

# City of Ewart

200 S. Main St.  
Ewart, MI 49631



---

## 2016 Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Adopted by City Council on



---

This Recreation Plan is the result of many hours of effort on the part of the City Council, City Parks and Recreation Committee, and the citizens of Ewart. In particular, we would like to recognize the following individuals for their efforts:

### Mayor & City Council

Casey Keysor, Mayor  
BJ Foster, Mayor Pro Tem  
Ralph Carlson  
Dan Elliott  
Gregg Sherman

### City Manager

Zackary Szakacs

### DPW Administrative Assistant

Krysta Leutz

### Parks and Recreation Committee

Jason O'Dell  
Chad Booher  
Krysta Leutz  
Patrick Muczynski  
Gregg Sherman  
Jay Wallace

# TABLE of CONTENTS

---

	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	
	Overview of the Planning Process.....	3
Chapter One	<b>COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION</b>	
	Location.....	4
	Physical Characteristics.....	5
	Social Characteristics.....	6
Chapter Two	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE</b>	
	Administrative Structure.....	9
	Revenues & Expenditures.....	10
Chapter Three	<b>RECREATION &amp; RESOURCE INVENTORIES</b>	
	Inventory Process.....	12
	Regional Recreation Areas.....	12
	County Recreation Areas.....	12
	City of Evert Parks.....	14
	Park Classification.....	19
	Evert Public Schools.....	20
	Accessibility of City Parks.....	22
	Recreation Standards.....	23
	Grant Assisted Parks.....	24
Chapter Four	<b>PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS</b> .....	25
Chapter Five	<b>GOAL &amp; OBJECTIVES</b> .....	26
	Action Plan.....	27
Appendix A	Community Input Documents	
Appendix B	Public Notices Public Hearing Minutes Resolutions	

# INTRODUCTION

---

## Overview of The Planning Process

In an effort to ensure that recreational facilities continue to satisfy the demands of the area population, the City of Ewart has undertaken this 2017 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The planning process began in June of 2016 and was designed to include input from varying sources. The City utilized multiple avenues of research including: a community wide survey to initiate involvement from local residents, an inventory of City Parks, and an additional inventory of recreation facilities. Based on their findings the Parks and Recreation Committee adopted the goals and objectives for this plan, which are set forth in Chapter 5. The primary objective of this plan is to set in place a foundation for long-term park management and coordinated program delivery within the City.



This is a general planning document. It is not mandatory in nature, however it should be referred to when making recreation related decisions. Although it is a five-year plan updates can be made at any time. A current plan must be on file with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE) when applying for grants from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The publication, Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans, prepared by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Grants Management Division was used as the guiding document during the development of the plan.

# CHAPTER ONE- COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

## Location

The City of Evart is located in the southeastern portion of Osceola County and is divided by U.S.-10, which transports the majority of traffic within the City. To the west U.S.-10 leads to the County's major north-south route, Interstate U.S.-31, and ultimately to the shore of Lake Michigan in the City of Ludington. Evart is approximately 65 miles east of Ludington, 60 miles west of Midland, 75 miles south of Traverse City, and 115 miles north of Lansing. Osceola County is in the West Central portion of Michigan's Lower Peninsula (see figure 1). The City of Evart, located along the banks of the Muskegon River and one of its tributaries, offering both residents and visitors an array of recreational activities and facilities.

Figure 1: City of Evart



# Physical Characteristics

The physical characteristics of the community must be taken into account in the planning and development of parks and recreation facilities and services, as these factors directly influence the trend and development of recreational activities. The amount, size, and location of these characteristics help determine where future development is appropriate, and where it should be discouraged.

## CLIMATE

Evert’s four-season climate significantly impacts the types of recreational activities local residents participate in, each season brings with it a unique set of activities. Facilities and services should be designed to take advantage of seasonal changes as much as possible. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the local weather conditions that comprise Evert’s climate.

Figure 2: Monthly Temperature Averages, City of Evert

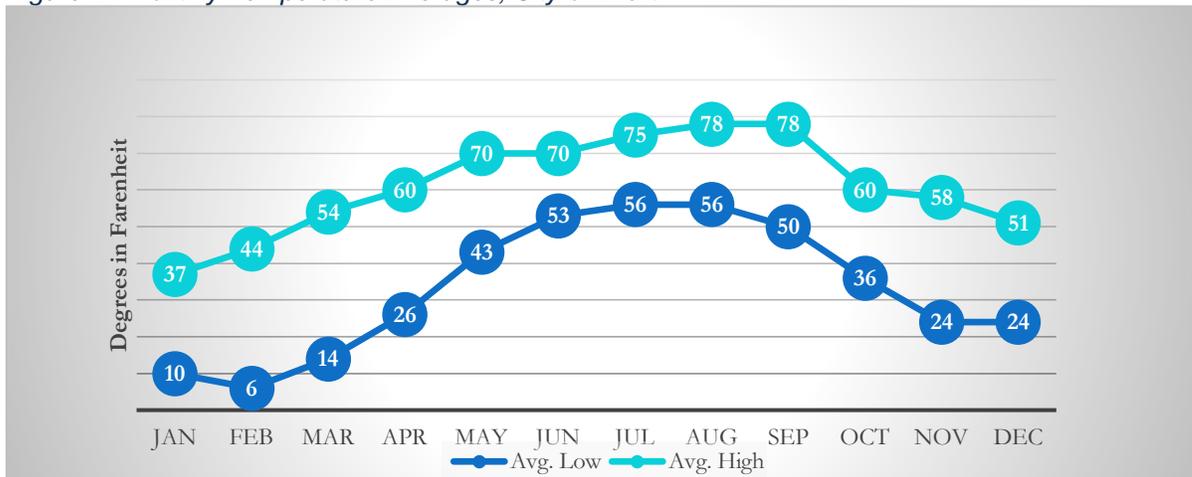
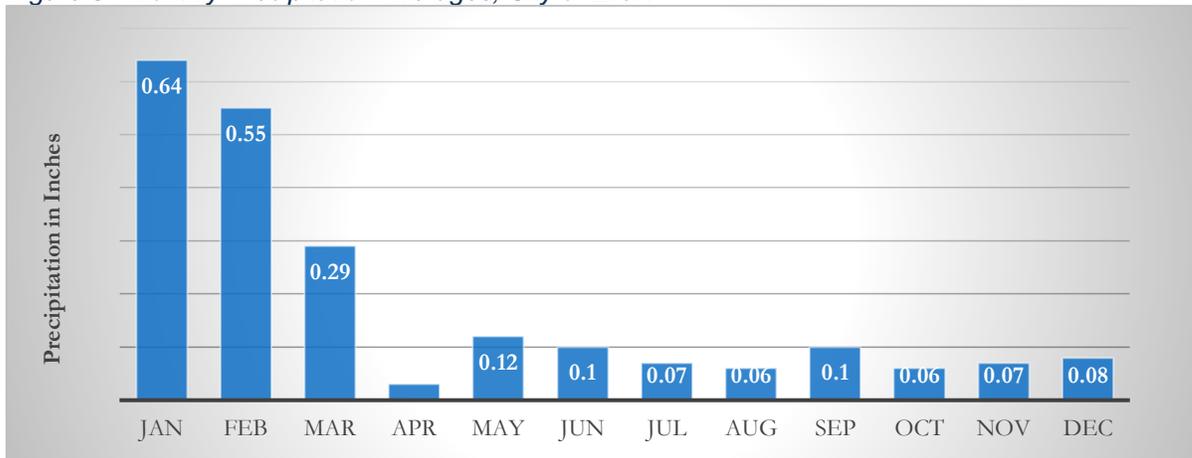


Figure 3: Monthly Precipitation Averages, City of Evert



## GEOLOGY & TOPOGRAPHY

The primary geographical feature in Evert is the Muskegon River, carving out the eastern and southern City Limits. The Muskegon River, at 170 miles long is the longest river in Michigan. Several local platforms, boat launches, and trails offer opportunities for hiking, tubing, kayaking, and fishing.

