

Recreation Plan

Village of Nashville

Nashville, Michigan



Parks Committee
Village of Nashville

Revised **/**/2025

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Resolution

Village of Nashville

Resolution # _____

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: _____

Attested by Kayce Nelson
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 parks, and prescribes a plan which accommodates and fulfills these needs. Recreation opportunities that exist in the Village, that are under the control of other governmental units including Maple Valley Schools athletic fields, Barry County's Paul Henry Trail, and both DNR owned conservation lands. These are considered valuable assets to our community. While the Village offers no financial support for these facilities, they are considered important to our community.

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:

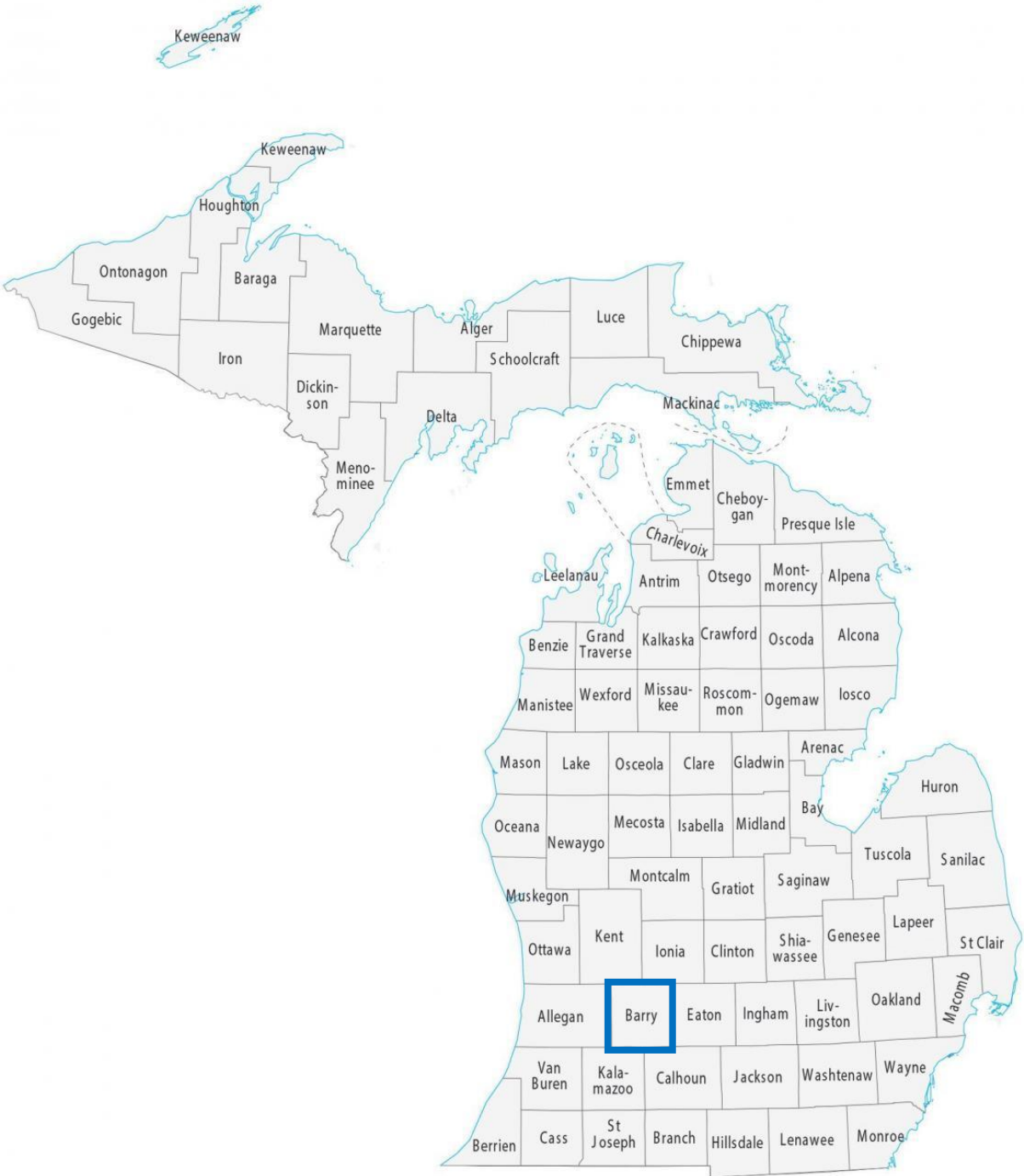
Advertise – public notice of 30 day review period – set public hearing after review period

