

PARKS, RECREATION AND CEMETERY BOARD AGENDA

Regular Meeting

August 25, 2026 at 5:30 PM



- 1) **CALL TO ORDER**
- 2) **ROLL CALL**
- 3) **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**
 - A. ELECTION OF CHAIR
 - B. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIR
- 4) **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.
- 5) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.
 - A. 6-23-26 MINUTES
- 6) **PUBLIC COMMENT** Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes.
- 7) **OLD BUSINESS**
- 8) **NEW BUSINESS /REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**
 - A. BIRD CITY USA
 - B. TRUST FUND GRANT - RIVERWALK
- 9) **RECREATION REPORT**
- 10) **PARKS REPORT**
 - A. NORTH KETCHUM TRUST FUND GRANT APPLICATION
- 11) **BOARD REPORTS**
- 12) **ADJOURNMENT**

PARKS, RECREATION AND CEMETERY BOARD MINUTES

June 23, 2026

Regular Meeting - 5:30 PM

[IGNORE_INDENT]

1) CALL TO ORDER

IN A REGULAR SESSION held on Tuesday, June 23, 2026, at 5:30 PM in the Training Room of the Public Services Building, 900 S Marshall Ave, Marshall, MI 49068, the Marshall Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board was called to order by: Linda Urquhart at 5:54 pm.

2) ROLL CALL

Roll was called: Urquhart

Present: Jim Coury, Alex Culver, Kaeli Hill, Zack Shippell, Natalie Rector.

Also Present: Deputy Clerk: Linda Urquhart, Parks Maintenance Supervisor: Camron Nelson

Absent: Mitch Robbins, Jerry Underhill, Liason Jacob Gates.

3) APPROVAL OF AGENDA - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

Approval of the agenda was made by Culver and supported by Hill. Motion carried on a voice vote.

4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Items can be added or deleted from the Agenda by board action.

Approval of February 24, 2026 minutes. Moved by Culver, supported by Hill. Motion carried on a voice vote.

A. 02-24-26 MINUTES

5) PUBLIC COMMENT Persons addressing the board are required to give their name and address for the record when called upon by the Chair. Members of the public shall be limited to speaking for a maximum of five (5) minutes.

No public present.

6) OLD BUSINESS

No old business.

7) NEW BUSINESS /REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

New business: Brooks Nature Center

Coury indicated Blue Heron Ministries, located in Indiana, held a prescribed burn at Brooks Nature Center. The total cost was \$2,000 and they supplied their own equipment.

Chief Erskine and Justin Miller were present during the burn.

Blue Heron Ministries remained the entire day to ensure the fire was extinguished.

Coury also mentioned several different native species have been planted in the last 20 years, and they are now starting to seed themselves.

8) RECREATION REPORT

No report

9) PARKS REPORT

A. NORTH KETCHUM TRUST FUND GRANT APPLICATION

Culver asked if the Grant had been approved. Marcia Strange was not present to respond to questions.

10) BOARD REPORTS

No reports.

11) ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:04, motion by Rector, supported by Culver.

Respectfully submitted by:
Linda Urquhart
Deputy Clerk

ITEM: 8.A

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: HONORABLE BOARD MEMBERS
FROM: Marcia Strange, Director of Community Development
DATE: August 25, 2026
SUBJECT: BIRD CITY USA

Representatives from the Marshall Area Conservation Corps are requesting support for submitting an application to join the Bird City USA program. City Council would appreciate input from the Parks, Rec and Cemetery Advisory Board before considering this application. Information regarding the program is provided and members will be available for questions. It is anticipated that additional scope will be led by volunteer efforts with official City approval and support.

Due to the Tree City USA status that has been attained and is being maintained by the City, it is anticipated that, at least for the initial year of membership, there will be no additional cost to attain Bird City USA status as well.

It is requested that items the Board would like to see focused on for our Community should be identified with a recommendation for long term project goals for the community.

A community must include at least 10 bird-friendly actions in the application. The application offers over 90 bird-friendly actions across four categories: Habitat, Threats, Education/Engagement, and Sustainability.

The 10 Actions must include the following

- Recognize World Migratory Bird Day, Action 3.1.1 - Would require a Resolution by City Council. Is the PRCAC in support?
- Bird City Michigan Resolution by the municipality, Action 3.7.1 - Would require a Resolution by City Council. Is the PRCAC in support?
- Put together a Bird City Michigan Team, Action 1.1.3 - Volunteers from the community would drive this committee. Is the PRCAC in support?

Here's a link to the [Bird City Michigan](#) website. You can see the 12 communities that have already been recognized. You can read each application by clicking the Achievements tab for that community.

Things to Note

- Our application will be visible to the public on the Achievements tab of your webpage.
- Best practices are to use links within the narratives, as opposed to attaching lots of files.
- PDFs and Word docs are viewable only by Michigan Audubon, not the public.
- JPGs are viewable by the public.
- List of the 90+ possible actions. [Also linked here.](#)
- Sample Resolution

Ford Stipend

As Founding Partner of Bird City Michigan, Ford's support includes a \$5,000 stipend for a bird-friendly project in each community where Ford has a facility once that community becomes a Bird City. We can complete the [Stipend Application](#) at any time. The application simply asks what bird-friendly project you will use the funds for. For example, the project funds could improve habitat, create an interpretive sign, or start a pollinator garden.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve application and recommend to City Council for final approval.

What is a Bird City?

A **Bird City** is a community that has been recognized for its work to:

- Create and protect habitat
- Reduce threats to birds
- Educate and engage people
- Promote sustainability

Benefits of becoming a Bird City community

- Enhanced community pride
- Increased eco-tourism through promotion of natural assets
- Media Attention
- Collaborations with like-minded organizations
 - Birds bring people together!



Launched in January 2025
birdcity.org/michigan

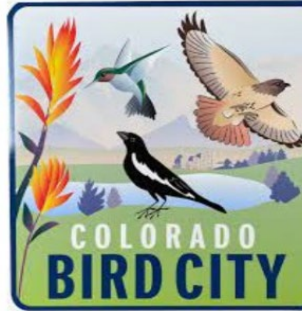


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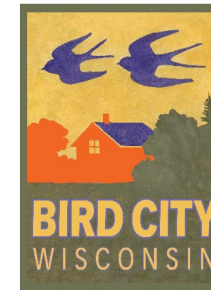
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Bird City
Georgia



BIRD TOWN
PENNSYLVANIA



2009



- There are 16 Bird City Programs in the Western Hemisphere.
- Over **300** communities in the Western Hemisphere have been recognized as Bird Cities.