Other natural features found throughout the community include woodlands and several wetlands, both forested and non-forested. Generally equal amounts of deciduous and coniferous forest exist within the City, intertwining with wetland and woodland areas. Natural features are an excellent asset to the community, providing both aesthetic and recreational enjoyment, as well as natural benefits to the local environment. Local wetlands act as a natural ground water purification system, filtering excess nutrients out of surface runoff. Filtration lessens the occurrence of unwanted plant and algae growth in inland lakes and streams. Woodland areas help moderate climate conditions and provide watershed protection. The local natural areas should be conserved as much as possible in future developments to protect our natural resources.

The general topography of the City is a relatively level grade, with a network of scenic rolling hills to the north and south of the City and the Muskegon River. The generally level terrain presents little to no restrictions with regards to future developments.

## Social Characteristics

The analysis of local and regional socioeconomic data is essential to a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. A thorough understanding of the community's demographics provides insight to the current and future needs of the citizens. When available, information from the 2010 Census was referenced, however in some instances 2010 Census data was not available, in which case the 2000 census was used.

Table 1: General Population, City of Evert, Evert School District & Osceola Co.

	2000	2010	% Change 1990-2010
City of Evert	1,746	1,903	8.3%
Evert School District	7,131	7,216	1.2%
Osceola County	23,197	23,528	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

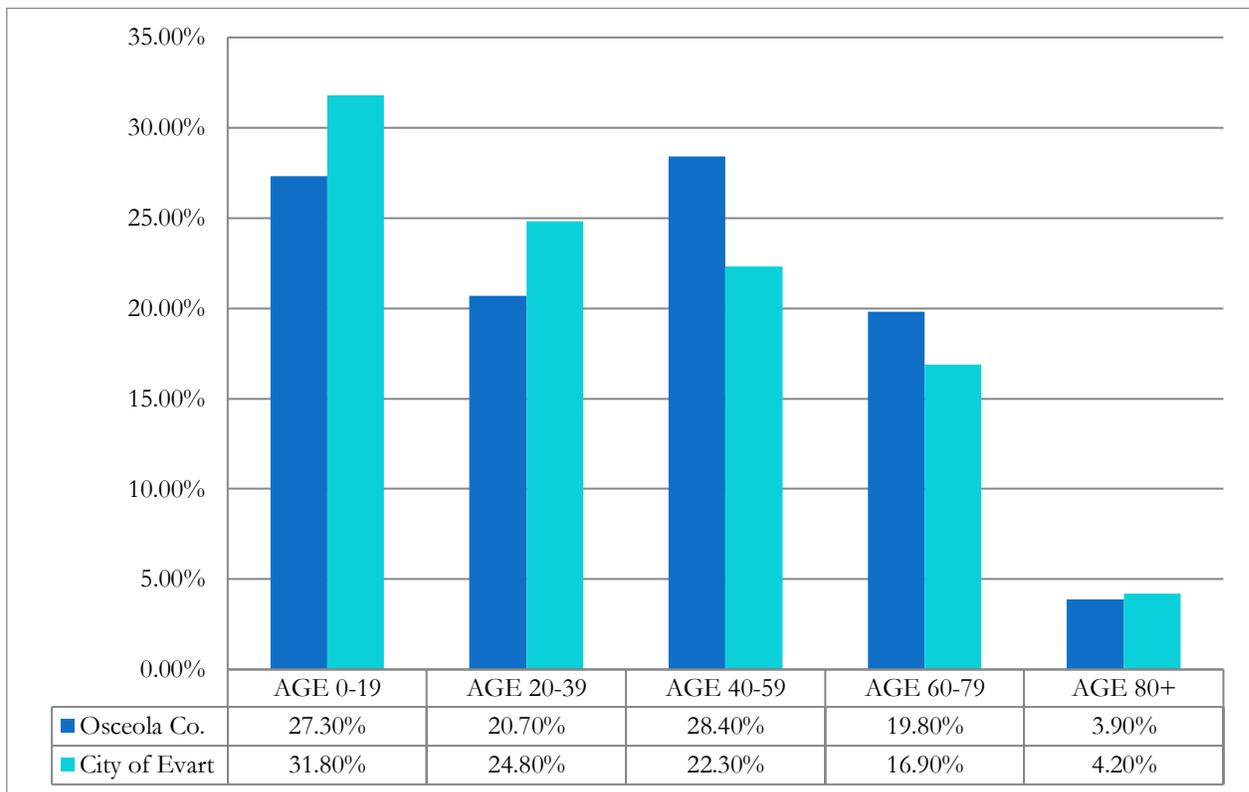
The City of Evert is a rural community. According to the 2010 U.S. Census the City of Evert had 1,903 residents, an increase of 9% from 2000 Census Data. However, for planning purposes it is important to look beyond the boundaries of the City. Due in part to its rural location, the City of Evert serves as a population center for an area much larger than the City

itself. The 49631 zip-code representing the City encompasses an area with a population of over 6,200 people while the Evert Public School District serves an area with a population of approximately 7,216 people. 2010 Census Data puts the total population for all of Osceola County at 23,528. These non-residents, though not taxpayers, increase the demand for park and recreation facilities. Table 1 displays the population trends for the City of Evert, Evert School District and Osceola County over the past decade.

In addition to population data there is a multitude of other demographic data available to planners, however, not all of it is pertinent to recreational planning. After reviewing selected demographic information, the following should be taken into account with regard to the development of recreational programming and facilities:

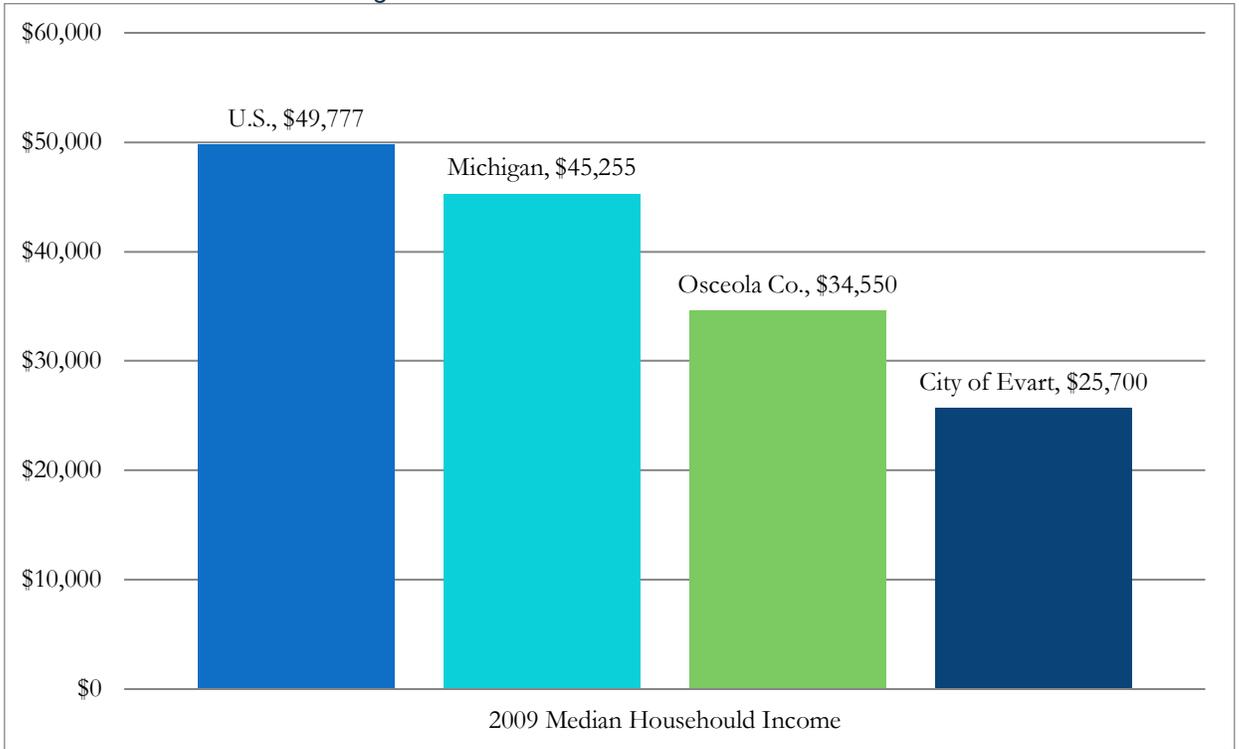
- The most recent data indicates 34% of all families in the City are below poverty level.
- Children, from birth to age 18, make up over 30% of the total City population (Figure 4).
- The Median Household Income in the City of Evert is significantly lower than the State of Michigan as a whole (Figure 5).
- 2000 Census data indicates 30% of the population age 5 years and older are disabled, defined by the Census Bureau as having “long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional conditions or limitations that affect the ability to perform major life activities”.