Hold public hearing – make any adjustments needed

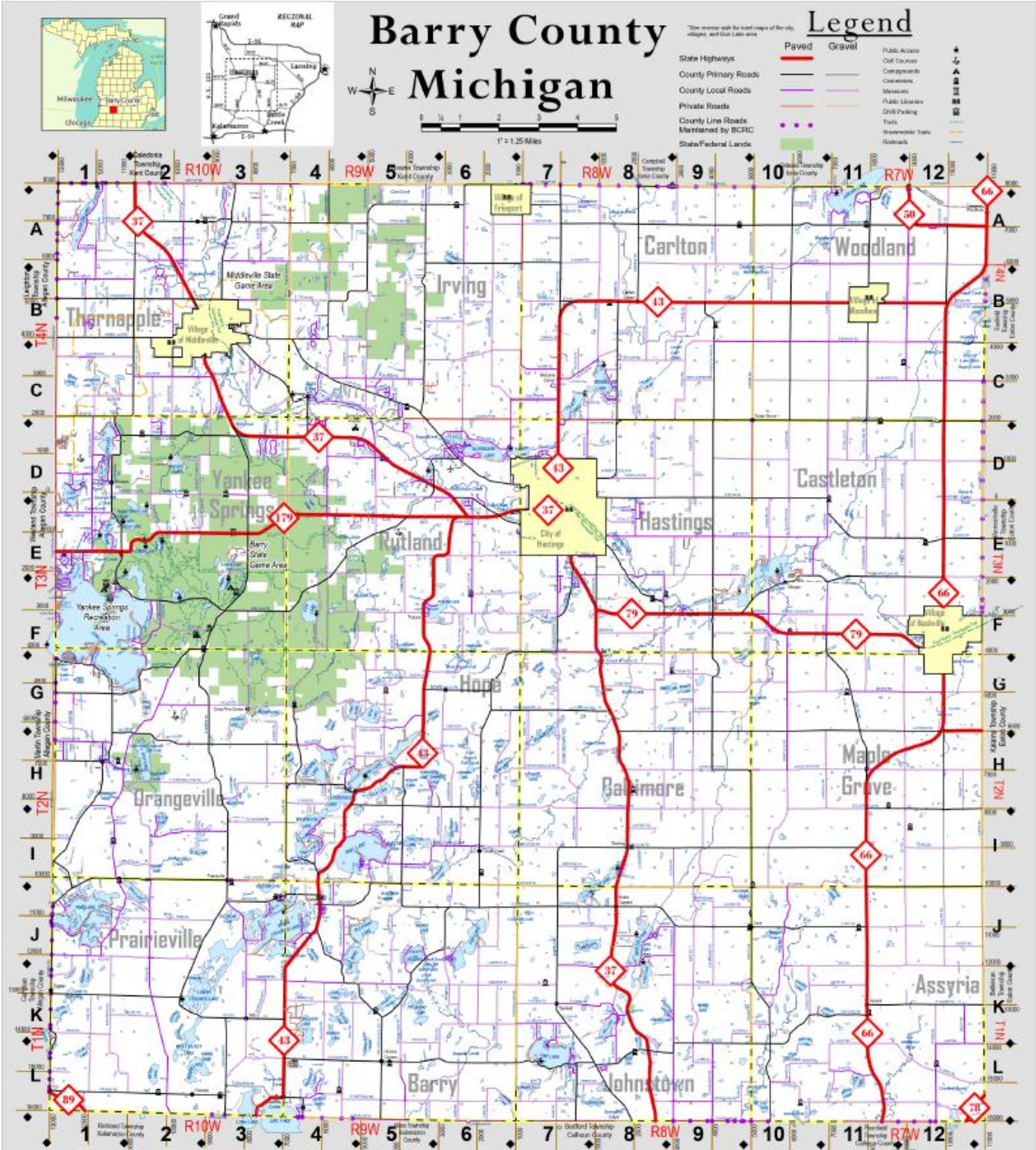
Adopt new revised plan

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 Counties



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 in the 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.

TABLE 1 – GENERAL CLIMATE FEATURES

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

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

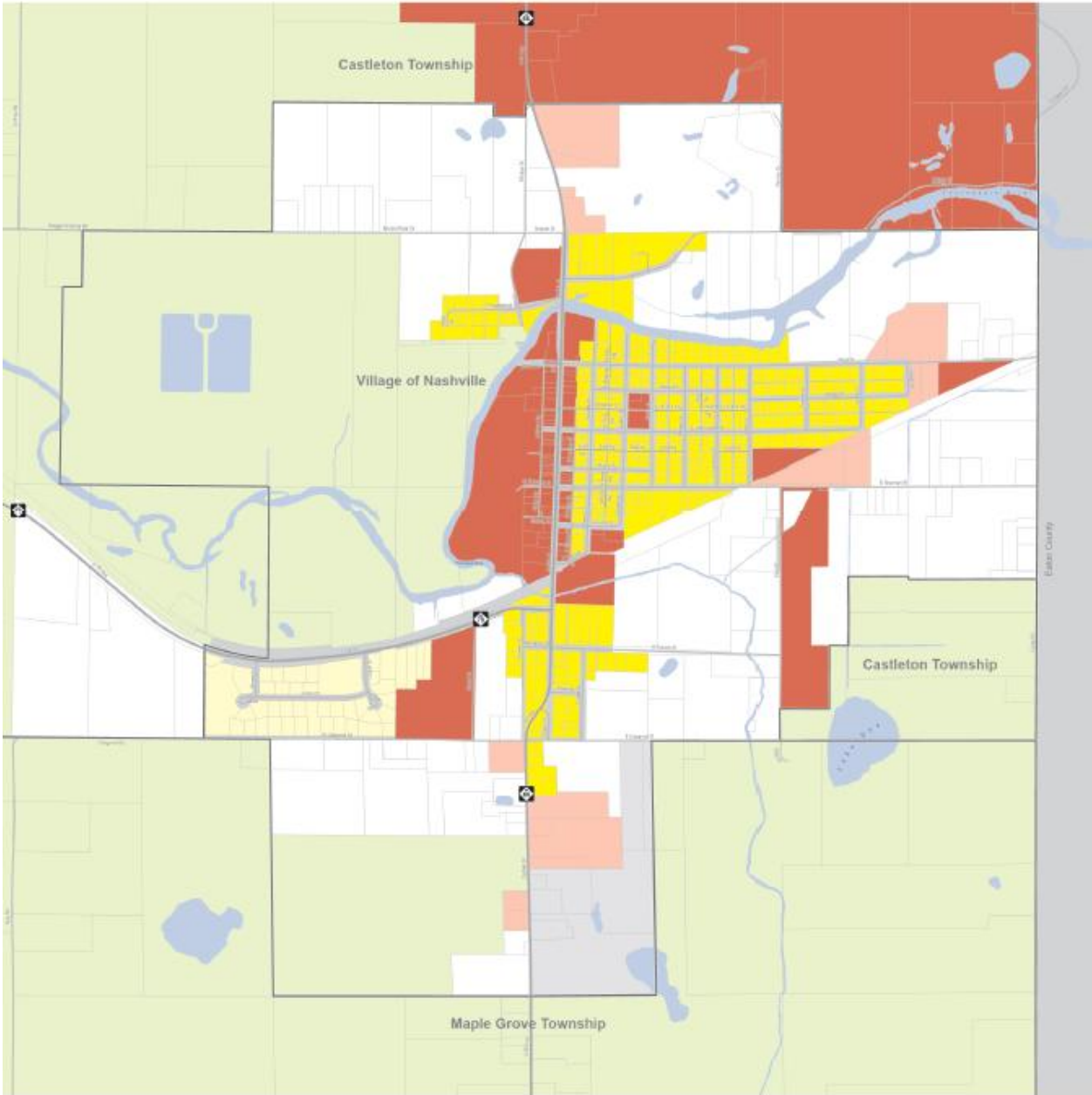
Terrain Features: The Village of Nashville lies on a flood plain. To the north of the bridge, the Thornapple River is narrow and back to its original size after the removal of the dam in 2010 with wetlands along its banks. South of the bridge the river below the new weirs is narrow and runs south along 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 topsoil predominantly covers sand and gravel with some interspersed clay.

MAP 4 – ZONING MAP

Village of Nashville BARRY COUNTY, MICHIGAN

Zoning



1/15/2025

Zoning is subject to change. Please consult the Barry County Planning & Zoning Department for additional information. This zoning map is representative of the last data made available to Barry County Land Information Services.

- Railroads
- Agricultural
- Conservation
- Forest
- General Commercial
- General Industrial
- High Density Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Light Industrial
- Medium Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Future Lakes & River
- Recreational Lakes
- Rural Residential
- Local Utility
- Local Utility - Non-County Zoning
- Tax Parcels
- Lakes & Ponds