Prothonotary Warbler | Doug Kuiper

Bird City Michigan Communities

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Alpena | Oakland County |
| Ann Arbor | Rochester |
| Big Rapids | Scio Township |
| Houghton | Sterling Heights |
| Iosco County | UM-Dearborn Campus |
| Meridian Twp | Village of Roscommon |

birdcity.org/michigan

Examples of Bird-friendly Actions Accomplished by these Communities

Habitat	Address Threats	Engagement	Sustainability
Create a Habitat Master Plan	Protect Birds from Window Strikes	Hold a World Migratory Bird Day Event	Educate Residents about Climate Impacts and Renewable Energy
Restore Native Bird Habitat	Reduce Entanglement / Ingestion Risks	Promote IBAs, Lead Bird Walks	<i>Implement Energy Savings Strategies</i>
Control Invasive Species	Retrofit Powerlines, Towers, and Bridges	Publish Birding Checklists	Adopt Nature-based Solutions, e.g., keeping water at surface, green roofs
Prevent Destruction of Nests	Educate the Public on Herbicide Impacts	Provide eBird Training	
Support Focal Species	Practice Integrated Pest Management	Include Underserved Communities	

Bird City Michigan is empowering leaders to create lasting habitats that showcase the sustainable life both birds and residents deserve.

2025 Media Impact

Bird City Michigan media coverage showcases Michigan as the ultimate birding destination, promoting community engagement and ecotourism.



Bird City Michigan communities were mentioned in 17 online articles and 50 social posts.



“Bird City Michigan: Ford funds conservation program to boost ecotourism”



“Congratulations to the city of Big Rapids for earning Bird City recognition”



“Kudos to Michigan Chamber members, Michigan Audubon and Ford Motor Company, for partnering to expand the Bird City Michigan initiative statewide.”

Notable Quotes from Michigan Leaders

Gabby Bruno, Community Relations Director Ford Motor Company

“This collaboration is a clear investment in a sustainable future, recognizing that healthy bird populations are important for a vibrant community,” said Gabby Bruno, Ford’s community relations director.

Amanda Wichinski, Economic Development Village of Roscommon

“Being the first Bird City Michigan community has created notoriety for our community.... We are literally on the map for Bird City Network, and our events are listed on the Bird City Network webpages.”

Michelle Stenger, Director of Community Development Big Rapids

“We recognize the value that Bird City brings in increasing awareness of Big Rapids, attracting more people to our community and encouraging them to enjoy our many amenities and businesses.”





How a community becomes a Bird City

1. Form a Team

Like-minded organizations will work together to complete the application: municipalities, birding and nature clubs, schools, nature centers.

2. Review the list of Actions

3. Submit the Intent to Apply form

4. Complete the Application

Choose 10 bird-friendly actions from a list of 95.

5. The municipality must **pass a Resolution** to pursue Bird City designation.

6. Remit the **\$200 application fee** – **waived for Ford communities.**





Supporting Documents Available by Request:

- How to Become a Bird City in Michigan
- Dream Teams Worksheet
- Sample Resolution
- Intent to Apply
- List of Bird-friendly Actions

Let's work together and get your community on the Bird City Michigan map!

Linda Smith, Director of Partnerships, Michigan Audubon
lsmith@michiganaudubon.org



Ford Motor is the Founding Partner of Bird City Michigan

Bird City Michigan

Part of the Bird City Network

How to apply for designation

All applications and renewals must be submitted ONLINE.

Contact us to set up an account.

BIRD CITY MICHIGAN APPLICATION STEPS:

1. Review requirements and full Action List below.
2. Assemble your Bird City Team – this is the collaborative group that works together to coordinate actions and complete your application. Use this [Dream Team Worksheet](#) as a guide.
3. Complete the [“Intent to Apply”](#) form and Contact Us
4. We’ll then invite you to log in to manage your application!

BIRD CITY DESIGNATION REQUIREMENTS

A minimum of 10 actions are required to be a Bird City in Michigan

- (1) Action 3.1.1 from Category 3 (World Migratory Bird Day event)
- (1) Action 3.7.1 from Category 3 (Bird City Michigan Resolution) with initial application and then every 5 years thereafter
- (1) Action 1.1.3 Put together a Bird City Michigan Team.
- (3+) At least 3 actions from Category 1 (Habitat)
- (3+) At least 1 other action in each: Category 2 (Threats to Birds), Category 3 (Education and Engagement), Category 4 (Sustainability)
- *Note: Besides 3.7.1 (Resolution) at least 1 action taken wholly or in large part by the municipality itself.*

APPLY FOR HIGH FLYER STATUS

A minimum of 20 actions are required to be a High Flyer including:

- Minimum requirements above
- Action 2.1.6 in Category 2 (Threats to Birds) Prohibit Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) programs for feral or free-roaming cats. Do not actively subsidize or condone outdoor cat colonies, and prohibit the formation, feeding, and support of outdoor cat colonies.

Before you submit, please make sure to include:

- Narrative(s): Clearly describe every action your community submits. Use complete sentences and explain your documentation. Approved narratives are published to your webpage, so please write them accordingly!
- Documentation: Where possible, electronically document actions by uploading appropriate images (max 10) or documents (max 1). Examples include photos, event flyers, brochures, ordinances, etc. Please note that PDFs are not visible to the public, only to the Bird City Michigan staff. Photos and links are preferred so that the public can benefit from and learn from viewing your supporting materials.
- Fee: Please submit the \$200 application fee.

To pay the fee online, [click here](#).

To pay the fee by mail, send a check to Michigan Audubon, 2310 Science Pkwy., Suite 200, Okemos, MI 48864.

To request an invoice, send an email to birdcity@michiganaudubon.org.

New Applicants	Renewals
Submission: Rolling	Submission: Annually, 1 year from approval
Review: Rolling	Review: Rolling
Fee: \$200	Fee: \$200

1. Habitat

1.1. Promote best management of community habitat

1.1.1 – Conduct an assessment of all natural areas, develop a habitat master plan to create additional natural areas and habitat corridors connecting them. A "habitat corridor" is a connection across the landscape that links up areas of habitat. By providing pathways between vital ecosystems, habitat corridors allow wildlife to move to new areas that offer better homes and food sources. Note that an Application may include either 1.1.1 or 1.1.2, but not both.

1.1.2 – Community has created (or adopted) and implements a local or regional land use or habitat master plan focused on creating, protecting, managing natural areas and connecting corridors (e.g. Smart Growth plans or similar) or can otherwise document that current community planning seeks to provide additional bird habitat. Note that an Application may include either 1.1.1 or 1.1.2, but not both.

1.1.3 – Assemble your Bird City Michigan Team: Form/maintain a diverse team that supports and manages participation in the Bird City program, including working with communities and managing the application and renewal process. Consider municipalities, chambers, conservation organizations, and sustainability or environmental quality boards as Team Members.

Please list the organizations represented by the team members here. Also, please upload the Intent to Apply form. (MANDATORY)

[Intent to Apply Form](#). Bird City Michigan staff can view this form, but it is not visible to the general public. Therefore, please also provide a narrative explaining the organizations represented by your team.