Figure 4: Population by Age, City of Evert, Osceola Co.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Figure 5: 2009 Median Household Income

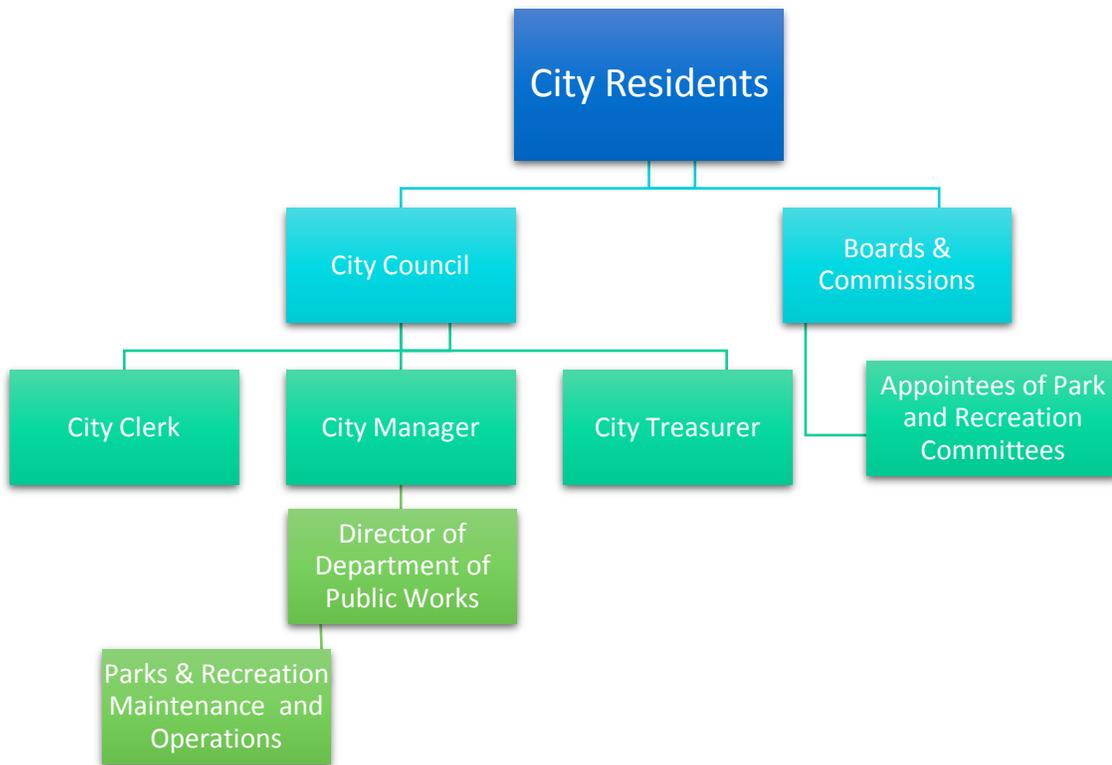


Source: U.S. Census Bureau

# CHAPTER TWO- ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

---

The City of Evart provides parks and recreation services under authorization of MCL section 1917 Public Act 156.



The City's day-to-day operations are performed by a full team including the City Manager, Clerk, Treasurer, Department of Public Works Director, and a full support staff of City employees. The City has volunteer Parks and Recreation Committee, the members of which are appointed by the City Council. The Committees are responsible for providing planning and direction of the City's parks. The Parks and Recreation Committee reports directly to the City Council. Day to day operation and maintenance of the City parks lies with the Department of Public Works staff, the same staff is also responsible for the City streets, sidewalks, and upkeep of the City Cemetery. The City of Evart does not employ any Recreation Staff, but relies on a strong volunteer base for duties such as program registration, and organization. The above flow chart graphically represents the relationship between the various groups involved in recreation. During the creation of this Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Park Committee and Recreation Committee met on a regular basis, and acted as the guiding body throughout the planning process.

## Revenues & Expenditures

Revenue collected for recreation comes from several sources. Registration and usage fees, donations, and general fund appropriations are the three primary sources. Expenditure data was collected to analyze the fiscal trends of the City in regards to parks and recreation. Tables 2 and 3 detail the budget for Community Recreation and City Parks.

Table 2: Community Recreation Budget

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>Little League</b>	\$0.00	\$1273	\$14,277.87
<b>Pop Warner Registration</b>	\$0.00	\$1800	\$1680
<b>Donations</b>	\$0.00	\$489.07	\$6471.27
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>Office Supplies</b>	\$14.99	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Field Maintenance</b>	\$2083.97	\$568.77	\$0.00
<b>Operating Supplies</b>	\$746.00	\$0.00	\$315.01
<b>Participant Awards</b>	\$96.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Professional Services</b>	\$1506.25	\$450.00	\$131.67
<b>Communications</b>	\$1043.89	\$586.18	\$36.95
<b>Travel Expense</b>	\$387.63	\$0.00	\$124.74
<b>Publishing/Printing</b>	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Utilities</b>	\$2325.41	\$2222.67	\$1196.70
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>	\$209.99	\$0.00	\$5540.39

Table 3: City Parks Budget

<b>Revenues</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>Pavilion Rental</b>	\$0.00	\$1650.00	\$925.00
<b>Campsite Rental</b>	\$14727.00	\$11627.00	\$14000.00
<b>Dumping Fee</b>	\$205.00	\$225.00	\$100.00
<b>Shower Fee</b>	\$40.00	\$37.25	\$25.00
<b>Trash Fee</b>	\$351.00	\$215.00	\$100.00
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>2013/2014</b>	<b>2014/2015</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>Salaries/Wages</b>	\$34203.00	\$3077.00	\$3829.02
<b>Office Supplies</b>	\$49.99	\$0.00	\$151.25
<b>Operating Supplies</b>	\$4075.59	\$5730.17	\$435.16
<b>Professional Services</b>	\$7725.95	\$8502.63	\$5378.72
<b>Licenses</b>	\$492.00	\$239.00	\$119.00
<b>Communications</b>	\$563.00	\$642.45	\$457.63
<b>Travel Expense</b>	\$0.00	\$14.56	\$0.00
<b>Publishing/Printing</b>	\$104.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Insurance</b>	\$146.92	\$2298.62	\$0.00
<b>Utilities</b>	\$5474.64	\$4440.21	\$3260.11
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance</b>	\$3120.08	\$2717.62	\$1386.75
<b>Equipment Rental</b>	\$4000.08	\$2000.03	\$1000.02
<b>Capital Outlay</b>	\$7305.89	\$0.00	\$0.00

# CHAPTER THREE- RECREATION INVENTORY

---

## Inventory Process

The recreation inventory was completed in early 2011, utilizing a variety of methods and resources, including the Osceola County Recreation Master Plan and the City of Evart 2006 Recreation Master Plan. Specific criteria were evaluated and initial observations were made of each park, recording the assets and features of each facility. Due to the City's rural setting it is expected that all City Parks will service an area including not only the City, but the surrounding townships as well.

## Regional Recreation Areas

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment operates a number of recreational facilities within Osceola County and the surrounding counties, including State Parks,



*Pere Marquette Rail Trail*

Trails and Forests (Figure 6). These areas provide opportunities for hunting, fishing, hiking, and camping.

Another extensively used facility within the County and running directly through the City is the Pere Marquette Rail Trail. Spanning the width of the City (Fig. 7), as well as the County, the Pere Marquette Rail Trail provides opportunities for biking, jogging and walking, and river and nature access. In the winter months the trail is used extensively by snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, and snow-shoers.

