately	18.1%	42
Very inadequately	14.2%	33
Don't know	10.3%	24
Weighted Average	2.47	
Answered	232	
Skipped	65	



16. What parks and recreation amenities, facilities, and services are you most interested in? (Please select your top five.)

Answer Choices	Responses	
Walking trails	59.4%	139
Outdoor water recreation (splash pad, fountains)	42.7%	100
Children's play equipment	38.0%	89
Dog park	35.5%	83
Trailhead with restroom facilities	34.6%	81
Picnic pavilions	31.2%	73
Organized athletic programs	29.9%	70
Bike trails	29.9%	70
Canoe/kayak facilities	29.1%	68
Ice skating rink	25.6%	60
Community garden	20.1%	47
Trail/park maps and directional signage	19.2%	45
Sports courts (basketball, pickleball, tennis, etc.)	18.4%	43
Outdoor education programs	15.4%	36
Baseball/softball fields	14.1%	33
Disc golf course	12.0%	28
Soccer fields	9.4%	22
Mountain biking courses/trails	9.0%	21
Cross country ski trails	8.1%	19
Boat launch	7.3%	17
Snowmobile trails	5.6%	13
Other (please specify)	4.7%	11
Skateboard park	4.3%	10
I'm not interested in any new recreation amenities, facilities, or services	3.0%	7
Answered	234	
Skipped	63	



17. Comments

1. This is a great idea to ask the community what they want. This way we own it and are more apt to take care of it better.
2. D.o.g P.a.r.k
3. the city needs a bike coordinator
4. They all need more police presents. Not just sitting in their cars but walking through the parks
5. Lightning bend needs barricades to stop people from driving the trails. We have a huge area of central riverside that's unused. The west end near the dam and pavilion aren't utilized. The area near the river needs to be managed so we can observe and enjoy the river. There's room north of the skating area for a small splash pad, but those are very pricey and Ionia isn't too far. A kayak launch off water street might be utilized, but also maybe not. The Ingalls Rd area is dangerous and hard to use or navigate."
6. The disc golf park at Lightning Bend is excellent, could be elevated with some new baskets & updated restroom/additional portapot
7. River is best asset to Belding growth would be happy to discuss with you Merrill Russell 794-1072.
8. I feel what we have needs to be better maintained. It would be nice to have someone who does summer recreation for children.
9. Drug use is keeping people out of the parks.
10. One of the nice things about belding is that the local "powers that be" aren't over stimulating the community with too much organization. There are a few nice trails, a few nice parks with playground equipment, and some history and memorials. The high school has nice sports facilities. This is really a good, well-balanced Community. Not a lot of wasteful spending of local tax dollars, not a lot of community overstimulation.
11. Many of the existing boardwalks (ex east Riverside Park) are falling apart and dangerous! We desperately need restrooms with running water that are open and maintained on a daily basis at all parks! We need a parks and recreation director who organizes activities for kids.
12. I could not use Central Riverside Park walk paths as they were covered with geese feces. Maybe it is due to Covid, but the tennis courts and areas around the park were full of weeds which make our city look dirty and unkempt. I wish the people are better at not littering. This park can be very dirty at times. How about planting some flowers to make our parks look more inviting and prettier? Thanks for allowing us to give feedback.
13. We have pretty nice parks they just aren't maintained. Pavilion and picnic tables must be replaced with longer lasting. Ice skating rink for winter and splash pad for summer would be wonderful. Need more activities outside for kids and teens. Best park by far is lightning bend path. The park by Leppinks is a disgrace. We also could bring more people into town if there was a better kayaking/tubing area
14. I walk almost everyday and get disgusted with how people are treating our Central Riverside Park picnic tables and throwing trash everywhere. Painting

obscenities. Why improve or fix up if people are not taking care of what's already there?

15. We need more things to be able to do with kids and all aged families.
16. We don't necessarily need to add in a bunch of new stuff, but instead should work on updating, maintaining, and promoting what we already have. Maybe put some type of camera to deter graffiti?
17. It would be nice to have some local businesses that support things like kayaking, biking, cross country skiing with these wonderful trails and waterways right here in Belding. As a dog owner, I see value in a fenced in area for dogs adjacent to the walking trails so they can play fetch and have a bit of freedom to run. This could also bring people together as well - easier to have a conversation with another dog owner while they are playing in the dog park than when you pass each other on the trail.
18. So unsafe at Park on Park St. Lights don't work at night, they go off and on scary walking through there at night. Landscaping is awful and embarrassing along trail. Needs new play equipment.
19. A plan needs to be in place to maintain/update our current parks. Playgrounds have not had bark spread in years making the drop of/landings of the slides dangerous high. Retaining walls of silk city trail has missing bricks along with weeds over growing them. Last week the trail was covered with wet leaves making it slick to walk in places.
20. We have parks, most in need of repair. Why do we not fix these opposed to adding on or developing more.
21. They are dull. Flowed, shrubs etc...would help
22. It would be great if our current parks were cleaned - no glass in dirt. A splash pad would be great! Winter activities with lighted trails would be amazing. The gardens along the boardwalks were once beautiful now not so much! Make us a beautiful & enjoyable place that we can be proud of.
23. Splash pad would be really great if modern play equipment is not doable
24. Thank you for requesting the opinions of local community members! We have a great need for clean, safe places for our children to gather for positive growth, play, and exercise!
25. There is a MASSIVE need for additional security at the skate park/picnic pavilion/soccer fields. I'd love for my kids and I to be able to use them without being harrassed by older teens that are just hanging out there. I won't even let my kids go there. Too many drugs, unsupervised teens, and not enough security for the residents that would actually use these parks otherwise.
26. Living in Grattan I enjoy our area and our kids are all grown up. So we don't use in town stuff
27. Lightning Bend Park is supposed to be a nature preserve, but I feel that adding more disc golf holes goes against the preservation of the area. Also, wouldn't it be great if the erosion issue was fixed on the trail - putting more dirt or asphalt doesn't count. Consider studying other natural trails and see what they do to prevent erosion. Also, trash isn't natural - there's nothing wrong with adding a

