

# City of New Buffalo

## Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan

2012 - 2017



# **CITY OF NEW BUFFALO**

## **COMMUNITY PARK, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND GREENWAY PLAN**

**2012 - 2017**

**Thank you to the following for input during the planning process.**

### **City Boards and Committees**

New Buffalo City Council  
Park and Recreation Board  
Harbor Commission  
Planning Commission  
Master Plan Steering Committee  
City staff

### **Governmental Partners**

New Buffalo Township  
Village of Grand Beach  
Village of Michiana  
Chikaming Township  
Three Oaks Township  
Village of Three Oaks  
Berrien County  
New Buffalo Area Schools  
Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians  
Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Army Corps of Engineers

### **Community Partners**

Harbor Country Chamber of Commerce  
Harbor Country Convention & Visitors Bureau  
New Buffalo Business Association  
Chikaming Open Lands  
Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy



**This plan was prepared with assistance from the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission - [www.swmpc.org](http://www.swmpc.org).**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
1. Jurisdiction and Purpose of the Plan .....	1
2. Physical Characteristics .....	2
3. Population and Social Characteristics.....	9
<b>B. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE.....</b>	<b>10</b>
1. City Council, Advisory Boards and Commissions .....	10
2. Staff.....	11
3. Budget and Sources of Funding.....	12
4. Volunteers .....	15
5. Relationships with Other Agencies.....	15
<b>C. RECREATION AND RESOURCE INVENTORY .....</b>	<b>16</b>
1. New Buffalo and Area Recreation Facilities Inventory.....	16
2. Non-Motorized Road and Trail Inventory .....	28
3. Water Trail Inventory .....	33
4. Open Space and Greenway Inventory.....	34
5. Recreation Programs, Events and Activities.....	36
6. City of New Buffalo Parks and Recreation Grants .....	39
<b>D. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS.....</b>	<b>40</b>
1. Statement of Public Representation .....	40
2. On-Line Survey.....	40
3. Public Workshops .....	45
4. Steering Committee Meetings.....	47
5. Public Hearing/Public Review .....	47
<b>E. MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>F. ACTION PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>50</b>
1. Rationale .....	50
2. Recreation Priorities.....	50
3. Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS).....	55
<b>G. APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>57</b>
1. Population and Social Characteristics.....	57
2. Notice of Plan Availability for Public Review and Public Hearing .....	64
3. Copy of Legal Notice of Public Comment Period and Public Hearing .....	65
4. Minutes from the Public Hearing.....	66
5. Resolution Approving the Plan.....	67
6. Letters of Transmittal.....	68
7. DNR Letter of Acceptance.....	70

## A. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

### 1. *Jurisdiction and Purpose of the Plan*

This Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to encompass all parks and recreation within the City limits. The City of New Buffalo has undertaken this Parks and Recreation Master Plan in an effort to:

- Maintain an updated Parks and Recreation Plan to guide investment in parks and recreation;
- Assess present community and area recreational facilities and programs;
- Establish a course of action for park improvements for the next five years;
- Solicit public input and response regarding parks and recreation in New Buffalo;
- Identify priority parks and recreation improvements and acquisitions; and
- Identify potential sources of funding to satisfy the goals of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the needs of residents and visitors.

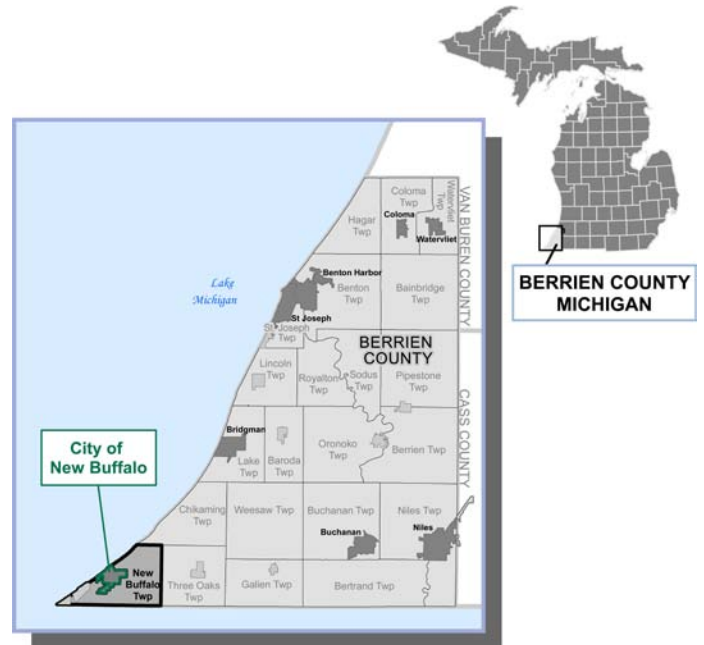


**New Buffalo Harbor – Easterly side, facing north (image courtesy DNR).**

## 2. *Physical Characteristics*

### a. *Location*

The City of New Buffalo is located in Berrien County, in the southwest corner of the State of Michigan. The City is bordered by Lake Michigan to the west, and is surrounded on three sides by New Buffalo Township. From the Chicago area, New Buffalo is just over an hour away while from South Bend the City is only a 30-minute drive. Likewise, large communities in Michigan such as St. Joseph, Benton Harbor, and Kalamazoo are less than 45 minutes away. The City is approximately two miles from the Indiana State Line.



