

The City of Birmingham's first city-wide Recreation Master Plan was adopted by the City Commission in June 2000 and subsequently approved by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). This highly urbanized community has over 20 recreation facilities and parks within their jurisdiction. Due to land constraints, they also rely on the public and private school systems to help provide open space and facilities for area residents.

The City has never operated under a comprehensive recreation master plan and began the process to elevate the quality of the system, respond to resident needs and operate in the most efficient fashion. In addition, the City wanted to be fiscally responsible by adopting a plan and thus making themselves eligible to apply for recreation-related grants and funding through the MDNR.

The seven-month planning process focused on citizen input and public involvement. The City created an advisory committee to guide the planning process and provide day-to-day input into the creation of goals, guidelines, policies and a five-year capital improvements schedule. In addition, two community forums were held to garner public input and determine priority recreation issues within the community.

The development of the Recreation Master Plan generated such enthusiasm and support that citizens organized and petitioned the City to place a Recreation Bond Issue on the November 2001 ballot. The \$25 million bond issue passed with voter approval and is now in place to begin to implement plan recommendations.

Since its adoption, the focus of the Recreation Master Plan has been implementation. Recently, a commission-appointed, resident ad hoc committee completed a Community Center Feasibility Study for a rehabilitation hospital (previously a public school) located on prime real estate just south of the downtown. Progress and acquisition discussions are continuing with the current property owner. The City has also begun developing a conceptual master plan for Booth Park, located along the Rouge River and adjacent to Old Woodward. Residents are participating in workshops and assisting in the design and programming for the site. At the end of 2001, the City Commission appointed a resident ad hoc committee to assist in the design and project development for a \$2 million dredging and recreation improvement project at Quarton Lake. Construction at Quarton Lake is scheduled for winter 2002.



Birmingham Recreation Master Plan



*Michigan Recreation
and Park Association
2002 Master Plan Award*