- trash can or two out there and have the same maintenance guy who collects for the disc golf also get the trash on the trails.
28. While volunteerism is a mainstay for the City of Belding, recreation activities and facilities could improve and supported with the addition of a recreation director.
 29. East Riverside is the best park in town and I use it daily since I moved here in April
 30. The picnic tables are all peeling and full of splinters. The swear words and crude pictures drawn on the pavilion are terrible, the sand volleyball court are full of glass and cigarette butts. Terribly kept up. Foul mouthed teenagers that hang around the playground area are not good for the little kids and they have no respect for the parents that ask them to watch their mouths.
 31. I feel as though we have several parks for our community. Focus should be on the ability to adequately maintain them and keep them relevant.
 32. Our city rec. Program is very poor and the maintenance of our parks is poor at best. It is a shame that brush between the river walk and the river on water street is out of control.
 33. Need to keep them free of litter, debris, needles and other harmful things that kids or walkers on the paths can come into contact with, no graffiti in pavilions, feel more safe surroundings and definitely more attention to bathrooms and maintenance
 34. There is a lot of damage to buildings during the day at the pavilions, restrooms are not accessible and portable one poorly maintained. Geese are huge issue.
 35. I would like to feel safe while at parks with my family. We have 8 children we take there often. They need updated for sure.
 36. As a family struggling with autism our biggest savior is the outdoors. We can't always blend with society so being able to avoid the public is nice and using trails really helps us feel human even when humans don't let us feel that way.
 37. We have a beautiful park at Lightning bend but the bike paths are not maintained at all and the main paths have several trees down. The paths need better marking as well. If it was advertised more, it would attract more to Belding. I go to other towns to use their hiking trails, I'm sure others would come here if they knew about it.
 38. We have nice parks but they need to be maintained. Maintenance of our parks is definitely lacking. New is nice but without maintenance it doesn't take long for it to become useless.
 39. Have used parks some, but not like we'd like to, either due to out of town job demands or not feeling safe when using, ie. Riverside park or Lightning Bend.
 40. I love this town. I grew up here and moved away just to have property since nothing was on the market. I would love to see more activities downtown like we see in Rockford. I know it's a lot to do but with volunteers I think we can make our town just as good as theirs for the community.
 41. Parking and access for Armstrong park. Maybe some benches and areas to fish from. Maybe a launch under the memorial bridge to lessen the load at water street park.

42. Maintain and keep lightning bend as a high school and middle school cross country course. People from all around and other schools enjoy coming here and using our course.
43. Keep doing the great work you're doing.
44. Belding is in a prime location with a gorgeous river running through it. I feel like visually and recreationally we should take advantage of that. Overall, I think central riverside park needs the most work. I think more trees, more landscaping and gardening and also making sure the sight line to the river is cleared regularly would help a ton. Maybe even a wooden path along the river similar to the one that leads to east riverside park. A viewing platform/bridge that goes under the dam would be nice as well. A lot of cities with dams incorporate the dam into their park decor. Also some spots for fishing would be nice as well. That's pretty much all I can think of at the moment. Good luck!
45. I do not think its wise to be looking at adding any new amenities until a plan to maintain what we already have regularly has been established. If things continued the way they have been, I would not support the addition of anything to our town. In 3 years, it will look like all the rest. Please fix the crooked lamp post, broken volleyball net, trail surfaces, boardwalk services, remove the weeds, and fill the children's play areas with the appropriate amount of mulch as well as fixing the equipment that is broken.
46. The basketball ball hoops are to low at the riverside park.
47. Cleaning up and keeping the parks and equipment that we already have should be top priority. We need to take care of what we have first!
48. I'm not a dog owner but if there was a dog park maybe people would not let their dogs run loose in Lightning Bend all the time which is frightening when at times they growl and bark at us when we hike.
49. Parks we have need major up keep, need updated along with more family-oriented ideas added to the parks we have. Then build off those.
50. As an owner of 2 dog's I would love to see a dog park.
51. Given current covid issues outdoor activities are of high importance, and our community's mental state.
52. The city needs a Recreation Director. Also, find ways to upkeep in reasonable and cost-effective ways. One example, partnership with groups and organizations. The Gardeneers is one great example
53. Please add more lighting and parking lot repair
54. We have issues keeping our parks from getting vandalized. Maybe we need to contact another city to see how they do it
55. Do it!!
56. Keep drugs out, sellers of drugs away...bathrooms clean and open
57. More lighting to deter crime. Officers interaction with those enjoying the park letting their presence be known.
58. The lack of nice bathrooms at Central Riverside and Lightning bend is not great. I think we could do better as a city at utilizing our parks better. We could organize more events at the parks or advertising the events there better. We have a great resource in Lightning bend but it is kinda the hidden gem.

Advertising all the great things we having going on there(disc golf, hiking, nature viewing, cross country, ect)

59. I would love to see a dog park in Belding. I Inow many people who would benefit from this.

60. Clean up what we have!!

61. Parks need to be maintained better and improved security.

62. While I am hoping the parks improve. In my opinion maintenance on these parks are half ass! Park benches need to be scraped and painted! Weed eating is par! The picnic tables look gross. As a tax paying citizen the Central Park pavilion is not appealing at all I would never rent that for a gathering.. I want people in the community to be proud of our parks and right now in my opinion they need work. And if improvements are made I sure hope the proper maintenance is kept up.

63. General maintenance is lacking across all city services, inclusive of city parks.

**Belding Park and Recreation Plan
Focus Group Summary
November 2021**

Focus Groups

1. Community Stakeholders
2. Trails and Nonmotorized Users
3. High School Students

Stakeholder Focus Group Summary

- Diversity of parks/trails amenities available and activities offered was a **strength**.
- Participants talked about how people in the community enjoy using the parks. There is a lot of **community pride** in the City parks.
- Identified Needs
 - **Maintenance** for many things – various park facilities, groundskeeping, trails. Many aspects of the parks and trails are falling into disrepair.
 - **Wayfinding** with parks to identify where restrooms, pavilions, and other amenities are, especially for those that are mobility impaired and who are not familiar with a specific park.
 - Participants noted that a **paid Park and Recreation Director** would be helpful to manage and oversee park and recreation facilities and programs throughout the City. The Department of Public Works helps address some maintenance issues. A network of volunteers run various recreation programs, sports leagues in the City.
 - Open, accessible **restrooms** for park users. Participants acknowledged this is difficult with the park vandalism that is occurring.
- **Park safety and vandalism** is a new, ongoing issue that has recently emerged. Since the spring of 2020, aligning with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic when schools closed and many adults were sent home during the initial statewide shutdown, the City Police Department, City Staff, and members of the community have noted variety of vandalism in many City parks. Suggestions to address this included having cameras that where in hard-to-reach places to catch the people who are doing this and having more community members out using the parks to deter the vandalism.
- There was concern about the questionable, **unsafe activities** at the pavilion(s) at **Central Riverside Park**.
- Diversity of playground equipment could be improved. Having **different kinds of playground/playscapes** for young children.
- “Something for all people of all ages.” [Belding Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs]
- “A gem in the rough.” [Belding Park and Recreation Facilities and Programs]
- One word to describe Belding Parks and Recreation: Opportunity

