

***THE HARTFORD COMMUNITY***  
**Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan**

*A combined plan for the communities of*

**CITY OF HARTFORD  
HARTFORD TOWNSHIP**

*Prepared by the*  
**Southwestern Michigan Commission**  
*March 2006*



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The gently undulating countryside of Hartford was originally inhabited by three major Indian nations; the Potawatomi, the Ottawa, and the Chippewa. Through the years, as the country became more populated and settlers began moving west, traders and trappers traversed the area trading furs and supplies with these tribes. In 1829 the State of Michigan was divided into counties and the area was opened for settlement. Hartford Township was officially established in 1840. The town of Hartford began organizing in 1852 but was slow to develop until 1870 when the Chicago-West Michigan Railroad was built. Over the next few years the town developed quickly and was officially incorporated as a village in 1877.

Sawmills were one of the first major industries in the area and business prospered. Later, as the lumber supply became scarce, sawmills closed and the township became more agricultural and the town became the focus of commercial and small manufacturing activity. In 1910, the population in Hartford Township was 2,597 with 1,268 residing in the village. By 1963 the population in the village had reached 2,305 and officially became the City of Hartford.<sup>1</sup>

The communities of Hartford Township and the City of Hartford have produced this joint plan to define and maximize resources and to encourage coordination of efforts in the planning and development of parks and recreation projects and for the protection of open space and natural resources. These communities have previously expressed a commitment to joint effort in the production of a combined community master plan adopted in 1999. As in that previous document, the combined municipal area will be referred to in this plan as the Hartford Community.

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<sup>1</sup> *Hartford Joint Community Master Plan, 1999 and Hartford Website*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Residents of communities involved in the development of coordinated plans can be thankful to those who are willing to work selflessly on behalf of all to achieve mutual goals designed for the satisfaction of all. The following individuals are among those who have contributed time and effort to the development of the Hartford Community Joint Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plan.

### **City of Hartford Steering Committee**

Yemi Akinwale  
Leo (Bud) Latus  
Theodore (Ted) Johnson  
Mark Scholten  
Tim Kling  
Joye Rathgeb  
RoxAnn Isbrecht

### **Hartford Township Steering Committee**

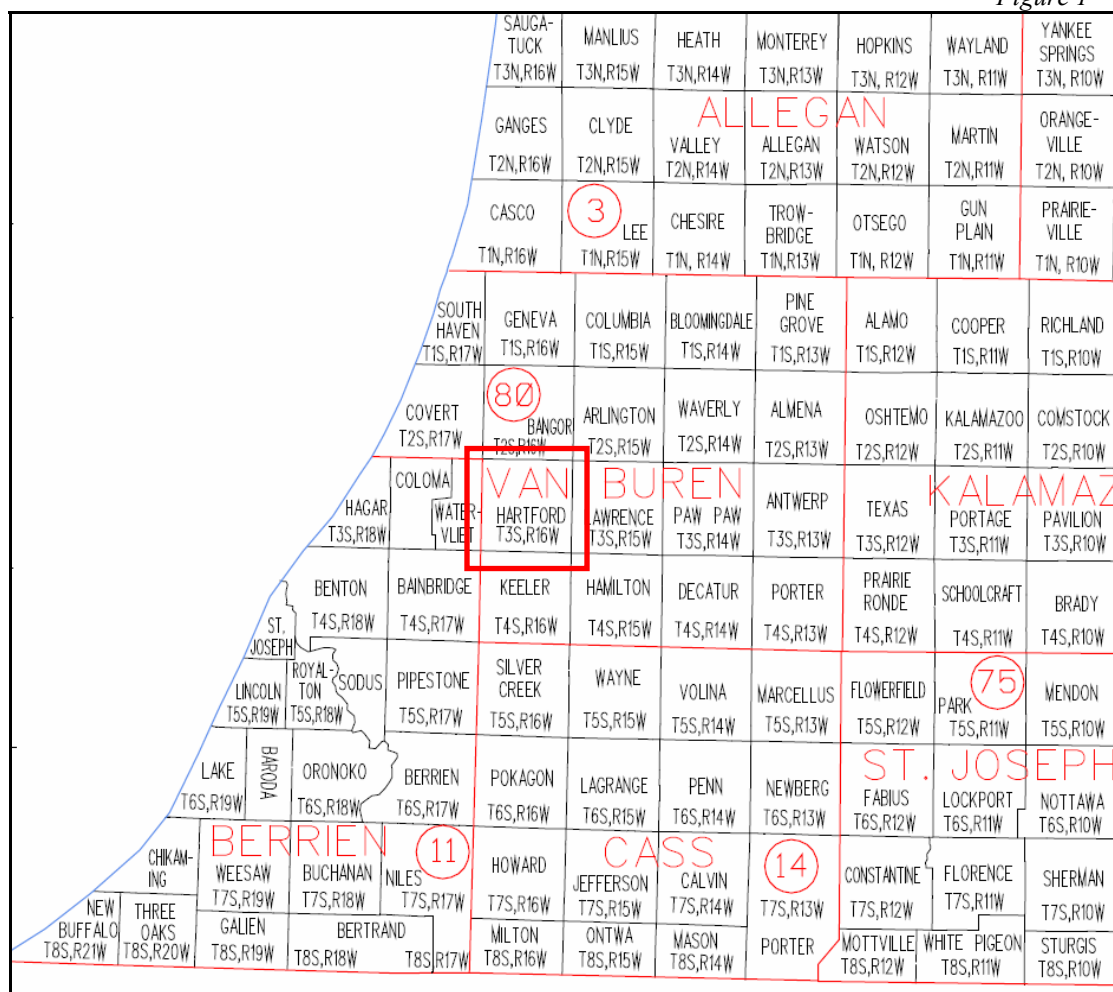
MaDonna Martin  
Robyn Larsen  
Scott Rumley  
Tad Moody  
Ken Kent  
Julie Sweet

## COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

### Location and Size of Area

The Hartford Community is located in southwestern Van Buren County in the southwestern portion of the State of Michigan. Hartford Township is comprised of 33.84 square miles of land area and contains the City of Hartford (1.37 square miles) entirely within its boundaries.<sup>2</sup>

Figure 1

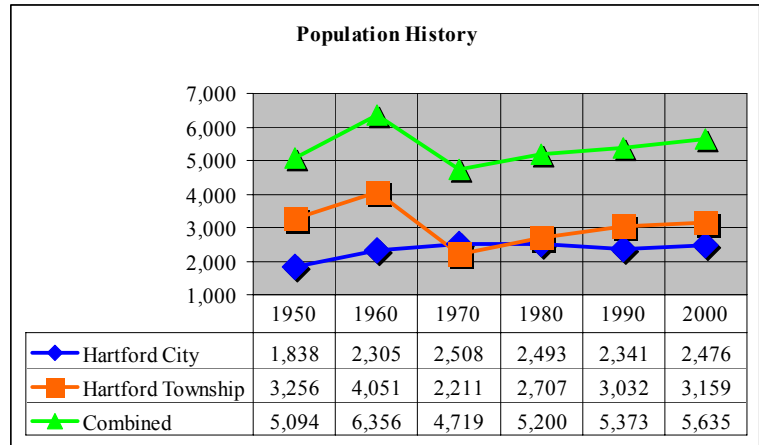


<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, Area Measurements and Density

## Population

The current population of the Hartford Community is 5,635 comprised of the City's 2,476 residents and the Township's 3,159 residents.<sup>3</sup> A July 2004 *estimate*<sup>4</sup> reports the City has 2,450 residents and the Township has 3,212 residents for a total of 5,662 – overall a slight increase for the area.

Figure 2



The City of Hartford has maintained a relatively consistent level of minimal population growth since the 1950 census. However, between 1960 and 1970 Hartford Township experienced a population decline of over 25

percent. (No specific cause has been credited for this sudden decrease although a downturn in overall economic conditions has been cited as a factor. Another factor may have been the construction of I-94 in the 1960s, an interstate highway that transects the Township and bypasses the City, which moved traffic away from the slower paced Red Arrow Highway which had previously served the Hartford Community.) Since 1970, there has been a steady increase in population in the Township; however, the current population is still less than that of the 1950 census. Overall, the combined community of Hartford has shown a steady rate of population growth since the 1970 Census.

## Population Density

Given the area measurement and population counts in the 2000 Census, the population density of the Hartford Community can be expressed as follows:

- The City of Hartford has an average of 1,805.6 persons and 746 housing units per square mile.
- Hartford Township has an average of 93.7 persons and 35.1 housing units per square mile.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division



- Van Buren County has an average of 124.8 persons and 55.6 housing units per square mile.

### Population by Racial Composition

The racial composition of the population in the Hartford Community does not differ greatly from Van Buren County as a whole with some notable exceptions; the percentage of Black or African American residents is lower in the Hartford Community and the percentage of American Indian and Alaskan Native and the percentage of Hispanic or Latino (of any race) in the Hartford Community is much greater than that of Van Buren County.

Table 1

	<b>City of Hartford</b>	<b>Hartford Township</b>	<b>Van Buren County</b>
<b>Total (one race)</b>	97.1%	97.8%	97.8%
<b>White</b>	85.4%	87.1%	87.9%
<b>Black or African American</b>	0.9%	0.5%	5.2%
<b>American Indian and Alaskan Native</b>	3.3%	1.2%	0.9%
<b>Asian</b>	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
<b>Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.01%
<b>Some other race</b>	7.2%	8.9%	3.4%
<b>Two or more races</b>	2.9%	2.2%	2.2%
<b>Hispanic or Latino (of any race)</b>	12.7%	15.5%	7.4%

### Population Distribution by Gender

The population distribution by gender for the Hartford Community shows a fairly even number of males and females. As seen in the table below, from 1990 to 2000 the number of males has increased by a slightly higher percentage than the number of females.

Table 2

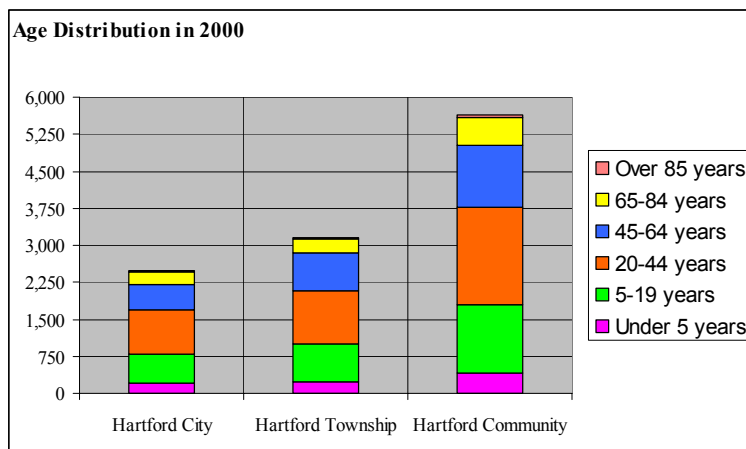
<b>Hartford Community</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>% Change</b>
<b>Male</b>	2,636	2,844	+8%
<b>Female</b>	2,737	2,791	+2%

## Population Distribution by Age Groups

The population distribution by age groups is shown in the following two

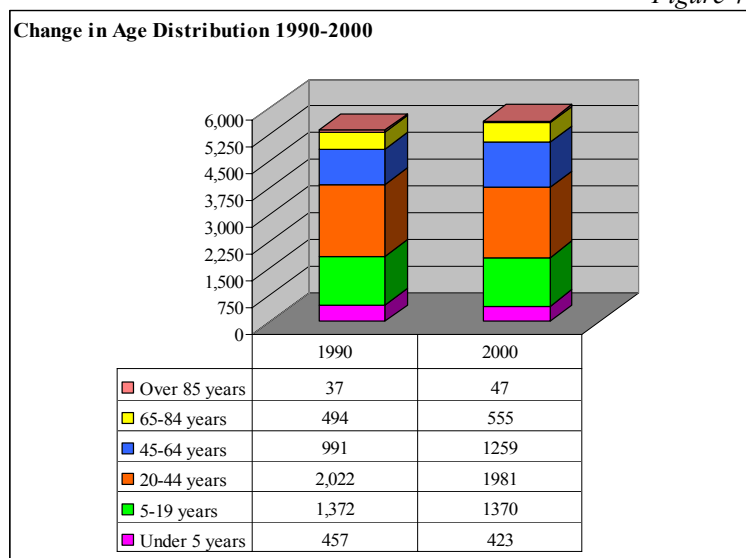
Figure 3

figures. In both the City and the Township, the largest sector of the population is in the “family-forming” group (20-44 years old). It is notable that there has been a change in age distribution from 1990 to 2000. Although the “family-forming” group is still the largest, that



group has shown a decrease in the last ten years concurrently with a significant increase in

Figure 4



the “mature family” group (45-64 years old). Coupled with an increase in the “retirement” group (65-84 years old) and a decrease in the “pre-school” group, this changing demographic could become significant in planning for future recreational facilities.

## Population with Unique Needs

Throughout the preparation of the 1999 Joint Community Master Plan and the 2006 Joint Community Recreation Plan, the Hartford Community has expressed a commitment to meeting the needs of those members of its population with unique needs such as senior citizens, the disabled, low-income, and those of all ethnic backgrounds.

### Low-income

As seen below, the Hartford Community has consistently had a lower income level recorded in the categories of *Median Household*, *Median Family*, and *Per Capita* than that of Van Buren County in general. Hartford Township, however, experienced a greater percentage of growth from 1989 to 1999 than either the City or the County. While both the Township and the City still have a higher poverty rate than the County (1999), both have shown a substantial decrease in the poverty rate since 1989. The community recognizes the needs of its low-income residents and hopes to continue the development of recreation facilities and sports programs available to those in all income brackets.

<b>Median Household Income</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
City of Hartford	19,458	32,879	23.19%
Hartford Township	22,646	35,741	17.77%
Van Buren County	25,491	39,365	15.96%

<b>Median Family Income</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
City of Hartford	23,567	36,632	16.50%
Hartford Township	24,213	39,830	21.10%
Van Buren County	29,265	45,824	17.11%

<b>Per Capita Income</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
City of Hartford	8,878	14,181	18.75%
Hartford Township	8,774	14,801	23.06%
Van Buren County	11,233	17,878	18.45%

	<b>Total Persons</b>	<b>Persons Below Poverty Level (1999)</b>	<b>Poverty Rate (1989)</b>	<b>Poverty Rate (1999)</b>
City of Hartford	2,523	406	22.5%	16.1%
Hartford Township	3,115	400	20.5%	12.8%
Van Buren County	74,852	8,334	15.1%	11.1%

### Disabled

Residents with disabilities must be considered in the preparation of any recreation plan. The U.S. Census categorizes a person with a disability as an individual that has a long-lasting physical, mental, or emotional condition. The condition can make it difficult for a person to do activities such as walking, climbing stairs, learning, or remembering. The condition can also impede an individual's ability to go outside or participate in activities alone.