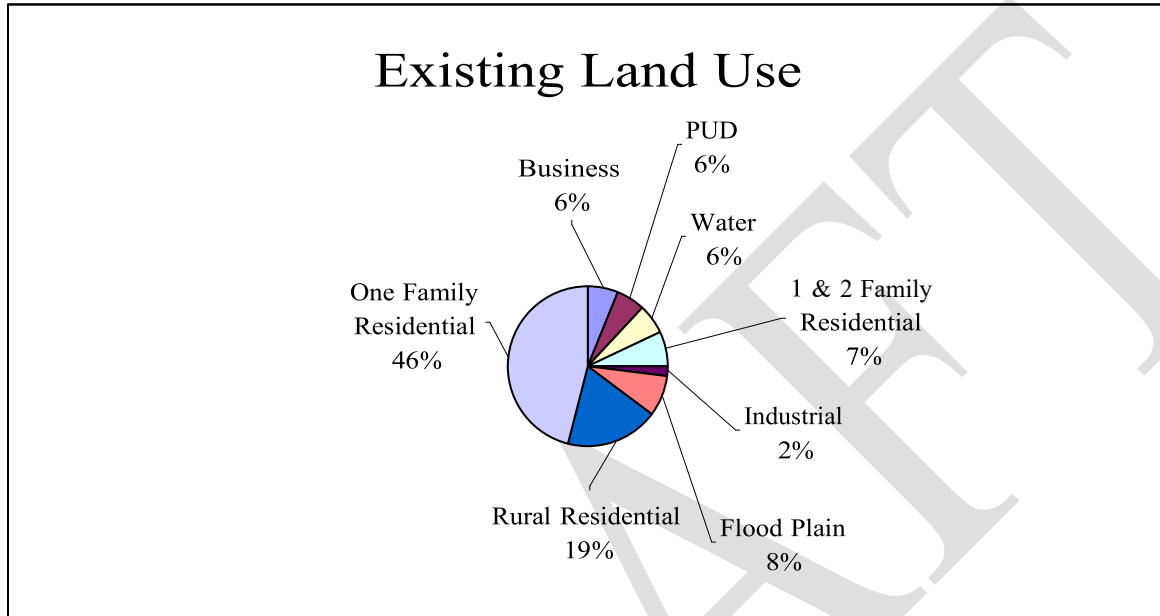


Scale: 1:8,000



This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as such. The information on Barry County maps is distributed and transmitted "as is" without warranties of any kind, either expressed or implied, including without limitation, warranties of title or implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose. Barry County does not guarantee the accuracy, timeliness, or completeness of the information on this map.

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 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

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2020</u>
Nashville Village	1279	1374	1525	1558	1628	1654	1654	1628	1537
Castleton Twp	2105	2340	2511	2611	3290	3390	3475	3431	3388
Maple Grove Twp	937	923	1068	1111	1358	1398	1471	1593	1599

The Village of Nashville’s population has not grown over the last 10 years.

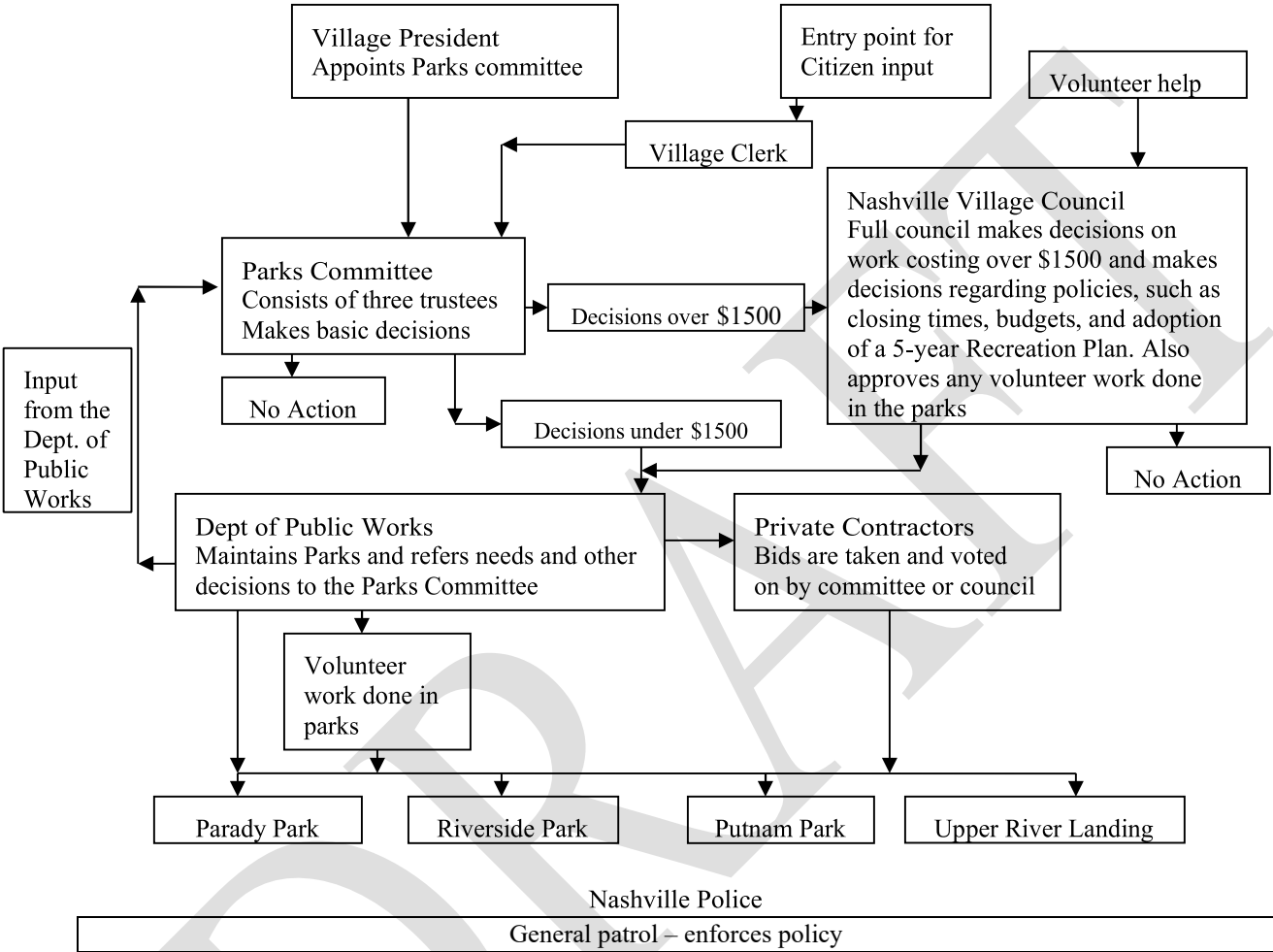
Socioeconomic Conditions: The population of Nashville 1612 people as of 2022 (city-data.com), is a predominantly working class, often described as a bedroom community. 61% of family homes with 2.4 people in each household. Much of the workforce must find employment in neighboring communities, as the village itself has a limited industrial sector. The Village has just a few businesses employing 10 persons or more. Industries of the past have not been replaced sufficiently. Notable is the poverty levels, of 7.44% of the population, compared to the national average of 11.1%. 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	1537
Housing units.....	684
Family Households.....	603
Median Family income.....	\$54,612
Non-Family Households.....	81
Non-Family Median income.....	\$31,515
Per capita income.....	\$44,427
Income below poverty level.....	23.5%
Children below poverty level.....	2.0%
65 and over below poverty level.....	8.6%
Families below poverty level total....	7.4%

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.

Administrator’s 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.