Trails and Nonmotorized Users Summary

- Participant **enjoy the nature** that can be experienced, seen on trails.
- Trails **used by a variety of people** - means of transportation, recreation, walking for exercise, for social enjoyment, biking for fun, people biking through the community on the Fred Meijer Flat River Valley Trail, long-boarders (like a skateboard),
- Identified Needs
 - **Trail maintenance** year-round
 - Wooden trail near East Side Park
 - **Wayfinding** for resources, attractions on trails
 - **Street Name signs** on trails at intersections
 - **Lack of one, connected trail/sidewalk system** in City. Various pieces and segments. There is no single loop or “backbone.”
 - **Trail map** would be helpful for those on the trail and on a website to help people plan trips.
- Future events could promote trail: Fall Festive Walk, Labor Day & Night Walk

Students Focus Group Summary

- Students enjoy the skate park because their friends hang out there
- High school football field is popular because it’s a place where friends hang out
- Trails are popular for students to walk with friends, family, and are a destination because they are scenic.
- Improvements Identified
 - An area where kids could hang out
 - Lighting to and on the trails
 - Swimming area (pool, beach)

Place 1- what made it so great?

Place 2 - What makes it so great?

Question 3- What could be improved or what would you like to have in Belding for fun?

Max



- 1.This place was fun while growing up because it paved the way for what I enjoy now.
- 2.This place is a nice place to hangout mess around with friends while doing something enjoyable
- 3.Belding could have more hangout spots or improve the ones we have now.

Brookelynne



1. This place has many great and fun memories with family and friends. We had lots of events happen there.
- Place 2 - I think we should have a sandy like beach area, instead of having to travel places further area
- Question 3- Have more areas for older people other than like just the skate park

Ava



I would go to this park on a bike with my parents when I was little.
I still like this place because when my friend is in town we walk down the wooden bridge trail to this park and take pictures. I think we should have more plants around Belding.

Codey



Place 1. I loved this place because football was my main sport.

Place 2. I still love this place because I still play football and I announce for the little kids.

Question 3. I think it would be better if we improved our overall football field. For example, better turf and a better pressbox.

Keagen



Place #1: It was my old house and I loved to go fishing on this lake and the Neighbors were so nice

Place #2: It is one of the first places I went too and it was fun

Question #3: It Can be improved by just cleaning up the area

Charlie



Belding High School is the place that I spend most of the time when I am out of my house. It's a place where I get to see a lot of friends and learn new things everyday. And although I don't like school I always have a lot of fun with my friends here...

The RUDNESS FIELD could have been a place that I would have liked a lot if I was 7 or 10 years old because I really like playing soccer and practicing other sports. It could also be any of the parks in Belding because I go for a walk and spend a lot of time in the parks.

I think Belding needs an improvement in building more stores to go shopping and more indoor things that can be used in winter because in winter it's too cold to be outside.

EXAMPLES

- Cinema
- Gym

Carley



When I was little I really loved the swings. It was my favorite thing to do at recess



Whenever I'm out on a run and I run past the river I always stop and notice how pretty it is.

It would be nice to have more places in Belding to sit by the river and see how calming it is.

Madison



Hannah



Singing the fight song and winning games.



Celebrating after a good race and drinking chocolate milk after long races.
I don't know what could improve.

Jay



1- my childhood made this place great for me,
doing arts and crafts with my mom, driving

Mario



in summer I like to play in that football stadiums



I like to run there in summer time



Caleb



I lived in grand rapids for 6 years and I loved the bright skyline
I spent most my time at the skatepark the past 2 years and i still go every day

Luisa

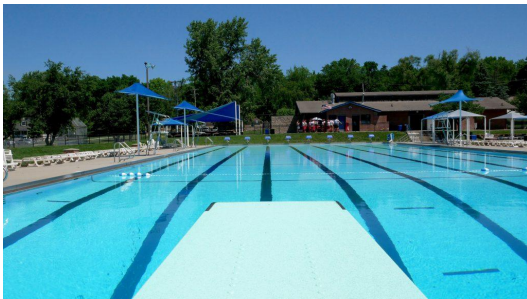


My family created the most fun and beautiful moments, and my friends the memories that I will never forget at night in Cancun.

When I go for a walk and hang out with my friends

Question 3- What could be improved or what would you like to have in Belding for fun?

Kait



RECEIVED

DEC 21 2021

Affidavit of Publication

CITY of BELDING

STATE OF MICHIGAN }
COUNTY OF MONTCALM } SS

BELDING CITY COUNCIL
5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan

TO THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
AND OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

Alyviah Mason, being duly sworn, says:

The City of Belding has prepared a draft Five Year Parks and Recreation Plan and invites the public to view the plan.

That she is Agent of the Daily News Greenville, a daily newspaper of general circulation, printed and published in Greenville, Montcalm County, Michigan ; that the publication, a copy of which is attached hereto, was published in the said newspaper on the following dates:

The draft plan is available for review on the City of Belding website:
<http://www.Belding.mi.us>
or at City Hall, 120 S. Pleasant Street, Belding.

December 17, 2021

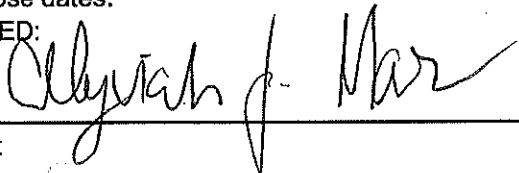
The City Council will be considering the adoption of the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan at a Public Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 18, 2022 commencing at 7:00 p.m. at the Pere Marquette Depot located 100 Depot Street, Belding.

The City Council intends to hold this meeting in-person to the extent permissible under Michigan law during the current coronavirus pandemic. The City will abide by any applicable orders or legal authority related to the coronavirus pandemic, which may require capacity constraints at the Pere Marquette Depot, masks, and social distancing. In the event that future legal authorities make an in-person meeting impermissible or not feasible, the City Council will post an update online at <http://www.Belding.mi.us> and at City Hall, which may establish a new meeting location or provide for an electronic (telephone/video) meeting.

That said newspaper was regularly issued and circulated on those dates.

All interested persons are invited to submit their comments in person or in writing at or before the meeting.

