

Recreation Plan  
Village of Nashville  
Nashville, Michigan

Parks Committee  
Village of Nashville  
Revised 10/1/2020

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Resolution

Village of Nashville

Resolution # 1-14-2021

Adoption of Revised Community Five Year Recreation Plan

WHEREAS, The Village of Nashville Parks Committee, an advisory committee body to the Village of Nashville, the duties of which shall be to develop a “Revised Village of Nashville Five Year Recreation Plan”, and

WHEREAS, With this authority the Village of Nashville Parks Committee has completed and submitted for review and adoption a “Revised Village of Nashville Five Year Recreation Plan”,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Nashville goes on record as adopting the above stated “Revised Village of Nashville Five Year Recreation Plan”.

Adopted: 1-14-2021

Attested by Debbi Clay  
Nashville Village Clerk

## INTRODUCTION

This Parks and Recreation Plan has been revised with the objective of designing and maintaining an adequate recreation delivery system in the Recreation Service Area (Village of Nashville, Maple Grove Township, Kalamo Township, Vermontville township and Castleton Township) through the year 2025.

## PURPOSE

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

## SCOPE

This Recreational Plan evaluates the recreational needs of Nashville residents, for neighborhood and community wide parts, and prescribes a plan which accommodates and fulfills these needs.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In the original development of this plan the Village Council worked with the Village Planning Board, Village Department of Public Works, Village Parks Committee and a special Citizens Parks Advisory Committee to gather information, assess present facilities and recommend measures contained within the plan preparations and policy recommendations.

For the present proposed plan, members of the Parks Committee, Nashville DPW, citizens of Nashville and members of the area pickleball group worked together to form the plan.

## RE-EVALUATION PROCEDURES

The purpose of the Nashville Community Recreation Plan, as stated previously, is to act as a policy guide in developing recreational services and facilities. To this end, it is pertinent that the plan is constantly re-evaluated to ensure an up-to-date document that meets the needs and desires of the community. Procedures for re-evaluation of this plan shall be that the Parks Committee reevaluates the contents every five (5) years and do the following:

Advertise – public notice of 30 review period – set public hearing after review period

Hold public hearing – make any adjustments needed

Adopt new revised plan

Send copies to: South-central Michigan Planning Council; Barry County Planning; DNR Grants Management.

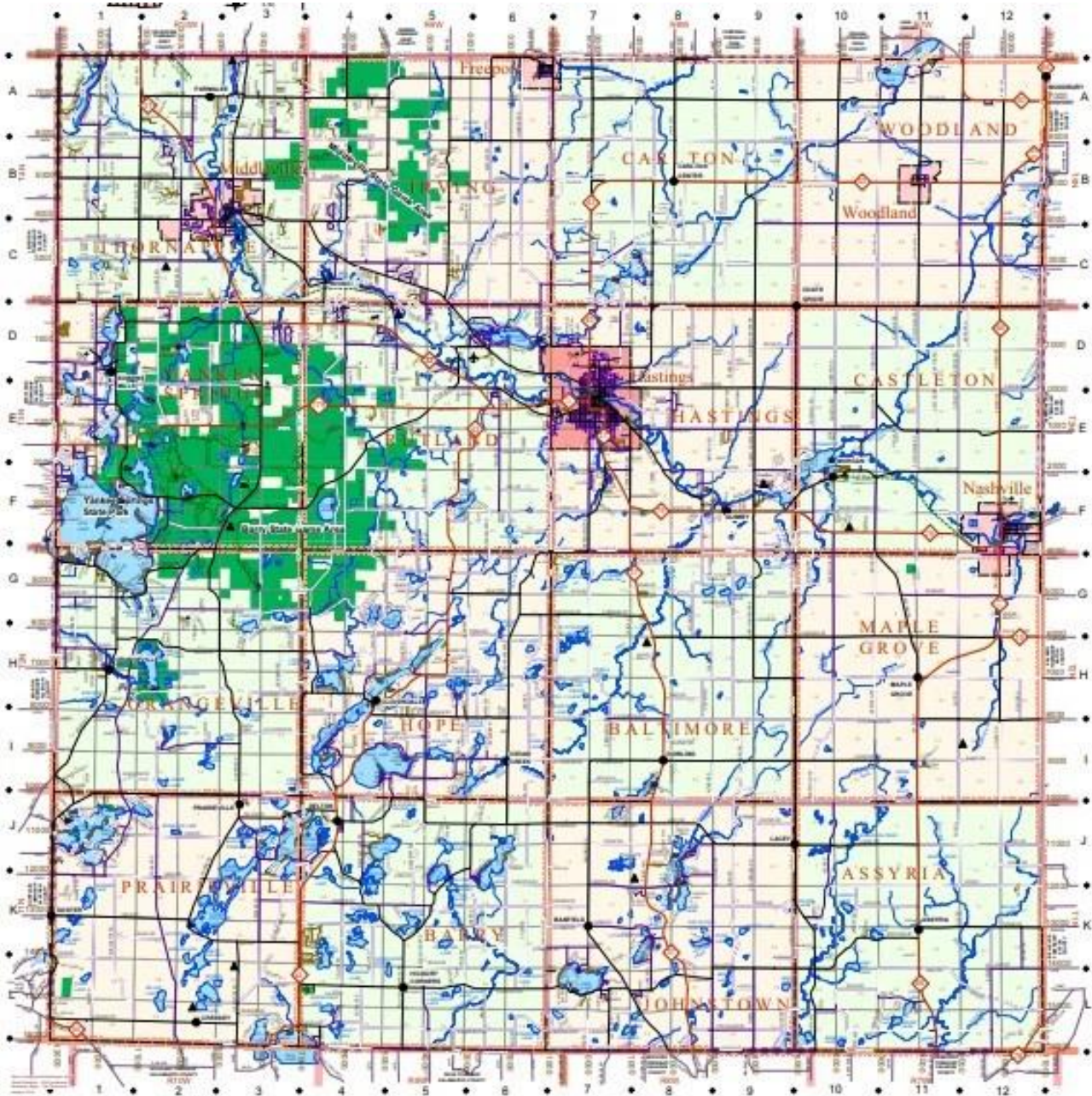
(must complete this process to be eligible for Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Grants