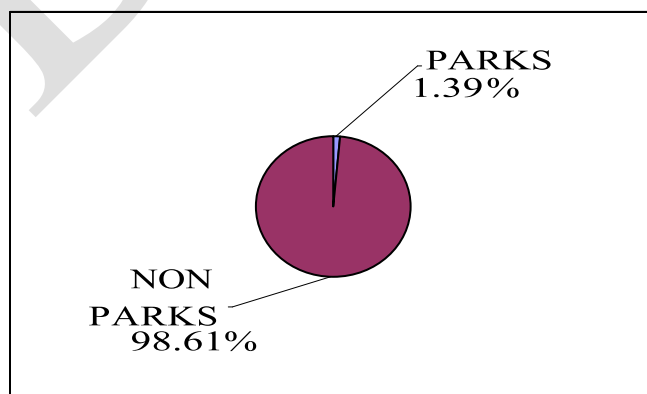
The Director of Public Works is a position hired by the council as is the other Department of Public Works’ position.

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

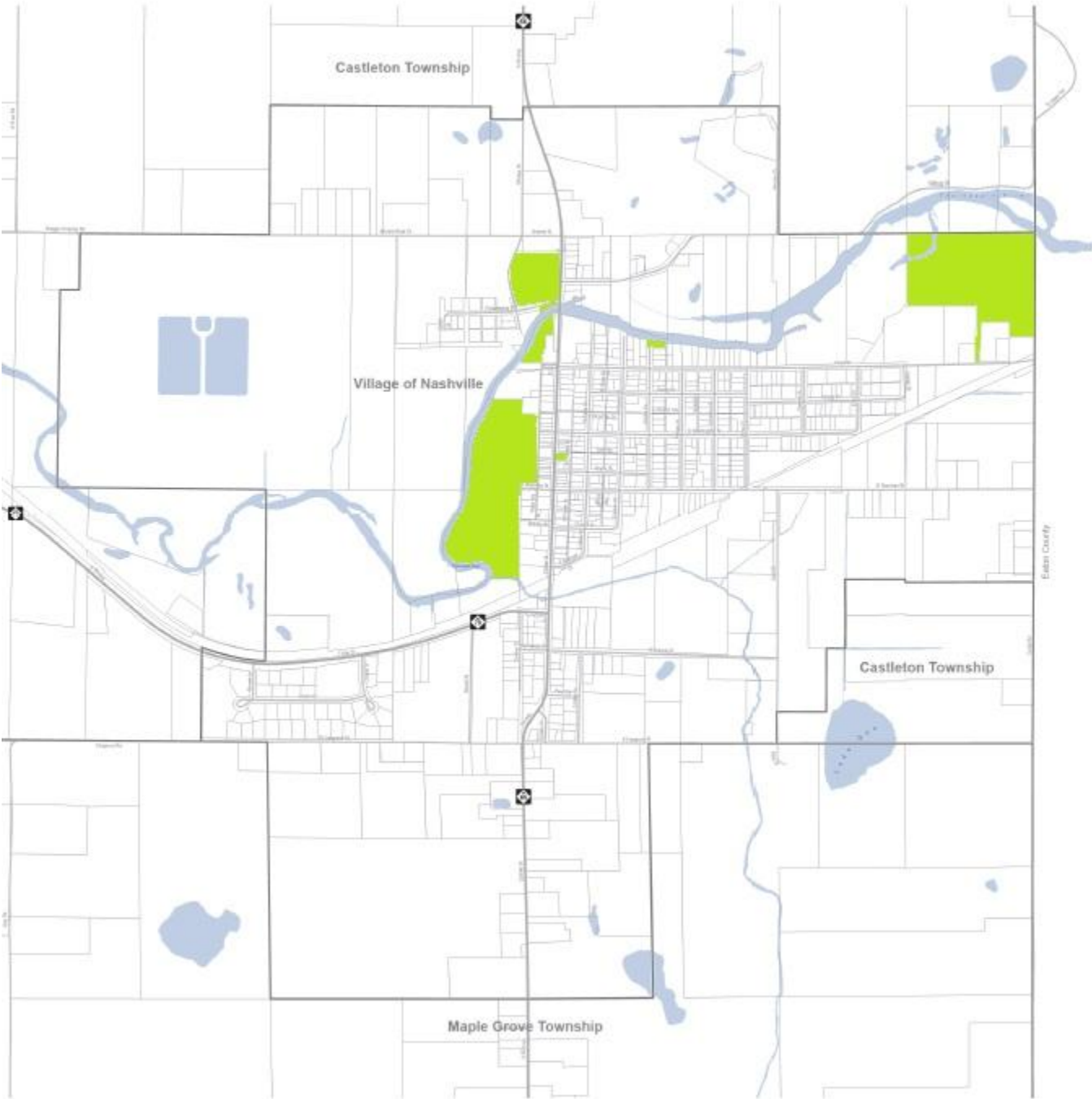
Relationship with other agencies

The Village of Nashville Parks Committee interacts with several Village units, such as the Village Council, the Village Clerk 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, Barry County Conservation District and Barry County Parks and Recreational Staff.

CHART 3 – PARKS AS A PERCENTAGE OF AREA



MAP 5 – LOCATION OF EXISTINGS RECREATIONAL FACILITIES



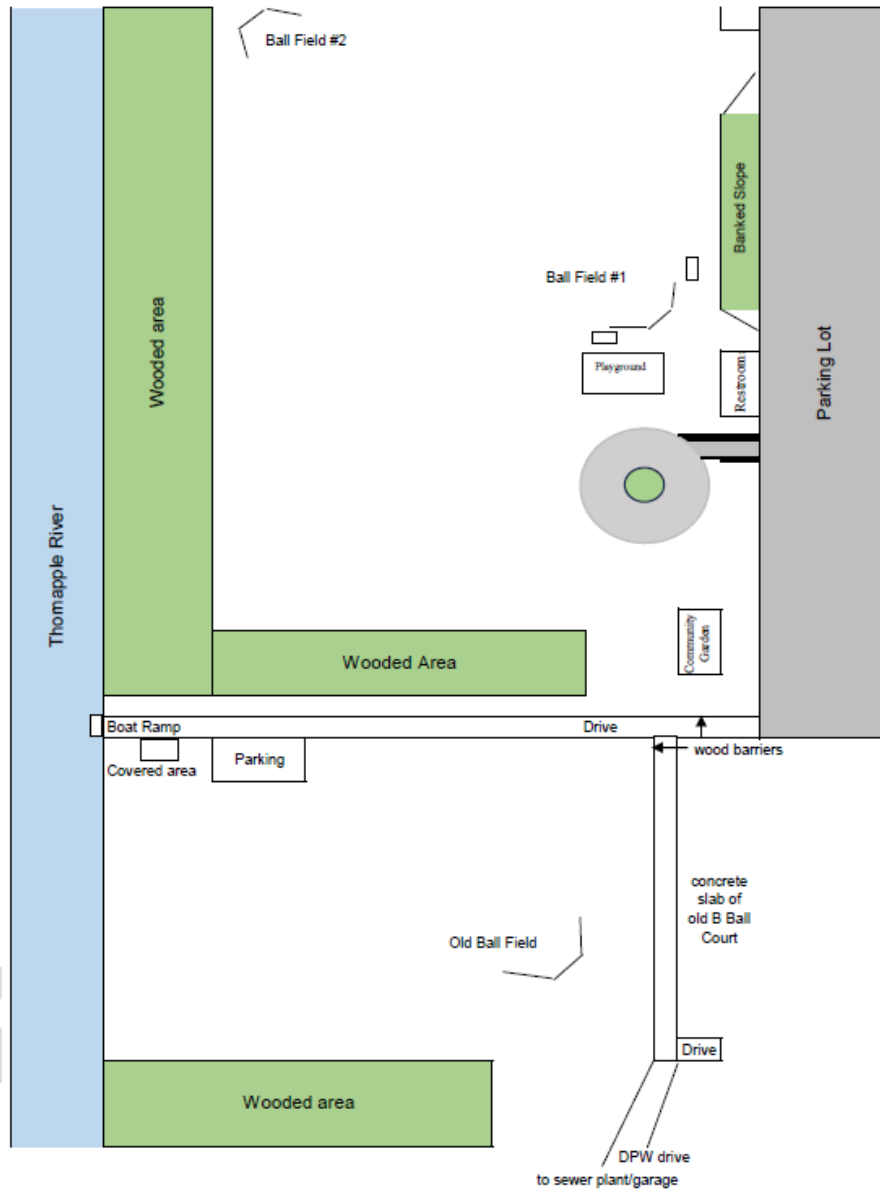
(RECREATIONAL FACILITIES are in Green)