The City of New Buffalo has an unusually important position in the State of Michigan. Often referred to as the "Gateway to Michigan", New Buffalo is the first city visitors encounter in the state as they travel from the west on I-94 or US-12. In recognition of this important gateway, the Michigan Department of Transportation constructed its first Visitors Center here. The Visitors Center is now a State Historic Landmark.

The City of New Buffalo not only serves as one of the first locations to welcome visitors who pass through the community to reach other destinations in Michigan. Its proximity to large population centers, along with its natural features such as Lake Michigan and the Galien River, attract a large number of tourists and summer residents.





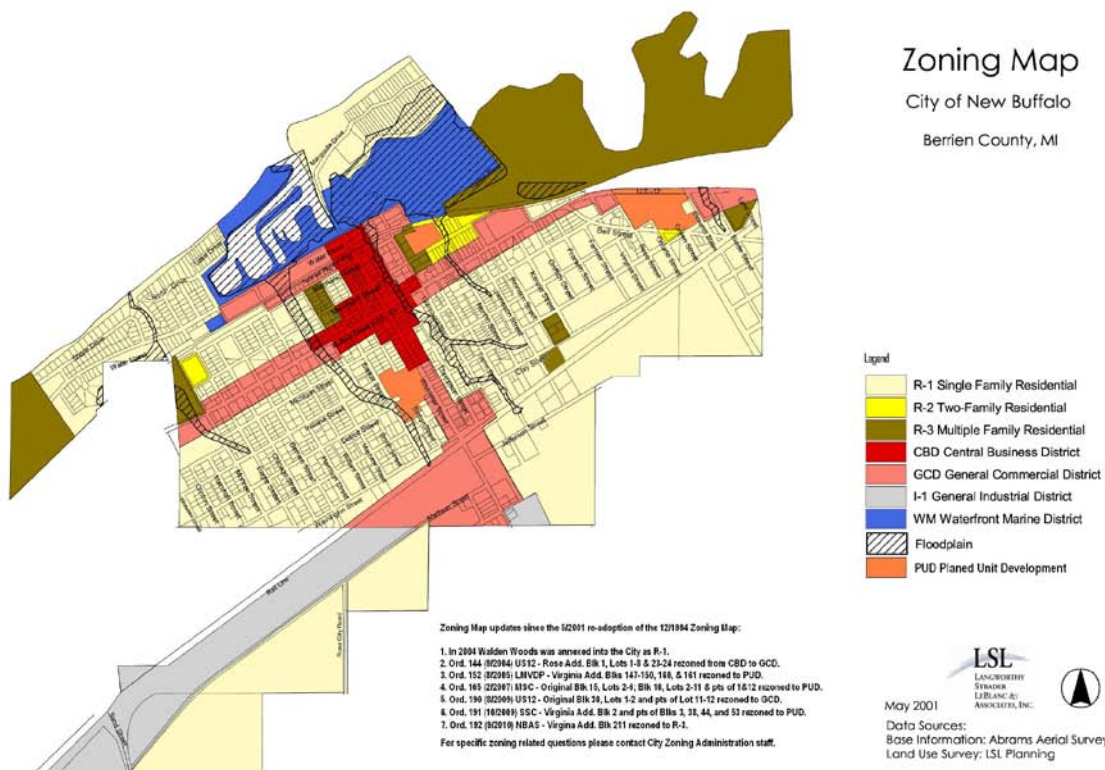
*b. Land Use Patterns*

New Buffalo's location and its natural features have contributed to the way in which the City evolved. Many homes in the City are in locations that are best suited to take advantage of the natural views and settings offered by this important lakeshore community. A majority of the commercial development, on the other hand, has occurred on major transportation routes.

The physical form of the City is largely a reflection of its lakeside location, its orientation to the Galien River, and the major transportation routes such as US-12, Red Arrow Highway, and the rail lines that connect the community to the larger constellation of cities along the I-94 corridor. New Buffalo's layout follows the traditional grid pattern of most Midwestern cities and towns developed during the mid-1800s. The grid, which is bisected by US-12, is oriented to the lakeshore and consists of condominium development on the lakeshore, modestly scaled residential neighborhoods and a traditional commercial downtown. While the city is predominantly residential, commercial development is found in the Central Business District, the US-12 corridor, and on Whittaker Street as it leads from one of two interchanges of I-94 which serve the City.