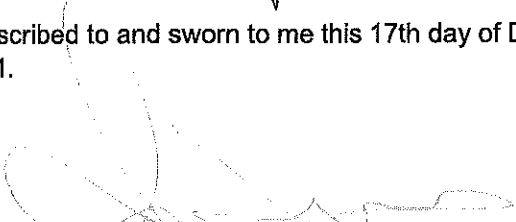
SIGNED:



Agent

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City Clerk by email at j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us, by phone at 616-794-1900, extension 210 or by mail/in person at 120 S. Pleasant Street, Belding, MI 48809.
Published 12/17/21

Subscribed to and sworn to me this 17th day of December 2021.



Amber M. Rood, Ionia County, acting in the County of Montcalm, Montcalm County, Michigan
My commission expires: September 16, 2025

99102698 00284510 616-794-4805

City of Belding *
120 S. Pleasant
Belding, MI 48809

Invoice

Greenville Daily News

P.O. Box 340
Greenville, MI 48838

Phone: (616) 754-9301

Fax: (616) 754-8559

URL: www.thedailynews.cc

City of Belding *
120 S. Pleasant
Belding, MI 48809

Acct #: 99102698
Phone: (616) 794-1900
Date: 12/14/2021
Ad #: 00284510
Salesperson: 239 Ad Taker: amason

Class: 996

Ad Notes:

Sort Line: BELDING CITY COUNCIL 5-Year Pa

Description	Start	Stop	Ins.	Cost/Day	Amount
01 Daily News DN PUB	12/17/2021	12/17/2021	1	152.10	152.10
aff Affidavit charge 2020					20.00
10 The Internet DN PUB	12/17/2021	12/17/2021	1	0.00	0.00

Affidavit of Publication
606 258 901 000

12-14-21
Janney

Ad Text:

BELDING CITY COUNCIL
5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan

TO THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF THE CITY OF
BELDING, AND OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS:

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Recreation Plan and invites the public to view the plan.

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<http://www.Belding.mi.us>
or at City Hall, 120 S. Pleasant Street, Belding.

Payment Reference:

Total: 172.10
Tax: 0.00
Net: 172.10
Prepaid: 0.00

Total Due 172.10

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5-Year Parks and Recreation Plan**

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Published 12/17/21

Janae Cooper

From: Stafford Media <legals@thedailynews.cc>
Sent: Tuesday, December 14, 2021 11:34 AM
To: Janae Cooper
Cc: legals@staffordgroup.com
Subject: Re: 30 Day Review Period Notice (002)
Attachments: AD_00284510.pdf; ReceiptForAcct_99102698_Order_00284510.pdf

Good Morning Janae - Please see attached proof for your approval along with a copy of the invoice. An affidavit will mail out following publication on Friday.

Alyvia Mason

The Daily News | The Daily News Extra | View Newspaper Group
616.754.9301 | legals@thedailynews.cc
<https://thedailynews.cc>

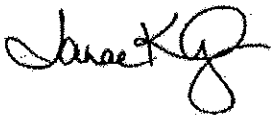
PLEASE NOTE *EFFECTIVE 3/1/21, our affidavit fee will be \$20.00

On Tue, Dec 14, 2021 at 11:29 AM Janae Cooper <j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us> wrote:

Please publish this one (1) time in the Friday, December 17, 2021 edition of the Greenville Daily News. Forward the bill and an Affidavit of Publication to me in your usual manner.

Please send confirmation of the receipt of this email message.

Thank you,



Janae K. Cooper | Belding City Clerk | (616) 794-1900 ext. 210 | j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us |

Office hours: Monday - Thursday, 7 a.m to 6 p.m.



CITY of BELDING
live. grow. naturally.

**City of Belding City Council
Notice of Public Hearing**

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF CITY OF BELDING,
IONIA COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS

A public hearing concerning adoption of a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan for the City of Belding will be held during the City Council Meeting on January 18, 2022, at 7:00 PM. This meeting will be held at the Pere Marquette Depot, 100 Depot Street. All interested persons are invited to submit their comments in person or in writing at or before the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City Clerk at the address number listed above.

The draft plan is available for review on the City website: www.belding.mi.us

Janae K. Cooper
City of Belding Clerk

Recreation Advisory Board Minutes
January 10, 2022
6:30 p.m.
Pere Marquette Depot
100 Depot Street

Chair Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

The Clerk, Janae Cooper, took the roll call:

Members present: Scott McNeal, Mike Brady and Sharon Carlson
(Mike McCarty arrived at 6:46 p.m.)

Members absent: Mike McCarty and Ron Devereaux

Moved by McNeal, seconded by Brady to excuse members McCarty and Devereaux. Motion carried by voice vote.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by McNeal, seconded by Brady to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried by voice vote.

Chair Carlson noted that the February meeting is on February 14th not February 8th as indicated on the agenda. The Chair also noted that due to the absences, if the Board would like to table the selection of Chair and Vice Chair it can be addressed when the agenda item is up for discussion.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by McNeal, seconded by Brady to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2021 meeting. Motion carried by voice vote.

Unfinished Business

- A. Lightning Bend - An engineering proposal was submitted by Williams & Works for MNRTF Grant Improvements. Chair Carlson advised that the Rec Board will need professional assistance as this is above their expertise. The Chair also recommended that the City seek other bids and noted that since the City does not have a Rec Director that the responsibility falls upon the City Manager and/or City Clerk. Moved by Brady, seconded by McNeal to seek additional quotes for the Engineering Proposal for the MFTRF Grant Improvements. Motion carried by voice vote.

(McCarty arrived at 6:46 p.m.)

New Business

A. Moved by Brady, seconded by McNeal that the Rec Board recommend the City Council to approve the Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan, 2022-2026. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

YEAS: McNeal, McCarty and Chair Carlson
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: Brady
ABSENT: Devereaux

Chair Carlson noted that the challenge the Rec Board faces is that they do not have a director; they rely on the City Manager, Clerk and Finance Director.

B. Selection of Chair for 2022
The Chair called for nominations. Moved by McNeal, seconded by McCarty to nominate Devereaux as Chair. Brady nominated McCarty. McCarty declined the nomination. Hearing no further nominations, the Clerk called for the vote to appoint Devereaux as Chair. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

YEAS: McNeal, McCarty, Brady and Chair Carlson
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Devereaux

C. Selection of Vice-Chair for 2022
The Chair called for nominations. Moved by McNeal, seconded by McCarty to nominate Carlson as Vice-Chair. Moved by Brady, seconded by Carlson to nominate McCarty as Vice-Chair. Hearing no further nominations, the Clerk called for the vote to appoint Carlson as Vice-Chair. Motion failed by the following roll call vote:

YEAS: McNeal
NAYS: Brady, McCarty and Chair Carlson
ABSENT: Devereaux

The Clerk called for the vote to appoint McCarty as Vice-Chair. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

YEAS: McCarty, Brady and Chair Carlson
NAYS: McNeal
ABSENT: Devereaux

Member Comments

Brady commented on the lack of representation on the Board of a High School Junior. McNeal advised that the Rec Board has not had participation in the past. Brady offered to pursue the matter. Brady also commented on Water Street Park and encouraged each member to walk or drive by it to view its condition.