1.1.4 – Demonstrate that local leadership organizations take an active role in the planning process for protecting and enlarging favorable bird habitat. Examples include Chambers of Commerce, conservation organizations, sustainability or environmental quality boards.

1.1.5 – Be, or take steps to become, a Tree City USA, awarded by the National Arbor Day Foundation. Please provide a narrative or bullet points about some of the community initiatives that helped you qualify as a Tree City.

1.1.6 – Be, or take steps to become, Bee City USA certified or Mayor's Monarch Pledge certified, or create a substantial effort to promote pollinator health in your community. Please provide a narrative or bullet points about some of the community initiatives that helped you qualify as a Bee City or Mayor's Monarch Pledge recipient.

1.1.7 – Document any advanced training completed by habitat managers. Examples include forest / prairie / grassland management training, often through a university or state natural resources department or similar. Please only include training completed in the current year and/or the two previous years.

1.2. Create and protect habitat

1.2.1 – Create or continue a project that creates or restores bird habitat and/ or increases habitat connectivity in your community.

1.2.2 – Create and maintain a public demonstration garden including native plants to benefit birds, wildlife, and ecosystems. Select a highly visible location, consider signage and / or messaging about the space / process, plan for maintenance and monitoring.

1.2.3 – Demonstrate how your community has managed a golf course to benefit birds.

1.2.4 – Plant and maintain right-of-way spaces (e.g. boulevards, power lines, pipelines, etc.) with native plants representative of the local ecosystem to increase their value to birds.

1.2.5 – Document the number of properties that are recognized as bird-friendly (e.g. Habitat Network, National Wildlife Federation's Backyard Certification Program, similar certification / recognition program for properties). Provide the population of the community so that a % of bird-friendly properties per population can be determined.

1.2.6 – Provide evidence (e.g., official designation of natural areas, conservation easements, ordinances, fee title acquisition etc.) that existing bird habitat has legal protection. (Exclusions: leash laws, prohibitions against disturbing nests and wildlife, areas consisting primarily of mowed grass)

1 . 3 . Promote native plants

1.3.1 – Support the establishment of natural lawns and native landscaping by offering training (e.g. presentations, workshops, workdays) on native planting for birds, pollinators, water quality.

1.3.2 – Develop and adopt a list of locally appropriate native plant species recommended for all new landscaping (business and residential developments, publicly owned or managed properties.

1.3.3 – Document an ongoing community priority to incorporate appropriate native plant species or native trees in public or private spaces.

1.3.4 – Work with local growers and suppliers to increase / ensure supply of locally appropriate native plants. Cultivate and publicize reliable suppliers. Organize, support or promote native plant sales.

1.3.5 – Demonstrate an ordinance or other official policy that requires your community to allot at least 50% of its annual street tree budget AND at least 75% of its non-street tree budget (e.g., parks, schools, institutional properties, publicly owned natural areas, etc.) for native species.

1.3.6 – Demonstrate a local ordinance demonstrating that your community does not restrict natural/native landscaping that emphasizes native plants and non-turf lawns. Consider improving existing regulations to improve emphasis on natives.

1 . 4 . Control invasive plants

1.4.1 – Educate property owners about invasive plant species and their control.

1.4.2 – Provide evidence that your community works on public lands to control invasive species that have significant negative impacts on bird habitat.

1.4.3 – Offer a program for private property owners who are interested in dealing with invasive plants that have significant negative impacts on bird habitat.

1.4.4 – Demonstrate that your city does not allow the planting of species known to be invasive in the state of Michigan on municipal or public property.

See the [Michigan Invasive Species](#) list.

1.5. Provide nesting habitat

1.5.1 – Develop and manage a program to create and monitor nest structures. Consider providing interpretive signage or other media that is visible to the public.

1.5.2 – Implement a municipal moratorium on the trimming of trees and shrubs and the mowing of ditches, stormwater retention basins, and other grasslands from April 15 to August 15 to prevent the destruction of active bird nests.

1.5.3 – Implement a tree-risk policy that includes specific plans to leave dead trees standing as nesting and foraging resources for birds when it is safe to do so.

1.6. Support focal species

1.6.1 – Document the establishment of a program to promote the conservation of a focal species of birds such as Purple Martins or Chimney Swifts through state-of-the-art management techniques, and/or public education.

See the [MNFI bird list](#) with their respective state status (E – Endangered, T – Threatened, SC – Special Concern)

1.7. Ensure clean water in natural waterways

1.7.1 – Show that your community maintains set-backs and buffers of at least 50 feet from wetlands, rivers, and lakes and educate land stewards regarding planting riparian buffers to improve habitat and infiltration capacity.

2. Threats to Birds

2.1. Address disturbance by harmful species

2.1.1 – Develop educational programs to control free-roaming cats and/or actively publicize the "Cats Indoors" program about the danger of free-roaming cats and the benefits of keeping cats indoors. Provide educational print materials (at city, veterinary offices, local NGOs, and private facilities).

<https://abcbirds.org/program/cats-indoors/>

2.1.2 – Create/implement a program that effectively reduces the number of feral/free-roaming cat populations (TNR – trap, neuter, release/return programs excluded).

2.1.3 – Create a cat license/permit program.

2.1.4 – Limit disturbance of birds from humans and/or pets in natural areas by enforcing leash laws, exclusion zones and pet waste disposal rules, especially during certain seasons (breeding, stopover).

2.1.5 – Require owners of every cat adopted from local facilities (city or NGO) to sign a pledge to keep cats indoors, on a leash or in an enclosure when outdoors.

2.1.6 – Prohibit Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) programs for feral or free roaming cats. Do not actively subsidize or condone outdoor cat colonies, and prohibit the formation, feeding, and support of outdoor cat colonies.

Mandatory for High-flyer status

2 . 2 . Address collisions with glass

2.2.1 – Provide property owners with information on how to protect birds from window strikes (e.g., online links, brochures).

See [American Bird Conservancy](#) for more information on the threat of window collisions.

2.2.2 – Educate building owners / architects / planners about Bird-Friendly Building Design and the conservation value of reducing glass collisions through educational events, publications, guidelines and consultations.

2.2.3 – Demonstrate ongoing efforts to reduce window collisions at building(s) within your community. Consider creating/sharing case study examples of mitigation.

2.2.4 – Document that a municipal or major public building has been certified as bird-friendly (LEED or comparable).

2.2.5 – Develop comprehensive requirements for addressing bird safety in the design, construction, and operation of municipal and private buildings in the community.

2 . 3 . Address light pollution

2.3.1 – Provide information about the impact of light pollution and how residents and businesses can reduce artificial light at night (ALAN).