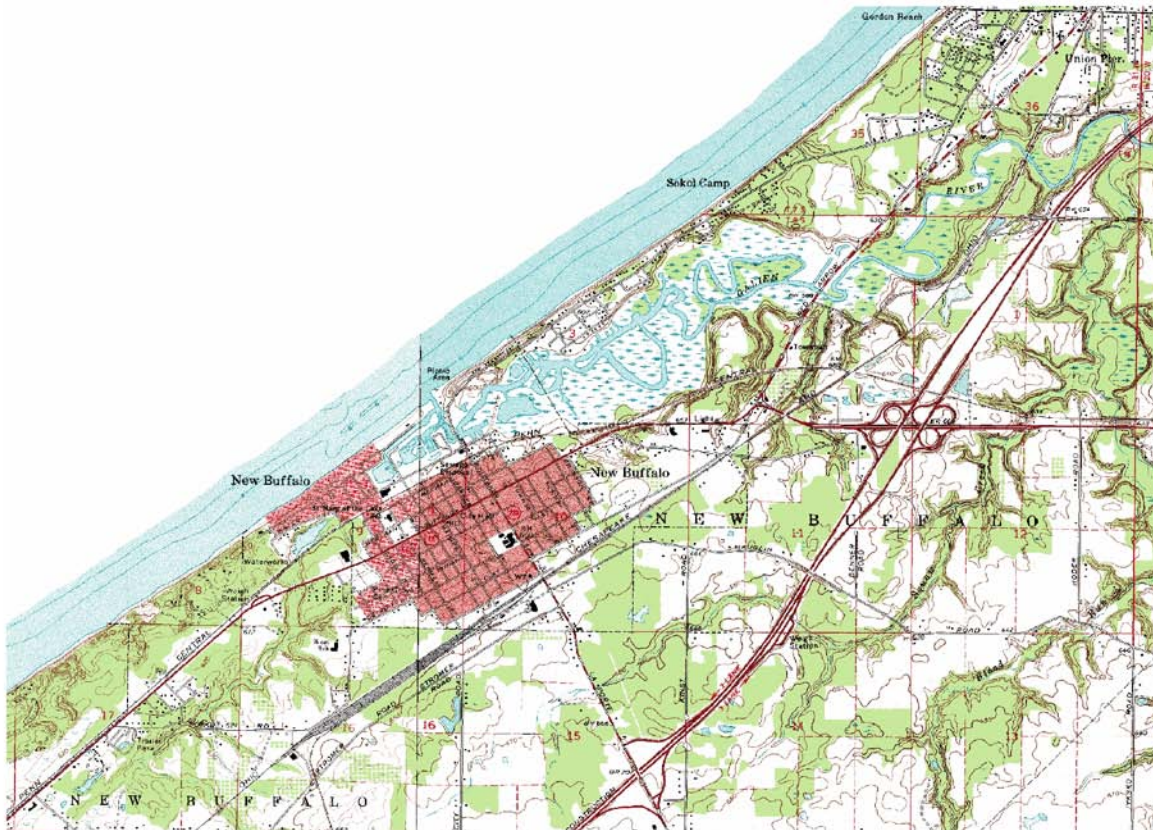
*c. Zoning*

The City of New Buffalo rewrote its Zoning Ordinance in 2003; however, its Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance, and Zoning Map are currently being updated, per requirements in the State of Michigan's Planning Enabling Act. Most of the City's recreational facilities are located within the R-1 District. In February 2008 Ordinance 175 took effect which made parks and recreation a use permitted by right in all zoning districts.



d. Topography

The topography of New Buffalo and its immediate environs can be generally divided into two areas, one located to the west of US-12, and the other to the east of US-12. To the west of US-12, the presence of sand dunes, including high-risk erosion areas, contribute to a steeply rolling topography. In combination with this, low-lying wetland areas and numerous creek ravines are found along the Galien River floodplain. On the eastern side of the highway, the topography is generally flat with poorly drained soils. Some topographical relief does exist, however, along the water courses in the area.



**Topographical Map of New Buffalo Area**

e. Soils

The soils of New Buffalo and its surroundings were created as a result of glaciers; therefore, soil types vary widely in texture, drainage, slope, and other characteristics. However, using the generalized soils map from the Soil Conservation Service, several observations can be made about soils in and around the City. First, areas consisting of steep slopes, sand (dunes), and well-drained soils are found along the lakeshore. Secondly, those areas along the Galien River and major transportation routes tend to be level, but the soils vary in their complexity, ranging from floodplain areas to sandy ridges.

*f. Historic Resources*

Berrien County and New Buffalo have a rich cultural history that predates early European settlement. Historians believe that as the glaciers receded, hunters followed the animals into the area. In addition, New Buffalo's location at the base of Lake Michigan and at the mouth of the Galien River also served as an important trading area for Native Americans.

More recently, the pioneer history of the community dates back to the end of the seventeenth century when early French missionaries and explorers first settled the area. In November 1679, the French explorer LaSalle discovered the Galien River. The fur trade in the early 1700's was followed by more permanent agricultural based settlements. As development continued in the community, its residents began to learn more about the rich history of the area.