MAP 1 – MICHIGAN

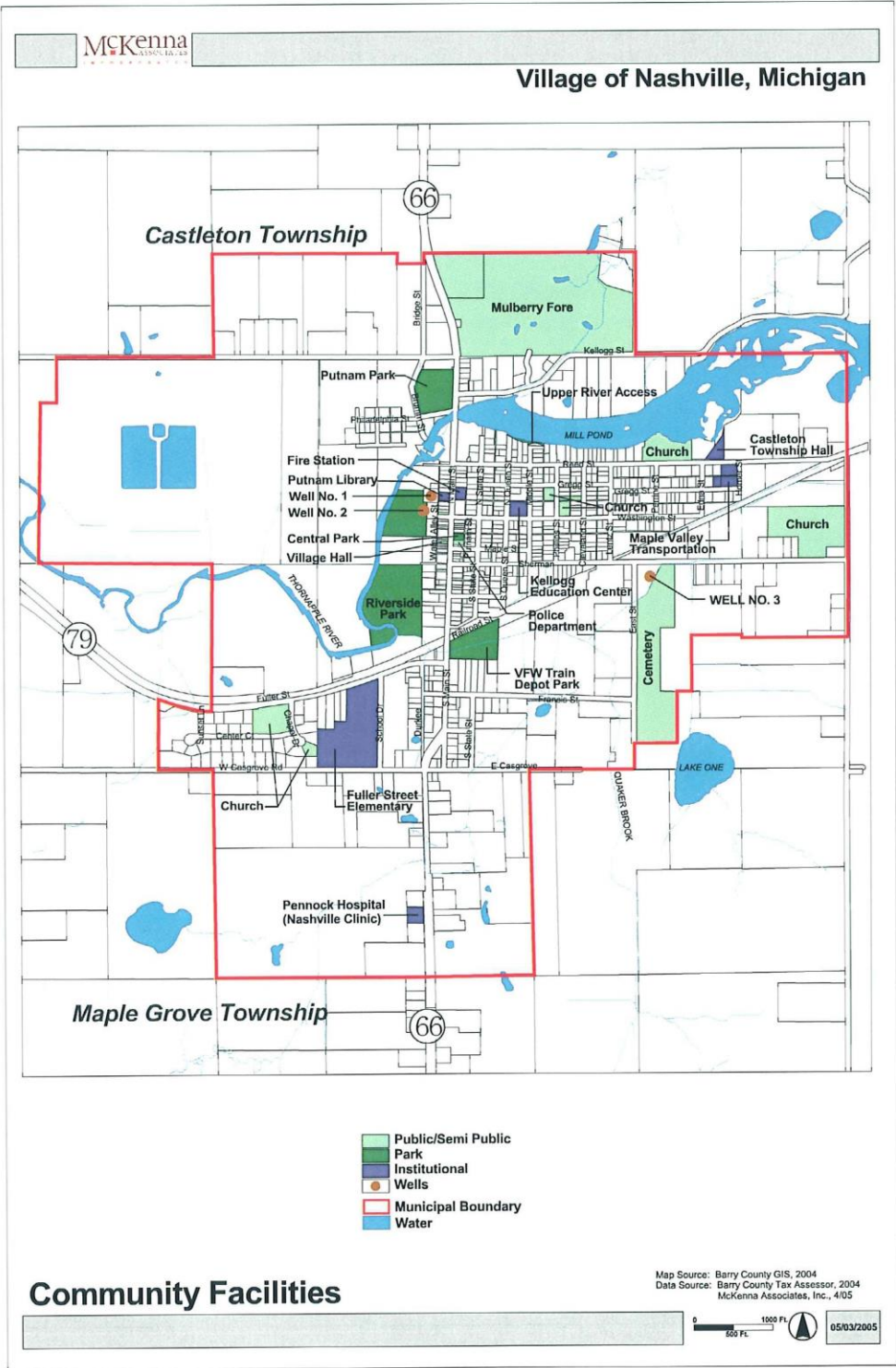




MAP 2 – BARRY COUNTY



MAP 3 – VILLAGE OF NASHVILLE



COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Physical Characteristics

Location: The Village of Nashville, founded in 1869, lies along the banks of the Thornapple River in eastern Barry County in the lower peninsula of Michigan (see map 1). The Village of Nashville lies along the east line of Barry County, approximately center of the north/south orientation of that line (see map 2). The village borders the western line of Eaton County to the east (see map 3). The village extends into Maple Grove and Castleton Townships. The village lies 12 miles east of Hastings, 21 miles north of Battle Creek and 30 miles southwest of Lansing. It is at the intersection of state highways M-79 and M-66. The Thornapple River passes through the middle of the village.

Climate: Nashville has a humid continental climate with 120-180 frost free days. Some other climate features can be found in Table 1.

TABLE 1 – GENERAL CLIMATE FEATURES

Avg Jan Temp (F) <u>Low</u>	Avg Jan Temp (F) <u>High</u>	Avg July Temp (F) <u>Low</u>	Avg July Temp (F) <u>High</u>	Average Temp (F) <u>Year</u>	Average Precip (in) <u>Year</u>	Average Snowfall (in) <u>Year</u>	Days with Precip <u>Year</u>	Average Relative Humidity <u>Year</u>	Clear Days <u>Year</u>
19	32	63	83	50	31	37	133	68	80

Terrain Features: The Village of Nashville lies on a flood plain. To the north of the bridge, the Thornapple River is narrow and back to its original size after the removal of the dam in 2010 with wetlands along its banks. South of the bridge the river below the new weirs is narrow and runs south along the western sector of the Village and exits to the west. In the east sector of the village a small creek draining Lake One (outside the village limits) combines with Quaker Brook, which runs along the southern village to drain into the Thornapple River in the west sector of the Village. Hills rise in the far northern and far southern sector of the village. Along the river below the weirs is mainly wooded flood plain.

Soil: The top soil predominantly covers sand and gravel with some interspersed clay.



MAP 4 – EXISTING LAND USE

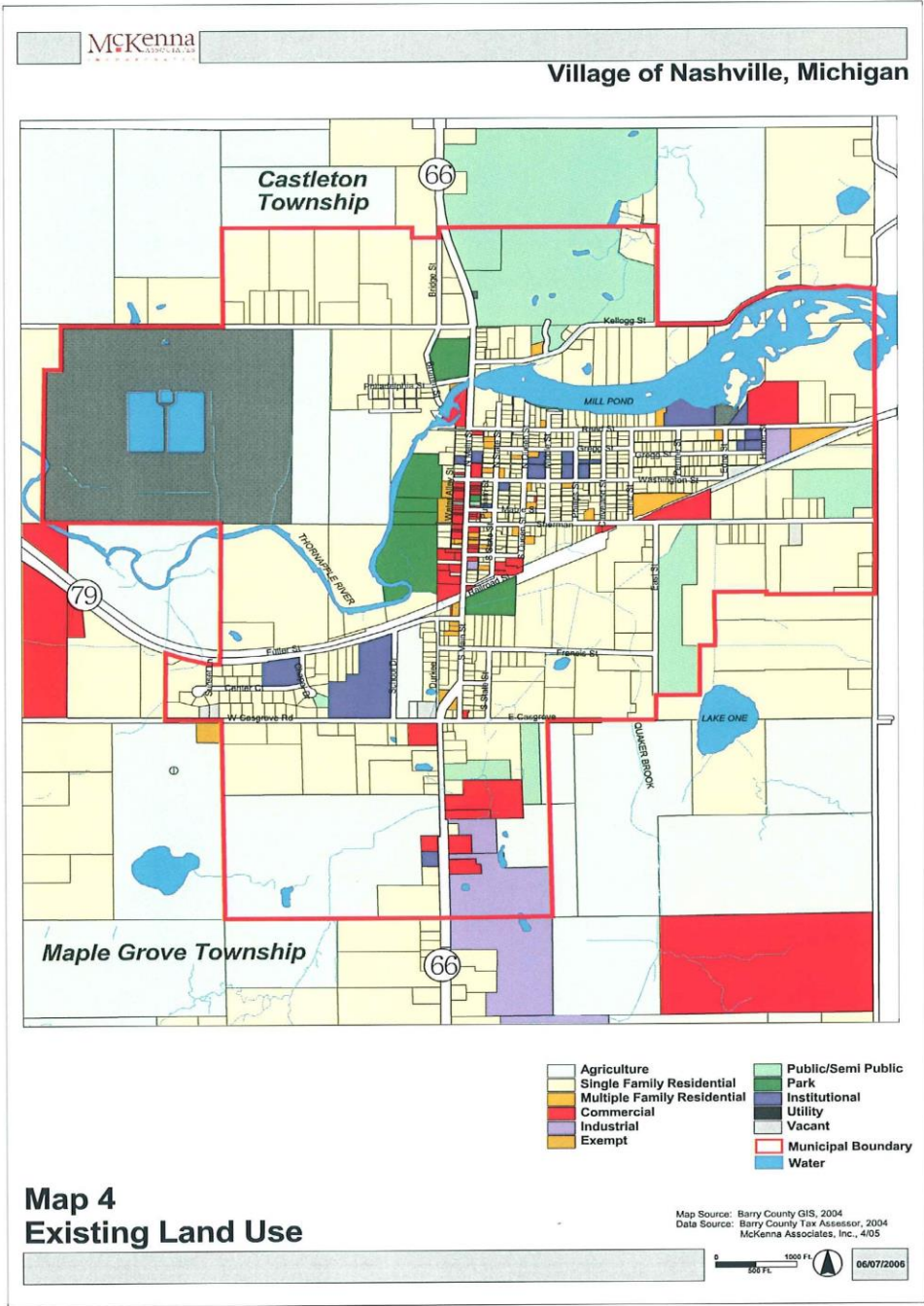
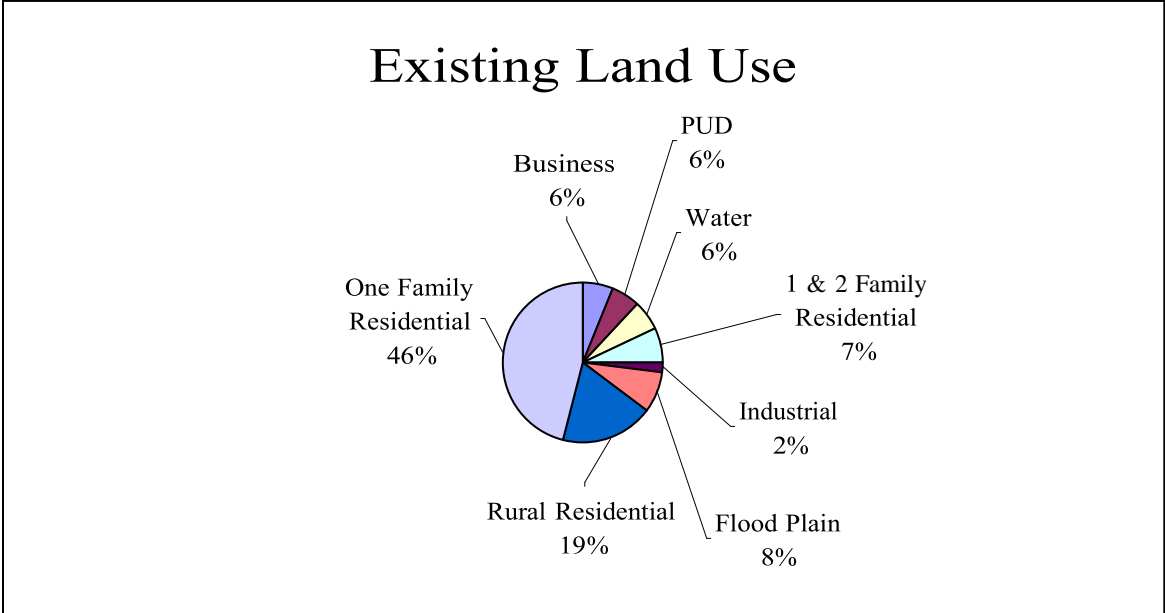