2.3.2 – Inventory all municipal lighting (building, facility, street) for Dark Sky compliance, and develop a plan including timeline and priority actions.

2.3.3 – Create a strategy to reduce light pollution and encourage participation, particularly during migratory seasons.

2.3.4 – Establish a Lights Out program that dims building lights to reduce collisions during spring and fall migration and/or create an outdoor lighting ordinance that includes Lights Out during bird migration.

2 . 4 . Address direct human-related threats

2.4.1 – Monitor infrastructure for evidence of collisions (e.g. solar, power, communications, wind, transportation including roads and bridges).

2.4.2 – Identify critical habitats and flyways for prioritizing bird-friendly infrastructure siting (e.g. solar, power, communications, wind, transportation including roads and bridges).

2.4.3 – Implement actions to reduce pollution and associated entanglement and ingestion risks (e.g. fees or bans on single-use plastics, secure collection for fishing line/trash, clean up events).

2.4.4 – Retrofit infrastructure (e.g. solar, powerlines, communications, wind, transportation including roads and bridges) to address threats to birds. For communication tower lighting: use the map and tools at songbirdsaver.org to work with tower owners to implement changes.

<https://songbirdsaver.org/>

2.4.5 – Regulate siting, construction, and operations of infrastructure (e.g. solar, power, communications, wind, transportation including roads and bridges) to reduce risk to birds.

2 . 5 . Address the threat of pesticides and other toxins

2.5.1 – Create and conduct an educational campaign on the impacts of pesticides and herbicides on bird populations and include practical information on solutions including Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and other natural controls.

2.5.2 – Encourage and promote the use of non-lead tackle and ammunition. Work with local sportsman's clubs to include related education in hunter education/gun safety.

2.5.3 – Reduce toxins/hazards by providing for and/or coordinating cleanup of lead ammunition on gun ranges and / or lead tackle (and fishing line) at fishing areas. =

2.5.4 – Document how your municipality practices Integrated Pest Management (IPM) or comparable, using natural pest control and the best available science to minimize pesticide and herbicide use.

3 . Education & Engagement

3 . 1 . Celebrate World Migratory Bird Day

3.1.1 – Document and describe your event that incorporates the annual WMBD theme in some fashion. If the event has not yet occurred, please share your detailed plans to celebrate birds in your community and raise awareness of migratory birds, the threats to their populations, and ways you can help protect them. Your WMBD may be an education program, an educational bird walk, and/or a festival. It should incorporate the current or prior conservation themes. In your narrative, include 1) the date and timing, 2) a description of the event, 3) details on how you incorporated the WMBD theme, and 4) please register your event and include a link to your event on the WMBD map in your narrative. Timing and scope of event TBD locally. If applicable, please include a jpg of a flier promoting the event. Please also mention the date of last year's WMBD event if your community held one. (MANDATORY)

[2026 World Migratory Theme](#)

[Register your event.](#)

3 . 2 . Increase awareness of birds and their habitats

3.2.1 – Educate the community about bird conservation issues, the actions the community has taken/is taking, and actions that can be taken at home.

3.2.2 – Actively raise awareness of your community's bird assets. Examples include placing a nest camera, offering bird watching field trips, promoting Important Bird Areas (IBAs), birding hotspots, birding trails and phenomena (e.g. raptor, waterfowl or songbird migration, congregating) in your area and/or creating a significant educational resource on your community's birdlife.

3.2.3 – Create or ensure that there are e-Bird hotspots for all publicly accessible parks, natural areas, preserves, etc.

3.2.4 – Develop a birding checklist for your area and make it available to citizens and tourist outlets in print and/or online.

3.2.5 – Create and distribute regular bird and bird conservation related content for online and news media (newsletters, blog posts, press releases, social media posts).

3.2.6 – Include a link and/or information about Bird City on the community's website where it can be easily found (e.g. first level of a drop-down menu on main page) OR demonstrate that your Bird City has a significant social media presence.

3.2.7 – Promote birding and enhance amenities at one or more birding locations. Examples include: facilitating early/off hours, access to restricted areas, improved signage, enhancing amenities, improving security.

3.2.8 – Document that a municipal site has significant bird-friendly landscaping that features native plants AND signage that explains the importance of native plants and providing diverse habitat for birds (e.g., brush piles, snags, water features).

3.2.9 – Encourage public art focused on birds through installments, awards, events, competitions.

3 . 3 . Educate and engage all ages

3.3.1 – Provide ongoing bird and conservation-related programs appropriate for children, youth, and families.

3.3.2 – Sponsor or facilitate training for educators in a recognized bird-related curriculum and / or demonstrate that educators are incorporating such curriculum into their formal and informal learning environments.

3.3.3 – Show that your community assists a youth conservation group in bird conservation projects (e.g., nest box monitoring, habitat restoration, bird surveys, etc.).

3.3.4 – Promote and support a bird club or other environmentally/ecologically minded club.

3.3.5 – Demonstrate that educators/professors are incorporating birds and bird conservation into their formal and informal learning environments using custom created or existing, nationally recognized environmental education programs or college courses.

3 . 4 . Ensure access to nature

3.4.1 – Show that your community works with underserved communities to increase their access to natural areas, environmental education, birding resources, and local environmental experts.

3.4.2 – Create demonstration landscape(s) that are bird-friendly on community property accessible by diverse groups.

3.4.3 – Offer multilingual programs and/or materials.

3.4.4 – Develop or maintain one or more accessible nature/birding sites for visitors regardless of physical abilities. Add these to the Birdability trail map at Birdability.org.

Add these to the Birdability trail map at Birdability.org.

3.4.5 – Identify and address other barriers to nature / birding access (e.g. hazardous plants, insects, animals, roads, areas, safety).

3 . 5 . Involve the community in conservation and stewardship

3.5.1 – Highlight traditional knowledge and approaches to conservation. Determine the indigenous traditional territory(ies) where your community occurs. Describe efforts to encourage the participation and perspective of local Indigenous community(ies) in the initiative.

3.5.2 – Involve schools, garden clubs, or other organizations in bird-conservation activities.

3.5.3 – Create and maintain bird feeding stations at parks, nature centers, schools and tourism / lodging sites. Consider incorporating education or monitoring activities.

3.5.4 – Distribute information on best practices for bird feeding, such as promoting regular cleaning of feeders to prevent the spread of disease, types of seed, and types of feeders.

3.5.5 – Host community planting events(s) to create or restore native bird habitat on municipal property.

3.5.6 – Work with partners in the non-profit, governmental, and corporate/business sectors to adopt bird-friendly practices and help sustain the Bird City program.

3 . 6 . Promote scientific research and monitoring

3.6.1 – Set up systems for community science participation (e.g. setting up accounts and projects within existing platforms like eBird and iNaturalist and protocols and training for participation.)