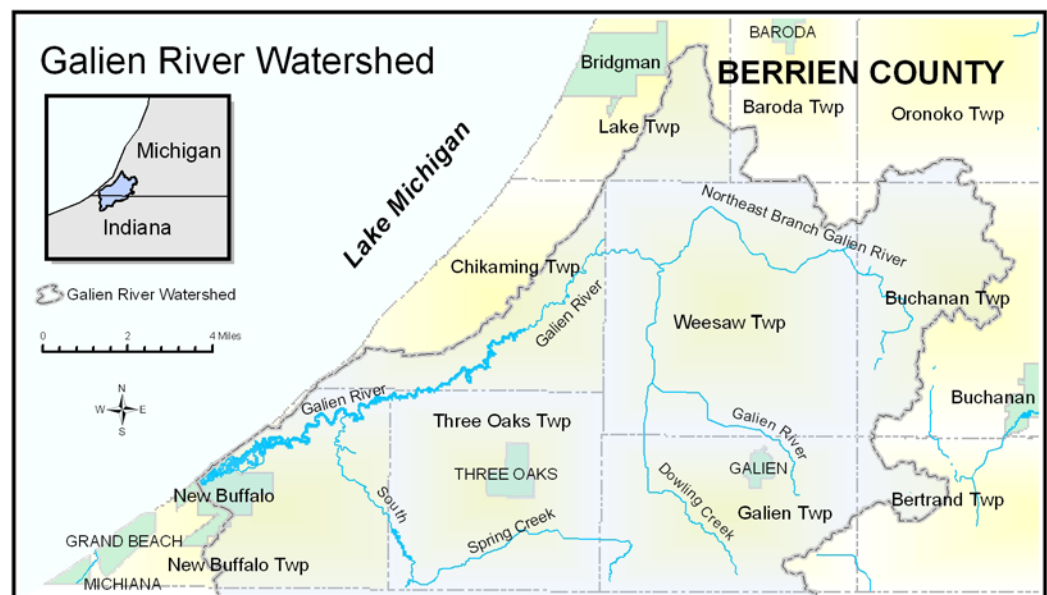
Two registered historic sites exist within or near the City. These are the Saint John German Lutheran Evangelical Church (pictured), and the Tourist Lodge Informational Center on I-94.

*g. Water Resources*

The following water resources are located within the City of New Buffalo:

**Lake Michigan.** The presence of Lake Michigan on the northwestern side of the City is an obvious water resource within the community and the entire State. The City Beach provides the primary public access point to the shoreline within the City. There are also several road end access points in New Buffalo and Chikaming Townships.

**Galien River.** The Galien River and its large, wooded flood-plain provides natural areas and important wildlife habitat. The river parallels the Lake Michigan shoreline in the eastern half of the





community before emptying into Lake Michigan near the City Beach. The river basin or watershed consists of a main branch and a southern branch. The Galien River Watershed is 112, 222 acres in size, with 82,665 acres in Michigan. Approximately 16,635 people live in Michigan's portion of the Galien River Watershed. A watershed does not respect state, county, township, village or city boundaries. Through the efforts of the Galien River Watershed Project, there is a recognition that watershed communities must work together to improve and protect water resources.

A watershed is an area of land that drains to common body of water. Part of Chikaming Township is within the Galien River Watershed. All land in the township drains to Lake Michigan. **Water quality protection needs to happen at the site level, municipal level and watershed level to be effective.**

The communities in the Galien River Watershed have expressed concerns about water quality and the impacts on public safety, wildlife habitats, and financial livelihoods. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) has included several reaches in the watershed on the Clean Water Act, Section 303(d) list for not meeting water quality standards. In consequence, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process was initiated. The identified pollutants that are impairing those waters include sediment, nutrients, and bacteria. The Galien River Watershed Management Plan identifies the causes and sources of the pollutants and recommends actions to improve water quality.

Further, the water quality of the ground and surface waters is being threatened by growth and development that does not limit impacts on these water resources. If not planned carefully, growth and development will cause water currently reaching the river through groundwater to be redirected and reach the river through overland flow via runoff from impervious surfaces. This threatens to change the watershed's flow regime - creating flashy streams and rivers with high flows after storm events. The increased runoff will also increase stream bank erosion and result in more pollutants (sediment, nutrients, etc.) reaching surface waters.

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) is providing grant funds to

Water quality protection is not just about public health and wildlife habitat, it's about money and the economy. Our high quality river systems are a crucial component of maintaining Michigan's \$1.5 billion a year fishing industry. In southwest Michigan, the local economy depends greatly on the water quality of Lake Michigan and the tourism it generates. For example, beach closings due to bacteria contamination can greatly hamper a local tourist dependant economy.

The Conservation Fund and Chikaming Open Lands to preserve and improve the water quality of the Galien River Watershed. Some of these grant funds will specifically be used to provide tools and planning assistance to local units of government within the watershed and to purchase conservation easements in the watershed. For more information on the Galien River Watershed refer to the "Galien River Watershed Management Plan" which can be found at [www.swmpc.org/grw.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/grw.asp).