Table 3

	City of Hartford	Hartford Township	Combined <sup>5</sup>
<b>Population over age 5 years</b>	2,312	2,949	5,261
<b><i>With a disability</i></b>	554	626	1,180
<b>Percent of population over age 5 years <i>with a disability</i></b>	24%	21%	22%

The following information is excerpted from the article “Future of Disability in America” published by the Population Reference Bureau:<sup>6</sup>

For more than 25 years, scientists have debated the implications of population aging and disability in the United States. Over the last 50 years, American life expectancy at birth has increased from less than 70 years to more than 77 years. Some analysts have argued that increases in life expectancy would translate into increases in ill health and disability; other analysts have countered that vitality will someday be the norm for all ages. A third camp maintains that the future of aging and disability in America will depend both on individuals’ choices—whether they drink to excess, smoke, overeat, or are inactive. A variety of federal assistance programs exist for children, adults, and older people with disabilities. Newer policies and programs emphasize legal protections for individuals with disabilities and the removal of barriers to participation. These changes have created new opportunities for many Americans with disabilities and provide the framework for affording people of all ages and abilities the opportunity to participate fully in the nation’s social, political, and economic activities.

The Hartford Community is engaged in the planning process to ensure that all existing parks and future park improvements are barrier free and accessible to all.

### **Ethnic Diversity**

As of the 2000 Census, the Hispanic American population in the City of Hartford is 12.7 percent and 15.5 percent in Hartford Township. This is a greater percentage of the population than the 7.4 percent in Van Buren County. Early in the 21st century, Hispanic Americans are projected to become the nation's largest ethnic minority. High immigration

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Census 2000

<sup>6</sup> *Disability in America (PDF: 540KB)*, Population Reference Bureau, September 2004, V. Freedman, L. Martin, R. Schoeni

rates and relatively high birth rates have boosted the growth rate of the Hispanic population above that of any other major U.S. racial or ethnic group except Asians. In the United States, the Hispanic, or Latino, population is projected to increase from 28 million in 1996 to about 100 million in 2050.<sup>7</sup> The Hartford Community also has a higher percentage of American Indian and Alaskan Native residents than the county. Throughout the development of park and recreation facilities and programs, the community will consider ways to reflect its ethnically diverse population.

### Senior Citizen Population

The senior-citizen population has increased in the Hartford Community at a rate similar to that of the nation. From 1990 to 2000, the population over age 65 increased almost 15 percent. The population between ages 45 and 64 also grew nearly 15 percent.

In the United States, the *proportion* of the population aged 65 years or older is projected to increase from 12.4 percent in 2000 to 19.6 percent in 2030. The *number* of persons aged 65 years or older is expected to increase from approximately 35 million in 2000 to an estimated 71 million in 2030. If the Hartford Community's senior-citizen population continues to keep pace with the nation, an increase of 15-20 percent can be expected before 2030.

### Employment

The unemployment rate in Van Buren County has dropped from the 7.4 percent average annual rate in 2004 to 4.9 percent in the month of October 2005.<sup>8</sup> The following table shows the population over 16 years of age that is considered the labor force in the Hartford Community. The number of employed and unemployed reflects the employment status in 1999 (per the 2000 Census).

Table 4

<b>Population 16 years and over</b>	<b>4,220</b>
In labor force	2,776
Employed	2,576
Unemployed	200

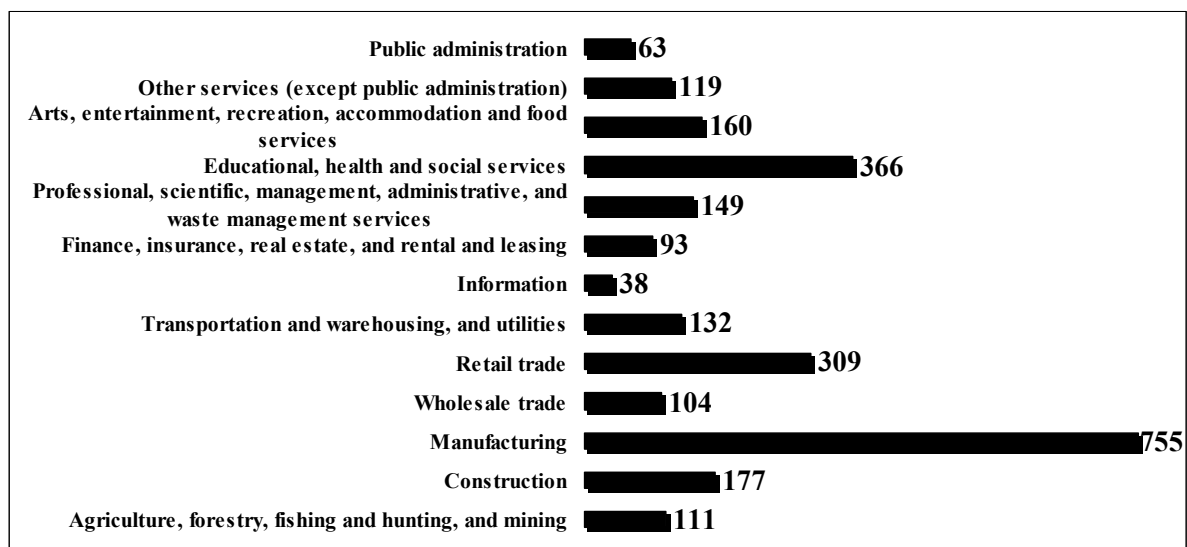
<sup>7</sup>

[http://www.prb.org/Template.cfm?Section=Population\\_Bulletin1&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=12473](http://www.prb.org/Template.cfm?Section=Population_Bulletin1&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=12473)

<sup>8</sup> Unemployment rates are currently available only at the County or MSA level in Michigan.

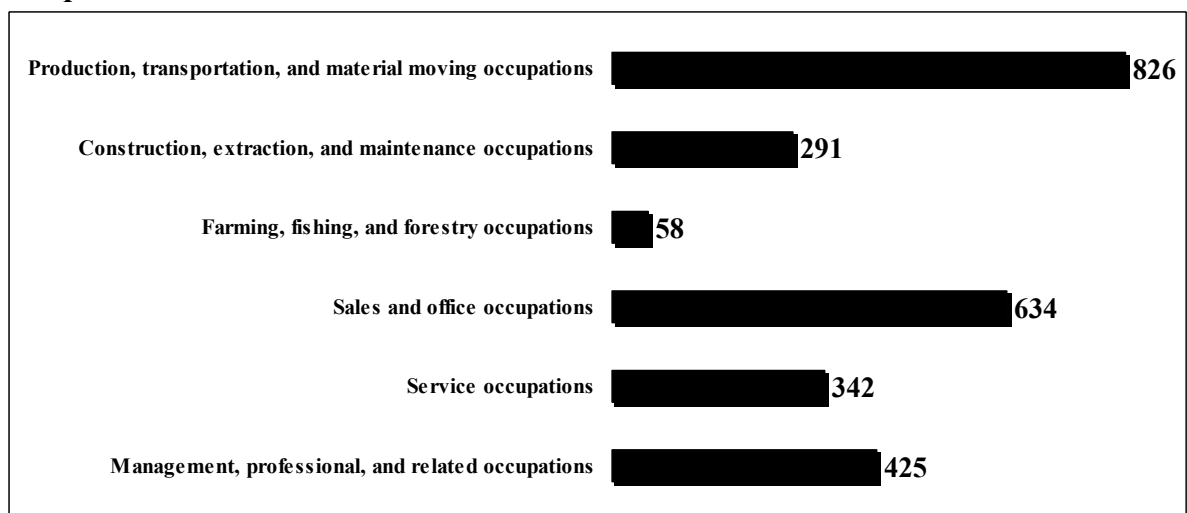
The following two graphs show the distribution of employment by number of residents in each occupation and industry type. In the graph immediately below, it is clear that *Manufacturing* is the predominant industry in the Hartford area. The other two major employment sectors are *Educational, health, and social services* and *Retail trade*.

### Industries



The occupations represented in the Hartford Community are shown in the graph below. The major occupations are in *production, transportation, and material moving* occupations. *Sales and office* occupations represent another major sector of employment.

### Occupations



## COMMUNITY ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### The City of Hartford

The City of Hartford operates under the Home Rule City Act as amended and updated on August 13, 1990. To manage the overall business and administration of the City, there is a City Commission and Planning Commission. The City has a manager, clerk, and treasurer who oversee day-to-day activities and administrative responsibilities. The City also has a Department of Public Works which operates and maintains the roads, water and sewer systems, snow removal, equipment maintenance, city park maintenance and other miscellaneous projects within the city. The Public Works superintendent also supervises part-time employees and individuals doing community service. The City utilizes the Public Works department to maintain Ely Park but does not currently have specific budget line items for recreation purposes or park maintenance. The City of Hartford's Downtown Development Authority is considered a source of some funding for recreational activities.

### Park Policies

The City of Hartford has established procedures and rules for the use of Ely Park. These include requiring the submission of an application by any group or assembly that expects to attract or involve more than 20 persons and the user is required to clean up the area after the event is over.<sup>9</sup>

### City of Hartford Staff Description and Organizational Chart

#### City Commission

Theodore Johnson - Mayor  
William McLaughlin - Mayor Pro-Tem  
Leo Latus  
Debra Keyser  
Mark Scholten  
Rick Hall  
Ron Burleson

#### Planning Commission

Louise Engle - Chairman  
Tim Kling - Secretary  
Donna Langston  
Joye Rathgeb  
Carlos Ledesma  
Frank Emery

**City Manager** – Yemi Akinwale

**City Treasurer** – Linda Gray

**Chief of Police** – Ramon Beltran

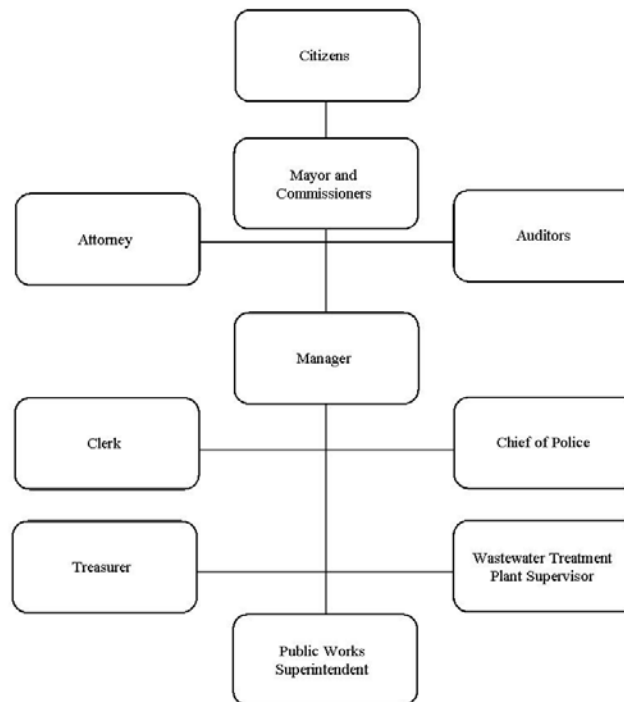
**City Clerk** – RoxAnn Rodney-Isbrecht

**DPW Superintendent** – Daniel Staunton

Waster Water Treatment Plant Supt. - Tom Melville

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix for complete park rules

## City of Hartford Organizational Chart

**Hartford Township**

Hartford Township does not own or operate any specific parks and therefore that responsibility has not been assigned to any organized governing group. Hartford Township works cooperatively with the City of Hartford and the school district to support the Recreation Council<sup>10</sup> and community efforts to seek additional and improved recreational venues and opportunities.

Hartford Township does not have any specific line items for recreational purposes in the annual budget at this time.

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<sup>10</sup> A volunteer group of City and Township residents



## Hartford Township Staff Description and Organizational Chart

### Planning Commission

James Jonatzke, Chairman  
Trevor Meachum, Secretary  
Kurt Dowd  
S.A. MacGowan  
Lawrence Blyly  
Marion Getz  
Ron Sefcik

### Trustees

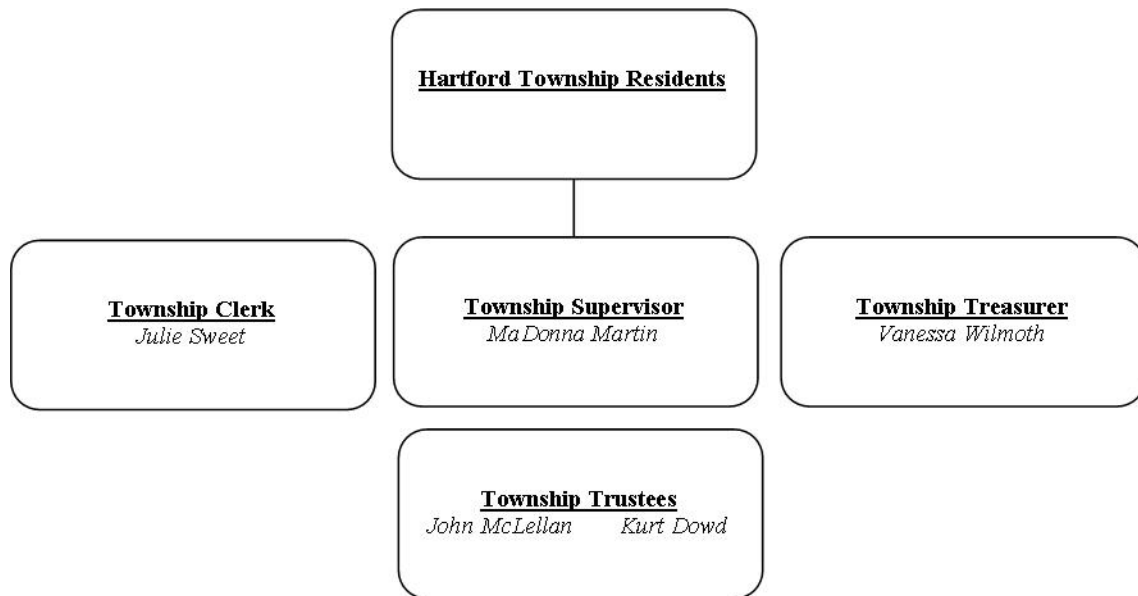
John McLellan  
Kurt Dowd

**Township Supervisor** – MaDonna Martin

**Township Treasurer** – Vanessa Wilmoth

**Township Clerk** – Julie Sweet

**Zoning Administrator** – James Lechenet



## Parks and Recreation

The Community of Hartford benefits from the Recreation Council, which is comprised of residents from the City and the Township. This Council functions as a committee of volunteers whose primary purpose is to organize and run the summer sports programs and organizes the scheduling and promotion of the outdoor concert series held at Ely Park. The summer sports programs are done cooperatively with the Hartford school district through the use of the school ballparks. The Recreation Council has no official authority through either the City or the Township.