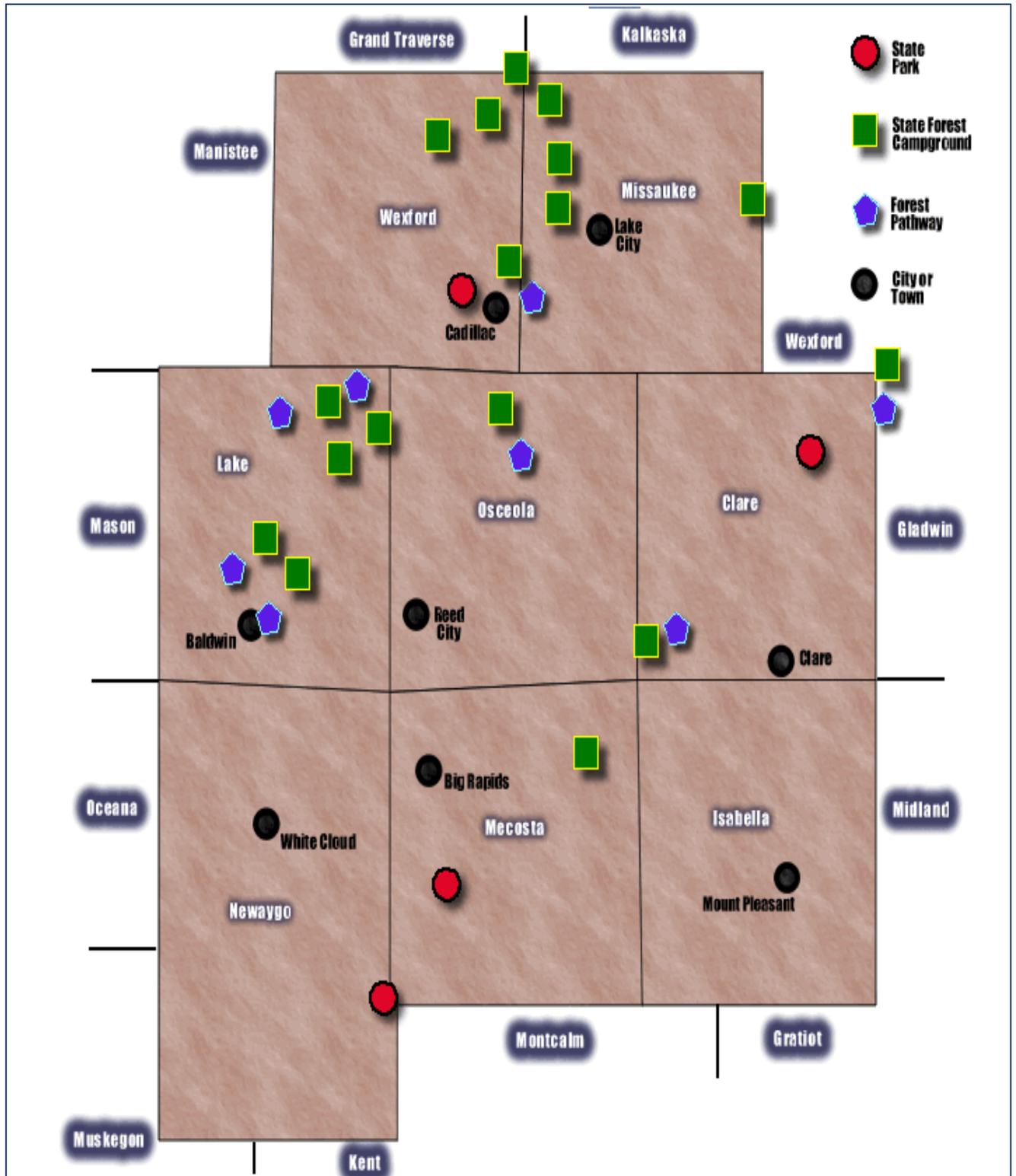
## County Recreation Areas

Numerous opportunities exist within Osceola County for outdoor recreation activities. Osceola County Parks Department operates two parks, both within minutes of Evart. Crittenden Park (on Big Lake) and Rose Lake Park both provide modern camping facilities as well as opportunities for hiking, picnicking, fishing, swimming and other water sports.



*Big Lake, Crittenden Park*

Figure 6: Osceola County and Surrounding County Recreation Inventory



# City of Evert Parks

## *RIVERSIDE PARK WEST*

Riverside Park West is located in the Southeast corner of the city, along the Muskegon River, where residents can enjoy the riverside walking trail as well as boat and canoe access via a ramp. This 17-acre park offers many active recreation facilities including beach volleyball, shuffleboard courts, a basketball court, baseball fields, two small playground areas, two pavilions, forty six picnic tables, fifteen grills, two drinking fountains, showers, and restrooms. The park also has a campground area set up with tables and electricity and room for fifteen trailers or tents. The campground is open from May 1st through October 1st. Rules and regulations for Riverside Park can be found in the appendix. In 2003, the City purchased a 33-acre addition to Riverside Park, now known as Riverside Park East, with a Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. A viewing and fishing platform are another recent addition to the park. A current site map is included in Appendix B.



*Riverside West Walking Trail*



*Riverside West Playground*



*Fishing/Viewing Platform, Riverside Park West*

## *RIVERSIDE PARK EAST*

Riverside Park East, a 33-acre park purchased in 2003 with a Natural Resources Trust Fund grant is located in the southeast corner of the city, directly across the Muskegon River from Riverside Park West. This partially wooded park features a trail-loop used frequently by walkers, joggers, bikers and other outdoor enthusiasts. During the winter months the trail is frequented by snowmobilers, skiers, and show-shoers. A foot bridge and viewing platform are also enjoyed by park-users. The park also features primitive camping sites and a new pavilion and bathroom structure.



*Rustic Campsite, Riverside Park East*



*Hiking Trail, Riverside Park East*



*Restrooms and Pavilion, Cant Hook Park*

## *CANT HOOK PARK*

Cant Hook Park is a mini park located in the heart of downtown Ewart. Erected in 2015 Cant Hook Park offers a picnic pavilion, bathrooms, and picturesque views of downtown Ewart.

### *EVART SKATE PARK*

The Evert Skate Park was first opened in 2005 to provide seasonal skateboarding, rollerblading, and BMX biking for area residents. Today the park is also utilized in the winter months as an outdoor ice skating rink. The fenced-in 33' x 102' park features several ramps, a grind rail, benches, picnic tables, and is surrounded by a large open lawn slated for possible future development



*World War II Cannon, Guyton Park*

### *GUYTON PARK*

This quaint 0.40-acre park located on a corner-lot on the northern edge of the City's central business district is named after the first soldier killed in World War I on foreign soil. The park offers passive recreational uses and features a cannon dating back to WWI and a monument to the memory of all who lost their lives from Evert during WWI, WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam conflict.

### *PUBLIC SQUARE*

This 2.5-acre park located directly adjacent to the Evert Middle School is equipped with numerous recreational facilities and is located in the heart of the City. Facilities include basketball courts, beach volleyball courts, a baseball field, and a playground.

### *HERITAGE PARK*

This 0.75-acre passive park is located on the west end of town and provides area residents with an ideal picnicking location. It is used frequently by people attending events at the Osceola County Fairgrounds as it is located directly across from fairgrounds camping and parking.



*Heritage Park*

### **CITY TENNIS COURTS & BALL FIELD**

Adjacent to the Evert Elementary School is a 4-acre parcel of City-owned land that is home to two tennis courts, a baseball field and a parking area.



*City Tennis Court*

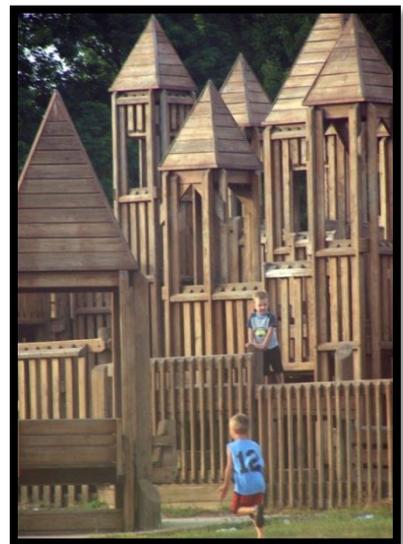
### **CITY PARK (SW CORNER OF 7-MILE AND MAIN STREET)**

As part of an agreement with Nestle Waters North America (Ice Mountain), the City acquired a 12-acre parcel of land on the corner of 7-Mile Road and North Main Street. The property is currently vacant until plans are developed for its future use.