**Wetlands.** Over 60% of the wetlands in the Galien River Watershed have been lost since pre-settlement times. Remaining wetland areas provide invaluable functions such as flood protection, pollutant removal and wildlife habitat. The Department of Natural Resources has identified the Galien River Marsh (located just upstream from where the Galien River enters Lake Michigan) as being one of the best fresh water estuaries in the State of Michigan. There are at least fifteen (15) different types of Threatened or Special Concern plants located within this wetland. In addition, large marsh and wooded wetland areas provide sanctuary for migrating

waterfowl such as the American Wigeon, Shoveler, Gadwall, Bufflehead, Goldeneye, Green-Winged Teal and many others.

*h. Vegetation, Wildlife and Fish*

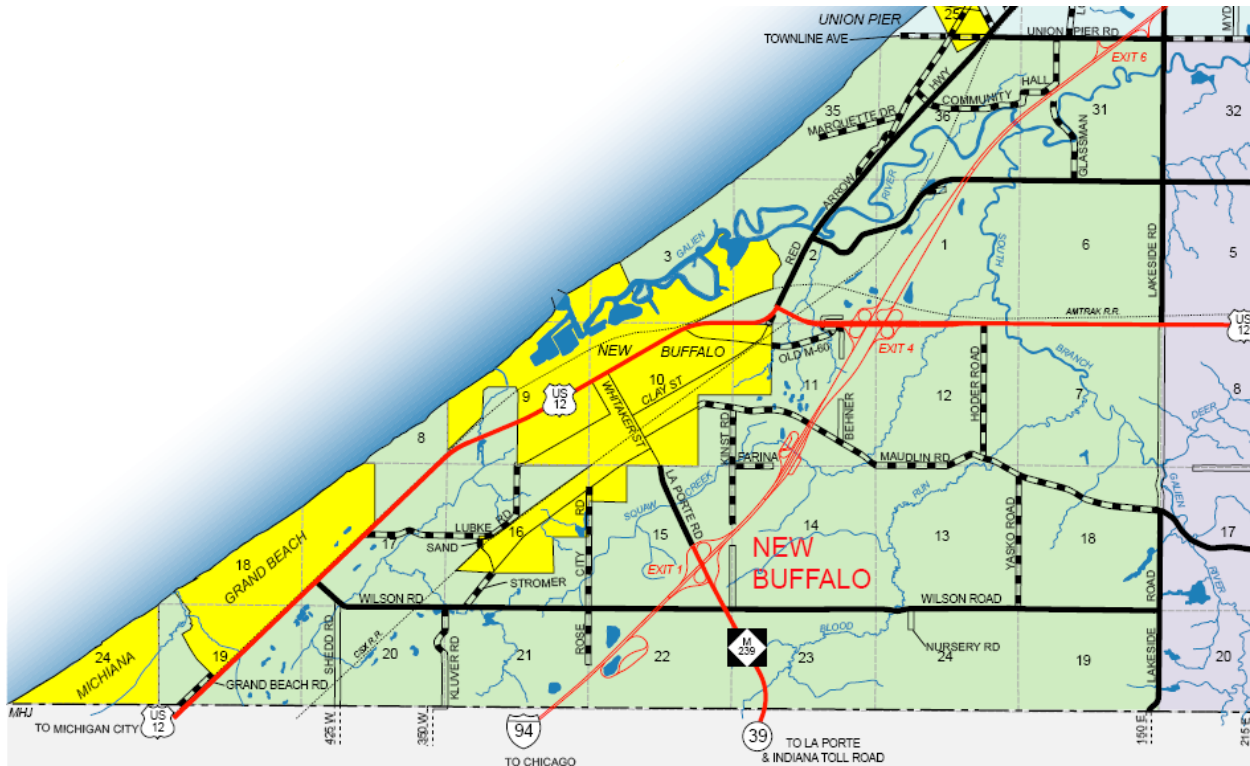
The wealth and diversity of natural resources found within New Buffalo and the surrounding area provides an excellent environment for recreation. There are a number of unique ecosystems found within the community that are seldom found in combination elsewhere in the world. The dune ecology found along Lake Michigan, combined with the high quality wetlands alongside the Galien River, further contribute to the diverse ecology in the New Buffalo area.

The varied landscape of the region, in turn, supports a broad range of plant and animal species. In addition, the strategic location of the community is not only important to people, but to migratory birds as well. New Buffalo is located in three different migratory fly-ways. The varied habitats of the area provide ideal settings for birds; the community is a popular destination for avid bird watchers. However, the area is also attractive to geese, which have caused some problems along public walkways near the harbor and lakefront. The City is pursuing solutions to the proliferation of geese.

Finally, the estuary of the Galien River and its tributaries serve as important resources to Lake Michigan and the recreational and charter fishing industries of the area. The River and its tributaries provide an ideal setting as a hatchery for a variety of fresh water fish species and provide fishing opportunities during the fall spawning season for salmon and steelhead.