**Volunteers, Organizations, and Supporting Agencies**

The Hartford Community benefits from several active volunteer organizations and community agencies in a variety of different ways.

- The Hartford Chamber of Commerce organizes the Hartford Winter Parade and the Strawberry Festival Parade in the summer.
- The American Legion helps with Memorial Day celebrations by providing flags and flowers for the cemetery and working to help clean Ely Park.
- The Hartford Community Recreation Council, comprised of residents of both the City and the Township, organizes the summer sports programs, plants flowers and helps keep Ely Park clean.
- The Lion's Club provides volunteers to clean up before, during, and after the Strawberry Festival, helps organize the winter parade, and were responsible for building the pavilion in Ely Park.
- The Historical Society maintains the Historical Museum and the 4H club maintains the County Fairgrounds.
- The City of Hartford's Public Works Director utilizes the public works crew and volunteers to maintain Ely Park and the trailhead area for the Van Buren Trail.
- The Hartford Police Department reserve officers offer their services during football games, concerts in the park, parades, Halloween activities, and the Strawberry Festival.

## PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

### Land Use Patterns

The following land use descriptions are taken from Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Michigan Land Cover/Use Classification System, 1975. The number of square miles in each descriptive area and percent of each category compared with total area (as of 1975) are taken from the Hartford Community Joint Master Plan of 1999.

Table 5

<b>Land Cover/Use Category</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Area in square miles</b>	<b>Percent of total area</b>
Agricultural	Agricultural land is broadly defined as land used primarily for the production of farm commodities	22.13	63%
Commercial	Commercial areas are those used predominantly for the sale of products and services. These include central business districts, shopping centers, commercial strip developments, and resorts	0.22	1%
Extractive	Extractive land encompasses both surface and subsurface mining operations such as sand and gravel pits, stone quarries, oil and gas wells, and metallic and nonmetallic mines	0.03	<1%
Forested	Forested lands are lands that are at least 10 percent stocked trees producing an influence on the climate or water regime	6.69	19%
Industrial	Includes a wide array of uses from light manufacturing and industrial parks to heavy manufacturing plants	0.15	<1%
Open Field	Is defined as an area supporting early stages of plant succession consisting of plant communities characterized by grasses or shrubs	2.75	8%
Recreational	Includes facilities and areas which are basically on open land used for outdoor cultural, public assembly, and recreational purposes. They may, however, include incidental buildings such as shelters, toilets, beach change areas, etc.	0.14	<1%
Residential	Uses range from high density, represented by multiple unit structures, to low density, where houses are on lots of more than one acre	1.11	3%
Water	Includes all areas that are predominantly or persistently water covered. Water bodies that are vegetated are placed in the wetlands category	0.14	<1%
Wetlands	Areas where the water table is at, near, or above the land surface for a significant part of most years. Includes marshes, mudflats, wooded swamps, and floating vegetation situated on the shallow margins of lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, and manmade impounds such as reservoirs	1.44	4%
Other	Includes land used for transportation, communication, and utilities infrastructure such as high right-of-ways and cemeteries	0.43	1%

Table 6 below is a more recent reflection of land use as defined in broader categories than those used in 1975. Agricultural land use has remained stable constituting 63 percent of the total area. Land used for Residential, however, jumped from 3 percent in 1975 to 24 percent in 1996.

Table 6

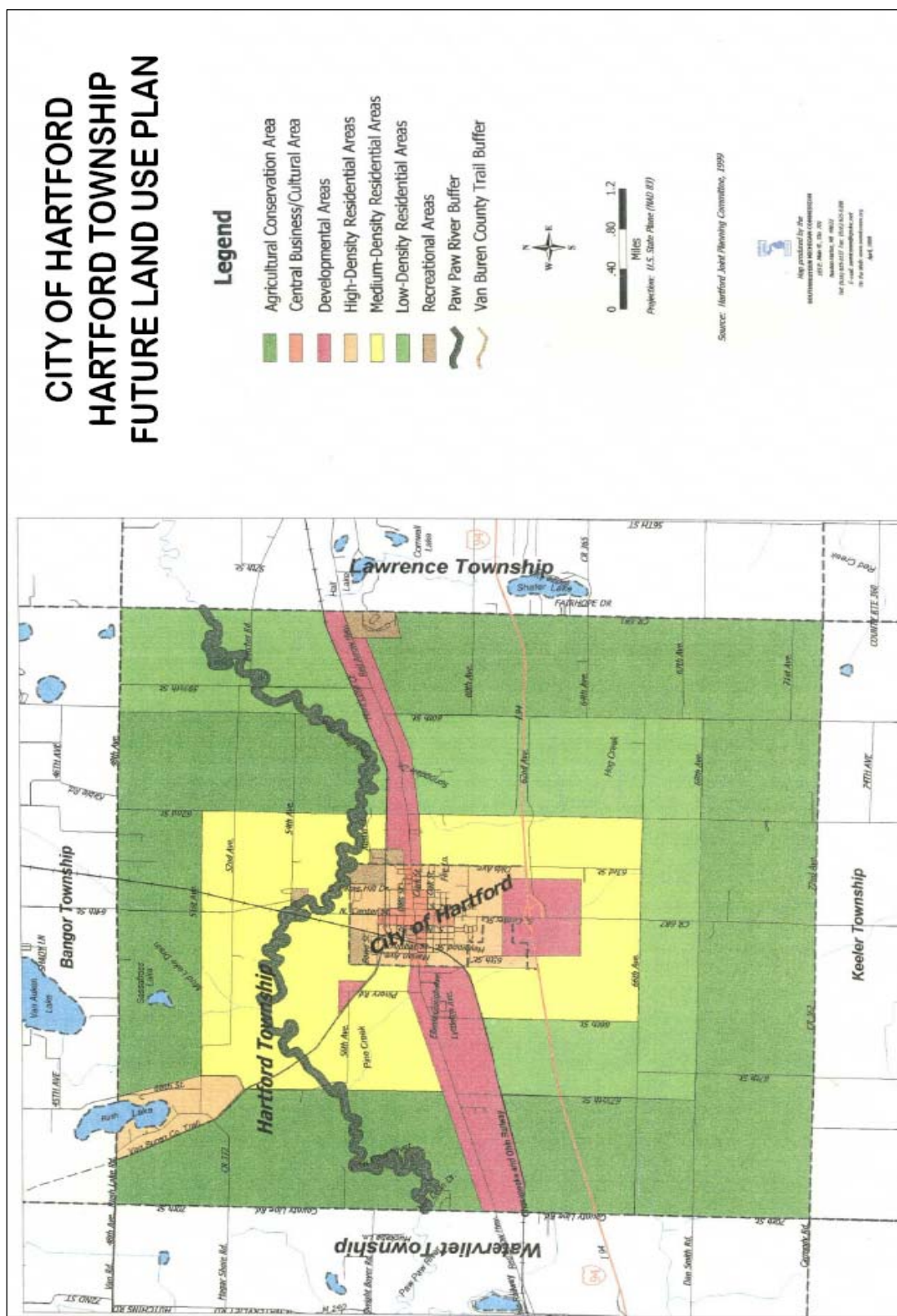
<b>Tax Assessment Land Use Category</b>	<b>Area in square miles</b>	<b>Percent of total area</b>
Agricultural	22.25	63.0%
Commercial	0.61	2.0%
Industrial	1.27	4.0%
Residential	8.36	24.0%
Other	2.57	7.0%

*Land Use per Tax Assessment Land Use Categories for the Hartford Community, 1996*

### **Future Land Use Plan**

The future land use plan for the Hartford Community reflects the community's interest in rural, agricultural, and natural resource protection. The legend on Map 1 and the descriptions in Table 7 use terminology such as "agricultural conservation area," "Paw Paw River Buffer," and "Van Buren Trail Buffer." The community will promote the protection of these natural features with its land use policies and recreation and open space planning.

### Map 1: Future Land Use Plan



## Future Land Use Plan

Table 7

Category	Purpose	Area (Sq. Mi.)	Principle Uses	Lot Sizes (Acres)	
				Max	Min
Agricultural Conservation	To protect, promote and sustain viable, profitable agricultural activities	17.24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homesteads, bars, and other structures necessary for agricultural production activities</li> <li>Single-family, non-farm residential units</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
Central Business/Cultural	To create a vibrant, traditional, centralized "downtown" area for socializing and community events	0.23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retail/service commercial businesses</li> <li>Second floor residential units</li> <li>Governmental/institutional/educational structures</li> </ul>	0.50	0.25
Developmental	To provide an area in which a variety of commercial and industrial activities can be developed	2.39	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light industrial such as warehousing or distributing</li> <li>Heavy industrial such as manufacturing and processing</li> <li>Office commercial</li> <li>Institutional (colleges, hospitals, training centers, etc.)</li> <li>Retail and service commercial</li> </ul>	1.00	N/A
High-Density Residential	To create an area of high-density residential development and concentrated population	1.44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single- and multi-family residential units</li> <li>Small neighborhood service commercial</li> </ul>	0.50	0.25
Medium-Density Residential	To provide a lower-density alternative to the high-density residential area	6.52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single- and multi-family residential units</li> <li>Mobile home parks</li> <li>Small, neighborhood service commercial</li> </ul>	2.00	0.50
Low-Density Residential	To provide a residential area of lower densities, larger units and greater property ownership	6.92	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Single-family residential units</li> <li>Small, neighborhood service commercial</li> </ul>	5.00	1.00
Recreational	To provide areas for the recreational enjoyment of community residents	0.30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ball fields, benches, picnic areas, etc.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
Paw Paw River Buffer	To protect the water quality and aesthetic appeal of the Paw Paw River by creating a "no build" zone within 100' of the riverbank	200' x 14.26 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational uses such as boating, fishing, hiking, animal watching, etc.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
Van Buren Trail Buffer	To provide separation ("no build" zone) between the Van Buren Trail and residences along the trail	25' x 3.53 miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recreational uses such as snowmobiling, hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, etc.</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A

## **Zoning**

Both the City and the Township of Hartford have zoning ordinances. The City's ordinance was adopted in 1996 and the Township's was adopted in 1966. The ordinances address the issues of each particular type of zoning district in terms of building and lot sizes, setbacks and other such details. The following tables show the different zoning districts in the City and the Township as well as the area and percentage of total area for each district.

### City of Hartford Zoning Districts, 1996

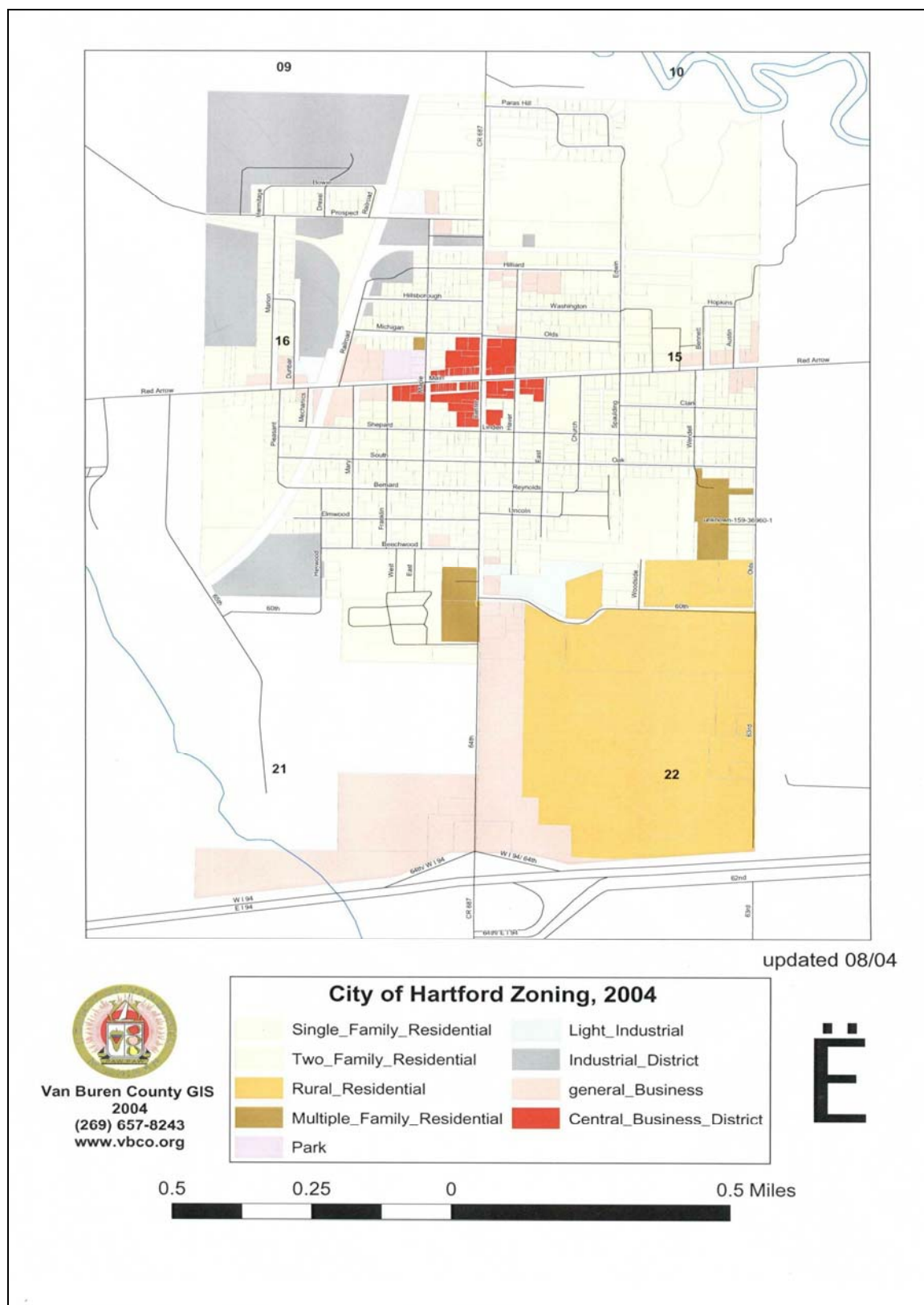
Table 8

		Acres	% of total land area
B-1	Central Business District	0.03	2%
B-2	General Business District	0.15	11%
I	General Industrial District	0.15	11%
LI	Light Industrial District	0.01	1%
R-MF	Multiple Family Residential District	0.02	1%
R-1	Single Family Residential District	0.75	56%
R-2	Two-Family Residential District	0.01	1%
RR	Rural Residential District	0.22	16%

Map 2 on the following page is the most recent zoning map for the City of Hartford.