McCarty commented on Brady's comment regarding the condition of Water Street Park.

McNeal commented on the conditions near the library as well.

Chair Carlson commented on Water Street Park and the Gathering Place near the library. She noted that there needs to be communication with the powers who can make the changes. She questioned if the work could be contracted out, or if there are any opportunities for volunteer groups or if City Hall Staff could do the work. She thanked everyone for entrusting her to be Chair the Past several years.

Next Meeting Date

February 14, 2022

Adjournment

Moved by McNeal, seconded by Brady to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 p.m.

Motion carried by voice vote.

Janae Cooper, City Clerk

PUBLIC NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING

Pursuant of Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being Sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

REC BOARD

TIME: 6:30 p.m.
DATE: Monday, January 10, 2022
LOCATION: Pere Marquette Depot, 100 Depot Street
RE: Regular Meeting

Please Note: The Rec Board will discuss submitting a recommendation for the City Council to adopt the Five-Year Parks and Rec Plan at the City Council meeting on January 18, 2022. All interested persons are invited to submit their comments in person or in writing at or before the Rec Board meeting. The draft Five-Year Parks and Rec Plan is available for review on the City website: www.belding.mi.us

The City of Belding will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at meetings/hearings, to individuals with disabilities attending the meetings/hearings upon 14-day notice to the City of Belding. Inquiries may be made by calling the Janae Cooper, City Clerk at 616-794-1900, ext. 210. Minutes of the public body are stored in the City Clerk's Office.

Phone: 616-794-1900
Fax: 616-794-0091
Website: www.belding.mi.us

Date of Posting: January 6, 2022
Time of Posting: 3:14 p.m.

**REGULAR MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, January 18, 2022
BELROCKTON
108 HANOVER STREET
7:00 P.M.**

A meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan was convened in open and public session at the Belrockton, 108 Hanover Street at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 18, 2022.

Mayor Bruce Meyers called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Council Member Scheid gave the Invocation.

Mayor Meyers led the Pledge of Allegiance.

City Clerk, Janae Cooper took the roll call:

Members present: Mike Scheid, Jorel Davis, Ron Gunderson and Bruce Meyers

Members absent: Bonita Steele

Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to excuse Steele's absence per section 4.5(f) of the City Charter. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All.

Approval of Agenda

Moved by Scheid seconded by Gunderson to approve the Agenda as presented. Mayor Meyers noted the following addition to the Agenda under New Business: Add Item M. Resolution of Appreciation for Ernie Thomas. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - all.

Public Hearing

Mayor Meyers opened up the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m. to discuss the Rec Board's recommendation to adopt the Five-Year Parks and Rec Plan, 2022-2026 as presented. Gunderson advised that the Plan is used by other entities for securing grants, making decisions, etc. The number of survey responses received were in line with what was projected; it was considered a good response. Hearing no members of the public offer questions or comments, the Mayor declared the Public Hearing closed at 7:10 p.m. The Clerk took a roll call vote to close the public hearing, with the result of the vote as follows:

Yeas: Gunderson, Davis, Scheid and Mayor Meyers
Nays: None

Absent: Steele

Consent Agenda

Moved by Scheid seconded by Davis to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All.

The Consent Agenda is as follows:

- A. Approve Independent Bank Checks 77378 to 77428 in the amount of \$111,355.57
Approve Independent Bank - File Approval Confirmation
Approve Independent Bank - ACH Transaction Approval Confirmation
- B. Approve Minutes: Regular scheduled meeting, January 4, 2022

Reports by Council Liaisons

Mayor Meyers reported that the Housing Commission will be meeting on January 20th at 6:00 p.m.

New Business

- A. Moved by Scheid seconded by Davis to Adopt the Five Year Parks & Rec Plan as recommended by the Rec Board. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-01**

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A NEW FIVE-YEAR RECREATION PLAN

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, held in said City on the 18th day of January 2022.

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board has engaged the process to develop a new Five-Year Recreation Plan, which describes pertinent features, recreation facilities, policies and desired implementation to improve recreational offerings in the community during the period between 2022 and 2026; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board facilitated public input via a community survey in October 2021 and three individual focus groups in November 2021 prior to the development of the Plan, enabling citizens and stakeholders to express opinions and needs, ask questions, offer advice, and discuss all aspects of the City's parks and recreation needs and amenities;

WHEREAS, the City of Belding has prepared the Five-Year Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and to meet the recreation

needs of residents as expressed during the public input sessions;
and

WHEREAS, a notice was published indicating that the Plan was available on the City's website and offered for a period of at least 30 days for public comment and review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board has recommended approval of the updated Five-Year Recreation Plan to the City Council, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held by the City of Belding Council on today's date.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Belding City Council hereby adopts the Five-Year Recreation Plan as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents and visitors of the community.

RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY 2022.

B. Moved by Scheid seconded by Davis to appoint John Niemela as an Alternate Board of Review member. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-02**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN APPOINTING JOHN NIEMELA AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER TO
THE BOARD OF REVIEW.**

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, held in said City on the 18th day of January 2022.

WHEREAS, an alternate member(s) are allowed to be appointed to the Board of Review to serve in the case of an absence of a regular member; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Niemela is a resident of the City of Belding; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Niemela has indicated his willingness to serve as an alternate member on the Board of Review.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan that John Niemela be appointed to serve as a alternate

member on the Board of Review with a term of office to expire on 1/01/23.

THIS RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

C. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to authorize the DPW to purchase a tractor and mower. Motion carried 3-1 by the following roll call vote:

Yes - Gunderson, Scheid and Mayor Meyers

No - Davis

Absent: Steele

The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-03**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN AUTHORIZING DPW TO PURCHASE A TRACTOR AND REAR
MOUNT BOOM MOWER**

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, held in said City on the 18th day of January 2022.