CHART 1 – EXISTING LAND USE



Social Characteristics

Population: The population of the village had increased slowly but steadily since 1940 until the 1990’s when it leveled off. In 2010 it has started to drop slightly. Population figures for the two townships that Nashville exists within include the population of the Village. These figures show slightly greater growth in the surrounding community of Maple Grove Township but a slight decline in population in Castleton Township.

TABLE 2 – POPULATION OF NASHVILLE & TOWNSHIPS

	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Nashville Village	1,279	1,374	1,525	1,558	1,628	1,654	1,654	1,628	
Castleton Twp	2,105	2,340	2,511	2,611	3,290	3,390	3,475	3,431	
Maple Grove Twp	937	923	1,068	1,111	1,358	1,398	1,471	1,593	

The Village of Nashville’s population has not grown over the last 10 years. As the economy worsened over the last few years, the Village in fact has lost residents.

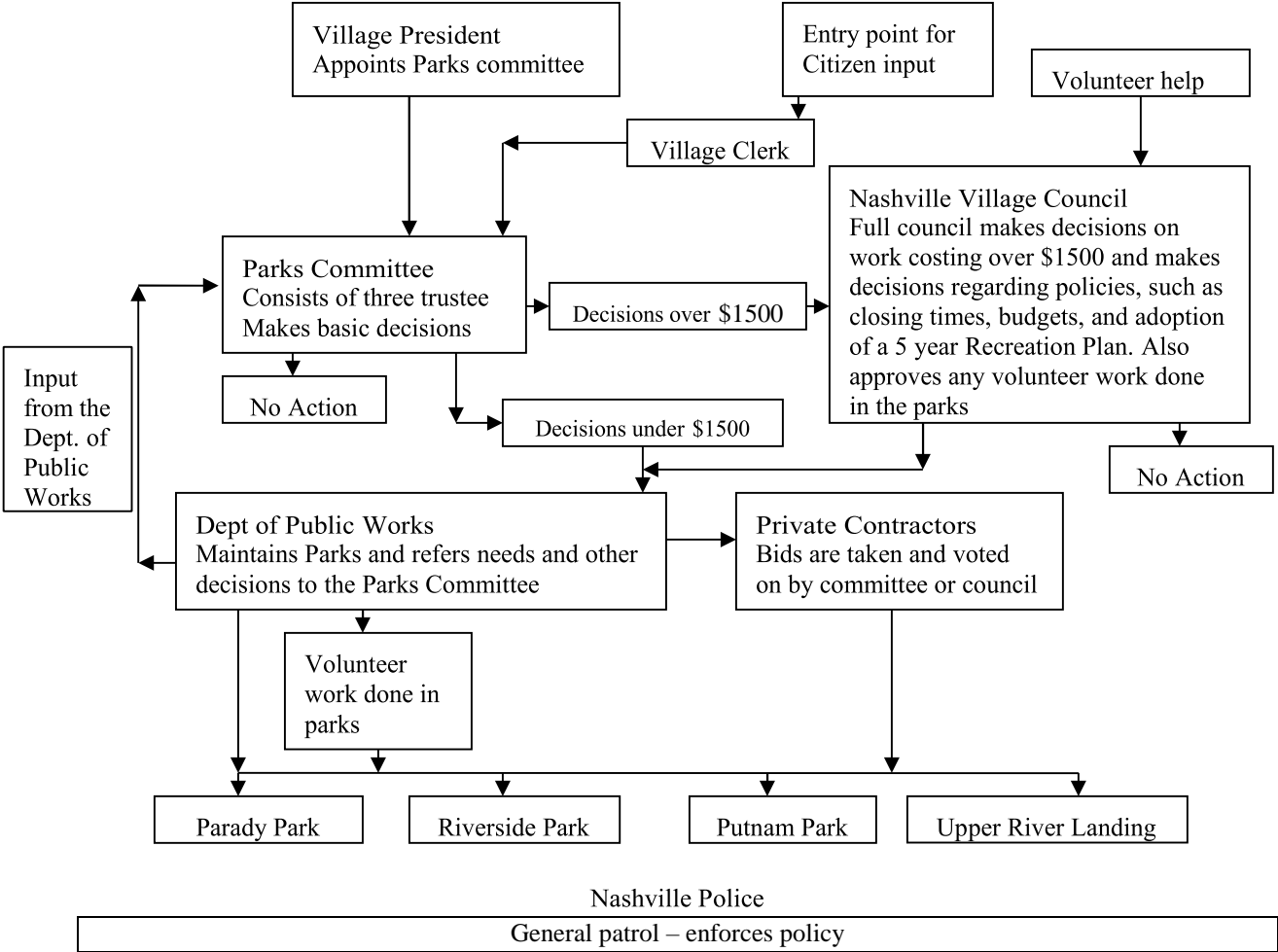
Socioeconomic Conditions: The population of Nashville 1655 people as of 2017 (city-data.com), predominantly working class. Often described as a bedroom community, 67.5% family homes with 2.6 people in each household, compared to state average of 67.2% with 2.4% people in each home. The vast majority of the work force must find employment in neighboring communities at least 12 miles away, since the village has sparse industrial development, just a few employing less than 10 persons each. Industries of the past have not been replaced sufficiently. Notable is the high poverty levels, with over a third (38.7%) of the children and just under 15% of the elderly living below the poverty level. The rural village is surrounded by farmlands which mainly produce corn, soy, cattle, dairy and swine. Low agricultural sale prices and high farm overhead make it increasingly difficult on local small farmers, contributing to high poverty levels surrounding the village. Decreases in the quality and quantity of union jobs in surrounding towns creates a poor job market for high school graduates, often leading to low paying work and high poverty levels among young couples with children.

TABLE 3 – CENSUS POPULATION STATISTICS

Source: U.S. Dept. of Commerce 2010 Census

Population .....	1628
Family Households.....	444
Median Family income.....	\$46,250
Non-Family Households.....	262
Non-Family Median income.....	\$17,143
Per capita income.....	\$17,642
Income below poverty level.....	23.5%
Children below poverty level.....	38.7% 65
and over below poverty level.....	14.7%
Families below poverty level total....	15.8%
Housing units.....	706 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

CHART 2 – PARKS ADMINISTRATIVE / MANAGEMENT  
STRUCTURE





### Park Management (See Chart 2)

The parks of Nashville are overseen by the Parks Committee which consists of three Council Trustees appointed by the Village President. In general, the parks are maintained by the Department of Public Works, who regularly mow the grass, plow snow and do any repair work that they notice is needed. Problems noted by citizens are forwarded to the village clerk, who passes them directly to the Parks Committee who then instructs the Department of Public Works to make necessary maintenance. Problems beyond the scope of the department and below \$1,500 are directly contracted by the DPW Director. Problems above \$1,500 are taken to the full council with a recommendation by the Parks Committee. In this case, if approved, bids by contractors are taken and decided on by the full council. If not approved, alternatives are offered by the Parks Committee or no further action is taken.

Several special cases must be noted where a community civic group sponsors a certain portion of the park system. They volunteer labor and raise money to help maintain their certain sponsored area. The Lions Club sponsors Putnam Park, where they occasionally will put in new trees, put in play equipment or some other small activity. The Jaycees sponsored Parady Park (Emory Parady Central Park) in the past; they built a gazebo and landscaped some of the park. The Nashville Historical Society secured memorial plaques and coordinated with the parks committee to build a new archway entrance to Parady Park in 2019, in honor of Nashville's Sesquicentennial. The Maple Valley Syrup Association helps maintain the Sugar Shack in Putnam Park. In all these cases the Village Council is petitioned for approval of the project and the DPW overlooks the progress of the project.