## **Evert Public Schools**

Evert Public Schools operates one elementary school, a middle school, a high school, as well as one alternative education building. With the exception of Evert High School, the public school buildings are located within the City Limits.

Evert Elementary School has activity areas for outdoor recreation including multi-purpose field space, hard surfaced sport courts, and playground equipment including the largest playground structure in the community, the Kids PAD. The facilities at Evert High School consist of four baseball fields. The outdoor recreation facilities used at the Middle School belong to the City of Evert, and are referenced earlier in this chapter as the Public Square.



*Evert Elementary, Kids PAD*

Figure 7: City of Evert Park & Rec Facilities

# Evert Parks & Trails

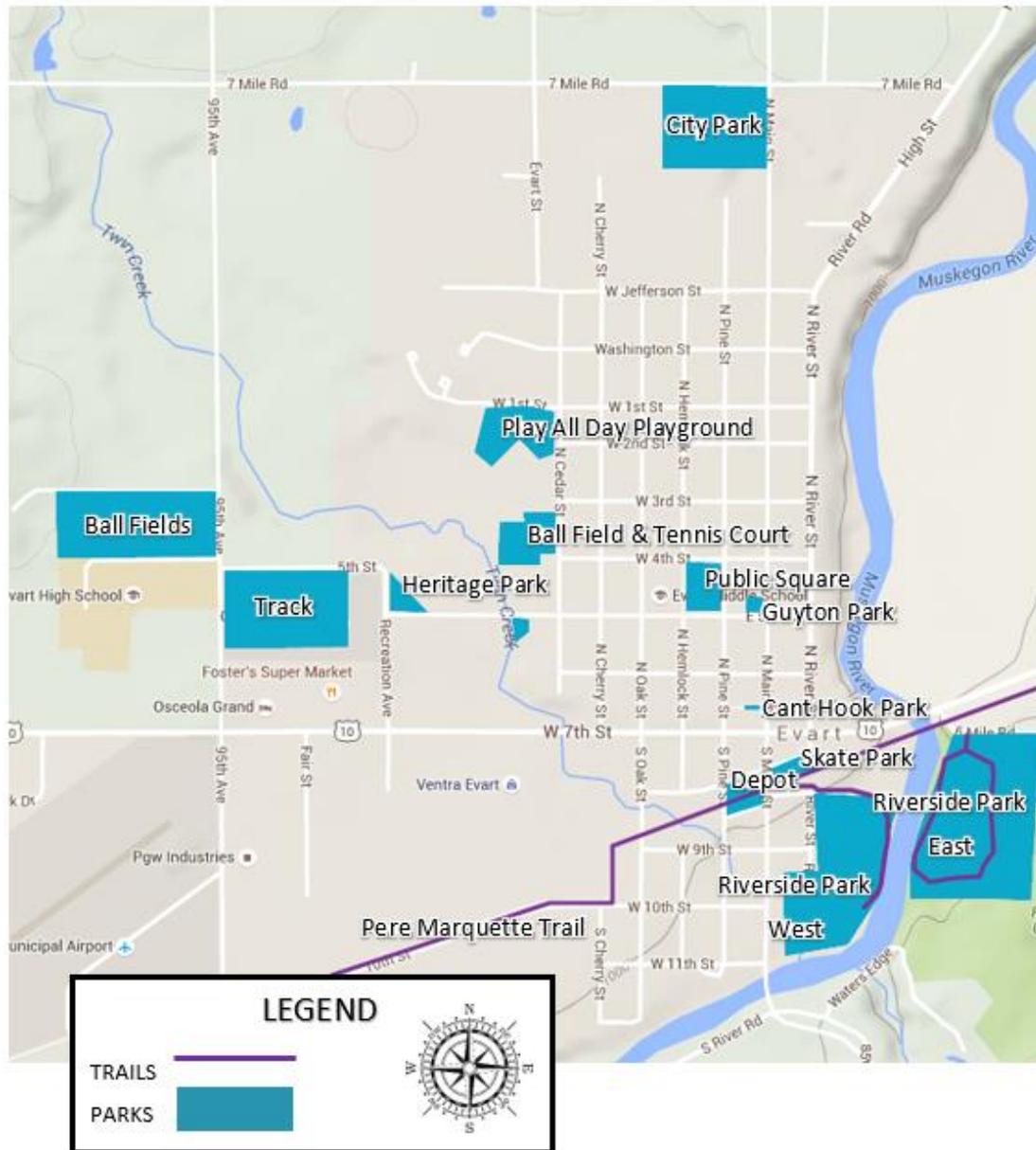


Table 4: Park Types

Classification	Description	Size Criteria
1 <b>Mini Park</b>	Used to address limited, isolated or unique recreational needs.	Between 2500 Sq. Ft and 1 acre
2 <b>Neighborhood Park</b>	Neighborhood park remains the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. Focus is on informal active and passive recreation	5 acres is considered minimum size. 5 to 10 acres is optimal.
3 <b>Community Park</b>	Serves broader purpose than neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.	As needed to accommodate desired uses. Usually between 30 and 50 acres.
4 <b>Special Use</b>	Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single- purpose use.	Variable

**City of Evert  
Facilities**

	Park Type	Baseball	Softball	Football	Multi-Use Field Space	Volleyball	Beach	Outdoor Basketball	Indoor Basketball	Tennis Courts	Playground	Restrooms	Horseshoes	Lake/River Access	Trails	Track	Picnic Tables	Pavilions	Skate Park	Campsites	Park Size
Riverside Park West	3	1				1	1				2	1	2	Y	Y		Y	2		15	17 acres
Riverside Park East	3				Y							1		Y	Y		Y	1		15	33 acres
Skate Park	4																Y		Y		1.1 acres
Guyton Park	1														Y						0.4 acres
Cant Hook Park	1														Y						.1 acres

## City of Evert Facilities

	Park Type	Baseball	Softball	Football	Multi-Use Field Space	Beach Volleyball	Outdoor Basketball	Indoor Basketball	Tennis Courts	Playground	Restrooms	Horseshoes	Lake/River Access	Trails	Track	Picnic Tables	Pavilions	Skate Park	Campsites	Park Size	
Public Square	2	1				1	2			1	1										2.5 acres
Tennis Courts & Ball field	4	1							2												4 acres
Heritage Park	1													Y		Y					0.75 acres
City Park	1				Y																12 acres

## Evert Public Schools Facilities

Evert Elementary School	2				Y		1	1		2				Y		Y					8 acres
Evert Middle School	3							1													Indoors
Evert High School	3	2	2					1													
Track and Field	3			1	1						Y				Y						

	Park Size	Campsites	Skate Park	Pavilions	Picnic Tables	Track	Trails	Lake/River Access	Horseshoes	Restrooms	Playground	Tennis Courts	Indoor Basketball	Outdoor Basketball	Beach Volleyball	Multi-Use Field Space	Football	Softball	Baseball	Park Type
<b>Crittenden Park</b>	10 acres	90		1	Y			Y		1	1			1	1					3
<b>Rose Lake Park</b>	48 acres	160		2	Y			Y		3	2			2	1					3

**Osceola  
County  
Facilities**

## Accessibility of City Parks

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), all areas of public service and accommodation became subject to barrier-free requirements, including parks and recreation facilities and programs. Therefore, an important step in planning must involve the evaluation of a community's park and recreation system accessible to persons with disabilities. All of the City Parks were inventoried to identify barrier-free conditions and issues. Table 4 provides an overview of the accessibility characteristics of each of the City of Evert's developed parks.

### Accessibility Scale

- 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 principals of universal design.