TABLE 4 – RECREATIONAL INVENTORY

Facilities	In Parks	Others in the Community	Condition
Basketball Courts			
Full Court	1	1 at High School	new
Tennis Courts	none	none	
Pickle Ball Courts	4	area church & school gyms	new
Sand Volleyball	none	none	
Baseball Fields			
Official	none	2 at High School	
Little League	2	1 at Baptist Church	new
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
Official	none	1 at High School	
Softball Fields	2	Same as Little League	new
Trails			
Rails to Trails	1	Paved trail developed by Rails to Trails	new
Playgrounds	2	1 at elementary school	new
Boat ramps	2	none	good
Fishing Dock	1	none	good
Horseshoes	none	none	
Picnic Pavilion	1	none	good
Concession booth	none	1 at High School Football Field 1 at Fuller Elementary Schools	
Restrooms	2	several at schools	new
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	none	none	
Community Garden	1	none	good

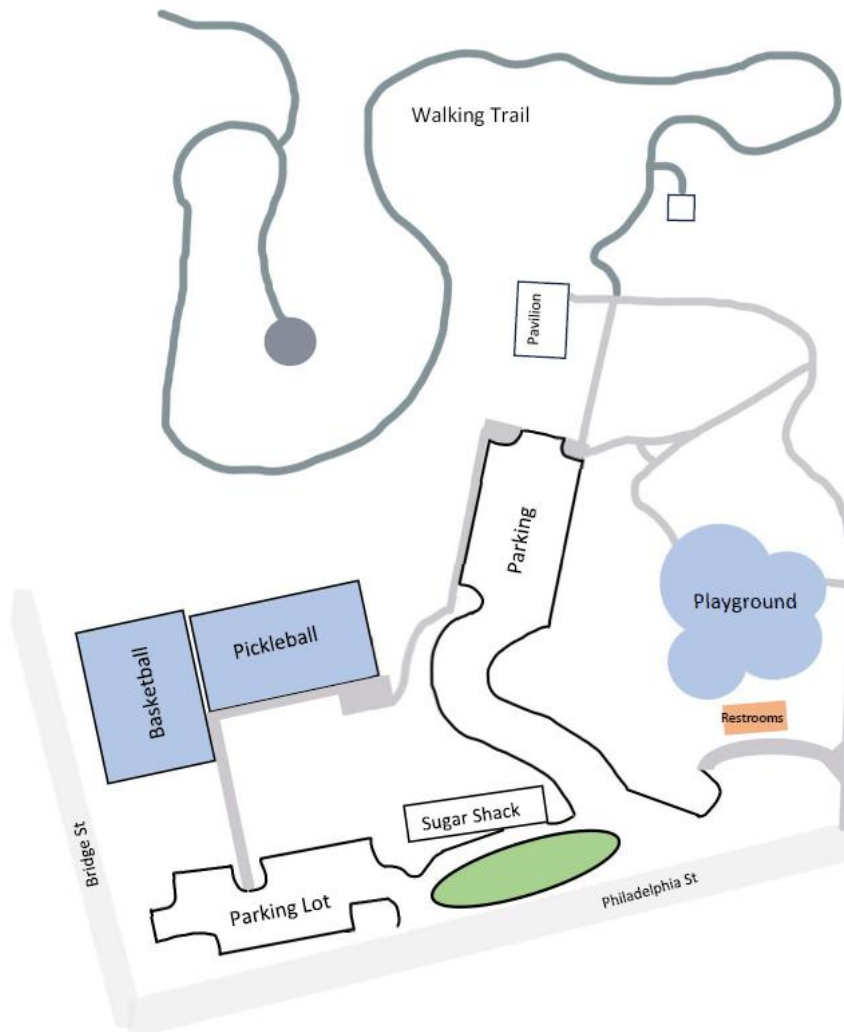
EXISTING RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

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.

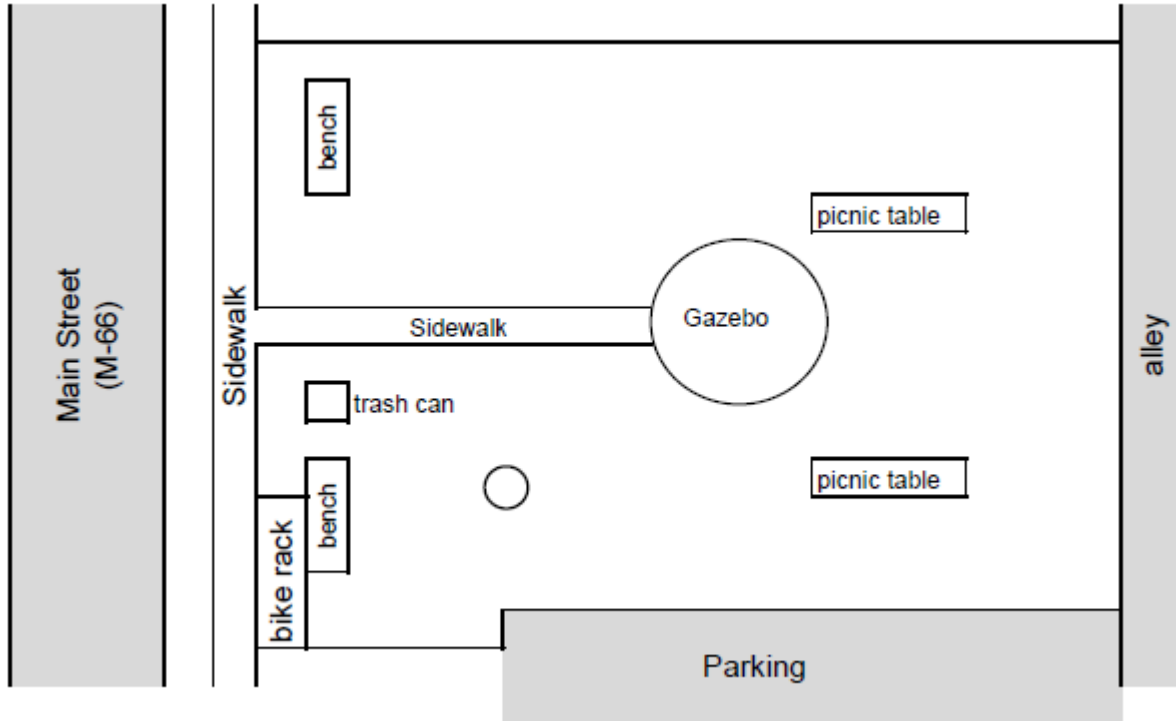


Map 6 Riverside Park:

Riverside Park is the largest of Nashville’s Parks. It contains two ball fields, an undeveloped mowed grass field, a 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 equipment is in good condition. 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. In 2025, the Village received a grant from the State of Michigan DNR to renovate the Basketball, Pickleball and Playground areas with brand new equipment, updated lighting and a walking trail through the large shade trees up the hill. The grant also put in a new parking lot and added additional parking near Philadelphia St. The picnic pavilion is in good shape. 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.