### Recreational Activities Management

The Village of Nashville does not have a recreational director. The Village is also not involved in the actual management of any recreational activities. Pee Wee Football is handled by the parents of that group. The Maple Valley Syrup Association runs all activities that take place in Putnam Park's Sugar Shack, where maple sap is processed into maple syrup. Fishermen and women are only under the direction of the D.N.R. requirements and guidelines. Some of the other civic groups have picnics, games, etc. that might occur on village property. In all of these cases, these civic groups require reservation by the Village for any use of Village property. Otherwise, park and playground use is very individualized, only directed by parents.

Outside, of Village parks, the Maple Valley School system manages its recreational activities, overseen by an athletic Director and appointed coaches on their own properties. Several churches also offer some recreational activities on their own properties, such as basketball open gyms and tournaments.

### Operating Budget

The operating budget of parks is determined by the Finance Committee which consists of three council trustees appointed by the Village President. The Parks Committee can only make recommendations during the budget writing process, but can also make appeals at the council meetings where the budget is approved, since the budget must be approved by the full council. If costs run over budget during the year then the full council must approve an amendment to the budget. The additional monies would come from another department, typically the General Fund.

### Administrators Staff

The Village of Nashville is managed by the Village Council, which consists of seven elected council trustees, one of which is elected to be the Village President.

There is no Village Manager in Nashville, but the office is run by the Village Clerk and the Treasurer, both of whom are appointed to their positions by the Village President.

The Department of Public Works is a position hired by council as is the other Department of Public Works positions.

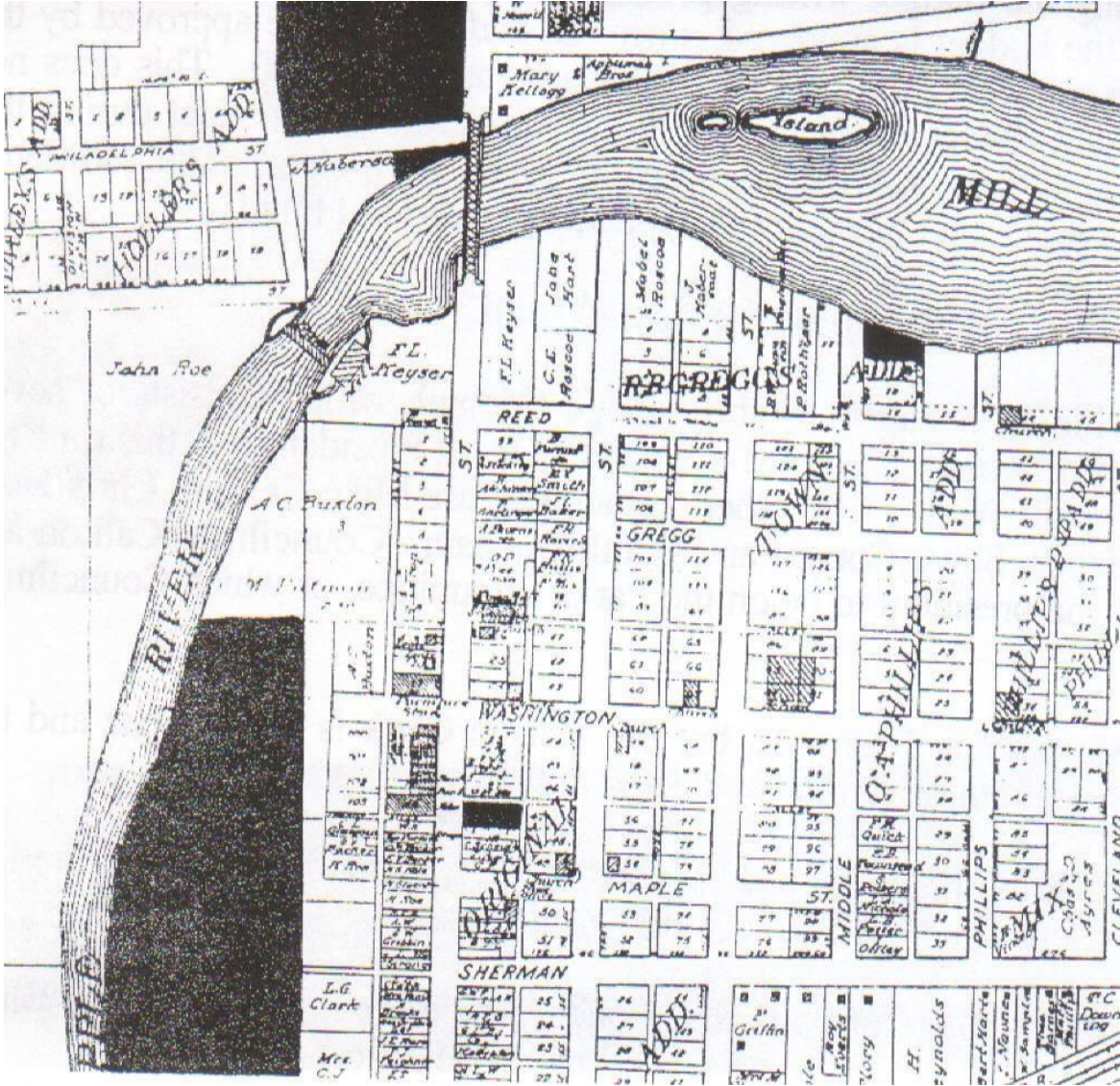
Parks are policed by the Village of Nashville Police, which consists of a Police Chief and officers.

### Relationship with other agencies

The Village of Nashville Parks Committee interacts with several Village units, such as the Village Council, the Planning Board and the Treasurer. Interaction of the Parks Committee outside of the Village has been with the Michigan Municipal League, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Barry County Recreational Staff.

RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

MAP 5 – LOCATION OF EXISTINGS RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



(PARKS ARE IN BLACK)

CHART 3 – PARKS AS A PERCENTAGE OF AREA

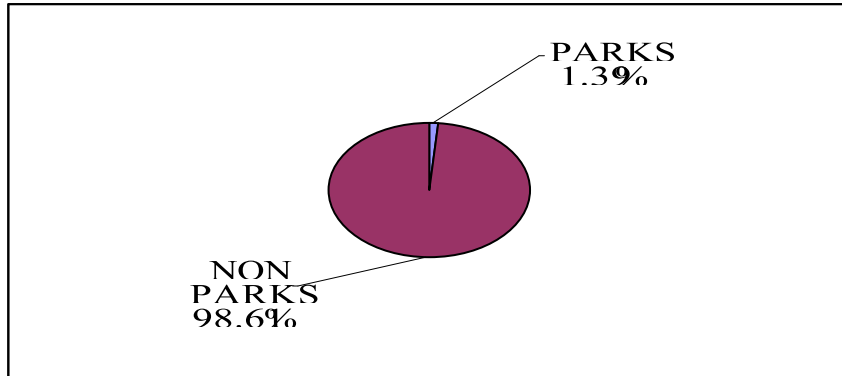


TABLE 4 – RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

Facilities	In Parks	Others in the Community	Condition
Basketball Courts			
Half Court	1	5 at Baptist Church	good
Full Court	1	1 at High School	good
Tennis Courts	none	none	
Pickle Ball Courts	3	area church & school gyms	good
Sand Volleyball	none	none	
Baseball Fields			
Official	none	2 at High School	
Little League	2	1 at Baptist Church	good
Football Fields			
Official	none	1 at High School	
Pee Wee - practice	1	1 at Fuller Elementary School	good
Soccer	1	Fuller Elementary School	good
Riverside Park	1		good
Running Track			
Official	none	1 at High School	
Softball Fields	2	Same as Little League	good
Trails			
Rails to Trails	1	Partial Paved/Grass trail developed by Rails to Trails	good
Playgrounds	2	1 at each elementary school	good
Boat ramps	2	none	good
Fishing Dock	1	none	good
Horseshoes	none	none	