Table 4: Accessibility of City Parks

Park	Facilities	Route	Comments
<b>Riverside Park West</b>	2	2	Paved Walkways, Barrier-Free Fishing Platform, Gravel Drive With One Accessible Parking Space, Non-accessible Restrooms and Picnic Area
<b>Riverside Park East</b>	2	3	Partially Paved Trail, Barrier-Free Fishing Platform, Gravel Parking
<b>Evert Skate Park</b>	3	3	Paved Parking and Walkway, Curb Cuts, No Restrooms
<b>Guyton Park</b>	3	3	Paved Roads and Walkways, Curb Cuts, No Restrooms
<b>Heritage Park</b>	3	3	Paved Road and Walkways, Curb Cuts, No Restrooms
<b>Public Square</b>	2	2	Paved Parking, Curb Cuts, No Restrooms, No Paved Walkway to Ball Field or Playground
<b>City Tennis Courts &amp; Ball field</b>	3	3	Paved Parking and Walkways, Curb Cuts, No Restrooms
<b>Cant Hook Park</b>	4	4	Paved Roads and Walkways, Curb Cuts, ADA Bathrooms

## Recreation Standards

Standards applied in this section are based on the Suggested Facility Development Standards that are part of the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plans, published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

Table 5: Recreation Standards Comparison

<i>Activity/Facility</i>	<b>Recommended Units Per Population</b>	<b>Service Area</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Basketball</b>	1 per 5000	¼ - ½ Mile	Exceeded	City-owned and school-owned
<b>Tennis</b>	1 per 2000	¼ - ½ Mile	Exceeded	City-owned
<b>Volleyball</b>	1 per 5000	½ - 1 Mile	Exceeded	City-owned and school-owned
<b>Baseball Field</b>	1 per 5000	¼ - ½ Mile	Exceeded	City-owned and school-owned
<b>Soccer</b>	1 per 10,000	1 – 2 Miles	Met	Multi-use open space
<b>Running Track</b>	1 per 20,000	15 – 30 Minutes Travel Time	Met	School-owned
<b>Football</b>	1 per 20,000	15 – 30 Minutes Travel Time	Met	School-owned
<b>Golf, 18-Hole</b>	1 per 50,000	½ to 1 Hour Travel Time	Exceeded	Privately-owned, open to the public
<b>Swimming Pool</b>	1 per 20,000	15 to 30 Minutes Travel Time	Met	Privately-owned, open to the public

Table 6: Grant Assisted Projects

<b>Project</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Current Use/Condition</b>
<b>Evert City Park #26-01118</b>	<i>Develop 2 tennis courts, 1 softball field, parking, LWCF Sign</i>	<b>1980</b>	<b>\$17,628.00</b>	<b>No longer in use, new tennis courts and ball field built adjacent to elementary school</b>
<b>Evert Public Square #BF89-311</b>	<i>Complete Reconstruction of original public square playground in order to provide adequate neighborhood play area</i>	<b>1989</b>	<b>\$53,250.00</b>	<b>Softball Diamond, In Use, Good Condition Playground, In Use, Good Condition Parking Area, In Use, Good Condition</b>
<b>Recreation Trail Development #26-01518</b>	<i>Recreation public trail development within the City of Evert to include biking, fishing, hiking and cross-country skiing.</i>	<b>1992</b>	<b>\$98,915.62</b>	<b>Being used as developed, Good Condition</b>
<b>Riverside Park Acquisition #TF02-028</b>	<i>Acquisition of 28 acres, including 1,386 feet of Muskegon River frontage and 2,500 feet of other stream frontage to expand Riverside Park and allow access to both sides of the Muskegon River.</i>	<b>2002</b>	<b>\$288,400.00</b>	<b>33 Acres of Land Acquired, In Use, Good Condition</b>
<b>Riverside Park Improvements #TF06-015</b>	<i>Improvements to 43 acre Riverside Park with 1500 Muskegon River footage to include parking, walking trails, skate park equipment, and fishing piers.</i>	<b>2006</b>	<b>\$100,000.00</b>	<b>Site Clearing, Earthwork, Culvert, Paved Walkway, Fishing Piers, Benches, Site Restoration In Use, Good Condition</b>
<b>Riverside Park Boat Launch #RP13-416</b>	<i>Riverside Park West boat launch, parking improvements, and new pavilion</i>	<b>2016</b>	<b>\$42,300</b>	<b>Boat Launch, Pavilion, Paved Parking Area and Driveway beginning construction Fall 2016</b>

## CHAPTER FOUR- PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

---

Local residents were presented with several opportunities to provide input and feedback for the City’s Park and Recreation Master Plan. The first phase included a written survey, designed to encourage input from individuals in the community who do not regularly attend City meetings. Surveys were mailed to each person receiving a City Utility Bill, totaling 581 surveys. Participants were asked to drop–off or mail their completed survey to City Hall. Residents were also able to complete the survey on the City’s website; 118 surveys, or 20% were completed and returned. Survey results can be viewed in Appendix A.

The second phase included a Community Workshop. Additional information was available from local newspapers and on the City’s website. A total of 9 participants, including several City employees and Recreation Committee members were in attendance. Participants divided into small brainstorming groups to generate ideas and suggestions for recreation facilities and programming. Responses from the Workshop are included in Appendix A.

Finally, residents were invited to attend the Public Hearing on [REDACTED] to voice their opinion one last time before the plan was officially adopted by the Evert City Council. Minutes from the hearing can be found in Appendix A.

# CHAPTER FIVE- GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

---

Prior to formulating an Action Plan, the Recreation Committee and Park Committee formed the following Goals and Objectives. The Goals and Objectives are based on the input received from area residents over the course of the planning period, as well as the issues discovered throughout the recreation inventory. Both sources brought several specific issues to the forefront. The goals are designed to be long-term in range as well as broad in scope to accommodate unforeseen changes in trends and funding.

## ***Goal I: Facility Maintenance and Improvements***

- Objective 1:** Maintain, repair, and update existing parks and facilities.
- Objective 2:** Improve the aesthetics and visual perception of the park system.
- Objective 3:** Bring all parks into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Objective 4:** Replace outdated equipment and accessories as required to promote safety.
- Objective 5:** Focus on implementing environmentally sustainable practices through green initiatives.

## ***Goal II: Facility and Program Development***

- Objective 1:** Strive to generate funds to create programming.
- Objective 2:** Improve communication with the public regarding recreation programs and activities.
- Objective 3:** Create additional programming and activities that meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Objective 4:** Develop and improve signage within the parks system, interpretive signs, directional signs, nature identification signs, etc.

## ***Goal III: Park Funding***

- Objective 1:** Actively pursue funding opportunities from the public, private individuals, and organizations to achieve goals and objectives.
- Objective 2:** Promote increased participation from local residents in the planning process.
- Objective 3:** Make residents aware of the need for a strong volunteer base.
- Objective 4:** Designating funds for the parks and recreational programming should continue to be a priority.
- Objective 5:** Implement Riverside West Park Store and use proceeds for Parks and Recreation.

## ***Goal IV: Promote Natural Features and Areas***

- Objective 1:** Promote parks through target marketing and projects that actively engage community members in our already existing natural features, areas, and history.
- Objective 2:** Develop and support quality landscape projects throughout the park system.
- Objective 3:** Continue to promote the use of the Muskegon River.
- Objective 4:** Promote all season rail trail access.

## ***ACTION PLAN***

While the goals and objectives of the City of Evert express intent and purpose, the Action Plan is more specific and addresses the manner in which the goals may be achieved.

### ***Riverside Park West***

- Build new ADA restrooms
- Create Riverside West Park storefront
- Improve pavilions
- Install signage visible from US10
- Install splash pad
- Upgrade campground facilities – water and electric
- Re-purposing Scout House feasibility study

### ***Riverside Park East***

- Add year-round cabins for camping along the Muskegon River
- Increase promotional, nature, and distance signage
- Provide access to the river
- Install a communal fire pit area

### ***Skate Park***

- Improve landscape
- Add picnic tables
- Continue Ice Rink and Annual Open House
- Expand Ice Rink to allow use for ice hockey and casual skaters
- Install a communal fire pit area
- Improve lighting for evening ice skating

### ***Guyton Park***

- Install promotional signage visible from US10 –World War I Historical Site
- Research feasibility of Veteran Memorial Wall
- Add trees to improve landscape

### ***Public Square***

- Continue to provide routine maintenance
- Playground maintenance and continued improvements
- Continue replacing backboards
- Repair fence around basketball court

### ***Heritage Park***

- Continue to provide routine maintenance

### ***City Tennis Courts & Ball field***

- Continue to provide routine maintenance
- Ballfield Maintenance
- Pour cement floor in dugouts
- Construct storage shed and gates
- Add trash cans

### *City Park (Hessler Property)*

- Install walking/biking path circling the property
- Install disc golf course
- Implement Landscape Architect Drawing

### *Can't Hook Park*

- Install trash can
- Facilitate community mural

# Appendix A

The Parks & Recreation Survey was created to gather input from local residents and initiate community involvement in the development of the City’s 2017 Master Parks and Recreation Plan. On August 1, 2016, 581 surveys were mailed to City Residents. Residents were given until August 15th, 2016 to return their completed surveys. The survey was also available surveymonkey.com, and promoted on three social media pages. Of the 581 surveys mailed out, 57 were returned and 37 were completed via the internet for a total of 81 submitted surveys. The following is a summary of the responses submitted.