## Map 2: City of Hartford Zoning





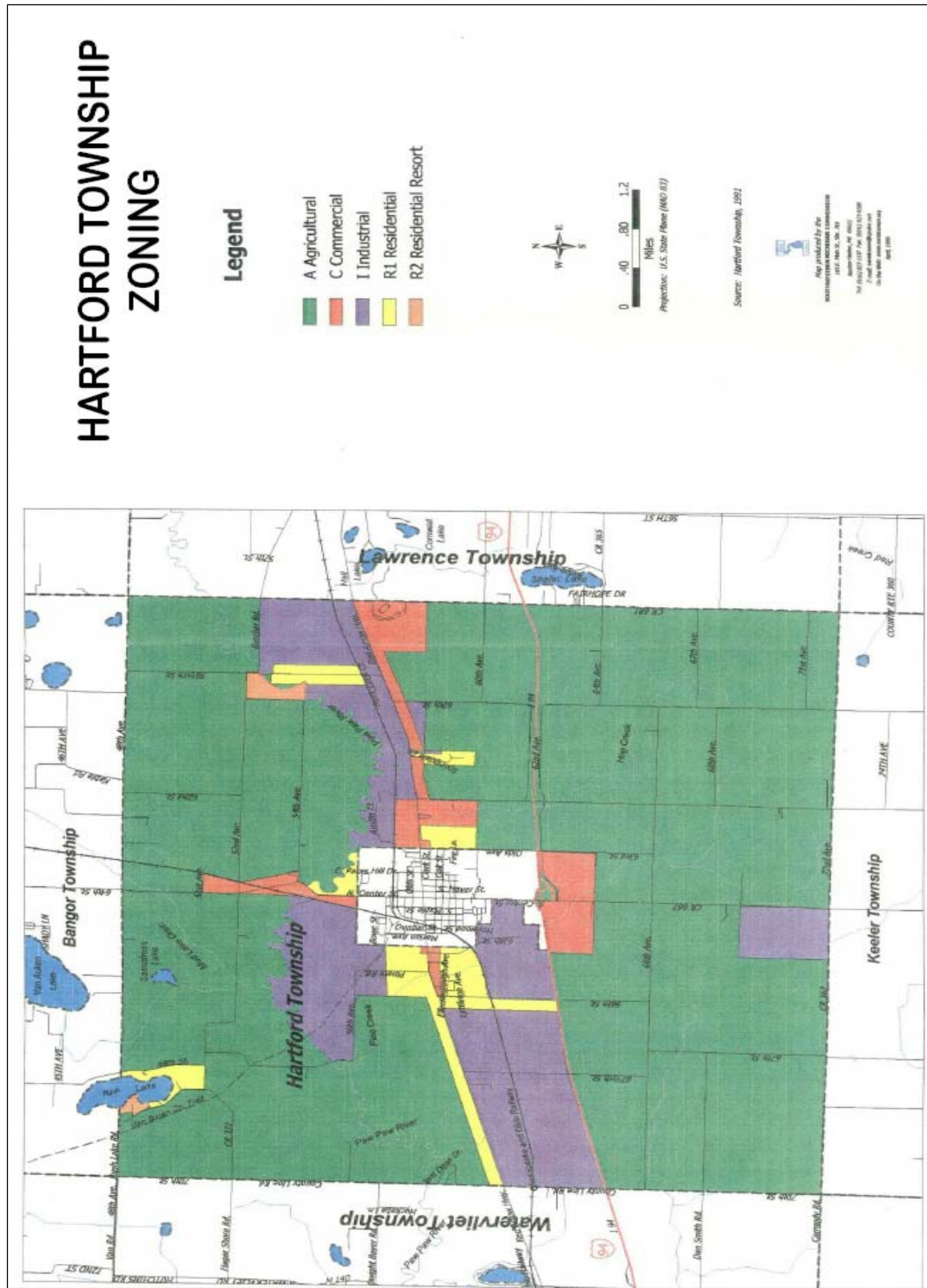
## Hartford Township Zoning Districts, 1991

Table 9

		Acres	% of total land area
A	Agricultural	26.27	78%
C	Commercial	1.32	4%
I	Industrial	4.82	14%
R1	Residential	1.18	4%
R2	Residential Resort	0.12	<1%

Map 3 on the following page is the zoning map for Hartford Township.

Map 3: Hartford Township Zoning



**Topography**

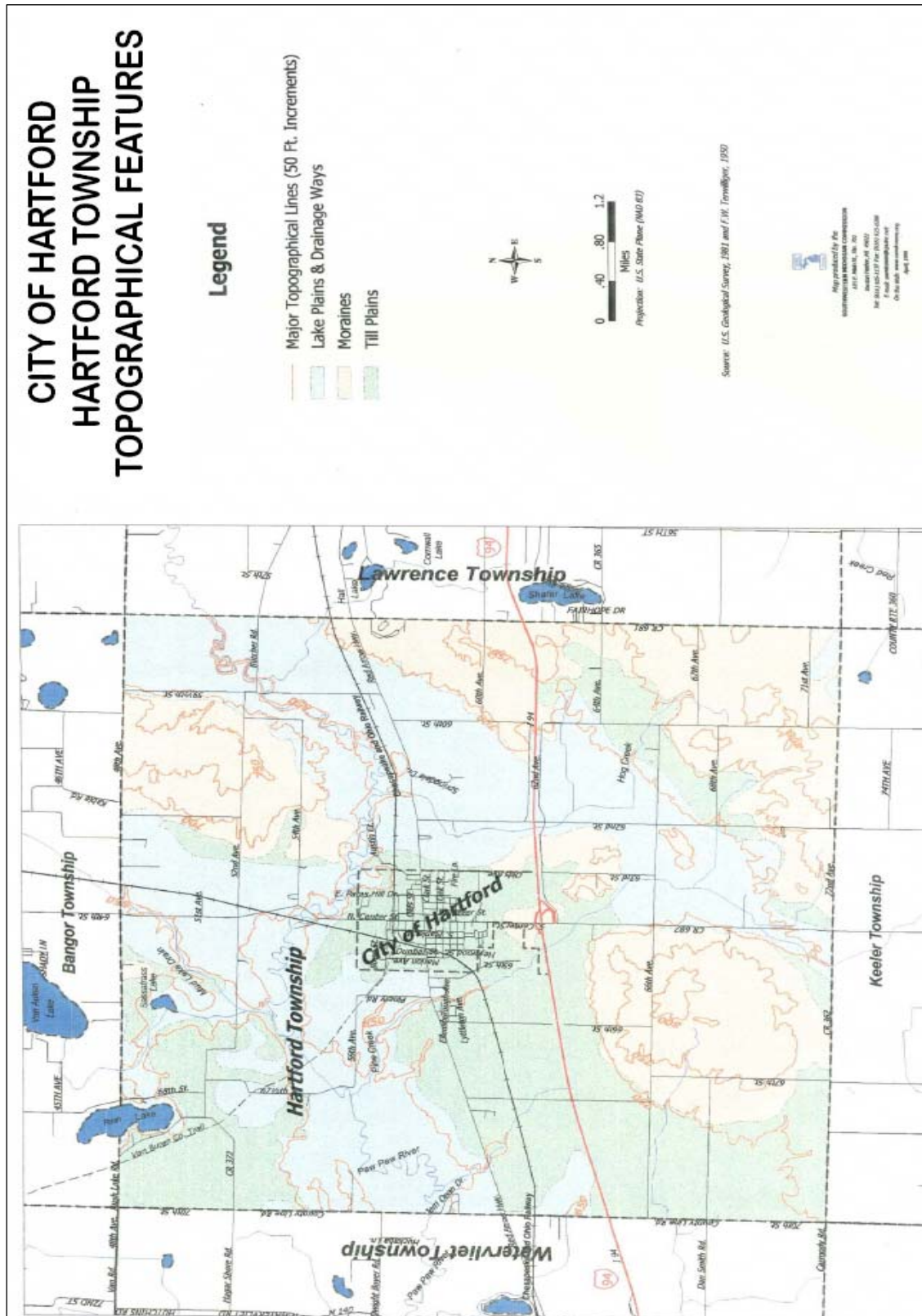
The topography of the Hartford area was formed through glacial action, particularly the Lake Michigan Lobe of the Wisconsin glacial sheet, which resulted in five dominant features: moraines, till plains, outwash plains, lake plains and drainageways, and areas where muck and silt were deposited by ponded water on till plains.<sup>11</sup>

Topographical elevations range from a low of 633 feet along the Paw Paw River to a high of 820 feet just south and west of Interstate 94 at the junction with County Road 687. The Township is characterized by gentle slopes and flat bottomland on the outwash and river flood plains. (See Map 4 on the following page)

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<sup>11</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Van Buren County*; 1986

Map 4: Topographical Features



### **Water, Fish, and Wildlife Resources**

The Paw Paw River is formed by the confluence of the north and south branches in northeast Van Buren County. The river flows approximately 89 miles through Van Buren County and Berrien County until joining the St. Joseph River in Benton Harbor near Lake Michigan. Among the many tributaries joining the river are Pine Creek which flows between Hartford and Watervliet, Mud Lake Drain between Hartford and Watervliet, and Hog Creek near Hartford. The Paw Paw River provides excellent habitat for a variety of waterfowl and is considered a cool water fishery which supports a very diverse fishery. During the spring and fall migrations the marshes are filled with northern pintail, northern shoveler, blue and green-winged teal, tundra swans, great blue heron, and the occasional Sandhill crane. The river area also supports American kestrel, northern harrier, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, great horned owl, barred owl, and long-eared owl.<sup>12</sup>

The Paw Paw River Watershed covers about 445 square miles, primarily in Van Buren County, as well as a small portion of Kalamazoo County. The watershed includes rare Great Lakes marshes and floodplain forests, which serve as habitats for migratory birds such as the Prothonotary Warbler (commonly known as the Golden Swamp Warbler), as well as the endangered Mitchell Satyr butterfly. Other rare species include the Massasauga rattlesnake and the spotted turtle. The Paw Paw River has 39 species of fish including walleye, bass, bluegill, black crappie, and northern pike<sup>13</sup>

### **Soils and Vegetation**

Much of the Paw Paw River is surrounded by forests. These forested floodplains protect water quality, control flooding and provide a non-fragmented corridor for wildlife. Many of the soils in Hartford Township are suitable for woodlands and cropland. The three predominant general soil classifications are shown and described in Table 10.<sup>14</sup> Although these soil classifications can be used for general planning purposes, decisions as to specific site suitability need to be made with more detailed soil analyses. Map 5 on the following page shows the location and extent of the general soil associations in Hartford Township.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.sarrett.com>

<sup>13</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paw\\_Paw\\_River](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paw_Paw_River)

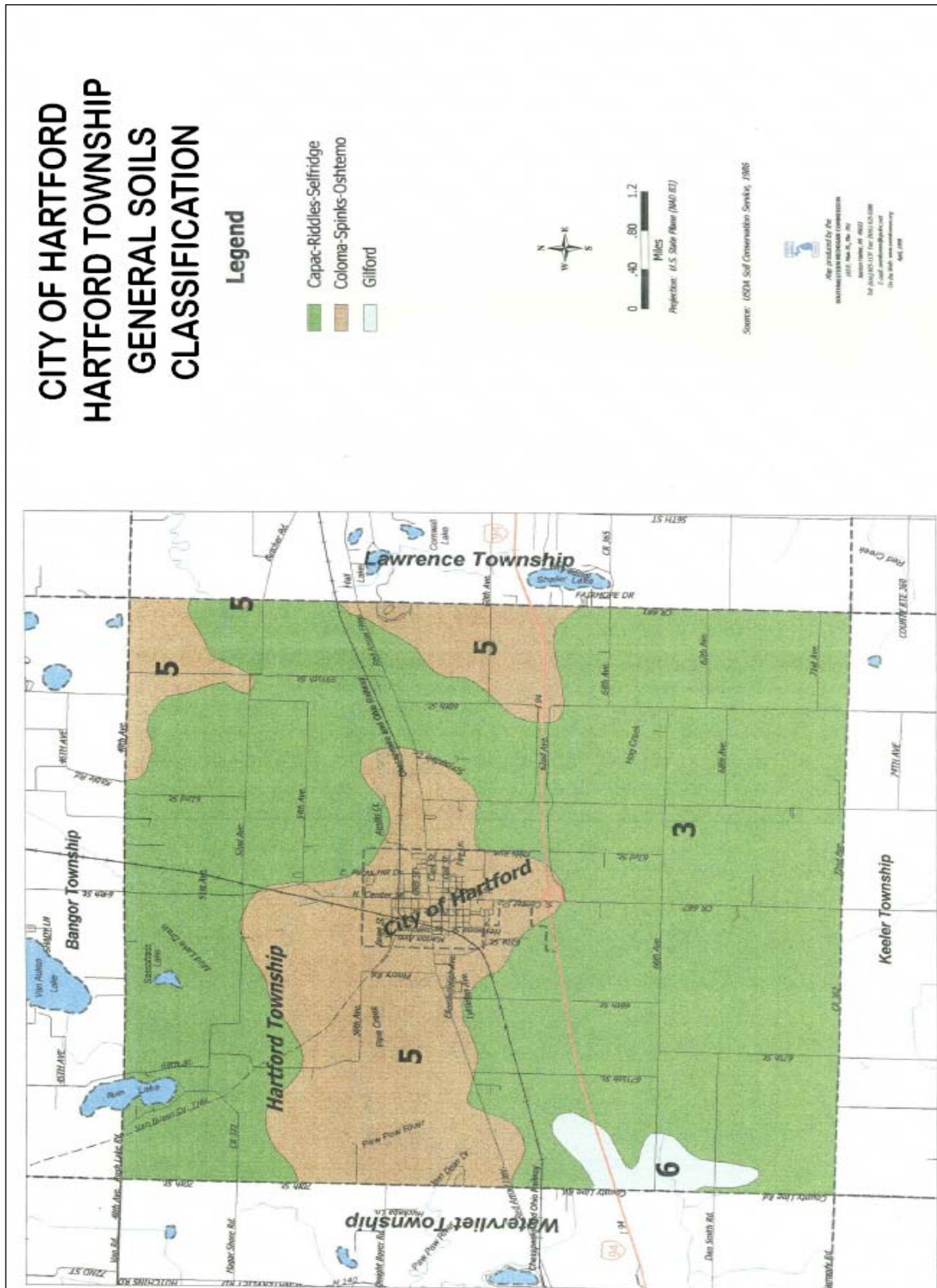
<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, *Soil Survey of Van Buren County*; 1986

Table 10

Association	Description	Percent of total area
Capac-Riddles-Selfridge	Nearly level to hilly, somewhat poorly drained and well drained, loamy and sandy soils on till plains, moraines, and lake plains. Mostly used as cropland and fairly well suited for woodlands. Ranges from well suited to generally unsuited for building site development and sanitary facilities	72%
Coloma-Spinks-Oshtemo	Nearly level to hilly, somewhat excessively drained and well drained, sandy and loamy soils on outwash plains and moraines. Mostly used as cropland with some as specialty crops. Ranges from well suited to generally unsuited for development and sanitary facilities.	26%
Gilford	Nearly level, very poorly drained, loamy soils on outwash plains. Mostly used as woodlands with some cropland. Generally unsuited for building site development and sanitary facilities.	2%



Map 5: General Soils Classification



**Natural Features**

Hartford Township covers a total area of 33.8 square miles. This area includes 33.7 square miles of land and 0.1 square miles of water.<sup>15</sup> The City of Hartford (1.4 square miles) is completely within the boundaries of Hartford Township.