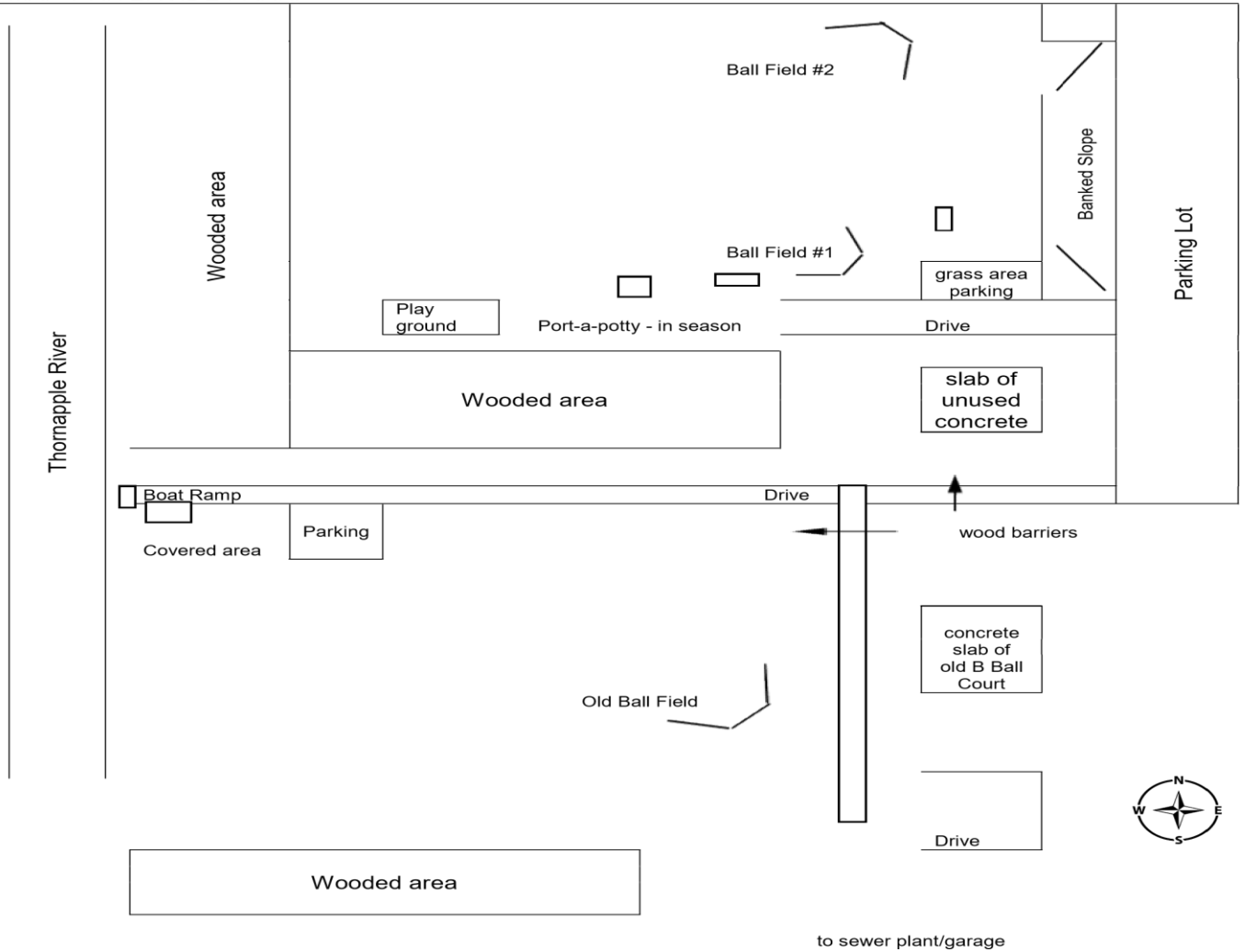
Village of Nashville  
5 yr Parks Plan

Picnic Pavilion	1	none	good
Concession booth	none	1 at High School Football Field 1 at Fuller Elementary Schools	
Restrooms	2	several at schools	good
Pools	none	none	
Horse Tie-ups	1	none	good
Ice Skating Rink	none	none	
Sledding run	1	none	good
Outdoor Theatre	none	none	
BBQ's	2	none	good
Farmer's Market	none	none	

**EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILTIES**

Nashville's Park System consists of four parks. From Largest to smallest: Riverside Park, Putnam Park, Parady Park and Upper River Access. Each park will be generally described.

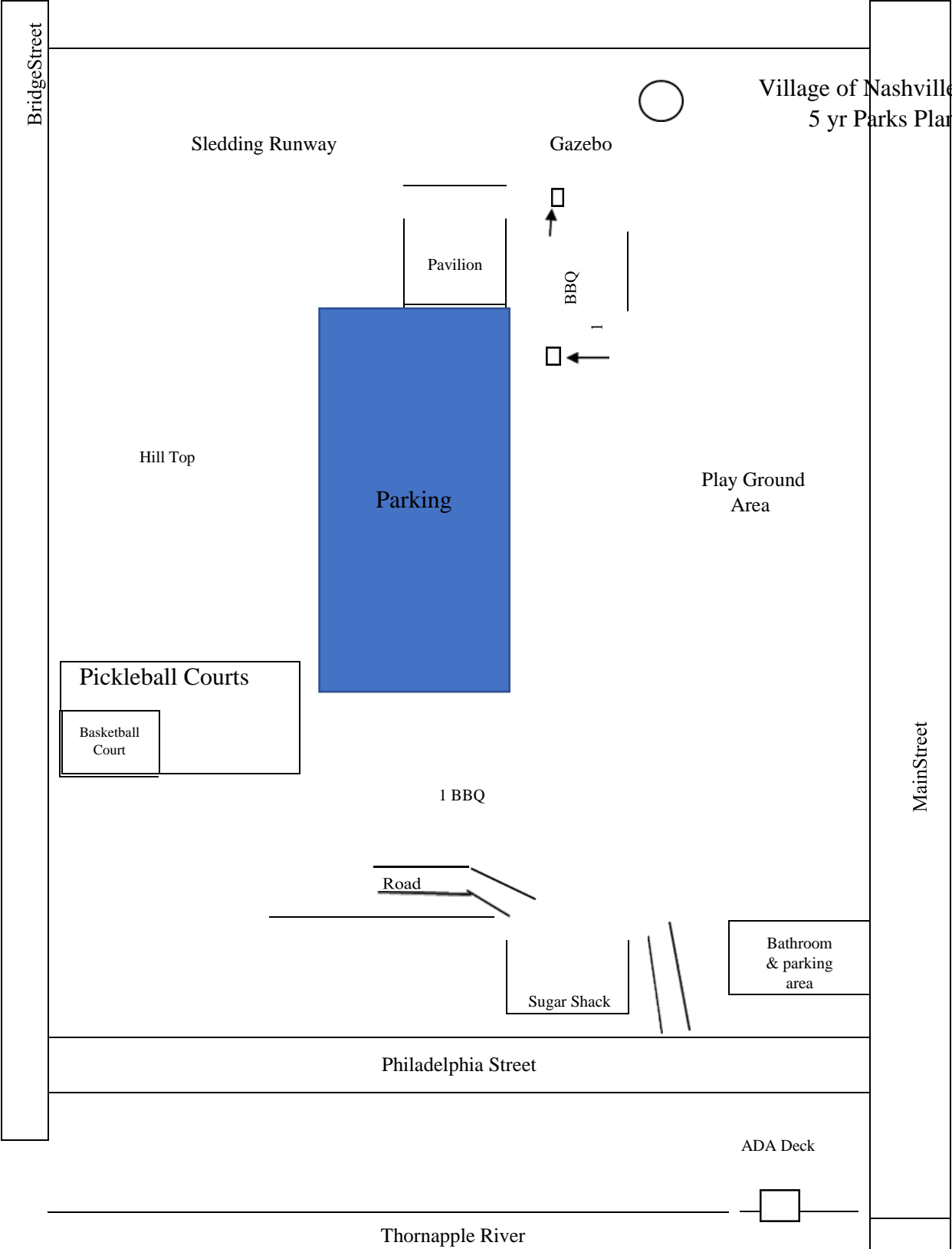
MAP 6 RIVERSIDE PARK:



DPW drive

**Map 6 Riverside Park:**

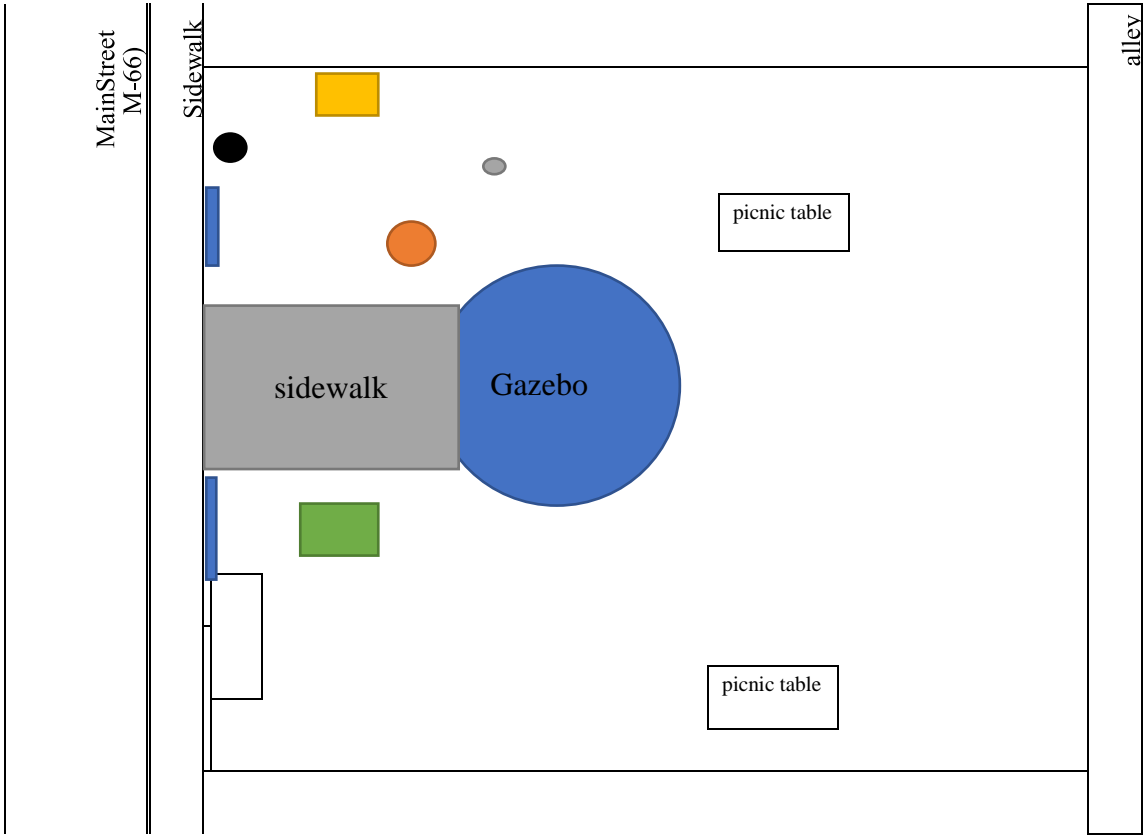
Riverside Park is the largest of Nashville’s Parks. It contains two ball fields, an undeveloped mowed grass field, a small playground, the lower river access boat ramp, and a large natural area. The baseball fields are used for practice and games by the local Pee Wee and Little League baseball teams in the spring, soccer teams in the spring & fall and the Pee Wee football teams in the fall. The Lower River Access ramp is in good condition. The playground only has a couple of pieces of play equipment. The park is very open and sunny.



Map 7 Putnam Park:

Putnam Park, the second largest of Nashville’s parks, contains many large trees and comes off of a high hill all the way down to the river’s edge. It is very shady and cool due to the overgrowth of large trees. It has one basketball and three pickle ball courts. There is a small playground area in the park that has play equipment. The picnic pavilion is in good shape. There is a small handicap accessible playground which was built with donations in 2001. The park slopes to the River with 150 feet of frontage. In 2017, after receiving a grant from the State of Michigan DNR, a handicap accessible fishing deck was built to allow residents access to fishing in the river and looking at the river in a safe environment. With the same grant, a new bathroom facility and parking were built to service the park and fishing deck. In 2018 new LED lights were added to the ball courts. 2019 renovations included relocating play equipment, additional parking, crack sealing and converting tennis courts to pickle ball.

**Map 8 Parady Park:**



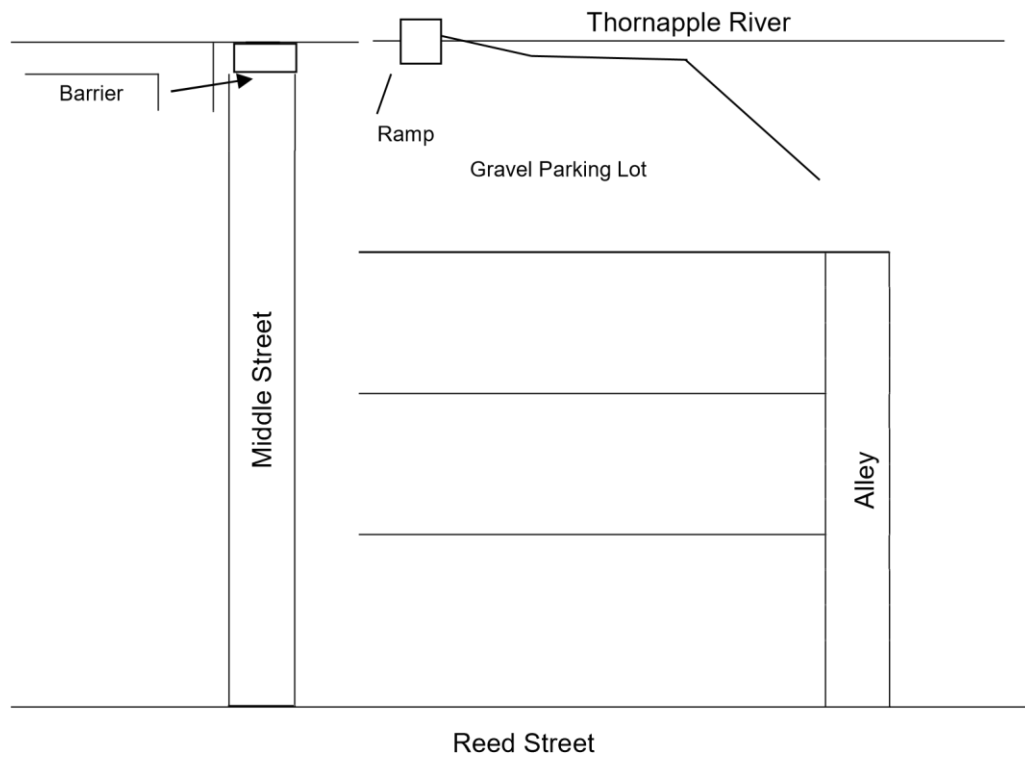
**Map 8 Parady Park:**

Emory Parady Central Park was so named because it is in the center of the downtown business district and was renamed by the council in 2017 to include Emory Parady, due to his federal and local history.



It is the only Nashville park that is not adjacent to the Thornapple River. It consists of a large village lot in the middle of town. It has a wooden gazebo, built by the Jaycees and paid for by the Village. The gazebo has been fitted with electric outlets that are used for music or sales that sometimes take place in the park. It is also occasionally used for outdoor church or wedding services held by local residents. A cigarette disposal, bike rack and benches were added during the Main Street renovation project. The park is in good shape. In 2019, the park was commemorated as Parady Park with a great arch displaying the name along with a new walk to the gazebo, historical marker and sesquicentennial stone.

## Map 9 UPPER RIVER ACCESS



The Upper River Access is so named because it contains a ramp for boaters above the newly placed weirs. The ramp was redone in 2010 with a grant after the dam was removed. The Scout building that was there has been removed and it is now all parking area and in good shape.

**CURRENT RECREATION PROGRAMS**

The Village does not organize recreational programs and does not have recreational staff. Different community organizations organize their own programs within the Village parks. The baseball and softball groups, Lions Club, Pee Wee Football, Route 66 Business District, etc. have organized their own activities. Local individuals such as fishermen are not organized by the Village.

**RECREATIONAL NEEDS**

Before going into specific recreational needs, general goals need to be stated. The Nashville parks need to provide better and more diverse recreation, but they also need to stimulate tourism as well as economic and residential development. Since the community is economically poor, there is a low tax base and therefore little money for development. In this case, a little has to go a long way to create the kind of park system that Nashville needs. We also need development that requires little maintenance. As added input a community survey was performed through the online and paper survey. Below is the tabulation of the interest survey.