## Are you a resident of the City of Evert?

Answer Choices–	Responses–
– Yes	<b>69.83%</b> 81
– No	<b>30.17%</b> 35
Total	116

## How many persons in the following age groups reside in your household?

Answer Choices–	Average Number–	Total Number–	Responses–
Responses Preschool (0-5)	1	36	36
Responses Children (6-12)	1	40	33
Responses Teen (13-19)	1	43	38
Responses Adult (20-40)	2	91	56
Responses Adult (41-55)	1	63	51
Responses Adult (56 and over)	2	93	62

Total Respondents: 118

## How often do you or members of your household use the City of Evert parks and recreation facilities?

Answer Choices–	Responses–
– Daily	<b>7.69%</b> 9
– Weekly	<b>24.79%</b> 29
– Monthly	<b>23.93%</b> 28

Answer Choices–	Responses–
– Less than 6-8 times per Year	<b>34.19%</b> 40
– Never	<b>9.40%</b> 11
Total	117

**Please check all of the local parks and recreational facilities you or someone in your household has used in the past year:**

Answer Choices–	Responses–
– Riverside Park West	<b>83.18%</b> 89
– Riverside Park East	<b>65.42%</b> 70
– Pere Marquette Rail Trail	<b>47.66%</b> 51
– Skate Park	<b>13.08%</b> 14
– Guyton Park	<b>18.69%</b> 20
– Cant Hook Park	<b>10.28%</b> 11
– Heritage Park	<b>7.48%</b> 8
– Waterworks Park	<b>24.30%</b> 26
– Play All Day Park	<b>24.30%</b> 26
– Tennis Courts	<b>5.61%</b> 6
– Football Field/ Track	<b>28.04%</b> 30
– City Square	<b>17.76%</b> 19
– Fairgrounds	<b>48.60%</b> 52

Total Respondents: 107

**Of the facilities listed below please indicate which two your family uses the most:**

<b>Answer Choices—</b>	<b>Responses—</b>
— <b>Riverside Park West</b>	<b>63.21%</b> 67
— <b>Riverside Park East</b>	<b>34.91%</b> 37
— <b>Pere Marquette Rail Trail</b>	<b>24.53%</b> 26
— <b>Skate Park</b>	<b>1.89%</b> 2
— <b>Guyton Park</b>	<b>2.83%</b> 3
— <b>Cant Hook Park</b>	<b>1.89%</b> 2
— <b>Heritage Park</b>	<b>0.00%</b> 0
— <b>Waterworks Park</b>	<b>11.32%</b> 12
— <b>Play All Day Park</b>	<b>9.43%</b> 10
— <b>Tennis Courts</b>	<b>1.89%</b> 2
— <b>Football/Track</b>	<b>12.26%</b> 13
— <b>City Square</b>	<b>4.72%</b> 5
— <b>Fairgrounds</b>	<b>21.70%</b> 23
Total Respondents: 106	

**Please indicate the priority you think the City of Evert should place on developing the following recreation areas and facilities:**

	Highest—	High—	Neutral—	Low—	Lowest—	Total—	Weighted Average—
— Sports Fields and Courts	19.59% 19	25.77% 25	40.21% 39	4.12% 4	10.31% 10	97	2.60
— Public Campgrounds	19.39% 19	24.49% 24	41.84% 41	7.14% 7	7.14% 7	98	2.58
— Trails (Hiking, Exercise, and Bike Paths)	19.59% 19	42.27% 41	27.84% 27	7.22% 7	3.09% 3	97	2.32
— Picnic Areas and Pavilions	16.33% 16	38.78% 38	32.65% 32	9.18% 9	3.06% 3	98	2.44
— Playgrounds	34.04% 32	40.43% 38	21.28% 20	3.19% 3	1.06% 1	94	1.97
— Splash Parks	40.40% 40	25.25% 25	18.18% 18	8.08% 8	8.08% 8	99	2.18
— Indoor Recreation/Community Center	35.00% 35	28.00% 28	26.00% 26	7.00% 7	4.00% 4	100	2.17

Comments:

Patrolling the parks so our children won't be exposed to bad language and behaviors.

As long as it keeps clean.

Keep brush cleaned out by fishing pier.

We need things to keep kids out of trouble. Things for adults too.

Splash Park

A YMCA or center for kids to play/learn.

Having a splash park would be a great idea. I have been to a few in other towns and the kids love them.

Another set of bathrooms are needed near the new playground in Riverside Park.

Trash can at the pocket park

Soccer field, middle school playground, community pool

Your campground desperately needs more trees to provide shade for campers. You've lost trees but have not really replaced them!

**Please indicate which activities you or someone in your household would be interested in participating in:**

<b>Answer Choices—</b>	<b>Responses—</b>
— <b>Dance</b>	<b>5.94%</b> 6
— <b>Theater</b>	<b>2.97%</b> 3
— <b>Drama</b>	<b>0.99%</b> 1
— <b>Arts &amp; Crafts</b>	<b>12.87%</b> 13
— <b>Music</b>	<b>6.93%</b> 7
— <b>Sport Skill Instruction</b>	<b>3.96%</b> 4
— <b>Sports League &amp; Tournaments</b>	<b>3.96%</b> 4
— <b>Ice Skating</b>	<b>0.99%</b> 1
— <b>Swimming</b>	<b>12.87%</b> 13
— <b>Camping</b>	<b>8.91%</b> 9
— <b>Canoeing</b>	<b>5.94%</b> 6
— <b>Hiking/Backpacking</b>	<b>4.95%</b> 5
— <b>Cross-Country Skiing</b>	<b>1.98%</b> 2
— <b>Snowshoeing</b>	<b>0.99%</b> 1
— <b>Aerobics</b>	<b>2.97%</b> 3
— <b>Computer Instruction</b>	<b>1.98%</b> 2
— <b>Healthy Eating/ Dieting</b>	<b>0.99%</b> 1
— <b>Summer Camp Days</b>	<b>2.97%</b> 3
— <b>Community Wide Special Events</b>	<b>1.98%</b> 2
— <b>Family Activity Programs</b>	<b>7.92%</b> 8
— <b>Trips to See Entertainment/ Sporting Events</b>	<b>6.93%</b> 7

Total

101

Comments:

Disc golf!!!! Very easy to install course. Surprised we don't have one yet.

## Do you have any additional comments to help improve our community's parks and recreation opportunities?

We really enjoy the Riverside Park West and the Skate Park. The only problem we have is the language that the adults use while our kids are playing.

New restrooms in Riverside Park, paved parking, lower prices on rentals of pavilions.

Love your fireworks. Have been attending for 20 years.

Happy with the woman who is helping with July 20th!

I didn't know if we had attended some of the parks because I didn't recognize the name. My daughter loves going to the Kid's Pad by the elementary school. She calls it "Castle Park."

Someone willing to give swimming lessons. Do fund raisers to help City to be able to add more things for families all year long.

I would like to see the waterworks park (5th st.) old stone wall (driveway) and on both sides of the creek fixed or rebuilt. There is one tall pine tree, you can see from 5th st., it looks like its ready to fall down. The High School Ball field that is right next to 95th avenue has signs that say no parking, but people park there all the time, when games are playing. I'm afraid someone is going to get hurt. Fill in dirt for Riverside West, driving by boat ramps, especially when you are driving out of the campground area. Riverside East maybe a little more clean up.

I think we need softball fields & better Little League fields. We had a lot of softball teams in the 40's and 50's now they have to go to Reed City.

Keep up the good work!

They need to make Riverside Park West more handicap accessible especially to all of the pavilions, play area, and shuffle board area. They need to have sidewalks that would work for walkers, wheelchairs. Plus paths going around by river more. Plus a new boat launch and paced parking to public picnic area!