*i. Transportation*

The City's proximity to the Illinois and Indiana state borders has promoted the creation of several significant transportation routes that serve the community. Foremost among these is I-94, whose Chicago-Detroit leg passes by the western edge of the City. US-12 slices through the heart of New Buffalo and serves as the community's primary commercial spine outside of downtown.



Interstate 94 serves as the primary transportation route from the central and western United States to Michigan, making it one of the most important routes through the State. This six-lane expressway has three interchange locations in the New Buffalo vicinity: at La Porte Road (M-239, which becomes Whittaker Street within the city limits), US-12, and at Union Pier. As mentioned earlier, New Buffalo is indeed the "Gateway to Michigan" and has the ability to draw from a much broader population base than many other communities its size.

The CSX Railroad Line and an Amtrak route pass directly through the City. In 2009, the New Buffalo Amtrak station was relocated from the CSX line to the Amtrak owned (Wolverine/Blue Water) line. The new Amtrak station is located downtown at 225 North Whittaker Street and services Amtrak's Wolverine Line (Pontiac - Detroit - Chicago) and Blue Water Line (Port Huron - East Lansing - Chicago). The Amtrak Station Code is "NBU".

The City of New Buffalo has a Transient Marina with thirty (30) available boat slips providing mooring space for boaters. A designated Michigan Recreational Harbor located at the mouth of the Galien River is also available to boaters.

Commercial airline flights are available at the South Bend Municipal Airport, which is 35 miles from New Buffalo, or either of Chicago's major airports, O'Hare or Midway, which are located 90 miles and 55 miles, respectively, from the City. Local service is available at Ross Air Field in Benton Harbor or the Michigan City Municipal Airport, which offers landing facilities for private aircraft.

Non-motorized pathways, such as the Kal-Haven Trail located to the north of New Buffalo have increased in popularity and desirability in recent years. A non-motorized pathway has been proposed to connect South Bend to Benton Harbor, and eventually to the Kal-Haven Trail. For

more information on local non-motorized facilities and plans, see the Inventory section of this plan.

*j. Climate*

Lake Michigan moderates the area's climate, which has an average temperature of 27 degrees Fahrenheit in the winter, with an average daily minimum temperature of 20 degrees. In the summer, the average temperature is 70 degrees F, and an average daily maximum temperature of 81 degrees. The growing season is 184 days, with an average annual rainfall of 36 inches. Average seasonal snowfall is 67 inches. New Buffalo's climate is conducive to year-round recreational activities, however, varying winter temperatures and levels of precipitation can affect winter-related activities.

**3. *Population and Social Characteristics***

The construction of second houses designed for year-round use, as well as the influx of summer residents to New Buffalo and adjacent communities, has led to a number of changes in the social and economic profile of southwestern Michigan. At first glance, the population of the community appears to be declining. The U.S. Census and Michigan Department of Management and Budget both base population numbers upon the number of year-round residents, not summer residents and second home owners.

A detailed breakdown of population and social characteristics affecting New Buffalo, including population, age and gender, household characteristics, and housing types, is listed in the Appendix. Several of the social and demographic characteristics are referred to within this Plan as they relate to the goals and objectives of the Plan.



## B. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

### 1. *City Council, Advisory Boards and Commissions*

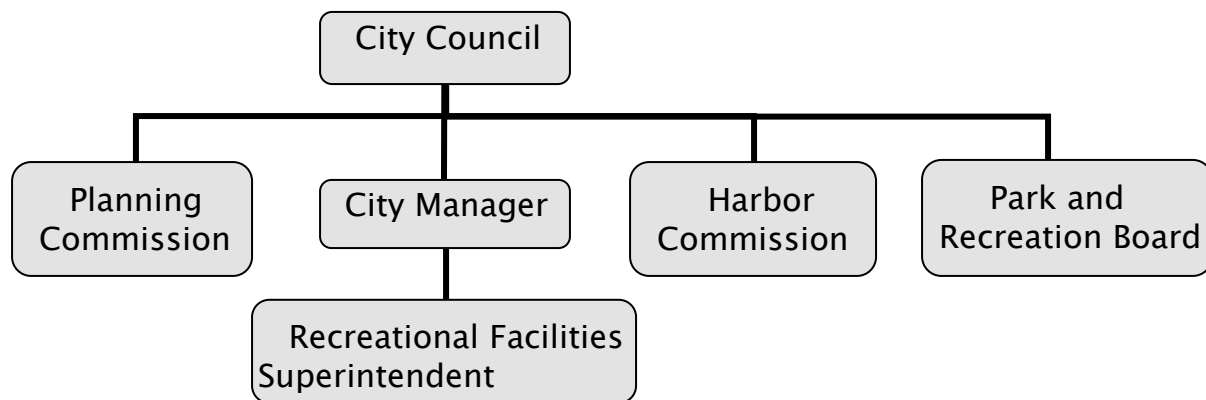
The City Council is responsible for approving the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan and decides the parks and recreation budget and policies, with the assistance of three bodies:

The Park and Recreation Board advises the City Council on matters concerning the City's parks and recreational opportunities. They make recommendations to the City Council for improving, planning, and developing outdoor and indoor recreational, educational and social facilities and programs for the community.