3.6.2 – Document research conducted by Bird City Partners including academic institutions (faculty or students) on breeding, migration, or overwinter activity that contributes to bird conservation.

3.6.3 – Participate in at least one official community science bird-monitoring program (e.g. Christmas Bird Count, Great Backyard Bird Count, Swift Night Out, Audubon Climate Watch, bird, Globe at Night, Nestwatch, FeederWatch, Hummingbirds at Home, the Big Sit, Marsh Monitoring, Global Bird Rescue or other actively coordinated community science projects).

3.6.4 – Contribute data for Chimney Swift reporting using Michigan Audubon forms.

<https://www.michiganaudubon.org/bfc/chsw/>

3.6.5 – Contribute data for Purple Martin reporting using Michigan Audubon forms.

<https://www.michiganaudubon.org/bfc/puma/>

3.6.6 – Participate in regular/systematic research and monitoring (bird, nest, habitat, environmental, ecological) over time, collecting and sharing data through publicly accessible database(s). Use data to assess habitat and inform management as possible. Monitoring may be in conjunction with regular park programming, in cooperation with partners, academic institutions, and/or as part of established monitoring protocols.

3 . 7 . Mobilize support / funding for community bird conservation

3.7.1 – MANDATORY – Attach a copy of an officially enacted Resolution supporting your community's designation as a Bird City. The resolution must be voted on and passed by the appropriate municipal council/board every 5 years thereafter (years ending in 0 or 5). Campuses: please submit a Letter of Support from a provost or higher.

(MANDATORY)

See a [sample resolution](#).

3.7.2 – Show that your community participates in fundraising activities that benefit local and statewide conservation efforts.

3.7.3 – Make funding available for bird conservation efforts in your community, perhaps through a grant process. Define goals, eligibility, and application process. Publicize recipients and projects.

3.7.4 – Work with government representatives to increase support for conservation programs and projects.

3.7.5 – Work with NGOs and/or private sector to increase support for conservation programs and projects.

4 . Sustainability

4 . 1 . Educate residents about climate impacts and renewable energy

4.1.1 – Describe your community's efforts to educate residents about climate change, effects on birds / biodiversity, and solutions.

4 . 2 . Reduce energy use and carbon emissions

4.2.1 – Perform an energy audit for municipal building(s) or campus building(s) and progress towards implementing efficiency strategies.

4.2.2 – Create a community plan to reduce energy use and carbon emissions through operational or building design changes, nature-based solutions, renewable energy use.

4.2.3 – Demonstrate that your community participates in a community solar program or that a municipal or campus building receives a significant percentage of its electricity from renewable energy.

4 . 3 . Promote sustainable infrastructure and practices

4.3.1 - Adopt nature-based solutions (e.g. keeping water at surface, green roofs, tree cover, wetlands) adding natural features and / or processes into the built environment to promote adaptation, resilience, and increase biodiversity.

4.3.2 - Support, create and improve alternative transportation throughout your community (e.g. hike and bike trails, rideshare programs, bike lanes).

4.3.3 - Recognize or certify an energy-efficient municipal or campus building (Minimum of LEED certified silver or comparable).

4.3.4 - Document your community's sustainability initiatives (recycling, composting, energy savings, lighting, carbon footprint)

4.3.5 - Require new buildings to be certified by a recognized sustainability program (LEED or comparable).

ITEM: 8.B

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: HONORABLE BOARD MEMBERS
FROM: Marcia Strange, Director of Community Development
Justin Miller, Parks and Recreation Superintendent
DATE: August 25, 2026
SUBJECT: TRUST FUND GRANT - RIVERWALK

The monies have been allocated to the Trust Fund Grant Application for the next section of Riverwalk repair and the City is being asked to accept the allocation. A resolution of acceptance will come before the City Council but it is requested that the Parks Rec and Cemetery Advisory Board make a recommendation for approval.

RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend approval to City Council to accept the allocation of funds from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and provide the match as required.

ITEM: 10.A

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



TO: HONORABLE BOARD MEMBERS
FROM: Marcia Strange, Director of Community Development
DATE: August 25, 2026
SUBJECT: NORTH KETCHUM TRUST FUND GRANT APPLICATION

In March the City submitted for a MDNR Trust Fund Grant for a new pavilion, bathrooms and accessible playground at Ketchum Park.
Marcia will be in attendance to review the proposed project with the Board.

RECOMMENDATION:
Review and provide feedback on the proposed project.

(2) ADA VAN ACCESSIBLE PARKING
SPACES INCLUDING PAVEMENT
MARKINGS AND SIGNS
EXISTING BOULDER, TYP.
CONCRETE SIDEWALK
U STYLE BIKE LOOP
REMOVAL OF EXISTING RESTROOM

REMOVAL OF EXISTING PLAYGROUND AND SURFACING
EXISTING PATHWAY
REMOVE EXISTING TREE, TYP.
LITTER BIN

(2) ADA SINGLE USER
ADA RESTROOMS
ADA BOTTLE FILLER
KITCHEN

PAVILION
ADA CHARCOAL GRILL
ADA PICNIC TABLE
PICNIC TABLE
LITTER BIN

EXISTING SKATEPARK

CONCRETE SIDEWALK
BENCH ON CONCRETE PAD WITH
UNIVERSAL COMPANION SEATING
CONCRETE RAMP TO PLAYGROUND
NEW TREE, TYP.