Splash Pad would be very cool for my younger cousins.

I think we should advertise our parks camping and trails

Local wifi or several outdoor hotspots (especially at parks) to encourage outdoor activity. Possible way to attract new residents??

I think a splash park is a fantastic idea. The city already has various places where kids can play baseball, softball, football and even the basketball courts at the public square, which I love for my children. The splash park would be wonderful for children of all ages, not to mention bring in families from outside of town.

A splash pad would be a huge asset to our community! Please consider this valuable addition to our Parks.

It seems we have some great parks. Some indoor options for the winter time would be great to get the community out and together.

make sure they are kept clean and mowed and if needed, painted

Please make it so children cannot be at the parks alone. I don't take my children to the parks in Osceola due to the foul mouthed little kids allowed there with no adult supervision.

I have seen other community's do a rent a bike program (Frankenmuth) and with the trails right here and being a tourist town that would be a nice opportunity for others who may visit but didn't pack their bike or just wanted a small ride to see the trails.

We love the parks, especially since the new playground was installed at Riverside. My kids REALLY enjoy the PAD too but a lot of adults have said it is in need of repair and that unsupervised kids are hanging around there doing inappropriate things. Family friendly is a must for us. It makes me a little less enthusiastic to go there but we have not personally had an issue.

Of all the things we as dog owners need is an enclosed dog park tht has time limit s tht u can schedule on Facebook or dog park/ deposit with trash can. Our dogs need to play and I bet a lot of people will go for it.??

Keep the dam horses and Amish buggies off the walking trails. I have tried to resolve this issue for years and no one listens. They should be fined.

Our campgrounds, rails to trails and river should all be advertised to the hilt to bring in more tourists.

I have been coming to Evert each month during the summer to camp at Riverside Park since 1985, and there are fewer and fewer choice lots because of the lack of shade since your trees were removed. Sometimes when I camp, the entire center ring remains empty because sitting out there in the blazing sun becomes prohibitive.in a small camper. It's a beautiful place, but it could be vastly improved with tree plantings, both on the electrified campsites, as well as in the tenting area. As a woman who camps alone, I come to your campground because I feel safe there. The police roll through frequently, and the grass is mowed regularly to keep the mosquitos down. I appreciate the nearness to town and use your various restaurants each time I come up. I am a photographer, and I love the landscape in your area, as it varys greatly from that where I live in the southern part of the state. I have camped in campgrounds without a resident camper, and found that I feel much safer at Riverside Park, and so I keep returning to it, even during the FUNFEST when most people camp at the fairgrounds. You have a gem there... Please maintain it!

The cursing that the adults use at Riverside park West has made my children and myself leave the parks several times!!! It is so awful to go there to enjoy the facility and have the adults be the reason we leave!

Power wash the pavilions at Riverside west! The floors are filthy.

With the addition of Little League, which takes almost all monetary and logistical responsibility away from the Rec. Dept., it would be nice to invest in the softball/baseball fields. They are used more than any other facility in the city. It would be nice to have some permanent bathrooms, storage sheds, etc. at the fields.

You all are doing great!! Keep up the good work!



## **AUGUST 17, 2016 6PM PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY WORKSHOP**

### **We want to know what matters most to you!**

The City of Evert is inviting local residents to attend a community workshop regarding the future development of the city parks, recreation facilities, and activities. Participants will have the opportunity to brainstorm with City Planners and Officials to help determine possible improvements and additions to be included in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan.



**Come Share your  
Vision for the  
Future of our  
Community**

**We want to know  
what matters  
most to you!**

### **EVART CITY HALL**

200 S Main St.  
Evert, MI 49631

[www.evert.org](http://www.evert.org)

August 17, 2016  
**6PM**

# COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

## PARKS & RECREATION MASTER PLAN

AUGUST 17, 6:00 P.M.

### Introduction to the Master Plan

#### *Purpose of the Master Plan*

- Required to be eligible for grants
- Provides the City with specific goals and objectives for 5-years

#### *Purpose of the Workshop*

- Gather public feedback
- Determine the aspects of Parks and Recreation that residents are pleased with
- Determine which aspects of Parks and Recreation need improvement
- Gather both general and specific ideas from area residents to possibly include in the Master Plan

### Exercise One: Points of Pride & Areas for Improvement

*In your group, brainstorm the areas of our Parks and Recreation Departments that are points of pride as well as those that are in need of improvements. Be as general or specific as you like.*

*Each group shares aloud, open for discussion*

### Exercise Two: Quality and Value of the Parks and Recreation Facilities and Programming

*Using the focus questions shown, discuss in your group the quality and value of the Parks and Recreation programs.*

- Do you feel the program offerings are well balanced? Are there gaps?
- What types of parks and recreation services can you see being offered in the community in the future?
- What facilities or programming in other communities impress you?

*Each group shares aloud, open for discussion*

### **Exercise Three: Five-Year Priorities**

*Using your responses from the last exercise describe what you envision for Parks and Recreation in five years.*

*Each group shares aloud, open for discussion*

### **Conclude**

*Additional comments can be filled out and left on the table, or emailed to [krystaleutz@evart.org](mailto:krystaleutz@evart.org)*

*Watch for more information regarding the Master Plan. Before the plan is submitted a public hearing will be held.*

# ***Parks & Recreation***

## ***Community Workshop Summary***

On June 28, 2011 a Community Workshop was held in the Community Room at City Hall to gather input from local residents regarding the City of Ewart's Parks and Recreation Master Plan. A total of 15 community members were present, including several members of the Recreation Committee. Participants broke into groups to brainstorm and discuss different aspects of the City Parks facilities and City Recreation programming. The following is an overview of the thoughts and ideas presented; comments and suggestions submitted after the workshop are also included.

### **Exercise One**

Participants were asked to consider the City Recreation facilities and programming and list those items that they are most proud of, as well as those that are in need of improvements. Topics mentioned more than once are noted with an asterisk.

#### **Points of Pride**

- Ice Skating Rink
- Muskegon River
- Rails to Trails
- Access to parks within walking distance
- Events that are getting established
- Number of parks and condition
- New Pavilion
- Party in the Park Event

#### **Areas for Improvement**

- Activities to bring people to our community
- Connecting communication with fairgrounds
- Promoting through target marketing- parks, campground, river activities, rail trail access, and cycling
- Increase signage
- Update website
- Repair and maintain Riverside West pavilions and bathrooms
- Increase classes: Hunter's Safety, photography, hiking, railroad tours
- Campground Store

### **Exercise Two**

Participants were asked to evaluate the quality and value of the parks and recreation facilities and programming using the following focus questions as a guide. Responses are listed after each question; those mentioned more than once are noted with an asterisk.

**Do you feel the current recreation programs are well balanced? Are there any gaps?**

- Create additional offerings for adults and senior citizens
- Generate volunteers to donate time to local events
- Bring back snow shoeing and invest time in creating a mountain bike trail
- The culture of the community has changed – we need to find passionate like-minded people

### **What types of parks and recreation services can you see being offered in the future?**

- Annual Ice Rink open house
- Continue fundraising initiatives
- Create future sporting tournaments rather than leagues – dodgeball, volleyball, basketball
- Partnering with other communities
- Kayaking, canoeing, splash pad
- Poker Run down the river
- Continue the Timber Beast Adventure Race
- Develop Hessler Property
- Offer classes

### **What facilities or programming in other communities impresses you?**

- Biking club
- Cabins – year round camping
- Number of volunteers
- Outdoor Hockey Rinks
- Midland bike repair sections of the rail trail
- Cities that promote their past – maybe bring back Evart Logging Days?
- Deerfield Park Cross Country skiing and biking trails

### **Exercise Three**

Participants were asked to describe what they envision for the park facilities and recreational programming in five years, using their responses from the previous exercises as a guide.

- Utilizing resources we already have: promotion, marketing, volunteer base
- Creating additional signage for Riverside Park
- Update signage
- Creating a Splash Pad in Riverside West
- Installing a Disc Golf course
- City parks and rec meshing with other events happening within the city: dulcimers, potential “jam fests” at city hall before the dulcimer festival begins.
- Grow events we are currently trying to establish
- Start hosting annual committee meeting and invite all community stakeholders (fairgrounds, DDA, Chamber, Athletics Boosters) to pool resources