The Recreational Facilities Department provides for the operation and maintenance of City owned or controlled parks, recreational facilities, and other facilities as assigned by the City Manager, to enable the public to enjoy recreational amenities and opportunities, while striving to enhance those facilities.

The Planning Commission approves long range land use policies for the City, including the Master Plan, and advises the City Council on planning and zoning related issues.

The Harbor Commission advises the City Council on matters related to harbor access and facilities, and acts as the agency responsible for seeking grant funding for harbor improvements.



## 2. *Staff*

Under the direction of the City Council, the City Manager and the Recreational Facilities Superintendent administer all matters concerning City recreational facilities. The City of New Buffalo maintains eight parks, with the Skate Park being jointly managed with New Buffalo Township and New Buffalo Area Schools. The Recreational Facilities Department is also responsible for the City's Amtrak Station.

Construction projects are authorized by the City Council, and overseen by the City Manager and Recreational Facilities Superintendent. All construction projects are completed by private contractors under direction from, and under contract with, the City. The City does not administer any recreation programs (more on this below).

Besides the full-time Recreational Facilities Superintendent, parks and recreation staff consists primarily of seasonal, part-time employees. During the summer months, individuals are hired as lifeguards, rangers, attendants, and maintenance laborers. Seasonal employees of the City's Recreational Facilities Department perform maintenance of the soccer fields and ball diamonds at Oselka Park. The pavilion at Lions Park can be reserved. See the City's website for information <http://www.cityofnewbuffalo.org/lionspark.asp>.

### 3. *Budget and Sources of Funding*

Funds for park construction and maintenance are approved by the City Council on an annual basis. Although General Fund monies are frequently used to supplement park revenues, beach parking, boat launching fees and mooring fees at the Transient Marina primarily fund the park system.

#### a. *Parks Department and Parks Improvement Fund Budgets*

<b>PARK OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE FUND</b>	<b>FY 2010-11 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2011-12 Projected</b>	<b>FY 2012-13 Budget</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
City Transient Marina fees	38,423	42,000	42,000
City Boat Launch fees - non-commercial	38,393	40,000	40,000
City Boat Launch fees - commercial	24,493	22,000	40,000
City Beach concession	7,000	6,000	7,000
City Beach parking fees	138,891	180,000	180,000
Dog park memberships & donations	1,349	2,700	1,200
Miscellaneous	21,901	2,625	2,620
Transfer from General Fund	115,000	0	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>385,450</b>	<b>295,325</b>	<b>312,820</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Salaries & fringe/ retirement	217,783	161,689	202,813
Supplies	18,413	17,250	16,400
Prof. fees/ contractual	16,707	12,000	9,600
Insurance	18,433	18,475	14,225
Utilities, gas & oil	27,214	23,580	23,000
Repairs & maintenance	21,077	16,000	14,500
Equipment/ capital outlay	1,664	35,220	27,000
Printing & publishing	3,796	1,600	2,000
Miscellaneous	4,105	13,120	5,000
Transfer to Emergency Harbor Dredging Fund	5,261	5,171	5,200
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>334,451</b>	<b>304,105</b>	<b>319,738</b>
<b>Beginning cash balance 7/1</b>	<b>29,646</b>	<b>77,868</b>	<b>69,088</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>385,450</b>	<b>295,325</b>	<b>312,820</b>
<b>Total available</b>	<b>415,097</b>	<b>373,193</b>	<b>381,908</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>334,451</b>	<b>304,105</b>	<b>319,738</b>
<b>Audit adjustment</b>	<b>(2,778)</b>		
<b>Ending cash balance 6/30</b>	<b>77,867</b>	<b>69,088</b>	<b>62,170</b>

<b>PARK CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND</b>	<b>FY 2010-11 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2011-12 Projected</b>	<b>FY 2012-13 Budget</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Park improvement millage (0.5 mills)	87,849	93,000	92,961
Horizon Bank donation - fireplace	10,000	0	0
Miscellaneous	1,032	1,305	1,305
Pokagon Fund grants	750,000	300,000	0
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>848,881</b>	<b>397,305</b>	<b>97,228</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Contractual - construction (Oselka Park)	16,199	1,000,000	0
Engineering / construction management	96,000	15,000	0
Miscellaneous	6,297	0	0
Oselka Park Phase 1 (bond payments)	102,696	99,800	101,675
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>221,193</b>	<b>1,114,800</b>	<b>101,675</b>
<b>Beginning cash balance 7/1</b>	<b>220,367</b>	<b>847,750</b>	<b>130,255</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>848,881</b>	<b>397,305</b>	<b>97,228</b>
<b>Total available</b>	<b>1,069,248</b>	<b>1,245,055</b>	<b>227,483</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>221,193</b>	<b>1,114,800</b>	<b>101,675</b>
<b>Ending cash balance 6/30</b>	<b>848,055</b>	<b>130,255</b>	<b>125,808</b>
<b>EMERGENCY HARBOR DREDGING FUND</b>	<b>FY 2010-11 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2011-12 Projected</b>	<b>FY 2012-13 Budget</b>
<b>Revenue</b>			
Contributions, interest, transfers, Pokagon Fund	112,208	169,221	19,250
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>112,208</b>	<b>169,392</b>	<b>19,450</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Contractual	106,487	80,000	80,000
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>106,487</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>Beginning cash balance 7/1</b>	<b>56,330</b>	<b>61,880</b>	<b>151,272</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	<b>112,208</b>	<b>169,392</b>	<b>19,450</b>
<b>Total available</b>	<b>168,538</b>	<b>231,272</b>	<b>170,722</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>106,487</b>	<b>80,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
<b>Ending cash balance 6/30</b>	<b>62,051</b>	<b>151,272</b>	<b>90,722</b>