WHEREAS, to comply with regulations set forth by EGLE regarding grass height and maintenance surrounding the ponds at the lagoons; and

WHEREAS, the terrain surrounding the ponds at the lagoons is uneven and is unable to be sufficiently maintained with the city's existing equipment per EGLE's regulations; and

WHEREAS, there are additional areas within the city where tall grass and brush along the roadsides is encroaching into the roadways; and

WHEREAS, to comply with EGLE's regulations and to accomplish those additional tasks, the DPW requests to purchase a tractor and rear mount boom mower from Burnips Equipment Co., in Dorr, Michigan in the amount of \$128,826.91.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Belding City Council hereby authorizes the DPW to purchase a tractor and rear mount boom mower from Burnips Equipment Co., in Dorr, Michigan in the amount of \$128,826.91.

**RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF
JANUARY 2022.**

D. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to appoint City Manager Jon E. Stoppels to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-04**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN APPOINTING JON STOPPELS TO A PARTIAL TERM ON THE DDA
BOARD.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, there has been a change in the City Manager position in the City of Belding, effective January 4, 2022.

WHEREAS, Downtown Development Authority Act 197 of 1975 states the Chief Executive Officer, being the mayor or city manager, will serve on the board;

WHEREAS, to retain consistency of prior practices established by the City of Belding, that Jon Stoppels, City Manager, be appointed to fill the partial term on the DDA expiring June 1, 2025.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan that City Manager Jon Stoppels be appointed to fill the partial term on the DDA expiring June 1, 2025.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

E. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Davis to appoint City Manager Jon E. Stoppels to the Building Authority. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-05**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN APPOINTING JON STOPPELS TO THE BUILDING AUTHORITY.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, there is a vacancy on the Building Authority with a partial term expiring June 30, 2023; and

WHEREAS, as part of their regular duties, the City Manager serves on the Building Authority; and

WHEREAS, there has been a staff change in the City Manager position; and

WHEREAS, the current City Manager, Jon Stopples be appointed to the Building Authority; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan that Jon Stoppels be appointed to the Building Authority with a term to expire on June 30, 2023.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18th DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

F. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to designate City Manager Jon E. Stoppels as Street Administrator. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-06**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN DESIGNATING JON STOPPELS AS STREET ADMINISTRATOR.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, Section 13(9) of Act 51, Public Acts of 1951 provided that each incorporated city and village to which funds are returned under the provisions of this section, that, "the responsibility for street improvements, maintenance, and traffic operations work, and the development, construction, or repair of off-street parking facilities and construction or repair of street lighting shall be coordinated by a single administrator to be designated by the governing body who shall be responsible for and shall represent the municipality in transactions with the State Transportation Department pursuant to this act."

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan that Jon Stoppels be designated as the single Street Administrator for the City of Belding, Michigan, in all transactions

with the State Transportation Department as provided in Section 13 of the Act.

THIS RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

G. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to add City Manager Jon E. Stoppels as an Authorized Signer on Mercantile Bank and Independent Bank Accounts for the City of Belding. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-07**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN AUTHORIZING CITY MANAGER JON E. STOPPELS TO SIGN
CHECKS FOR THE CITY OF BELDING.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, Jon E. Stoppels has been appointed City Manager of the City of Belding effective January 4, 2022; and,

WHEREAS, the City Manager must have the authorization of city council to sign checks for the City of Belding.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan that authorization is hereby granted to City Manager Jon E. Stoppels to sign checks for the City of Belding.

**THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY
OF JANUARY, 2022.**

H. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to authorize to issue City Manager Jon E. Stoppels a City Credit Card from Mercantile Bank. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-08**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN AUTHORIZING TO ISSUE A MERCANTILE BANK CREDIT CARD
TO JON STOPPELS FOR CITY USE**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, Jon Stoppels has been appointed the City Manager of the City of Belding, effective January 4, 2022; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan to issue Jon Stoppels a credit card from Mercantile Bank for city use.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

- I. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Davis to authorize the City Manager signature on Land Exchange Transaction Agreement. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes -All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-09**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN AUTHORIZING JON STOPPELS SIGNATURE ON THE LAND
EXCHANGE TRANSACTION AGREEMENT**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, Jon Stoppels has been appointed the City Manager of the City of Belding, effective January 4, 2022; and,

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan, authorize Jon Stoppels signature on the Land Exchange Transaction Agreement.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

- J. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Davis to authorize engineering services by Fleis & Vandenbrink for Bridge Street bridge over the Flat River. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-10**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING, MICHIGAN

TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY FLEIS & VANDENBRINK TO PROVIDE DESIGN ENGINEERING SERVICES AND BIDDING ASSISTANCE FOR BRIDGE STREET OVER THE FLAT RIVER BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, The City of Belding's Application for preventative maintenance improvements for the Bridge Street Bridge over the Flat River was selected by MDOT Local Bridge Program; and,

WHEREAS, there is an estimated construction cost of \$327,000 in fiscal year 2024; and

WHEREAS, the scope of improvements identified in the funding application are as follows:

- Resurfacing of the asphalt approaches
- Patching and epoxy overlay of the concrete deck
- Expansion joint replacement and re-sealing other joints
- Concrete spalling repair on the beams
- Miscellaneous structure patching (joint headers, sidewalks and substructure)
- Surface sealer/coating on concrete railings, sidewalks and fascias; and

WHEREAS, the work is not scheduled until the 2023-24 construction season however preliminary design and paperwork is required at this time by MDOT; and

WHEREAS, the total proposed fee by Fleis & Vandenbrink is \$25,400.00; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan, to accept the proposal submitted by Fleis & Vandenbrink to provide design engineering services and bidding assistance in the amount of \$25,400.00 with an estimated cost of \$327,000.00 to complete the work.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

K. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to adopt the Dial-A-Ride Drug and Alcohol Policy. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-11**

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING, MICHIGAN

**APPROVING THE REVISED DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY FOR THE CITY OF
BELDING DIAL-A-RIDE.**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Dial-A-Ride revised Drug and Alcohol Policy has been approved by MDOT; and

WHEREAS, the policy is necessary to meet our Federal requirements for Public Transportation services; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Dial-A-Ride is required to adhere to the conditions
In the revised Drug and Alcohol Policy; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan, that the Mayor is hereby authorized to sign the revised Drug and Alcohol Policy for the City of Belding Dial-A-Ride.