One of the most notable natural features in the community is the Paw Paw River. This river is approximately 14.25 miles long as it flows east to west through the Township. Regions bordering the Paw Paw River are primarily wetlands in the form of marshes and swamps. The river's elevations average between 630 and 640 feet with the wetland areas stopping at approximately the 650 foot elevation line.<sup>16</sup>

There are other small lakes and creeks in the Township, most notably Rush Lake, as well as Pine and Hog Creeks which flow northward from the southern edge of the Township and empty into the Paw Paw River. Map 6 on the following page shows detail of the wetland areas in the City and Township.

A complete list of endangered and threatened species for Van Buren County is available in the Appendix.

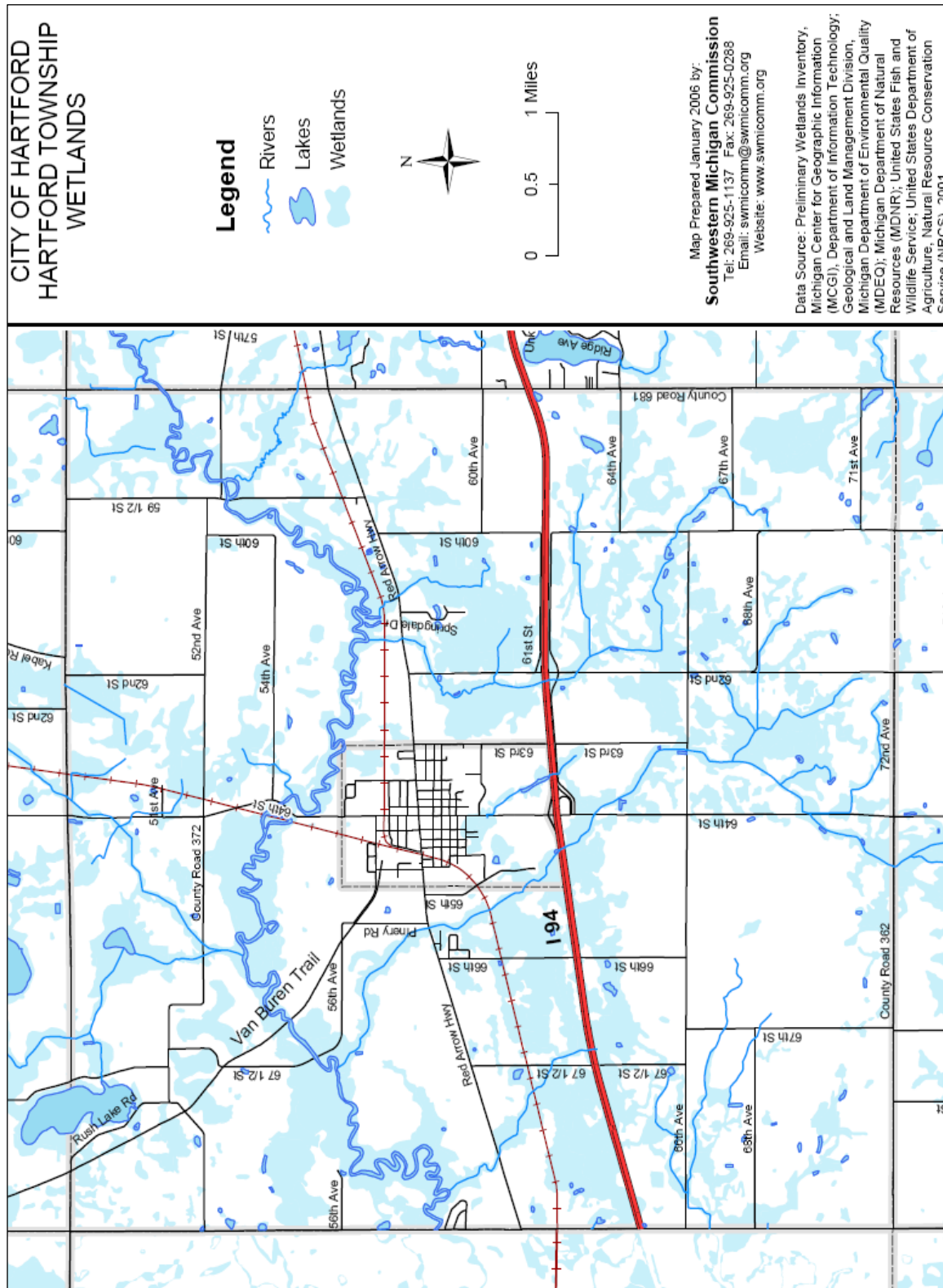
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<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

<sup>16</sup> Hartford Community Master Plan, 1999



Map 6: Wetlands



## Climate

Planning for recreational facilities and activities almost always includes planning around, or planning for, the weather. The average weather statistics for Hartford are shown below with highs and lows emphasized. Overall, Hartford enjoys four distinct seasons with relatively few extremes.

Table 11

<b>Average Weather<sup>17</sup></b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>
Average temp. (°F)	<b>24.3</b>	27.5	36.9	47.5	58.6	67.8	72.2	70.5	63.4	52.4	40.6	29.5
High temperature (°F)	31.3	35.1	45.5	57.3	69.1	78.1	<b>82.0</b>	80.1	73.2	61.7	47.9	35.9
Low temperature (°F)	<b>17.2</b>	19.8	28.2	37.7	48.2	57.5	62.3	60.9	53.4	43.0	33.2	23.0
Precipitation (in)	2.2	1.7	2.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.7	<b>4.0</b>	3.1	3.3	2.9
Days with precipitation	<b>16</b>	12	14	13	12	11	9	9	9	10	13	15
Wind speed (mph)	<b>11.8</b>	11.1	11.7	11.5	10.1	9.1	8.2	7.8	8.5	9.6	11.0	11.2
Morning humidity (%)	82	81	80	78	79	81	84	<b>89</b>	<b>89</b>	84	83	83
Afternoon humidity (%)	73	68	62	56	54	55	57	59	60	61	69	<b>75</b>
Sunshine (%)	32	41	47	51	57	63	<b>65</b>	62	56	47	30	27
Days clear of clouds	3	4	5	6	7	7	8	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	8	4	3
Partly cloudy days	6	6	7	8	10	10	<b>13</b>	12	9	8	6	5
Cloudy days	<b>23</b>	19	19	17	14	12	10	10	12	15	21	<b>23</b>
Snowfall (inches)	<b>20.4</b>	14.4	9.4	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	7.8	18.4

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.capitaldecking.com/decking-decks/city/Hartford-Michigan.html>

### **Transportation Systems**

The overall transportation system of Van Buren County includes the modes listed below. These modes may be potential links and/or factors to be considered when planning for recreational space and activities. The Hartford Community area is accessible to visitors and tourists by many of these modes and residents of the community are in turn able to use these transportation systems to access recreational opportunities in surrounding areas.

Table 12 gives the approximate distances (time and mileage) between Hartford and selected cities in the region.

*Table 12*

<b>Place</b>	<b>Population<sup>18</sup></b>	<b>Distance from Hartford</b>	<b>Travel Time (Approximate)</b>
Chicago, IL	2,895,444	104 miles	2 hours
Kalamazoo, MI	77,145	32 miles	45 minutes
Grand Rapids, MI	197,800	81 miles	1.25 hour
Detroit, MI	951,270	166 miles	2.5 hours
South Bend, IN	107,789	45 miles	45 minutes

**Highways and Roadways** - The major highway transportation routes traversing Van Buren County and connecting its cities, villages, and townships are the east-west highways of Interstate 94, M-43, and Red Arrow Highway; the major north-south highways are Interstate 196, M-140, and M-40.

The most significant highway with easy access to Hartford is Interstate 94 (I-94), a major east-west thoroughfare. I-94 is one of the most heavily traveled commercial corridors in the Midwest. To the east of Hartford, I-94 terminates in Detroit at the U.S./Canadian border and to the west, I-94 travels through the Midwest's largest city – Chicago, Illinois and eventually terminates in Billings, Montana. In addition to providing access to these major cities, I-94 also serves as the connector to convenient routes serving other nearby cities. The population of these cities can be considered when planning for tourism-related recreational activities. (See Table 12)

Red Arrow Highway is an all-weather route with a significant amount of commercial and industrial land adjacent to it. Red Arrow Highway is currently being considered by an

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

economic development focus group as a means of promoting tourism in the areas surrounding the highway.

***Private services*** – Private transportation in Van Buren County is typically provided by taxi services.

***Public Transit Systems*** – In addition to public transit services provided by Van Buren Public Transit, the counties adjacent to Van Buren County also have public transit systems available. These systems may be potential resources to connect the Hartford Community and its recreational venues with residents in neighboring counties and to make available a wider scope of regional recreational services to be used by residents of the Hartford Community.

***Railroads*** - Passenger railway transportation can be accessed at the newly renovated train depot in the City of Bangor - 10 miles from the City of Hartford, which provides service for Amtrak's Pere Marquette line offering daily trips from Grand Rapids to Chicago.

***Commercial Bus Station*** - Commercial bus transportation includes Greyhound with stations in South Haven and Paw Paw, and Indian Trails with a stop in Paw Paw.

***Airports*** - Airports certified for carrier operations include the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek International Airport, the Gerald R. Ford International Airport in Grand Rapids, and the South Bend Regional Airport. The South Haven Regional Airport and the Southwest Michigan Regional Airport (located in Benton Harbor) provide charter and services to private aircraft owners (individual or corporate).

***Marinas*** - Marinas are available in South Haven, approximately 20 miles from Hartford, for private boat owners and fishing charters. Ports with passenger ferry services are located north of Van Buren County in Muskegon and Ludington.

***Non-motorized*** – Numerous roadways in Van Buren County have paved shoulders and are suitable for bicycle riding and walking. Van Buren County is also home to the 14-mile Van

Buren Trail and the 33.5-mile Kal-Haven Trail. The Kal-Haven trail is a linear multi-use trail that links Kalamazoo to South Haven and the Van Buren Trail is a park trail linking South Haven with Hartford. Both of these trails are suitable for hiking, biking, and horseback riding and both are open in the winter for cross-country skiing; snowmobiling is allowed when there is a four-inch base. The Bangor/South Haven Heritage Water Trail is a canoe and kayak trail encompassing 20 miles of the South Branch of the Black River between the cities of Bangor and South Haven.<sup>19</sup> To improve non-motorized transportation options, planning and site designs can often be structured to: 1) promote development that mixes land uses, 2) enhance pedestrian facilities, 3) promote infill and redevelopment, and 4) increase density.

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<sup>19</sup> "Van Buren County Community Center," <http://www.vbco.org/natfeat0010.asp>

## RECREATION INVENTORY

Members of the joint steering committee assisted with the compilation of the recreation inventory. Site visits were performed and previous plans and community descriptions were reviewed and updated in accordance with established standards.

### **Recreation Inventory**

Ely Park is the only park within the boundaries of the City and the Township. This 2.5 acre *neighborhood park* has a covered pavilion used for a variety of activities, most notably a popular outdoor concert series.

The Van Buren Trail is a 14-mile dirt and gravel *park trail* connecting South Haven and the City of Hartford. The Van Buren Trail trailhead is located on Prospect Street in the City and offers free parking for trail users.

The Paw Paw River is a *water resource* accessible for activities such as canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The portion of the river in Hartford Township is not well-suited for motorized boating.

The Hartford School District allows the use of its athletic field as a *school park* for summer sports programs and other events as needed.

In 2002, the City of Hartford participated in a community assessment conducted by the Anderson Economic Group. The assessment was done for the communities along the Red Arrow Highway to help develop strategies for enhancing the region's economy. As part of the "Amenity Inventory" the following recreational facilities were identified as being "Resident and Visitor Highlights".

- The Race Track – The Hartford Speedway draws in thousands of people every weekend during the summer months. Attendees at the events come from throughout Southwest Michigan, and beyond to watch drivers race this high banked, 1/2-mile oval race track.

- Proximity to the lakeshore – The short drive from Hartford to Benton Harbor, Saint Joseph, and other lakeshore commercial centers provide residents with easy access to major retail and employers.
- Recreational Facilities – Hartford’s school district provides recreational facilities for community youth for school sports programs and community usage.<sup>20</sup>

The full inventory of recreational facilities and recreational opportunities currently available to the Hartford Community follows:

- Facilities *within* the political boundaries of the Hartford Community
  - Ely Park
  - Van Buren Trail\*
  - Van Buren County Fairgrounds\*\*
  - Van Buren Historical Museum\*\*
- Facilities *outside* the political boundaries of the Hartford Community
  - Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial Park
  - Van Buren State Park
  - Lake Michigan Shoreline
  - Van Buren County lakes (36 with either public access and/or public fishing sites)
  - Algird Banicks Dunes Nature Sanctuary
  - Ross Nature Preserve
  - Keeler State Game Area
- Private Property
  - Hartford Speedway
  - Paw Paw River – Access points near County Road 681 and 687 and near 59 ½ Street between Hartford and Lawrence (the public accesses the river at these points although the land is privately owned).
- School Property
  - Hartford High School
  - Hartford Middle School
  - Woodside Elementary School
  - Red Arrow Elementary School

*\*The City provides parking for the trailhead but does not maintain or exercise any control over the trail. The trail is maintained and operated by the Van Buren County Road Commission*

*\*\*The fairgrounds and museum are physically located within Hartford Township; however, control of the properties is maintained by Van Buren County.*

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<sup>20</sup> Anderson Economic Group – Preliminary Release. City of Hartford Community Assessment. Oct. 2002

**Barrier-Free Compliance Status and Unmet Needs**

The Hartford Community is committed to meeting the needs of all residents and visitors. This is evident in the attention given to projects that will enable easier and safer access to all recreational venues. The Community has also expressed a commitment to ensuring a more enjoyable experience for all those participating in recreational pursuits. To achieve this goal of barrier-free compliance and maximum enjoyment, the Community has established sidewalks and comfort stations (restrooms/drinking fountains) as a top priority for Ely Park. The MDNR Guidelines require that a barrier free ranking be given to each facility for assessing its accessibility to persons with disabilities. The assessment considers the accessibility of both the facilities themselves as well as the access routes to them. The following system, provided by the MDNR Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (1/27/2006) was used:

- 1 = none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 2 = some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 3 = most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
- 4 = the entire park meets accessibility guidelines
- 5 = the entire park was developed/renovated using the principals of universal design

Ely Park was ranked “2” with some of its facilities meeting accessibility guidelines. This rank is assigned on the basis of no physical impediments to park access but recognizing that as park amenities are added, the entire park can be brought into compliance with ADA-standards. The remaining recreational facilities in the area are not under the jurisdiction of either Hartford Township or the City of Hartford.