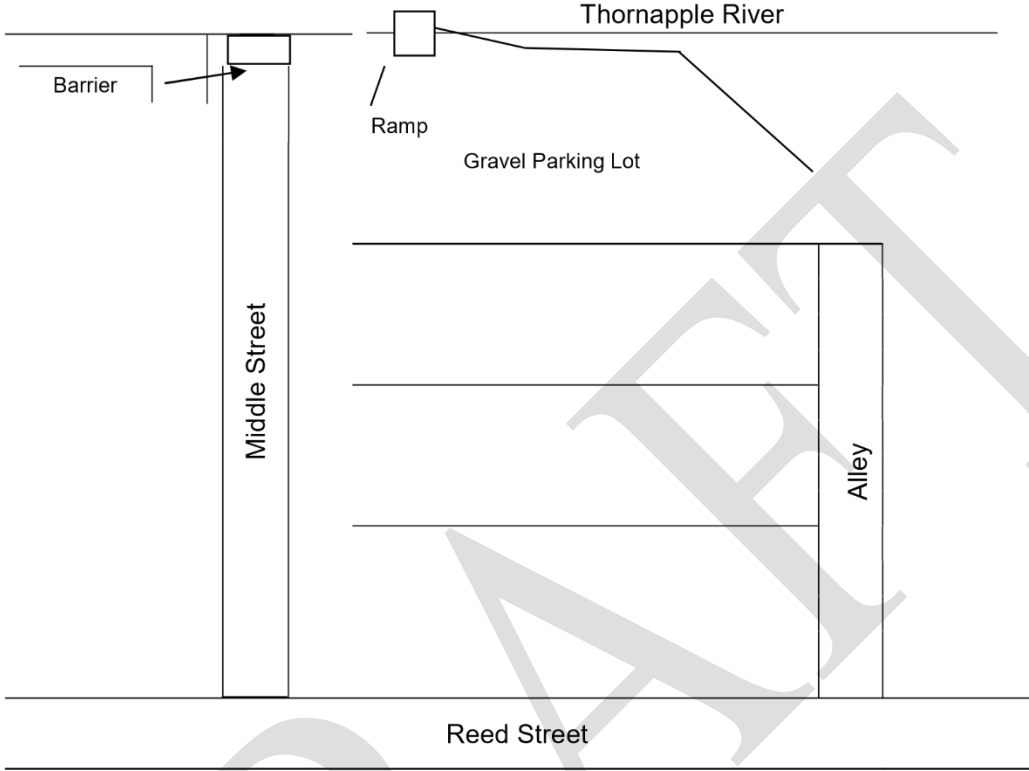


Map 8 Parady Park:

Emory Parady “Central” Park was 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 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. Below is the tabulation of the interest survey.

TABLE 5 – COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS (results from 2025 survey)

Parady Park			
Ranked most wanted – 3 being highest	3	2	1
Outdoor movies	24.6%	28.1%	47.4%
Splash Pad	54.4%	26.3%	19.3%
Play Equipment	28.1%	24.6%	47.4%
Benches/Picnic Tables	40.4%	43.9%	15.8%
Workout Stations	15.8%	10.5%	73.7%
Restroom	43.9%	28.1%	28.1%
Large Pavilion	24.6%	36.8%	38.6%
Riverside Park			
Farmers Market	49.1%	26.3%	24.6%
Riverwalk/Boardwalk	50.9%	31.6%	17.5%
Dog Walking area / Dog Park	21.1%	24.6%	54.4%
Picnic Facilities	26.3%	47.4%	26.3%
Disc Golf	17.5%	24.6%	57.9%
Benches	38.6%	40.4%	21.1%
Workout Stations	15.8%	17.5%	66.7%

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
2. Add benches and more seating
3. Riverwalk