**THIS RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY,
2022.**

- L. Moved by Scheid, seconded by Gunderson to approve the Dial-A-Ride Annual Budget. Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-12**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN APPROVING DIAL-A-RIDE 2023 ANNUAL BUDGET**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January, 2022.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Act 51 of the Public Acts of 1951, as amended (Act 51), it is necessary for the City of Belding Dial-A-Ride, (hereby known as THE APPLICANT), to provide a local transportation program for the state fiscal year of 2022-2023 and, therefore, apply for state financial assistance under provisions of Act 51; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary for THE APPLICANT, to name an official representative for all public transportation matters, who is authorized to provide such information as deemed necessary by

the State Transportation Commission or department for its administration of Act 51; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary to certify that no changes in eligibility documentation have occurred during the past state fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, the performance indicators for this agency have been reviewed and approved by THE APPLICANT; and

WHEREAS, THE APPLICANT, has reviewed and approved the proposed balanced (surplus) budget, and funding sources of estimated federal operating funds of 123,581.00, estimated state operating funds of \$120,098.00, estimated local operating funds of \$80,000.00, estimated fare box of \$40,400.00, estimated other funds (RTAP) of \$4,500.00, with total estimated expenses of \$323,679.00.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that THE APPLICANT hereby makes its intentions known to provide public transportation services and to apply for state financial assistance with this annual plan, in accordance with Act 51; and

HEREBY, appoints Valerie Conklin as the Transportation Coordinator, for all public transportation matters, who is authorized to provide such information as deemed necessary by the State Transportation Commission or department for its administration of Act 51 for 2022/23.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

M. Mayor Meyers recognized Ernie Thomas, DPW Director, with a Resolution of Appreciation upon his retirement. The City Council passed the Resolution of Appreciation by the following roll call vote: Yes - All. The Resolution is as follows:

**CITY OF BELDING
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-13**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELDING,
MICHIGAN EXPRESSING APPRECIATION TO ERNEST THOMAS ON HIS
RETIREMENT**

A regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, was held in said City on the 18th day of January 2022.

WHEREAS, Ernie Thomas began his career with the City of Belding Department of Public Works in 1974 pushing a hand mower around tombstones in the cemetery. Later that year he began working for the water department; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 Ernie was appointed as foreman of water and sewer; and

WHEREAS, 1996 Ernie was promoted as the Director of Public Works; and

WHEREAS, Ernie has volunteered on the Sesquicentennial Committee, the Labor Day Committee, the Building Authority Board and Music in the Park; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 Ernie was honored as Michigan Rural Water Association Man of the Year; and

WHEREAS, in 2018 Ernie was presented with the Rolly Olney Lifetime Achievement Award; and

WHEREAS, Ernie has brought respect, honor, devotion and integrity to the City of Belding, as the Director of Public Works by leading by example, exhibiting the highest in level of ethics and maintaining a superior moral character; and

WHEREAS, Ernie has served with unwavering commitment, willingness and ability to understand and respond to the concerns of the residents of the City of Belding, has made a substantial contribution to the betterment of the City; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Belding, Michigan commending Ernie Thomas for his time-honored legacy of dedication, enthusiasm and outstanding public service given to the City of Belding for the past forty-seven and a half years, and best wishes are extended to Ernie on his retirement.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY, 2022.

Public Comments

Barrett Moulter, 715 Kiddville Street commented on Ernie (Thomas) and his staff. He additionally commented on a new business that is considering to locate within the City of Belding.

City Manager Comments

City Manager Jon Stoppels commented on Ernie's retirement. Stoppels additionally commented on his past two weeks on the job. He is working towards prioritizing several important issues.

Council Comments

Scheid congratulated Ernie on his retirement.

Davis congratulated Ernie on his retirement, noting that this type of longevity is something rarely seen anymore.

Gunderson thanked Ernie and recognized his dedication to the city. He thanked all who attended the meeting and thanked those who worked on the Rec Plan.

Meyers thanked Ernie, the Rec Board and all who attended the meeting.

Adjourn

Moved by Scheid seconded by Davis to adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m.
Motion carried by the following roll call vote: Yes - All.

Bruce Meyers, Mayor

Janae K. Cooper, City Clerk

**CITY OF BELDING, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION NO. 2022-01-01**

A RESOLUTION ADOPTING A NEW FIVE-YEAR RECREATION PLAN

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, Michigan, held in said City on the 18th day of January 2022.

The following Resolution was offered by Council Member Scheid and seconded by Council Member Davis.

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board has engaged the process to develop a new Five-Year Recreation Plan, which Describes pertinent features, recreation facilities, policies and desired implementation to improve recreational offerings in the community during the period between 2022 and 2026; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board facilitated public input via a community survey in October 2021 and three individual focus groups in November 2021 prior to the development of the Plan, enabling citizens and stakeholders to express opinions and needs, ask questions, offer advice, and discuss all aspects of the City's parks and recreation needs and amenities;

WHEREAS, the City of Belding has prepared the Five-Year Recreation Plan for the benefit of the entire community and to meet the recreation needs of residents as expressed during the public input sessions; and

WHEREAS, a notice was published indicating that the Plan was available on the City's website and offered for a period of at least 30 days for public comment and review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belding Recreation Advisory Board has recommended approval of the updated Five-Year Recreation Plan to the City Council, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held by the City of Belding Council on today's date.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Belding City Council hereby adopts the Five-Year Recreation Plan as a guideline for improving recreation for the residents and visitors of the community.

Upon vote for the said resolution, the vote was:

YEAS: Scheid, Gunderson, Davis and Meyers
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Steele

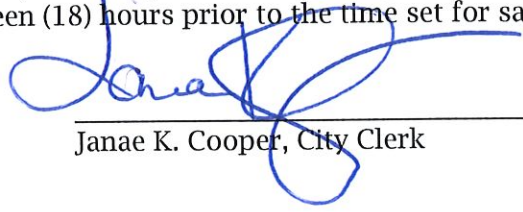
RESOLUTION WAS THEREUPON DECLARED ADOPTED THIS 18TH DAY OF JANUARY 2022.

CERTIFICATION

State of Michigan }
County of Ionia }

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the City Council of the City of Belding, County of Ionia, State of Michigan, at a meeting held on January 18, 2022, the original of which is on file in my office and available to the public. Public notice of said meeting was given pursuant to and in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of Michigan of 1976, including in the case of a special or rescheduled meeting, notice by posting at least eighteen (18) hours prior to the time set for said meeting.