**Needs Assessment**

Following the public visioning session, meetings conducted with the steering committee, and a thorough analysis of all data collected previously and currently, the following needs were established for the Hartford Community.

**Current Acquisition Needs**

- Property for river access at two locations (At 59½ Street northwest of town and at CR 687)
- Site for park/playground in southwest corner of town



**Future Acquisition Needs**

- Site for community center
- Site for skate park
- Site for neighborhood park and playground

**Current Facility Needs**

- Ely Park Amenities: Restroom facilities, drinking fountains, lighting and sidewalks for enhanced pedestrian safety, playground
- Signage promoting use and location of: Van Buren Trail trailhead at Prospect Street, Paw Paw River Access Points, Ely Park, and Hartford Speedway
- Woodside School ball field improvements: Lighting, concessions, outdoor ice rink, soccer field, etc.

**Future Facility Needs**

- Ely Park: Enlarged and improved pavilion and playground
- Community Center
- Paw Paw River Access Points: Signage, restroom facilities, drinking fountains, parking, fish cleaning stations, dumpsters
- Sidewalk/Non-motorized use: Continuation from Beechwood Street to I-94, lighting, retention wall
- Park/playground: To be developed in southwest corner of City

**Barrier-Free Accessibility Needs**

Ely Park: Sidewalks, restroom facilities, drinking fountains, picnic site, pavilion ramp

**Summary**

In response to the demographic change of increasing numbers of senior citizens as related to recreational planning, the AARP conducted a nationwide study in August 2005 to better understand how baby boomers (ages 41-59) spend their travel and leisure time. Following are the top ten travel planning factors as compiled in this study. This information can be

useful when planning for recreational facilities and activities that may be more tourism related.

### **Top Ten Travel Planning Factors**

1. Beautiful scenic place
2. Very relaxing
3. Good weather/climate
4. No schedules to meet
5. Can see and do new things/have different experiences/meet new people
6. Good place for family/children
7. Environment is clean and unspoiled
8. Convenient to get to
9. Ability to gain knowledge of history or other cultures
10. Outdoor adventure

Regardless of the destination when preparing to *travel*, baby-boomers are looking for beautiful scenery, relaxation, good weather, and no pressure of schedules to meet. The study further reveals that baby-boomers typically partake in a number of *leisure activities* which may be either adventurous or experiential. Following are two top ten lists of activities that boomers have participated in over the past 12 months categorized into "adventurous" activities and "experiential" activities.<sup>21</sup>

### **Top 10 Experiential Activities**

1. Shopping
2. Fine dining
3. Touring scenic byways
4. Casino/riverboat gambling
5. Zoo
6. Gardens
7. Theater/drama
8. National parks touring
9. Festivals, nightclub/stage shows, major sports events
10. Health club/exercise facilities

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.aarp.org/research/family/travel/boomer\\_travel.html](http://www.aarp.org/research/family/travel/boomer_travel.html)

**Top 10 Adventure Activities**

1. Fresh or saltwater fishing
2. Escorted or guided tour
3. Biking
4. Hiking/backpacking/rock and mountain climbing
5. Camping (tent)
6. RV camping
7. Motorcycling
8. Horseback riding
9. Snorkeling
10. Whitewater rafting/kayaking

Of the Top 10 Adventure Activities listed above, the Hartford Community is able to provide parking and other amenities/supplies for users of the Van Buren Trail for biking, hiking, and horseback riding. There are also freshwater fishing opportunities along the Paw Paw River. The Hartford Community is committed to providing a variety of positive recreational experiences. The community is also committed to understanding and meeting the needs of its changing population. Among those needs are more opportunities for recreational and leisure activities. While these opportunities are important to all age groups, the increasing number of senior citizens encourages the community to look ahead and begin the development of projects that will enhance the accessibility, availability, and quality of recreation and leisure experiences.

Recognizing the area's beautiful natural resources and with a renewed interest in developing tourism the Hartford Community is looking to recreational facilities and experiences as one of many active steps taken to enrich the quality of life for all residents and visitors.

## **THE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **Plan Development Process**

The residents and municipal leaders of the City of Hartford and Hartford Township recognize the benefits of joint planning which include creating a shared vision, identifying common needs of City and Township residents, increased efficiency when providing recreational services, building on other cooperative and joint planning efforts, and linking the joint park, recreation, and open space plan with the joint master plan, capital improvement schedules, and other common goals of the community. Therefore, in the development phase of this plan, members of both municipalities served on the joint steering committee. This committee ensured that the recreational needs and desires of all community residents were addressed. Attention was also given to developing recreational facilities and venues that would attract visitors to the Hartford Community area.

A systems approach was used to develop this joint park, recreation, and open space plan. Previous community surveys and community assessments were studied and compared with current questionnaires and a public visioning workshop. The joint community steering committee participated in discussions related to this information and were instrumental in its analysis. The demographic characteristics of the community were also studied and played an integral part in the needs assessment portion of the plan. The Southwestern Michigan Commission participated in the development of the plan through research and analysis, preparation of maps, and in the conducting of the steering committee meetings and public input sessions.

After a thorough assessment of community needs and desires, the steering committee worked with the Southwestern Michigan Commission in the development phase of establishing community recreation goals, objectives, and action program.

## PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS

Recognizing the importance of developing a joint park, recreation, and open space plan endorsed by the members of the community, the City of Hartford and Hartford Township invited public participation in a number of ways.

### Steering Committee

The steering committee included representative members of each community, business leaders, planning commissioners, and the school district. The steering committee held, and attended, meetings at the City Hall and the Township Hall on the following dates<sup>22</sup>:

January 10, 2006	Hartford City Hall
January 25, 2006	Hartford City Hall (Joint Public Visioning)
January 31, 2006	Hartford City Hall
February 7, 2006	Hartford Township Hall
February 28, 2006	Hartford City Hall (Joint Public Comment)

### Public Invitations

Members of the general public were invited to a joint public visioning workshop held January 25, 2006 at Hartford City Hall<sup>23</sup>. Residents attending the visioning session were given a survey designed to assess and prioritize a variety of recreational opportunities. The purpose of the survey was twofold. The first objective was to establish an understanding of what could constitute a recreational activity. The second objective was to begin the thought process of prioritizing needs. Residents then participated in an exercise designed to express the positive points of the Hartford Community recreational opportunities, the improvements needed to existing facilities and programs, and to establish a vision of future recreational development.

Members of the general public were invited through an advertisement in the local newspaper to review and comment on the draft plan at several locations including Hartford City Hall, Hartford Township Hall, Hartford Public Library, and the school libraries.

<sup>22</sup> See Appendix for agendas

<sup>23</sup> See Appendix for announcement and results

Students at the High School and the Middle School were invited to review the plan through announcements and notices posted on bulletin boards. The plan was available from February 8, 2006 through March 8, 2006.<sup>24</sup>

To encourage regional planning cooperation and scope, copies of the draft plan were distributed for review to Van Buren County and Southwestern Michigan Commission as the regional planning agency.

An announcement was placed in the local newspaper inviting the public to a joint public meeting February 28, 2006 for the purpose of receiving public comments and suggestions regarding the joint park, recreation, and open space plan.<sup>25</sup> The meeting was well attended and a summary of comments received at that meeting and received throughout the 30-day comment period follows:

- *A letter was written and signed by several students requesting a skateboard park. The request indicated the student's willingness to work with community leaders to build the park and to keep hours consistent with other community facilities. Some of the students attended the public comment meeting and were invited to read the letter and engage in discussion.*
- *The Hartford High School student council distributed a survey/flyer requesting comments and ideas for recreational facilities and received the following suggestions from fellow students:*

Soccer Field	60	Indoor Basketball	7	Racquet Ball Courts	2
Skate Park	50	Bowling Alley	4	Pond with fish	1
Swimming Pool	32	Dance Club	3	Pool Hall	1
Roller Rink	13	Boxing Gym	3	Gardens	1
Kid's Playground	8	Golf Course	3		
Paintball Park	8	Bike trails	2		

- *Emphasis was given to the importance of the Ely Park restroom facility project.*
- *The need for signage and marketing of current facilities was mentioned as a priority.*
- *A youth/community center) was suggested to give kids an option other than Ely Park.*
- *Several requests were made for basketball tournaments.*

<sup>24</sup> See Appendix for announcement

<sup>25</sup> See Appendix for announcement

The public was invited to attend public hearings at the City Council meeting March 20, 2006 and the Township Board meeting March 9, 2006 to comment on the approval of the final plan.<sup>26</sup>

### **Public Surveys and Assessments**

A survey of the residents in the Hartford Community was conducted in 1999 for the purpose of determining residents' attitudes on a variety of subjects related to the community during the development of the Joint Community Master Plan. Eight of the sixty-eight questions were related to recreational opportunities and were taken into consideration throughout the development of this joint park, recreation, and open space plan. An overall analysis of the survey results showed respondents in favor of the community taking proactive measures to promote better growth and development through sound planning. A summary of the relevant responses follows:<sup>27</sup>

1. The environment is an important issue in the community  
*272 respondents strongly agreed and 11 disagreed*
2. The community should encourage the preservation of woodlands and wetlands  
*257 strongly agreed and 18 disagreed*
3. The area around the Paw Paw River should be preserved as a natural area  
*247 strongly agreed and 19 disagreed*
4. Existing recreational areas and facilities are adequate to serve community needs  
*72 strongly agreed and 112 disagreed*
5. The community should spend more money for recreation (indoor and outdoor) facilities  
*169 strongly agreed and 30 disagreed*
6. There are enough parks in the area  
*80 strongly agreed and 89 disagreed*
7. The community should develop a park on the Paw Paw River  
*148 strongly agreed and 58 disagreed*
8. How do you rate the current recreational facilities and programs  
*15 rated the programs as very good; 128 as average; 100 as poor*

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<sup>26</sup> See Appendix for announcement

<sup>27</sup> The "Final Analysis" of the Hartford Community Attitude Survey is available upon request.

In the 1999 Joint Community Master Plan, residents approved the following goal:

*“To provide and promote a variety of recreational opportunities within the community.”*

This goal included the following objectives:

- Build upon the City’s existing 1998 recreation plan to develop a community-wide plan
- Identify the recreational needs and desires of the community, including all groups of age, race, income, etc.
- Develop new or further develop culturally identifying events and festivals such as the Strawberry Festival
- Advertise local recreational facilities and events to raise public awareness

The Hartford Community Master Plan, approved in 1999, also indicates the community’s desire to support and complete the following tasks:

- Work with school system to develop athletic fields
- Install or improve sidewalks, lighting, restrooms, and other facilities at Ely Park.

This approved 1999 Master Plan and the survey results included were considered and became part of the planning process for this joint community recreation plan.



## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

After carefully considering the community's demographic and physical characteristics as well as all other information received through the planning and public input process, the following goals and objectives reflect the vision of the Hartford Community's future recreational facilities and programs.

1. Develop Ely Park through facility enhancements and make improvements for pedestrian safety and access for the disabled.
  - a. Provide amenities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, sidewalks, lighting, and a playground
  - b. Improve and enlarge the pavilion
  - c. Promote further use of art and cultural programs such as the outdoor concert series
  - d. Ensure barrier-free compliance with existing and new facilities
2. Encourage preservation of valuable water and land resources while promoting responsible recreational use.
  - a. Support the Paw Paw River Watershed Project
  - b. Support efforts to protect high quality natural areas
3. Preserve and protect sites and properties that have historic and cultural value and promote rehabilitation and enhancement where needed.
  - a. Work cooperatively with the local historic society's efforts
  - b. Further encourage cooperative efforts with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
4. Establish stable and secure funding for community recreation projects.
  - a. Develop Township and City budgets with recreation line items
  - b. Determine fund-raising strategies
  - c. Designate research group/committee to explore funding opportunities and conduct feasibility studies

5. Enhance the quality and availability of recreational opportunities for all age groups and abilities.
  - a. Increase availability of intergenerational activities/facilities
  - b. Continue and expand cooperation with the school district to improve athletic facilities used for community recreational purposes.
  - c. Continue to develop sport programs for all age groups
6. Promote recreational tourism by providing consistent signage (and other media methods) to encourage use of recreational facilities.
  - a. Place signs along Interstate I-94, Red Arrow Highway, and other major routes
  - b. Promote facilities such as the Paw Paw River, Van Buren Trail, Ely Park, and Hartford Speedway through the use of website(s) and printed materials
7. Build a community center as a means to provide year round recreation facilities to provide social interaction for all age groups as well as to provide revenue opportunities through the usage for private and/or public events.
  - a. Investigate location options and determine acquisition costs
  - b. Work to develop site and building plans
  - c. Determine budget
  - d. Plan and host fundraising events
8. Develop a non-motorized pathway along CR 687 from the downtown area to I-94 to provide safe, recreational access to downtown area parks and programs.
  - a. Continue existing sidewalk space from Beechwood south to I-94
  - b. Designate as non-motorized corridor
  - c. Consult County Road Commission for feasibility of using road easement
  - d. Provide access to Van Buren Trail through use of a non-motorized path through downtown Hartford
9. Promote a positive relationship with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians for the protection and enhancement of natural resource recreational areas.

10. Build a skate park.
  - a. Finalize design with input from high school students
  - b. Investigate location options - determine need for acquisition
  - c. Develop cost analysis
  - d. Investigate funding sources
  - e. Plan and hold fundraising events
  
11. Develop a neighborhood park with playground facilities in the southwest corner of the city.
  - a. Investigate cooperative options with property owners
  - b. Determine costs
  - c. Develop park plan with picnic area and playground equipment
  - d. Plan and hold fundraising events
  
12. Increase public access to the Paw Paw River
  - a. Investigate feasibility of using Van Buren County Road Commission property
  - b. Investigate property acquisition options

## ACTION PROGRAM

The table below outlines the Community Action Plan designed to prioritize the Community's recreation needs and to develop strategies to meet those needs.