Putnam Park

1. Update Pavilion

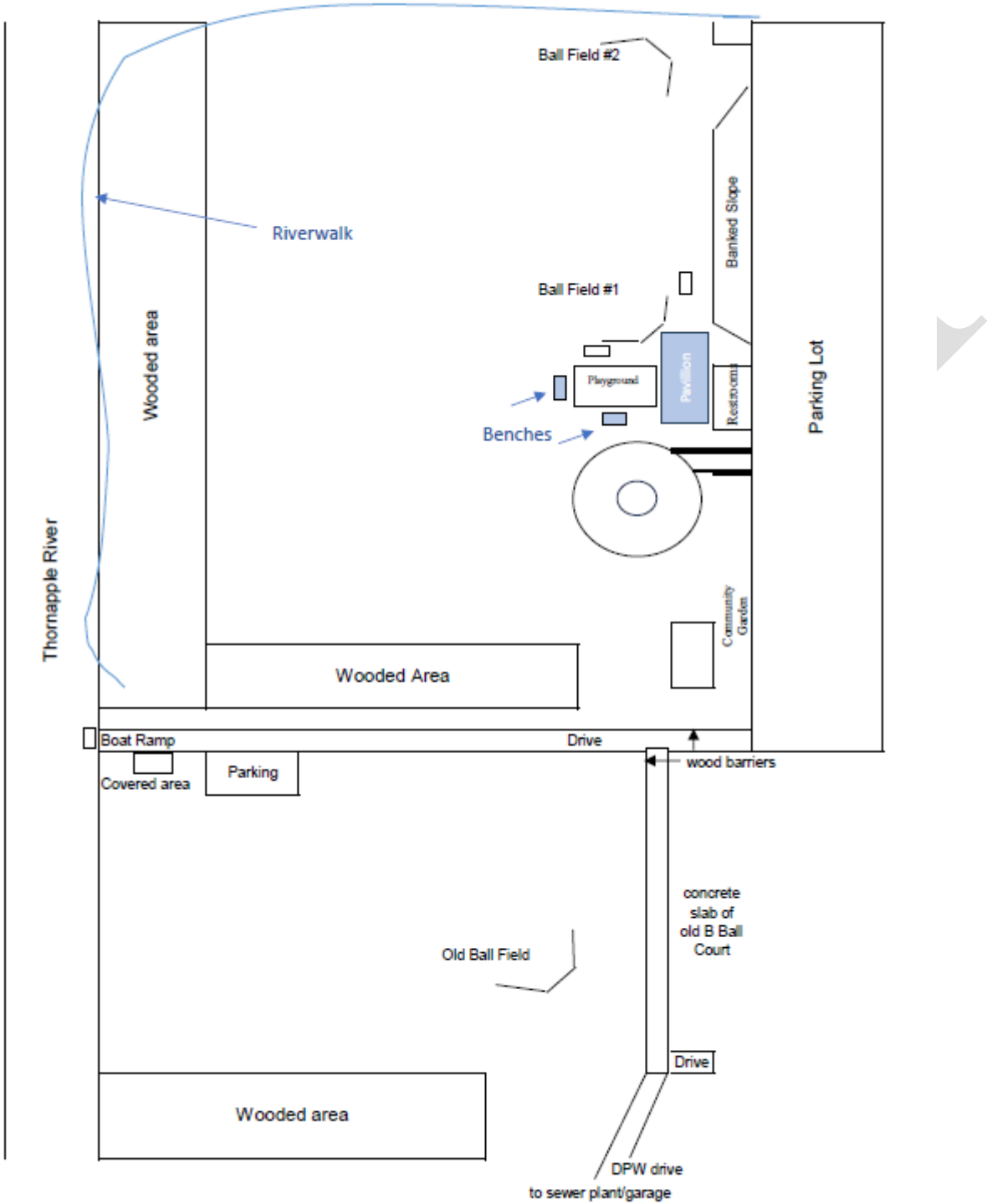
Parady Park

1. Parking spaces along east alley
2. Restroom
3. Splash Pad

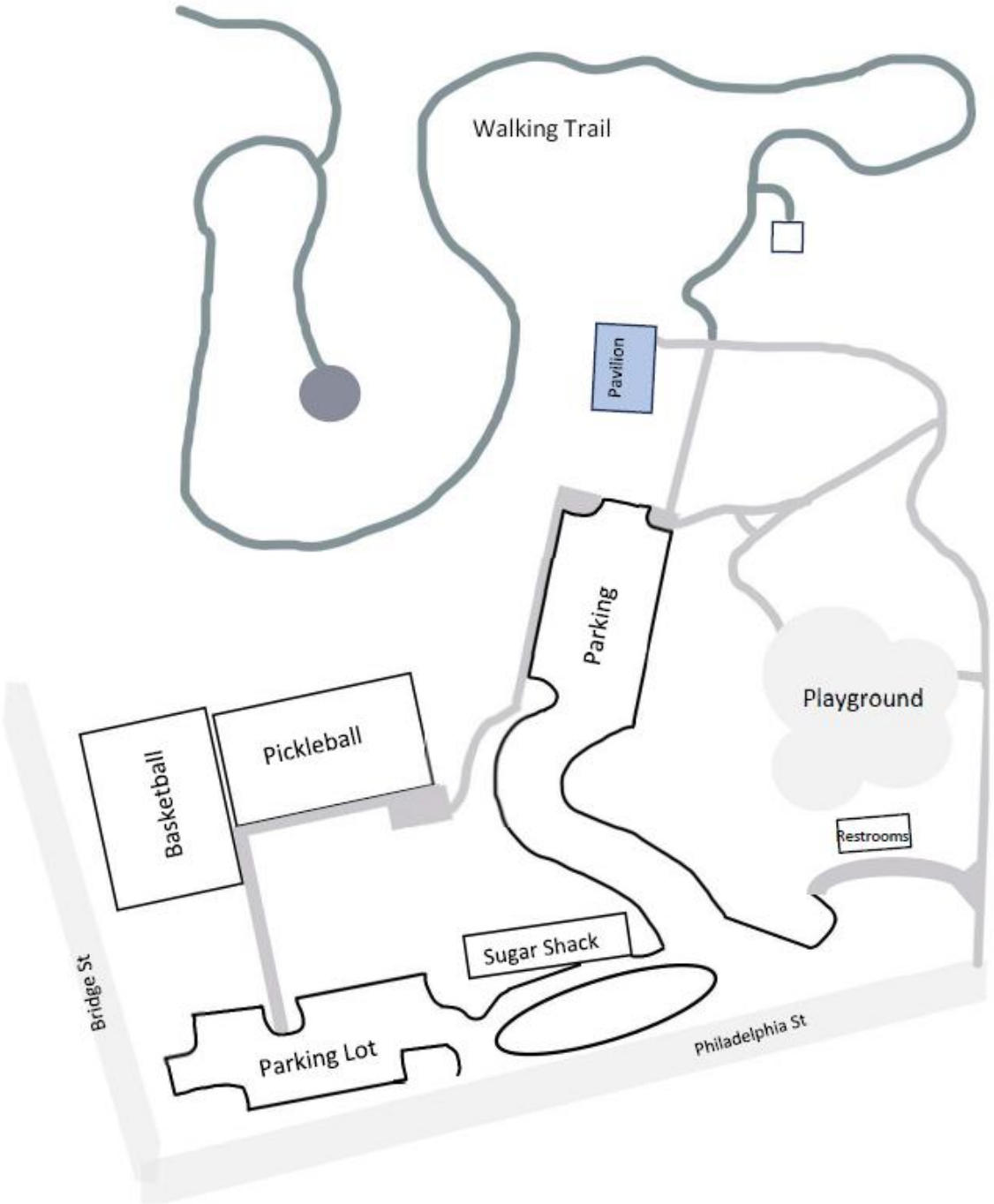
Upper River Access

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

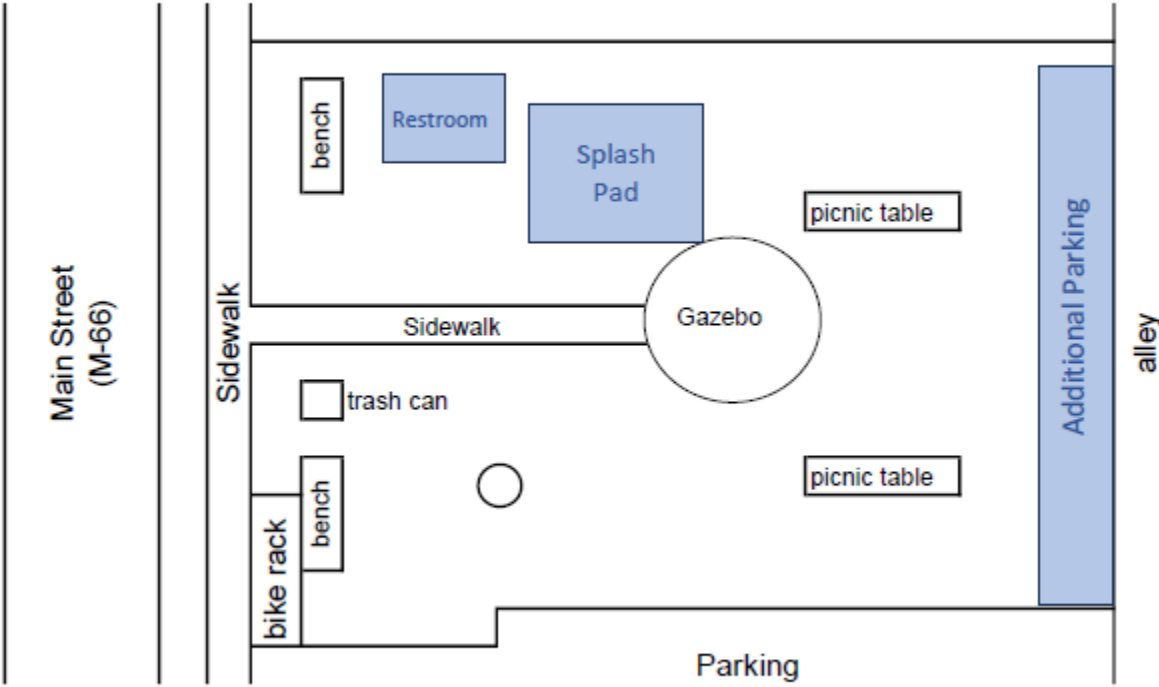
MAP 10 RIVERSIDE PARK ACTION PLAN
Action items in blue