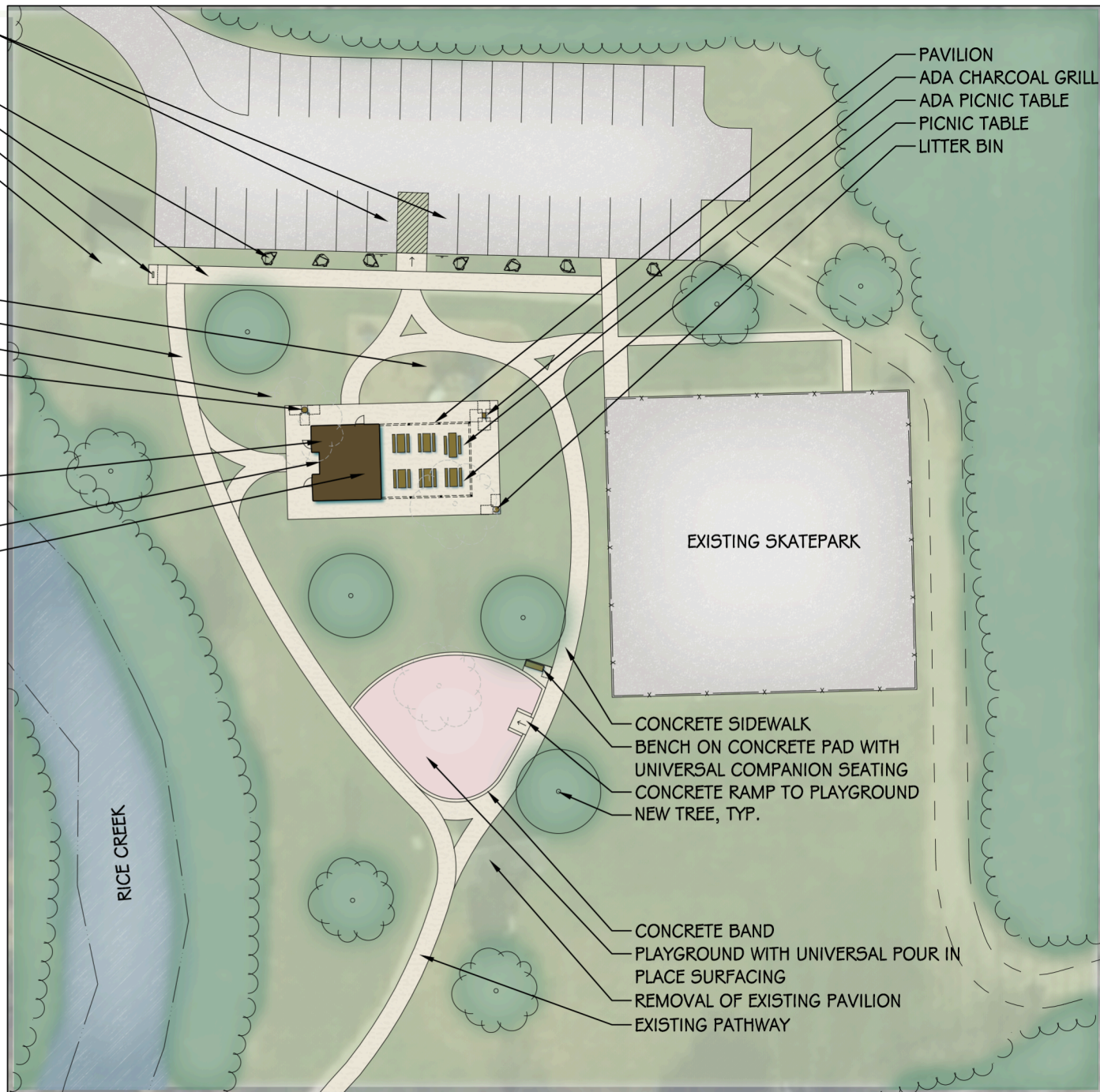
CONCRETE BAND
PLAYGROUND WITH UNIVERSAL POUR IN
PLACE SURFACING
REMOVAL OF EXISTING PAVILION
EXISTING PATHWAY

RICE CREEK



Site Overview

1" = 200'-0"



Site Enlargement

1" = 50'-0"

Preliminary Estimate

PROJECT: **Ketchum Park Renovation (MNRTF Grant Application)**
 OWNER: **City of Marshall, MI**
 DATE: **March 12, 2026**

Ketchum Park is a City owned Park located along Rice Creek. The focus of this project is a pocket section of the overall park that is located at the terminus of E Hanover Street and S Gordon Street. The park contains a restroom, pavilion and playground. This project includes removal of the playground that is outdated, damaged and lacks universal access and removal of the restroom and pavilion which are both heaving and no longer have safe ADA accessible route into the facilities. A new universally accessible playground with universally accessible pour-in-place rubber surfacing will be installed along with a new pavilion with an integrated restroom and kitchen. The project also includes ADA parking with signage, native trees and plants, and park amenities such as accessible picnic tables at the pavilion, benches with companion seating, a 180 degree rotating ADA accessible grill at the pavilion, a loop style bike rack, as well as recycling and litter receptacles. All new structures and amenities will be connected with a new 6' concrete walkway to make this area accessible and enjoyable for all once again.

1	LS	Mobilization	@ \$	25,500.00	\$	25,500.00
1	LS	Erosion Control	@ \$	1,275.00	\$	1,275.00
1	LS	Restoration	@ \$	1,275.00	\$	1,275.00
2	EA	Tree Removal	@ \$	1,000.00	\$	2,000.00
1	LS	Demolition of Existing Restroom	@ \$	15,000.00	\$	15,000.00
1	LS	Demolition of Existing Pavilion	@ \$	10,000.00	\$	10,000.00
1	LS	Demolition of Existing Playground	@ \$	8,000.00	\$	8,000.00
2	EA	ADA Pavement Striping + Signs	@ \$	250.00	\$	500.00
1	LS	Pavilion with Restrooms and Kitchen and bottle filler	@ \$	350,000.00	\$	350,000.00
1	LS	Playground Equipment	@ \$	50,000.00	\$	50,000.00
2000	SFT	Pour in Place Surfacing with Concrete Curb and Ramp	@ \$	30.00	\$	60,000.00
1	LS	Grading / Utilities	@ \$	25,000.00	\$	25,000.00
5000	SFT	Concrete Sidewalk, 4"	@ \$	8.00	\$	40,000.00
4	EA	Deciduous Tree	@ \$	650.00	\$	2,600.00
1	EA	Bike rack, U style	@ \$	750.00	\$	750.00
5	EA	Picnic Table, 6'	@ \$	2,000.00	\$	10,000.00
1	EA	ADA Picnic Table, 6'	@ \$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
1	EA	Charcoal Grill	@ \$	1,500.00	\$	1,500.00
1	EA	Bench	@ \$	1,500.00	\$	1,500.00
2	EA	Litter Bin	@ \$	2,000.00	\$	4,000.00
2	EA	Recycle Bin	@ \$	2,000.00	\$	4,000.00
1	EA	MNRTF Sign	@ \$	500.00	\$	500.00