Table 13

PROJECT	TIMELINE	COST ESTIMATES	FUNDING SOURCES
<b>Establish stable and secure funding for community recreation projects</b>	2006		City, Township, public donations, grants, community donations and fundraising
<b>Develop Promotional Materials</b>	2006		City and Township
Website		TBD	
Printed Materials		TBD	
<b>Ely Park</b>	2007		MDNR and City
ADA accessibility features		25,000	
Restrooms*		90,000	
Drinking Fountains*		2,000	
Sidewalk*		20,000	
Addition to Pavilion*		15,000	
Playground*		35,000	
Lighting		5,000	
Signage		1,000	
<b>Paw Paw River Access</b>	2006-2009		MDNR, City, Twp, and fundraising
Property Acquisition		250,000	
Restrooms*		40,000	
Parking for trailers/campsites		75,000	
Picnic*		15,000	
Drinking Fountains*		5,000	
Fish Cleaning Station*		15,000	
Signage		1,000	
<b>Community Center</b>	2007-2008		MDNR, City, Twp, fundraising
Property Acquisition		250,000	
Construction*		250,000	
<b>Non-Motorized Path to I-94</b>	2006-2008		MDOT Enhancement, VBRC**, City, fundraising
Development of existing sidewalk space*		50,000	
Completion of extension*		150,000	
<b>SW Neighborhood Park with Playground</b>	2009-2010		City, fundraising
Property Acquisition or Easement Agreement		30,000	
Playground Equipment and Picnic Tables - Construction/Development*		10,000	
<b>Van Buren Trail</b>	2006		City, Twp, VBRC**
Signage		1,000	

<b>Skate Park</b>	2008-2010		
Property Acquisition and Construction		25,000 - 60,000	Foundation grants, fundraising
<b>School Athletic Field</b>	2008-2010		
Soccer, Baseball, and Softball Field; Basketball and Tennis Courts; Concession Stand; Outdoor Ice Skating Rink, Restrooms		\$450,000	Hartford School District, City, Twp., community donations, fundraising

*\*Will incorporate barrier-free design*

*\*\* Van Buren County Road Commission*

## **APPENDIX**

**Meeting Agendas****AGENDA*****Steering Committee Meeting #1***

Joint park, recreation, and open space plan for the City of Hartford and Hartford Township

*January 10, 2006 4:30 p.m.*

*Hartford City Hall*

**Explain the process:**

- Collection and analysis of community information – writing of background information
- Three Steering Committee Meetings to plan procedures and to prepare goals and objectives – **SET DATES**
- One Public Visioning Session – **SET DATE**
- One Public Hearing to present final draft – **SET DATE** (Adequate notice in newspaper)
- Notification to surrounding jurisdictions and comment period
- Adoption by jurisdictions
- Letters of adoption received by DNR *prior to* April 1, 2006
- Eligibility to apply for DNR Recreation Grants April 1, 2006

**Outline and determine the values:**

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Compile the following:**

- Land Use Patterns
- Current Funding Sources
- Annual and Projected Budgets for Operations, Maintenance, and Capital Improvements
- Staff Description and Organizational Chart
- Roles of Commission(s) or Advisor Boards(s)
- Relationship(s) with Other Agencies
- Parks and Recreation Policies and Procedures
- Current Inventory
- Description of Community's Barrier-Free Compliance Status and Unmet Needs
- Capital Improvement Rationale
- Capital Improvement Action Program
- Capital Improvement Schedule
- Estimated Costs (by action/project and total by year)
- Year actions will be undertaken
- Priority of each action
- Map showing location of proposed actions/projects

## **AGENDA**

### **Steering Committee Meeting #2**

Joint park, recreation, and open space plan for City of Hartford and Hartford Township

*January 31, 2006 4:30 p.m.*

*Hartford City Hall*

*Confirm February 7 Steering Committee Meeting to be in Township Hall.*

*Ask school leaders to approach student council/government classes – invite them to view the plan and to submit comments.*

#### **1. IDENTIFY NEEDS**

Determining what recreational facilities should be provided in the future to most effectively satisfy needs is a critical element of a recreation plan. Planning for recreation projects requires some assurance that these facilities will be used. It is important to accurately predict and prioritize what recreational facilities will be popular now and in the future. Holding a public visioning session is one method used to garner ideas to develop these assessments; involving focus groups (aka steering committees) is another.

Current Acquisition Needs:

Future Acquisition Needs:

Current Facility Needs:

Future Facility Needs:

Barrier-Free Accessibility Needs

#### **2. ESTABLISH GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

Once needs are determined, the establishment of goals and objectives for providing recreational opportunities will create a framework from which decisions can be made on a daily basis. **Goals** represent a long-term ideal to be aimed for by the community in providing recreational opportunities. **Objectives** are the steps taken and the routes chosen to reach that goal. **Action Plans** outline a more precise framework of time with specific responsibilities given to specific entities. (These entities can be either jurisdictional or personal)

Following are some goals and objectives excerpted from other recreation plans to use as examples:

##### **A Goal with no Objectives**

Complete the integration and expansion of the bike path system to link existing and future neighborhoods, commercial and cultural destinations, parks, schools and regional parks and trails. *A really great idea but how would you know where and when to start?*

##### **A Goal with Objectives:**

Assure the availability of a quality recreational experience in the parks.



**Objectives:**

1. Assure accessibility in all existing and future recreational facilities for persons with special needs.
  - Update the playground, walks, parking and restroom at the Park to meet current ADA guidelines and requirements.
2. Provide adequate maintenance of all parks and recreational facilities.
3. Consider the long-term or on-going maintenance costs of all future park improvements to recreational facilities prior to making such improvements.
4. Develop Master Plans to guide the development or additions.
5. Explore the possibility of a dedicated maintenance fund for the care of special recreational facilities requiring special maintenance such as bike paths, perennial plantings, fountains, etc.

**3. DISCUSS DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTION PLAN**

Goals and Objectives only become effective when an Action Plan is also developed. The Action Plan may be most effective on specific projects with a specific timetable.

**A Goal with Objectives and Action Plan**

Assure communication to encourage public awareness and involvement in the recreation process and recreation resources.

**Objectives:**

1. Promote good public relations for recreational facilities through the media.
  - Use newsletter to identify what is happening, what's available, who to talk to, etc.
  - Use bike path route signage to highlight parks
  - Place park directional signage on main roads
  - Use local newspaper to highlight recreation news wherever possible
2. Develop brochures to explain available recreational facilities.
3. Identify projects that private individuals and organizations can undertake or fund.
4. Identify and promote areas or recreational planning that need citizen involvement.

**Action Plan:**

Use newsletter to identify what is happening, what's available, who to talk to, etc.

When	Who	What
Quarterly	City Administrative Assistant	Information received from Parks Committee

Use bike path route signage to highlight parks

When	Who	What
By given date	Road Commission	Combined funds to be used

## **AGENDA**

Steering Committee Meeting #3

Joint park, recreation, and open space plan for City of Hartford and Hartford Township

February 7, 2006 4:30 p.m.

Hartford Township Hall

- 1. Refine Goals and Objectives**
- 2. Complete Action Plan**
- 3. Determine locations for public comment on Draft Plan**
- 4. Determine methods of public notice and methods to receive comments and suggestions**

## **AGENDA**

### **JOINT PUBLIC VISIONING SESSION**

January 25, 2006 7:30 p.m.

Hartford City Hall

1. Welcome
2. Introduction of Steering Committee Members
3. Recreation Plan Overview
  - Benefits of having a recreation plan
  - The planning process
  - Anticipated outcome
4. General Recreation Facility and Program Assessment Exercise
5. Community Recreation Assessment and Vision

**Public Visioning Session Results****HARTFORD COMMUNITY RECREATION FACILITY/PROGRAM ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

Please put a checkmark in the column that most closely represents your opinion. Please feel free to add your own ideas on the back of this form.

Activity/Facility	Current Asset Perfect As Is	Improvements Needed to Current Asset	Asset Needed (Developed Soon)	Asset Needed (Far Future)	Completely Unnecessary
Playgrounds	1	7	6		
Ball fields	5	6	1		
Organized Sports	4	5	1	1	
Access to sport facilities (Unscheduled)	4	4	2	1	
Family-Oriented Sport Events	2	4	3	1	
Adult Sports		3	6	1	
Teen Sports	4	4	2		
Pre-Teen Sports	5	4	2		
Pre-School Age Sports	3	4	2	1	1
Skate Parks		2	4	3	3
Intergenerational Activities		3	2	4	
Music – indoor		2	1	5	
Music - outdoor	7	6			
Bike Routes	1	3	5	4	
Mountain Bike Trails	1	4	2	2	1
Organized Bike Tours/Events		2	1	5	
Outdoor Adventure		2	3	3	
Hiking Trails		7	4	2	
Public Swimming/Boating	1	3	4	3	2
Fitness/Nutrition Education			5	3	1
Fitness/Nutrition Activities		1	3	3	1
Work-out Courses (i.e. ropes/stations)		1	5	3	2
Walking Paths		4	5	2	
Health Clubs	1		1	5	1
Cultural Heritage	1		3	4	1
Historical Tourism	1	2	3	3	
Hunting	2	5	3	1	
Fishing		5	1	1	1
Birding	1	3	2	2	
Wildlife Viewing	1	2	4	1	
Nature Walks	1	4	5	2	
Nature Centers		1	5	3	2
Outdoor Education		2	3	3	1
Winter Sports		4	5	2	
Snowmobile Trails	4	5	2	2	
Ice Fishing	2	1	1	2	2
Cross-Country Skiing		4	6	1	
Elderly Accessible		2	7		
Elderly Focused Activities		3	5	1	
Disabled Accessible		3	5		
Central Website for activity schedule	3	4	5		
Pet Access	1	2	2	3	3
Comfort Stations (Water/Restrooms)		3	6	3	
Added in Picnic Area (not on form)		1			

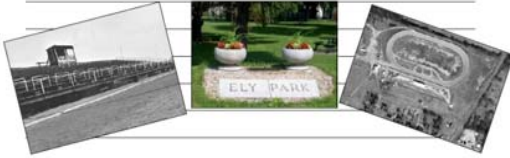
Three 36" x 46" posters were used to facilitate input from residents who attended the joint public visioning session. Comments were received and participants were asked to prioritize the suggestions by placing dots beside the items of greatest interest.

The results were tabulated and became part of the planning process to develop goals and objectives.

(Example of posters and result summaries follow)

### RECREATION IN HARTFORD

WHAT I LIKE ABOUT OUR  
RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS




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### RECREATION IN HARTFORD

IMPROVEMENTS I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE TO OUR  
RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS




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### RECREATION IN HARTFORD

RECREATION FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS I WOULD LIKE  
TO SEE DEVELOPED IN THE FUTURE




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<u>What I like</u>		<u>Improvements I would like to make</u>		<u>Future projects I would like to see</u>	
Ely Park	11	Ely Park (restrooms, aesthetics, disabled access, playground)	14	Restrooms in Ely Park	11
Concert in the Park Series	9	Pavilion Improvement	12	Playgrounds	9
Van Buren Trail	7	Non-motorized paths/sidewalks	8	Picnic Area/Pavilion (Ely Park)	7
Paw Paw River and Lakes	5	Improve river access points	7	Picnic area near river access	6
Library	5	Signage (Trails, water resources, snowmobile)	4	Community Center	5
VB Historical Museum	5	Pedestrian safety to Ely Park	4	Nature Trails	5
Sport Complex After Hours Availability	3	Little League Complex	4	Soccer program and facilities (nets/field)	5
Strawberry Festival	3	River clean-up (in river and along sides)	4	Carpool lot by I-94 (connected to sidewalk)	4
Fair Grounds	2	Fairground museum	3	Ice Skating Rink	3
Little League Program	2	Game Area Markers	2	Disabled Access to more facilities	3
Hunting	2			Swimming pool	2
High School Sport Facilities and Little League Complex	1			Dog park	2
Snowmobile Trail	1			Skate park	2
Speedway	1			Historic Home Designation	1
Horseback riding on trail	1			Snowmobile parking in town	1
Scouting Activities (boys and girls)	1			Red Arrow Elementary Playground Facilities	1
County Fair	1			Fish Cleaning Station	0
American Legion Programs	1			Campground Facilities	0
American Legion	0				
Rocket Football	0				

**Public Comment Meeting**

**JOINT PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING**

**City of Hartford and Hartford Township**

February 28, 2006 7:30 p.m.

Hartford City Hall

1. Welcome
2. Explanation of plan development and current status
3. Invitation for comments
4. Adjourn



**Public Notices**

Notice for joint community visioning session January 25, 2006.

Announcement was published in the Tri-City Record January 12, 2006

**PUBLIC NOTICE  
COMMUNITY  
VISIONING  
CITY OF  
HARTFORD/  
HARTFORD  
TOWNSHIP JOINT  
RECREATION PLAN**

ALL RESIDENTS OF THE CITY OF HARTFORD AND HARTFORD TOWNSHIP ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY VISIONING PROCESS TO DISCUSS RECREATION PLAN AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR COMMUNITY, ON JANUARY 25, 2006, AT HARTFORD CITY HALL AT 7:30 P.M.

JOIN US TO DISCUSS OUR RECREATIONAL NEEDS AND WANTS TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY A BETTER PLACE FOR OURSELVES AND OUR CHILDREN. MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO BE THERE AND LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

YEMI AKINWALE  
CITY MANAGER

(1/12/06-TCR)

Notice for 30-day comment period and joint public hearing February 28, 2006 to receive comments. Announcement was published in the Tri-City Record February 2, 2006

## Public Notices

### PUBLIC NOTICE CITY OF HARTFORD

Notice of Joint Public Hearing of the City of Hartford and Hartford Township on approval and adoption of the 2006-2011 Hartford Community Recreation Plan. The Draft Recreation Plan will be available for review at the Hartford Township Hall and Hartford City Hall from February 8, 2006-March 8, 2006, during regular business hours.

Date of Hearing: February 28, 2006  
Time of Hearing: 7:30 p.m.

Place of Hearing: Hartford City Hall, 19 W. Main Street, Hartford, MI.

This notice is posted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Public Act 267 of 1976, as amended, MCL41.72a(2) and (3), and the Americans With Disabilities Act. The Hartford Township Board will

provide necessary reasonable auxiliary aids and services, such as signers for the hearing impaired and audio tapes of printed materials being considered at the meeting, to individuals with disabilities at the meeting upon 5 days notice to the Hartford Township Board.

Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Hartford Township Board by writing or calling the following:

Julie Sweet, Clerk  
59238 66th Street  
Hartford, MI 49057  
(269) 621-3379  
(2/2/06-TCR)

The Tri-City Record is an  
publication for all area m  
To advertise, ca

City of Hartford – Notice of Public Hearing to adopt the plan March 20, 2006.

**CITY OF HARTFORD  
COUNTY OF VAN  
BUREN  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC  
HEARING**

**TO: ALL THE RESIDENTS OF  
The CITY OF HARTFORD.**

Please take notice that the City of Hartford Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing on March 20, 2006, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Commission Room at City Hall during the regular Workshop meeting to review and adopt the five (5) year Joint City and Hartford Township Recreation Plan 2006-2011.

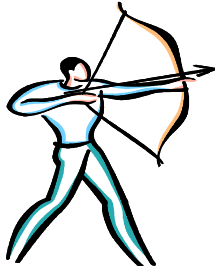
Everyone interested in making comments on the Plan will be allowed to do so.

RoxAnn Rodney-Isbrecht,  
City Clerk  
City of Hartford  
19 West Main Street  
Hartford, MI 49057  
269-621-2477  
269-621-2054 fax

Invitation distributed to schools for student comment on Draft Plan.



If you are:



A Student Council Member

A Government Class Student

An Athlete or Sports/Physical Fitness Enthusiast

A Musician or Music Lover

A Skier/Snowmobiler/Hiker/Fisherman/Hunter/Biker/Walker

OR

A Resident of the Hartford Community (under age 21) who cares about the park and recreation facilities

You are invited to submit your comments on the Draft Hartford Community Joint Recreation Plan. The Plan is available for review, during normal business hours, at Hartford Township Hall and Hartford City Hall. Please submit your comments in writing to:



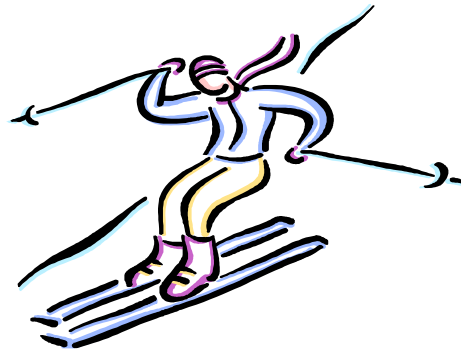
Shelley Klug

Southwestern Michigan Commission

185 East Main Street, Suite 701

Benton Harbor, MI 49022

[klugs@swmicomm.org](mailto:klugs@swmicomm.org)



General invitation for public comment—distributed throughout community.

## Hartford Recreational Facility Plan (City & Township)

Gov't Fiscal Years 2006-2010

Grant Requests are being written to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources for:



**YOUR IDEAS HERE >>**

- Ely Park bathrooms and sidewalks
- Paw Paw River access fix (East & North of town)
- Signs for parks, ballfields and attractions
- Ely Park pavilion expansion

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Invest your brainpower! Read and/or add to the plan at City or Township Hall through March 8<sup>th</sup>.** Or, email a request to [klugs@swmicomm.org](mailto:klugs@swmicomm.org).

**Present your ideas – February 28<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm, City Hall**

Thank you,  
Joint Committee on  
Recreation Facilities  
Master Plan

CITY  
Yemi Akinwale  
Ted Johnson  
Tim Kling  
Leo Lafas  
Joye Rathgeb  
Mark Scholten

TOWNSHIP  
Kenny Kent  
Robyn Larsen  
Tad Moody  
Scott Rumley  
  
Shelly Klug, SW MI Commission

## Ely Park Rules

# CITY OF HARTFORD

19 W. Main St  
Hartford, MI 49057  
Phone: 269-621-2477  
Fax: 269-621-2054  
cityclerk@hartfordmi.com



## **ELY PARK RULES**

**HOURS** – 10:00 P.M. – 6:00 A.M.

No person shall use or enter a park during hours when park is posted as being closed.

**ASSEMBLIES** – Clubs, organizations, associations or any specific groups

Any person, assembly or group expecting to attract more than 20 persons, desiring use of a park, shall make application with the City Manager.

All approvals shall require the user to clean up the area occupied after the affair is over, and all applications for use must give the name, address and phone number of person responsible for the cleanup.

Approval for use of the parks shall be granted by the City Manager if all the following conditions are satisfied:

- a. The City Manager finds that the park is large enough for the anticipated crowd;
- b. The purpose and proposed activity of the applicant will not disturb the peace of the persons in the area surrounding the park; and
- c. Reasonable provisions have been made for cleanup after the gathering.

**EXCLUSIVE USE PROHIBITED -**

Under no circumstances shall any group be granted exclusive use of the park and no permit-tee shall exclude the public from using the park. The granting of a permit does give priority to the group in the use of the shelter and electric at Ely Park.

**WILLFULLY ABUSING EQUIPMENT -**

No person shall mark, deface, disfigure, injure, displace or remove any table, bench, fireplace, railing, pavement, or other public utility, appurtenance, structure or City property in the park.



## Ely Park Rules (Continued)

### JOSTLING OR CROWDING –

No person shall jostle or crowd another in any public park, nor shall any person throw any ball or other object in such manner as to unreasonably annoy or endanger other persons in or on such park, nor shall any person engage in any rough or violent play therein.

### GARBAGE AND RUBBISH RECEPTACLES –

No person shall throw, place, deposit or leave any garbage, rubbish, glass, cans, containers, papers or other waste in any public park or playground, except in containers provided by the City for that purpose. Waste material, other than those resulting from use of the park, may not be deposited in park receptacles.

### WATER POLLUTION –

No person shall throw, discharge, or otherwise place in the water of any fountain, stream storm sewer or other body of water in or adjacent to any park; any substance, liquid or solid, which may result in water pollution or a creation of hazard to the health and safety of other persons.

### VEHICLES –

No person may drive, operate or park a vehicle within a park except upon a street, path, drive or parking area which is marked and designated for the use of vehicles. An exception is permitted for a single vehicle traveling at a slow rate of speed into the park for the purpose of unloading only items for use by a group that is using the park in accordance with the terms of this Ordinance.

**Letter to County Planning Department**



**SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COMMISSION**

185 East Main Street, Suite 701, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Phone: 269-925-1137 x 13 • Website: [www.swmicomm.org](http://www.swmicomm.org)

[klugs@swmicomm.org](mailto:klugs@swmicomm.org)



March 23, 2006

Kelly Getman-Dissette  
MSU Extension Educator  
Community Development  
226 E. Michigan Ave.  
Paw Paw, MI 49079

Dear Ms. Getman-Dissette:

Enclosed please find the final adopted Hartford Community Recreation Plan. This recreation plan is the result of combined efforts involving both the City of Hartford and Hartford Township.

After a public comment period of thirty (30) days, Hartford Township adopted the plan by resolution on March 9, 2006 and the City of Hartford adopted the plan by resolution on March 20, 2006.

The plan will now be submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Sincerely,

Shelley Klug  
Associate Planner  
Southwestern Michigan Commission



Letter to Regional Planning Agency



**SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN COMMISSION**

185 East Main Street, Suite 701, Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Phone: 269-925-1137 x 13 • Website: [www.swmicomm.org](http://www.swmicomm.org)

[klugs@swmicomm.org](mailto:klugs@swmicomm.org)



March 23, 2006

K. John Egelhaaf, Executive Director  
Southwestern Michigan Commission  
185 East Main Street, Suite 701  
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Dear Mr. Egelhaaf:

Enclosed please find the final adopted Hartford Community Recreation Plan. This recreation plan is the result of combined efforts involving both the City of Hartford and Hartford Township.

After a public comment period of thirty (30) days, Hartford Township adopted the plan by resolution on March 9, 2006 and the City of Hartford adopted the plan by resolution on March 20, 2006.

The plan will now be submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Sincerely,

Shelley Klug  
Associate Planner  
Southwestern Michigan Commission

### List of Endangered and Threatened Species

**State Status:** E = endangered, T = threatened, SC = special concern.

**Federal Status:** LE = listed endangered, LT = listed threatened, LELT = partly listed endangered and partly listed threatened, PDL = proposed delist, E(S/A) = endangered based on similarities/appearance, PS = partial status (federally listed in only part of its range), C = species being considered for federal status

#### **Michigan Natural Features Inventory Van Buren County**

Current as of 12/12/2005

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's Hawk		SC
<i>Acris crepitans blanchardi</i>	Blanchard's Cricket Frog		SC
<i>Adlumia fungosa</i>	Climbing Fumitory		SC
<i>Agrimonia rostellata</i>	Beaked Agrimony		SC
<i>Ambystoma opacum</i>	Marbled Salamander		T
<i>Amorpha canescens</i>	Leadplant		SC
<i>Aristida tuberculosa</i>	Beach Three-awned Grass		T
<i>Aristolochia serpentaria</i>	Virginia Snakeroot		T
<i>Asclepias purpurascens</i>	Purple Milkweed		SC
<i>Baptisia lactea</i>	White or Prairie False Indigo		SC
<i>Bartonia paniculata</i>	Panicled Screw-stem		T
<i>Berula erecta</i>	Cut-leaved Water-parsnip		T
<i>Besseyia bullii</i>	Kitten-tails		T
Bog			
<i>Cacalia plantaginea</i>	Prairie Indian-plantain		SC
<i>Carex lupuliformis</i>	False Hop Sedge		T
<i>Carex platyphylla</i>	Broad-leaved Sedge		T
<i>Carex seorsa</i>	Sedge		T
<i>Cirsium hillii</i>	Hill's Thistle		SC
<i>Cirsium pitcheri</i>	Pitcher's Thistle	LT	T
<i>Clemmys guttata</i>	Spotted Turtle		T
<i>Clonophis kirtlandii</i>	Kirtland's Snake		E
Coastal plain marsh	Infertile Pond/marsh, Great Lakes Type		
<i>Coreopsis palmata</i>	Prairie Coreopsis		T
<i>Cyperus flavescens</i>	Yellow Nut-grass		SC
<i>Cypripedium candidum</i>	White Lady-slipper		T
<i>Dalea purpurea</i>	Purple Prairie-clover		X
<i>Dendroica cerulea</i>	Cerulean Warbler		SC
<i>Dendroica discolor</i>	Prairie Warbler		E
<i>Dryopteris celsa</i>	Log Fern		T
<i>Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta</i>	Black Rat Snake		SC
<i>Eleocharis equisetoides</i>	Horsetail Spike-rush		SC
<i>Eleocharis melanocarpa</i>	Black-fruited Spike-rush		SC
<i>Emys blandingii</i>	Blanding's Turtle		SC
<i>Eryngium yuccifolium</i>	Rattlesnake-master		T
<i>Filipendula rubra</i>	Queen-of-the-prairie		T
<i>Fuirena squarrosa</i>	Umbrella-grass		T
<i>Galearis spectabilis</i>	Showy Orchis		T
Great Blue Heron Rookery	Great Blue Heron Rookery		
<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>	Kentucky Coffee-tree		SC
<i>Hemicarpha micrantha</i>	Dwarf-bulrush		SC
<i>Hibiscus moscheutos</i>	Swamp Rose-mallow		SC
<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	Goldenseal		T
<i>Hypericum gentianoides</i>	Gentian-leaved St. John's-wort		SC
<i>Isotria verticillata</i>	Whorled Pogonia		T
<i>Juncus scirpoides</i>	Scirpus-like Rush		T
<i>Kuhnia eupatorioides</i>	False Boneset		SC

Lemna valdiviana	Pale Duckweed		X
Lepisosteus oculatus	Spotted Gar		SC
Lepyronia angulifera	Angular Spittlebug		SC
Lepyronia gibbosa	Great Plains Spittlebug		T
Linum virginianum	Virginia Flax		T
Liparis liliifolia	Purple Twayblade		SC
Ludwigia alternifolia	Seedbox		SC
Ludwigia sphaerocarpa	Globe-fruited Seedbox		T
Lycopodium appressum	Northern Prostrate Clubmoss		SC
Lysimachia hybrida	Swamp Candles		SC
mesic sand prairie	Moist Sand Prairie, Midwest Type		
Mesic southern forest	Rich Forest, Central Midwest Type		
Microtus ochrogaster	Prairie Vole		E
Neonympha mitchellii mitchellii	Mitchell's Satyr	LE	E
Notropis anogenus	Pugnose Shiner		SC
Oak barrens	Barrens, Central Midwest Type		
Panax quinquefolius	Ginseng		T
Panicum leibergii	Leiberg's Panic-grass		T
Panicum verrucosum	Warty Panic-grass		T
Platanthera ciliaris	Orange or Yellow Fringed Orchid		T
Polemonium reptans	Jacob's Ladder or Greek-valerian		T
Polygala cruciata	Cross-leaved Milkwort		SC
Polygonum careyi	Carey's Smartweed		T
Pomatiopsis cincinnatiensis	Brown Walker		SC
Populus heterophylla	Swamp or Black Cottonwood		E
Potamogeton bicupulatus	Waterthread Pondweed		T
Prairie fen	Alkaline Shrub/herb Fen, Midwest Type		
Protonotaria citrea	Prothonotary Warbler		SC
Psilocarya scirpoides	Bald-rush		T
Pycnanthemum verticillatum	Whorled Mountain-mint		SC
Rallus elegans	King Rail		E
Rhexia virginica	Meadow-beauty		SC
Rhynchospora macrostachya	Tall Beak-rush		SC
Rotala ramosior	Tooth-cup		SC
Sabatia angularis	Rose-pink		T
Scleria pauciflora	Few-flowered Nut-rush		E
Scleria reticularis	Netted Nut-rush		T
Silphium integrifolium	Rosinweed		T
Sistrurus catenatus catenatus	Eastern Massasauga	C	SC
Southern floodplain forest			
Sporobolus heterolepis	Prairie Dropseed		SC
Stellaria crassifolia	Fleshy Stitchwort		T
Strophostyles helvula	Trailing Wild Bean		SC
Terrapene carolina carolina	Eastern Box Turtle		SC
Trichostema dichotomum	Bastard Pennyroyal		T
Trillium sessile	Toadshade		T
Triphora trianthophora	Three-birds Orchid		T
Triplasis purpurea	Sand Grass		SC
Valeriana edulis var. ciliata	Edible Valerian		T
Viburnum prunifolium	Black Haw		SC
Wet-mesic prairie	Tallgrass Prairie, Central Midwest Type		
Wilsonia citrina	Hooded Warbler		SC
Woodwardia areolata	Netted Chain-fern		X

**Resolutions of Adoption**

**Minutes**

**Plan Certification Checklists**

The documents listed above are on file.