MAP 11 PUTNAM PARK ACTION PLAN
Action items in blue

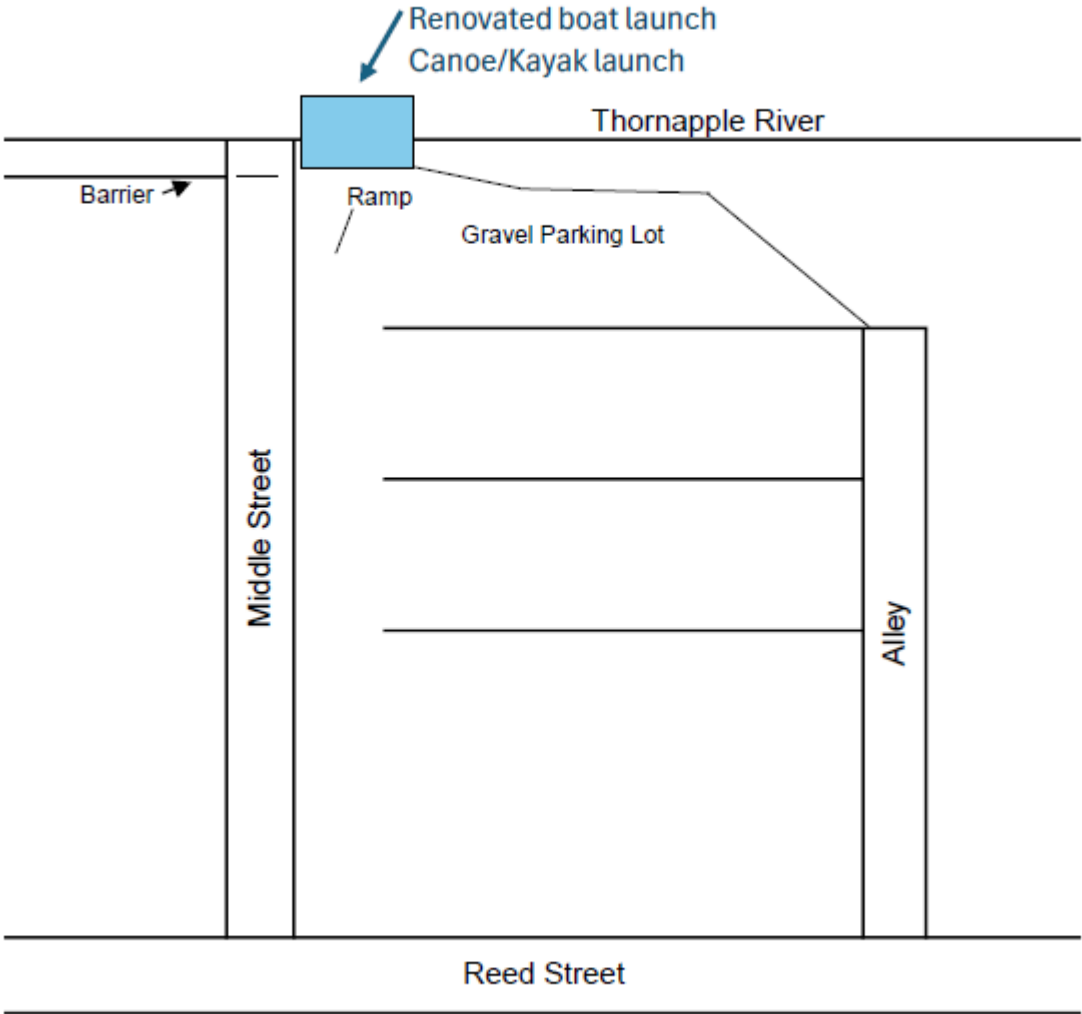


MAP 12 PARADY PARK ACTION PLAN
Action items in blue



DRAFT

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

2027 – Pavilion, benches and seating at Riverside
Est. Cost - \$50,000.00

2028 – Riverwalk at Riverside Park
Est. cost - \$125,000.00

2029 – Improved upper River access
Est. Cost - \$50,000

2030 – Restroom, Splash Pad Pavilion at Parady Park
Est. Cost - \$300,000

2031 – Update Pavilion at Putnam Park
Est. Cost - \$25,000

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 13.

BASIS FOR ACTION PROGRAM
Rational for each action in action program

2027

- 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

2028

- Many area residents would like to see additional walking trails in our community. A Riverwalk along Riverside Park and the Thornapple River would be a great addition to the current Paul Henry Trail System that was recently paved in the Village of Nashville.

2029

- Upper River Access – Canoe/kayak access with an updated boat launch would provide our residents with safer and more usable access to the beautiful Thornapple River.

2030

- Restroom access on the East side of M-66 will save pedestrians from crossing M-66 to access the restroom at Riverside Park. A Splash pad has been requested by many of our area residents. A Pavilion would provide a shaded area while using the splash pad.

2031

- An update to the current pavilion as it is several years old.

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. Another factor was that a couple of projects were located in the same park and a grant could be written to include both projects.

2027: In 2024, Riverside Park received a renovation including a new restroom, ballfield, parking and playground equipment. In 2025 a second ballfield was added. With this a need for seating and covered picnic facilities is needed. Riverside Park hosts many softball, baseball, and soccer teams; these amenities would accommodate both the players and their fans.

2028: In 2019 and 2024 the Paul Henry Trail was paved within Village of Nashville limits. Many of our area residents would love to see an extension to this walking trail. A Riverwalk addition following the Thornapple River through Riverside Park would be a great addition to this trail system.

2029: The village is optimistic that it will be able to update the boat launch and provide our residents with safer and more usable access to the Thornapple River for all types of boating; including Canoes and kayaks.

2030: The Village will be seeking grant money to do an overhaul of Parady Park. A major request for our community is a splash pad and with Parady Park being our central pocket park it is a perfect location. The Village would see the grant funds to do a combination of a splash pad, restroom pavilion area for our residents to have access to.

2031: After a major overhaul done to Putnam Park in 2025, the Pavilion was not a part of the upgrade at the time. The Pavilion will be several years old and will need a revamp at this time.

We are almost certain that by year 5 of the Five-Year Recreation Plan some amendments will have occurred. If all of our projected plans have not 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.

DRAFT