SUBTOTAL ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COST \$ 615,400.00

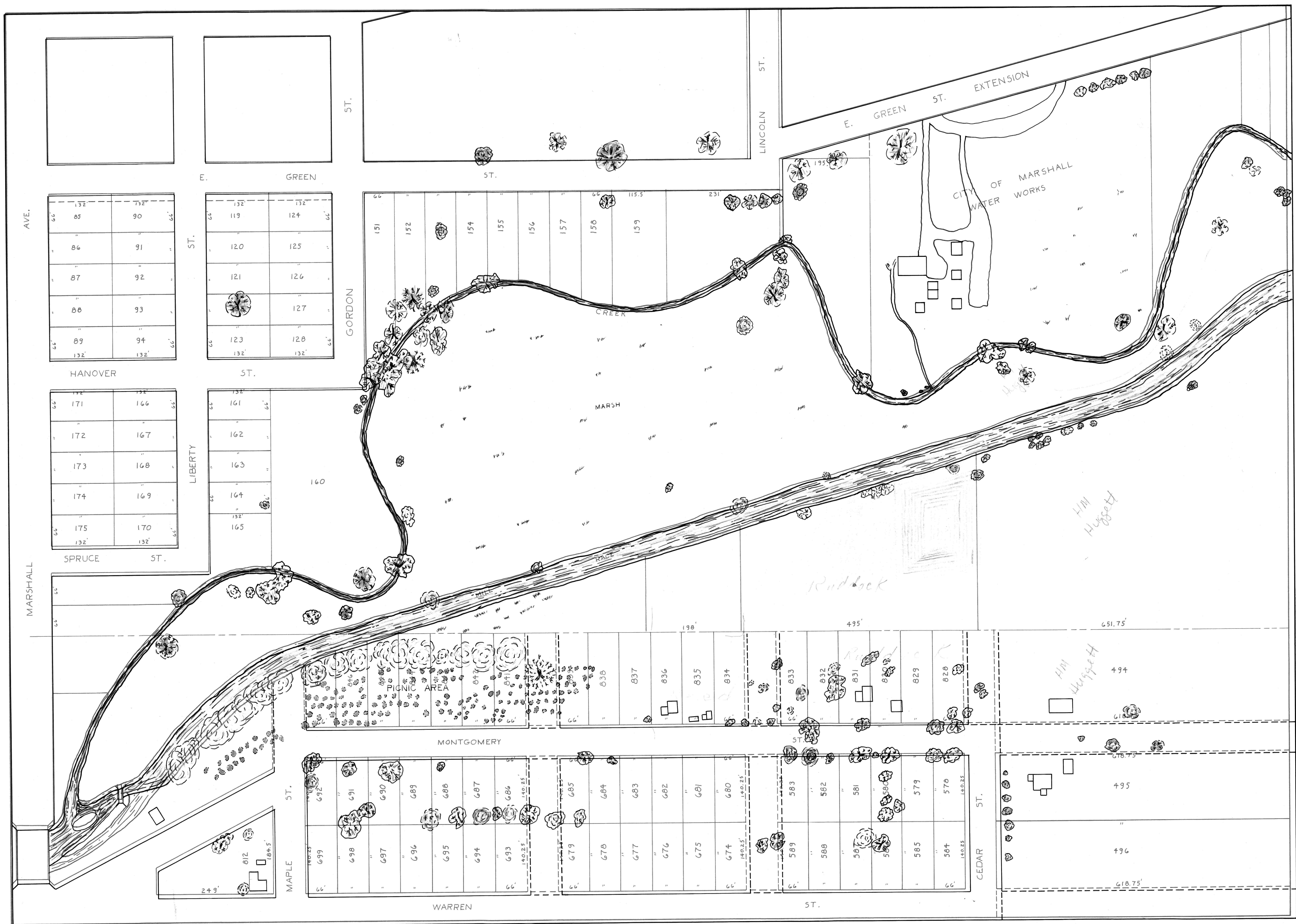
Construction Contingency 15% 92,300.00

Construction Engineering / Grant Management (20% Max) 15% 92,300.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COST \$800,000.00

GRANT REQUEST (\$400,000 Max) 50% \$400,000.00

CITY OF MARSHALL MATCH (25% Min) 50% \$400,000.00



KETCHUM PARK
 PLOT PLAN
 SCALE 1"=100'
 M. J. Fitch
 8-4-61



CITY OF MARSHALL, MICHIGAN
RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT
FOR THE MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND GRANT
APPLICATION
FOR NEW PAVILION, BATHROOMS AND PLAYGROUND
RESOLUTION 2026-08

WHEREAS, the City of Marshall's Ketchum Park located between Montgomery Street and South Marshall Ave, which has served the community members for almost 70 years since being cleared to become the first recreational park in the City of Marshall in 1958. Over the years, disjointed improvements have been steadily added to the park: picnic pavilions, a skate park, and playground and trail developments. The North Ketchum Park project will provide a new pavilion, bathrooms and playground and will unify the space while allowing for future, planned, improvements; and

WHEREAS, the application and improvements are supported the City of Marshall's Parks & Recreation Masterplan 2025-2029 and scheduled in the city's 2026-27 Capital Improvement Plan.

WHEREAS, the City of Marshall seeks funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) to assist with these park renovations, including grading, and accessibility improvements; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Marshall, Michigan, supports the submission of a grant application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for financial assistance in repairing and improving the area on the North side of Ketchum Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Marshall, Michigan, will make available its financial obligation amount of \$400,000 (50%) of a total \$800,000 project cost, during the 2027-28 fiscal year;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager, or their designee, is authorized to take necessary actions to submit the application and fulfill any grant requirements.

Adopted this 16 day of March, 2026.

YEAS: 6
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 1

CERTIFICATION:

I, Michelle Eubank, Clerk of the City of Marshall, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the City Council at a regular meeting held on March 16 with a quorum present.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michelle Eubank", is written over a horizontal line.

Michelle Eubank

City Clerk

City of Marshall, Michigan

March 24, 2026

Grants Coordinator
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Grants Management
P.O. Box 30425
Lansing, MI 48909-7925

Re: Letter of Support for the City of Marshall – Ketchum Park Renovation Project (MNRTF Application)

Dear Grants Coordinator,

On behalf of Disability Network Southwest Michigan (DNSWM), a Center for Independent Living serving individuals with disabilities across our region, we are pleased to offer our strong support for the City of Marshall's Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) application for the Ketchum Park Renovation Project along Rice Creek.

DNSWM's mission is to promote independence, inclusion, and full community participation for people with disabilities. Access to high-quality, inclusive outdoor recreation is a critical component of that mission. The Ketchum Park project represents an exemplary approach to advancing equitable access and aligns closely with MNRTF priorities related to universal access, community benefit, and long-term public value.

We commend the City of Marshall for prioritizing universal design—going beyond minimum ADA requirements to create a park environment that is usable, welcoming, and dignified for people of all ages and abilities. The proposed improvements demonstrate a thoughtful and comprehensive commitment to accessibility, including:

- A universally accessible playground featuring inclusive play equipment and unitary rubber surfacing to ensure safe, independent use by children with mobility, sensory, and developmental disabilities.
- A new pavilion with integrated accessible restrooms and kitchen space, supporting inclusive community gatherings and programming.
- ADA-compliant parking and a continuous accessible walkway system, ensuring seamless site access from arrival through all major park amenities.
- Benches with companion seating, promoting social inclusion and usability for individuals using mobility devices.
- A 180-degree rotating ADA-accessible grill, a best-practice feature that meaningfully expands participation in shared recreational experiences.

Importantly, this project reflects not only compliance, but intentional inclusion—a distinction that is strongly valued in MNRTF scoring criteria. By incorporating features that support independent use, social integration, and multigenerational access, the City is creating a destination that will serve a broad and diverse population, including individuals with disabilities, older adults, families, and caregivers.