Dated: January 18, 2022



Janae K. Cooper, City Clerk

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF MEETING LOCATION

PUBLIC NOTICE OF OPEN MEETING

Pursuant of Michigan Open Meetings Act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being Sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

CITY COUNCIL

TIME: 7:00 p.m.
DATE: Tuesday, January 18, 2022
LOCATION: Belrockton, (Belding Museum) 108 Hanover Street
RE: Regular Meeting

The City of Belding will provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at meetings/hearings, to individuals with disabilities attending the meetings/hearings upon 14-day notice to the City of Belding. Inquiries may be made by calling the Janae Cooper, City Clerk at 616-794-1900, ext. 210. Minutes of the public body are stored in the City Clerk's Office.

Phone: 616-794-1900
Fax: 616-794-0091
Website: www.belding.mi.us

Notice of Public Hearing

City of Belding City Council
Notice of Public Hearing

TO: THE RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS OF CITY OF BELDING, IONIA COUNTY, MICHIGAN, AND ANY OTHER INTERESTED PERSONS

A public hearing concerning adoption of a Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan for the City of Belding will be held during the City Council Meeting on January 18, 2022, at 7:00 PM. This meeting will be held at the Pere Marquette Depot, 100 Depot Street. All interested persons are invited to submit their comments in person or in writing at or before the meeting. Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the City Clerk at the address number listed above.

The draft plan is available for review on the City website: www.belding.mi.us

Date of Posting: January 17, 2022
Time of Posting: 1:55 p.m.

**LOCATION CHANGED TO
ALLOW FOR SOCIAL
DISTANCING DUE TO THE
SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE
IN COVID CASES.**

**MASKS RECOMMENDED,
PLEASE.**

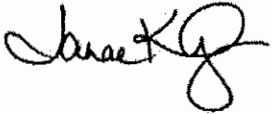
**THE PUBLIC HEARING
AND THE CITY COUNCIL
MEETING LOCATION HAS
CHANGED TO THE
BELROCKTON (BELDING
MUSEUM) 108 HANOVER
STREET.**

Janae Cooper

From: Janae Cooper
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 7:59 AM
To: 'Stay, Andrea (DNR)'; DeOliveira, Tanya; McBride, Alexandria (DNR)
Cc: Jon Stoppels
Subject: RE: City of Belding Parks and Recreation Plan - Change of Location Question due to COVID

I have followed the directive of our city attorney regarding the location change. I will include all of the notices with the rec plan submission.

Thank you,



Janae K. Cooper | Belding City Clerk | (616) 794-1900 ext. 210 | j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us |
Office hours: Monday - Thursday, 7 a.m to 6 p.m.



From: Stay, Andrea (DNR) <StayA@michigan.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 7:43 AM
To: DeOliveira, Tanya <DeOliveira@williams-works.com>; McBride, Alexandria (DNR) <McBrideA1@michigan.gov>
Cc: Janae Cooper <j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us>
Subject: RE: City of Belding Parks and Recreation Plan - Change of Location Question due to COVID

All public notice for meetings, and communication need to meet the requirements of the Open Meetings Act. Please review that guidance for location change notifications. Submit all meeting notice information with your recreation plan submission.

Thank you,

Andrea Stay (she/her/hers)
Grant Coordinator – Southern Region
Grants Management Section
Finance and Operations Division
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
StayA@Michigan.gov

2022 Recreation Grant Workshop This virtual workshop will cover program updates and application guidance for the DNR Recreation Grants Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and Recreation Passport Grant Program. The virtual workshop webinar will be held from 1-3 p.m. on Tuesday, February 3, 2022. Register here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1840073811238108941>

From: DeOliveira, Tanya <DeOliveira@williams-works.com>
Sent: Monday, January 17, 2022 4:05 PM
To: Stay, Andrea (DNR) <StayA@michigan.gov>; McBride, Alexandria (DNR) <McBrideA1@michigan.gov>
Cc: Janae Cooper <j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us>
Subject: City of Belding Parks and Recreation Plan - Change of Location Question due to COVID

CAUTION: This is an External email. Please send suspicious emails to abuse@michigan.gov

Alex, Andrea,

The City of Belding is working on the final aspects of approving their 5 year Parks and Recreation Plan. The City will be holding their 5 year DNR Parks and Recreation Plan Public Hearing at the Tuesday, January 18, 2022 City Council Meeting. This is the same meeting where the City Council will also consider (and is expected to approve) the Resolution to Adopt the Plan. The public hearing was properly notified via the newspaper. They recently (today) decided to move the location of their City Council meeting on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 due to trying to increase social distancing because of the rise of COVID-19 cases. To work on notifying the public of the change of location, this is what the City Clerk shared with me:

"...I spoke with the City Attorney regarding the location change. Since the Public Hearing is being held within the City Council meeting, he told me to notice them out together, and post notices on both the original location (Depot) and the new location (Belrockton) along with the other places I normally post (website, city hall, Facebook) I included the city's electronic sign too.

With the rapid rise in cases we are trying to consider the safety of everyone. The locations are in very close proximity to one another as well."

I wanted to reach out to you to make sure that the City was still in good standing regarding the CHANGE IN LOCATION for the public hearing, as they are expecting to upload and submit the Park and Recreation Plan by the February 1, 2022 deadline. The City Clerk is CC'd on this email.

Looking forward to your reply,

Tanya DeOliveira, AICP
Project Manager

williams&works
(800) 224-1590 | (616) 988-3506
williams-works.com

Janae Cooper

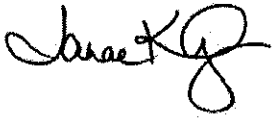
From: Janae Cooper
Sent: Tuesday, January 18, 2022 7:57 AM
To: 'Kraker, Randall W.'
Subject: RE: Relocated meeting

Not a problem! Thank you.

I have posted the change of location in the usual places (City Hall and the city website) as well as on the City Facebook page, the electronic sign outside of City Hall, the original meeting location and the new meeting location (both the front and back doors). The pertinent information on the signage noting the location change on the buildings is in very large, bold red font and highlighted in yellow.

Additionally, I sent an email to the media who normally attend.

Thank you,



Janae K. Cooper | Belding City Clerk | (616) 794-1900 ext. 210 | j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us |
Office hours: Monday - Thursday, 7 a.m to 6 p.m.



From: Kraker, Randall W. <rwkraker@varnumlaw.com>
Sent: Monday, January 17, 2022 5:12 PM
To: Janae Cooper <j.cooper@ci.belding.mi.us>
Subject: Relocated meeting

Janae, if the City has a website and posts notices on it, you should also post a notice of relocated meeting and public hearing on it. Also, you should start the meeting and the public hearing each a few minutes late to accommodate anyone who first went to the original location. Randy

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone
Get [Outlook for Android](#)