**TABLE 5 – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS (results from 2019 survey)**

RESPONSE	#
<b>Parady Park</b>	
Outdoor movies	55
Splash Station (location to be determined)	54
Play Equipment	53
Parking	52
Workout Stations	52
Benches/Picnic Tables	52
Large Pavilion	52
<b>Putnam Park</b>	
Play Equipment	56

Pickle Ball Courts	55
Parking	53
Outdoor Movies	53
Basketball Courts	50
Riverside Park	
Mosquito Spray Program	56
Restrooms	55
River walk/boardwalk	53
Picnic Shelter	52
Dog Park/Walk	51
Workout Stations	49
Parking	45

Major Recreational Needs (very general):

1. Create areas of modern recreation more suited to current needs.
2. Creation of types of recreation which stimulate tourism and residential development.

**ACTION PROGRAM**

Goals to accomplish in the Next 5 years

**Riverside Park**

1. Add Pavilion with attached restroom
2. Replace playground equipment
3. Splash pad

**Putnam Park**

1. Renovate/expand basket and pickleball courts
2. Additional playground equipment

**Parady Park**

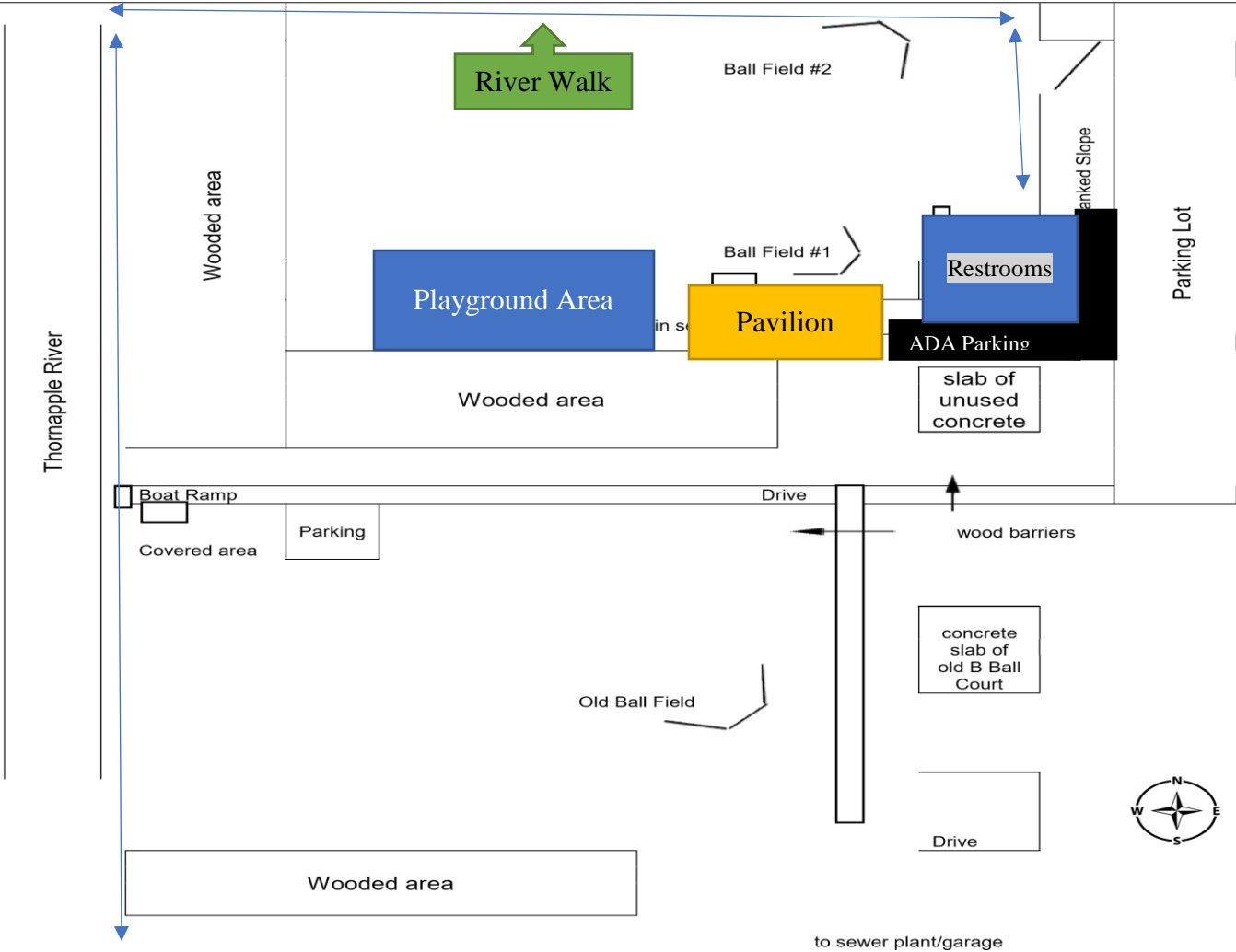
1. Concrete pads for picnic table
2. Parking spaces along east ally

**Upper River Access**

1. Canoe/Kayak launch
2. Renovate boat launch/float dock

MAP 10 RIVERSIDE PARK ACTION PLAN

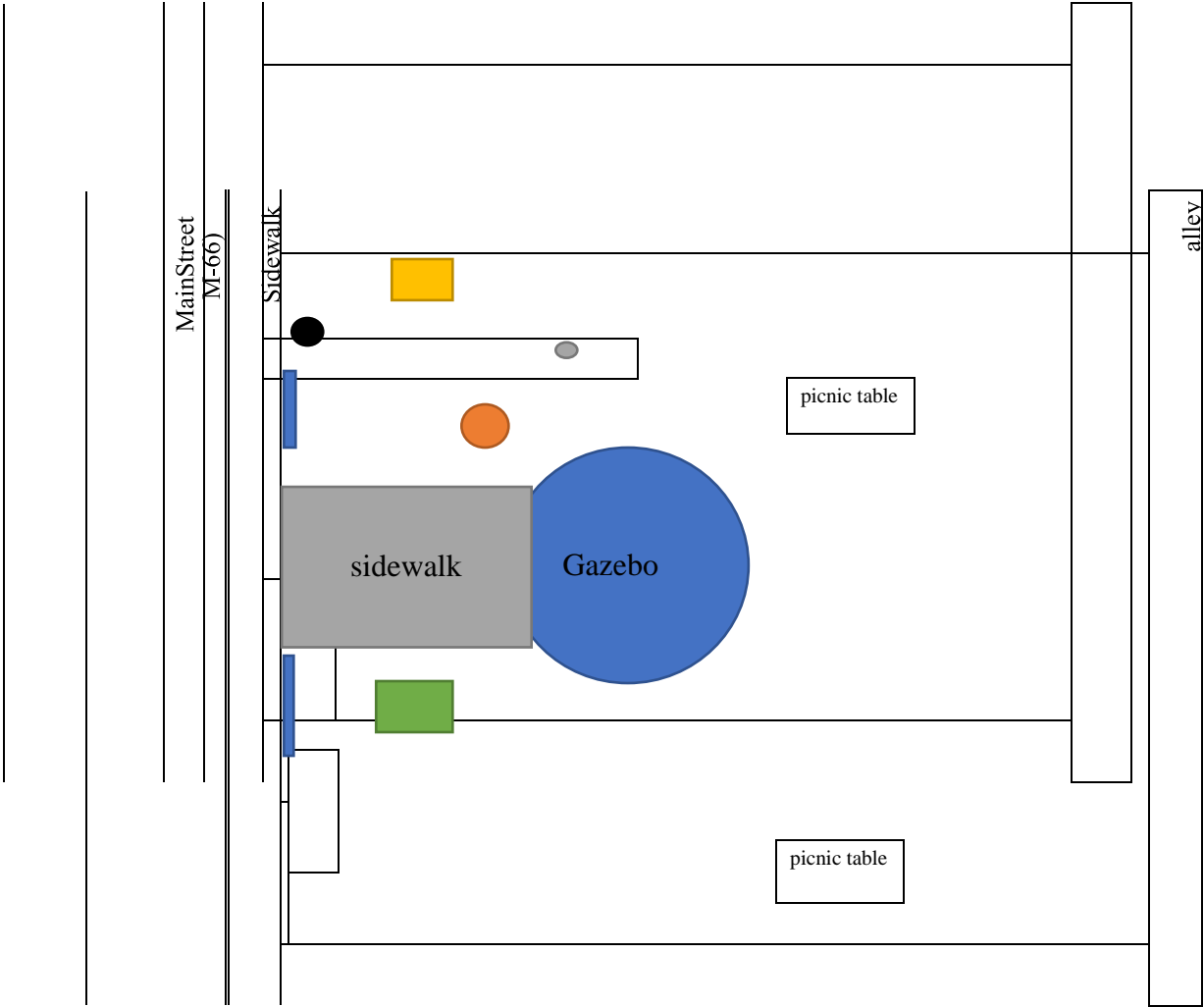
MAP 6 RIVERSIDE PARK:



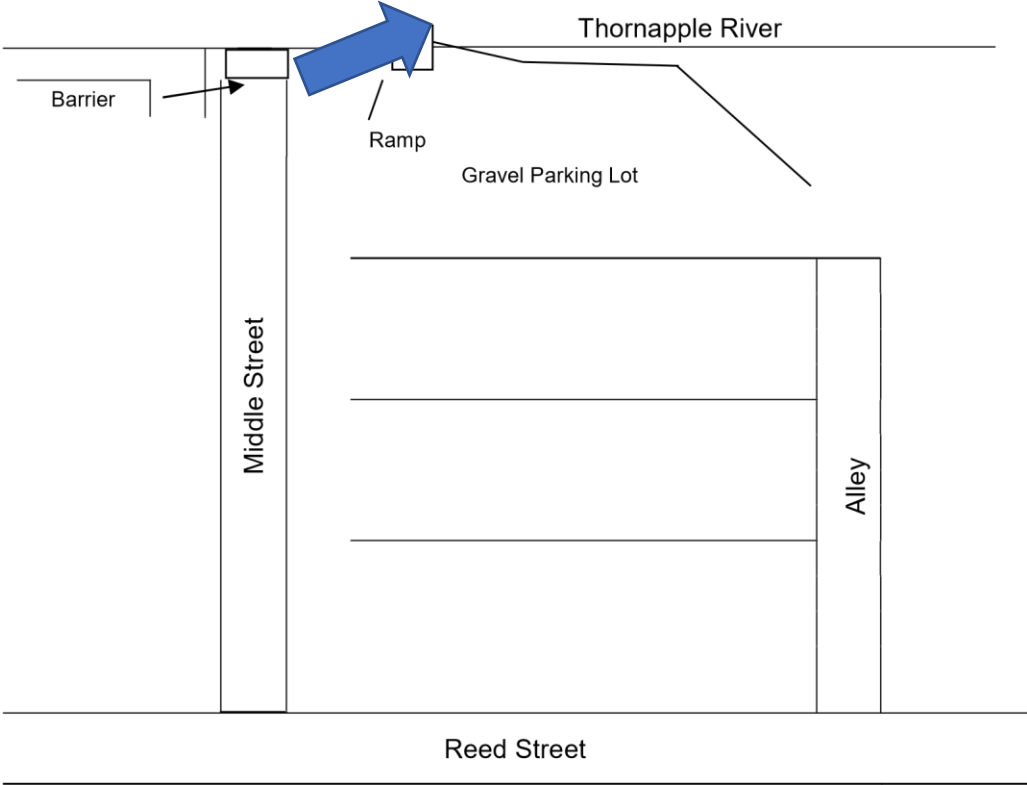
MAP 11 PUTNAM PARK ACTION PLAN



MAP 12 PARADY PARK ACTION PLAN -



UPPER RIVER ACCESS ACTION PLAN



Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS)

The Capital Improvement Schedule, on this page, is intended as a general time map which best meets Nashville’s recreational goals. Realistically, actual improvements will vary to some extent from the CIS. As amendments to the CIS are needed, the committee will make these changes to the CIS in the same manner that the Village Council uses when budget amendments are needed during the fiscal year. Since a combination of Village staff, volunteers and contractors will be utilized, and since there are such a large variety of goals to be met, delays and opportunities will require amendments to the CIS.

TABLE 6 – CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE

2020- Improve parking facilities at Putnam Park  
 Remove and re-locate play structures near Pavilion  
 Est. Cost - \$10,000.00

2021- Construct Restrooms/Pavilion at Riverside Park

Repair backstops and construct outfield fence – Riverside park



Construct ADA accessible sidewalks and pad for seating and bleachers – Riverside Park  
Security Lighting – Riverside Park  
Asphalt drive and ADA Parking – Riverside Park  
River Walk Path  
Est. cost - \$125,000.00

2022 - Parking spaces – Parady  
Concrete Pads for Picnic Tables  
Est. Cost - \$20,000.00

2023- Additional Parking at Putnam Park  
Additional Playground Equipment including ADA Equipment  
Est. Cost - \$90,000.00

2024 – Improved Upper river Access  
Est. cost \$50,000.00

2025 – Riverside Park Splash Pad  
Est. cost - \$125,000.00

The overall implementation and coordination of the CIS will be managed by the Parks Committee, which will function administratively in the same manner as described in Chart 2 on page 17.

#### BASIS FOR ACTION PROGRAM

##### Rational for each action in action program

Starting with action #1 in Riverside Park and ending with action #5 at Putnam Park:

2020

1. Putnam Park – update Putnam parking area

2021

1. Riverside Park – Currently Riverside Parks does not have any covered area for picnic tables or other items and a pavilion in this park has been requested by several area

residents. This park is home to several softball tournaments and would benefit from a covered area to accommodate the players and their fans. Riverside Park rents PortA-John during the summer months. Having permanent ADA bathroom attached to the pavilion would just be a plus for those wanting to use Riverside Parks several recreation areas for any length of time

2. Clear an area for a future River walk path with hopes of someday connecting to Paul Henry Trail

2022

1. Parady Park – Parking spaces on east side of park near ally way to encourage more activity in the park without the hazard of crossing the street.
2. Parady Park – Concrete pads for picnic tables for additional seating/eating area in the park.

2023

1. Putnam Park – Building an additional parking lot for the Putnam Park basketball/pickle ball Courts is needed because the current lot cannot hold enough cars to accommodate the court when in use by a large group or tournament. The present lot can only hold about 10 - 12 cars.
2. Putnam Park has a small playground area and an additional small area with ADA playground equipment, but the village would like to increase the area and add more equipment of various types. This park is used for field trips by the local elementary school at the end of every school year and all village children throughout the year and they would benefit from a larger variety and quantity of equipment. When a large crowd of children are in the park at one time there is not enough equipment to hold them all.
3. Riverside Park has a few playground structures but they are old and out of date. An updated playground area that would include ADA play equipment (not currently available at this site) would be used by children attending the softball tournaments along with children that live in the downtown area

2024

1. Upper River Access – canoe/kayak access for variety of use in the boat launch

2025

1. Riverside Park – Splash Pad

## PRIORITY RATIONAL

Priority was assessed based on a combination of factors. The largest priority was given to projects that were needed yesterday, in other words, long past due as far as safety and community outcry. Another factor was the need to blend the amount of money spent over the five years to give the village and community groups enough time to generate ongoing funds. As a result, some years were skipped so that the plan was financially realistic and the village did not incur debt. Another factor was that a couple of projects were located in the same park and a grant could be written to include both projects.

2020: In 2019, the village hoped to invest a large amount of money along with a grant into the park system to add a new parking lot by the basketball courts in Putnam Park. Minimal upgrades to courts and parking were performed. So, this year the village needs to take a year off from the park system and rebuild its fund balance to help with future projects.

2021: In 2020, the village is hopeful that this year will see the acceptance of grant applications that will allow the Village to build a new pavilion with attached ADA restroom in Riverside Park and to update the playground equipment in Riverside Park. Grant money will be needed to complete these projects and the village will need time to look for and prepare for these projects.

2022: The village is optimistic that it will be able to install parking on the east side of the park near the ally along with cement pads for a picnic area to encourage more use in the parks. This year the village needs to take a year off from the park system and rebuild its fund balance to help with future projects.

2023: The village would like to overhaul the pickleball and basketball courts and expand the parking area along and add new playground equipment in Putnam and Riverside Parks this year. But to complete the Putnam Park project, the village will be looking for available grant money.

2024: The village would like to improve access for kayaks and canoes as this could increase the usage of the Upper River Access. This year the village needs to take a year off from the park system and rebuild its fund balance to help with future projects.

2025: The village would like to install a splash pad concept in the Riverside Park to encourage more play activities and utilize the parking area for maximum use. The village will look for grant opportunities to complete this project.

We are sure by year 5 the Five-Year Recreation Plan will have been amended several times by year five and if not all of our projected plans have been accomplished, we will keep pursuing these goals in future years.

## CONCLUSION

This recreational plan is an assessment of what exists, what is needed and a realistic five-year recreational plan to provide adequate recreational facilities for the Village of Nashville and surrounding areas. This recreational plan is not only realistic in its execution, but can be maintained properly with Nashville's current administrative and management structure. The proposed recreational improvements will improve the quality of living in Nashville and provide for all major recreational needs in a cost-efficient manner.