DNSWM has been consulted to provide input on accessibility and universal design considerations for this project. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute our expertise and confirm that the proposed elements reflect current best practices in accessible recreation design. This collaboration strengthens the project's readiness and ensures that accessibility is meaningfully integrated from planning through implementation. The Ketchum Park Renovation Project will result in a high-impact, community-centered recreational asset that

KALAMAZOO OFFICE
517 E. Crosstown Parkway
Kalamazoo, MI 49001
(269) 345-1516

BATTLE CREEK OFFICE
200 W. Van Buren Street
Battle Creek, MI 49017
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ST. JOSEPH OFFICE
2900 Lakeview Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
(269) 985-0111

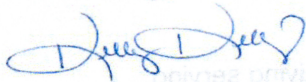
Disability Network Southwest Michigan is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

enhances quality of life, promotes health and wellness, and ensures that public resources are accessible to all residents and visitors. It is a strong investment in equity, sustainability, and inclusive community development.

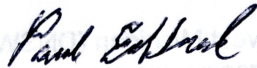
We respectfully encourage the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to give this application favorable consideration.

If you have any questions or would like additional information regarding accessibility considerations, please do not hesitate to contact Paul Ecklund at (269) 929-6307, or via email at ecklundp@dnswm.org.

Sincerely,



Kelley Kellis, MPA
President & CEO
Disability Network Southwest Michigan



Paul Ecklund, MA, ADAC
Accessibility Consultant
Disability Network Southwest Michigan

DNWSM's mission is to promote independence, inclusion, and full community participation for people with disabilities. Access to high-quality, inclusive outdoor recreation is a critical component of that mission. The Kalamazoo Park project represents an exemplary approach to attaining equitable access and aligns closely with MNRTF priorities related to universal access, community benefit, and long-term public values.

We commend the City of Marshall for prioritizing universal design—going beyond minimum ADA requirements to create a park environment that is usable, welcoming, and dignified for people of all ages and abilities. The proposed improvements demonstrate a thoughtful and comprehensive commitment to accessibility, including:

- A universally accessible playground featuring inclusive play equipment and a fully inclusive seating area.
- A new pavilion with integrated accessible restrooms and kitchen space, supporting inclusive community gatherings and programming.
- ADA-compliant parking and a continuous accessible walkway system, ensuring seamless site access from arrival through all major park amenities.
- Benches with companion seating, promoting social inclusion and usability for individuals using mobility devices.
- A 150-degree rotating ADA-accessible grill, a best-practice feature that meaningfully expands participation in shared recreational experiences.

Importantly, this project reflects not only compliance, but intentional inclusion—a distinction that is strongly valued in MNRTF scoring criteria. By incorporating features that support independent use, social integration, and multi-generational access, the City is creating a destination that will serve a broad and diverse population, including individuals with disabilities, older adults, families, and caregivers.

DNWSM has been consulted to provide input on accessibility and universal design considerations for this project. We appreciate the opportunity to contribute our expertise and affirm that the proposed elements reflect current best practices in accessible recreation design. The collaboration strengthens the project's readiness and ensures that accessibility is meaningfully integrated from planning through implementation. The Kalamazoo Park Renovation Project will result in a high-impact, community-centered recreational asset that

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Dear Grant Review Committee,

On behalf of the Ketchum Park Advisory Committee (KPAC), we are pleased to express our strong support for the City of Marshall's North Ketchum Park Pavilion and Playground Project.

Ketchum Park is one of Marshall's most valued natural recreation areas, providing residents and visitors with access to scenic open space and the Kalamazoo River corridor. The park continues to evolve as a community destination through thoughtful improvements, including the recent renovation of the community skatepark, which has expanded recreational opportunities for youth and families.

The proposed pavilion and playground project represents an important step in implementing the long-term vision outlined in the Ketchum Park Master Plan. The master plan identifies the need to enhance park amenities, create gathering spaces, and expand recreation opportunities while preserving the park's natural character.

The addition of a pavilion will provide a shaded gathering space for families, picnics, and community programming. The playground will add a welcoming recreational amenity for children and encourage families to spend more time enjoying the park and its natural surroundings.

Together with recent park improvements, these additions will strengthen Ketchum Park as a multi-generational recreation destination while continuing the phased improvements identified in the master plan.

The KPAC Committee strongly supports this project and believes it will enhance the long-term recreational value of Ketchum Park while continuing the City of Marshall's commitment to investing in high-quality public parks.

Sincerely,

Mitchell R. Robbins

Mitchell R. Robbins

Ketchum Park Advisory Committee
City of Marshall

March 25, 2026

Grant Review Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support, as a conservationist, for the proposed improvements to Ketchum Park in Marshall, Michigan, including the addition of new restroom facilities, a pavilion, and an ADA-accessible playground. I am a life-long conservationist that currently serves on the City of Marshall Parks, Rec and Cemetery Board, I am a Natural Resources Consultant and Conservationist for the Brooks Nature Area, a member of the Marshall Area Conservation Corps, and the Ketchum Park Advisory Committee.

Thoughtful investment in public green spaces is one of the most meaningful ways a community can promote both environmental stewardship and public well-being. Ketchum Park, as our oldest and largest park, already serves as an important natural and recreational asset, and these enhancements would significantly improve its accessibility, usability, and long-term sustainability.

From a conservation perspective, well-designed infrastructure such as modern restrooms helps reduce environmental impact by managing waste responsibly and protecting nearby soil and water systems. A centrally located pavilion, co-located with the bathrooms and near the existing skate park, can help concentrate foot traffic and organized activities in designated areas, minimizing the strain on surrounding green space and preserving natural habitats.

Equally important is the inclusion of an ADA-accessible playground. Access to nature and outdoor recreation should be inclusive for all individuals, regardless of physical ability. Creating a space where children of all abilities can safely play, explore, and connect with the outdoors reflects a commitment to both social equity and environmental engagement. Experiences in parks often foster lifelong appreciation for nature, which is essential for future conservation efforts.

These improvements, when thoughtfully planned and implemented, will not detract from the park's natural character but instead enhance its role as a community resource while protecting its ecological integrity. In my opinion this is exactly the type of project that the Trust Fund should be supporting. By investing in durable, environmentally conscious design and materials, the City of Marshall can ensure that Ketchum Park remains both resilient and welcoming for generations to come.

The City of Marshall has been successful in getting grants in the past and staff has performed well in managing those grants. Those projects have had great outcomes for the community and our community parks assets, and I anticipate and look forward to further, similar, success if this project is supported.

I strongly encourage moving forward with awarding the requested Trust Fund Grant and commend the City of Marshall's effort to balance accessibility, recreation, and conservation in one cohesive vision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "James Coury". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

James Coury

Ketchum Park Advisory Committee

Marshall Parks, Recreation and Cemetery Board

Marshall Area Conservation Corps