DEBT SERVICE FUND (EXCERPT)	FY 2010-11 Actual	FY 2011-12 Projected	FY 2012-13 Budget
Revenue			
Transfer from City's LRSB discretionary distribution	45,600	50,000	53,513
Other transfers for funding other debt services	69,598	87,536	79,500
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>115,198</b>	<b>137,536</b>	<b>133,013</b>
Expenditures			
Transient Marina Seawall	53,095	49,700	53,413
Other debt servicing	76,403	79,568	82,128
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>129,498</b>	<b>129,268</b>	<b>135,540</b>
Beginning cash balance 7/1	29,739	15,439	23,707
Revenue	115,198	137,536	133,013
<b>Total available</b>	<b>144,937</b>	<b>152,975</b>	<b>156,720</b>
Expenditures	129,498	129,268	135,540
<b>Ending cash balance 6/30</b>	<b>15,439</b>	<b>23,707</b>	<b>21,180</b>

*b. Other Funds*

As can be seen from the above budget, City revenues do not always cover actual or anticipated expenses. Therefore, the City actively seeks funding from sources outside the City. As noted in the next section, the City has received three development grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to develop facilities at the City Beach, the City Boat Launch, and the Transient Marina. The City also investigates private funding programs, such as the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust, for individual projects. The Recreational Facilities Supervisor continually monitors both public and private grant funding sources and prepares applications for promising programs. The Department also seeks individual and corporate private donors.

Another source of funding is the partnership with the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians. The City of New Buffalo receives a percentage of casino revenues and can use this towards recreation projects. In addition, the Pokagon Fund, is a local foundation formed as a result of the casino, and has funded several recreation related initiatives and projects in New Buffalo and the surrounding area.

The new casino also poses an additional strain on City infrastructure and facilities, particularly with regard to recreation. The thousands of people drawn to the area by the casino will require additional lodging, restaurants and amusements in the area. In terms of public recreation, the need for additional camping and lake access will likely be acute. The agreement between the Pokagon Band and the City and Township guarantees a percentage of casino revenues and foundation grant funding that can be used to improve parks and recreation opportunities. If the

experience of other small cities with nearby casinos is any proof, the casino presents a source of funding to meet the challenges of increased population and visitors.

However, casino funding should not be viewed as an unlimited source of funding. Most casinos are very popular at the outset, but outside forces often militate against long-term success at the same high level. For instance, the New Buffalo land-based casino is expected to have an impact on the nearby Blue Chip floating casino in Michigan City. It is possible that changes in Indiana law to allow land-based casinos on the Indiana side of the line could have a conversely negative impact on revenues to New Buffalo. Therefore, plans for recreation facilities, particularly for capital improvements, should be realistic and not rely strictly on casino funding. Those items identified in the Capital Improvements Schedule that are dependent on the Pokagon Fund or casino revenues for funding may need to be re-prioritized if the casino is no longer able to generate sufficient funds.



Transient Marina Entrance

#### **4. *Volunteers***

The City does not directly operate any recreation programs. Summer baseball and softball leagues are managed by a volunteer-led local foundation. Volunteer committees manage other programs that take place on parks grounds, such as the Ship and Shore Festival.

#### **5. *Relationships with Other Agencies***

The City is continually exploring ideas to improve relationships and develop collaborative and cost-saving partnerships with the New Buffalo School District, New Buffalo Township and the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians to provide recreation programming and facilities. Currently the City works cooperatively with New Buffalo Area Schools and New Buffalo Township to operate the Skate Park. Further, the City was active in the development of the Harbor Country Hike and Bike Plan which was funded by the Pokagon Fund.

## **C. RECREATION AND RESOURCE INVENTORY**

### ***1. New Buffalo and Area Recreation Facilities Inventory***

An inventory of the recreational facilities located in and near the City of New Buffalo was conducted using several sources of information, including the Berrien County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2010-2015; Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City of New Buffalo, 2005-2010; Michigan DNR; and on-site visits to the facilities.

The City of New Buffalo owns and operates Oselka Park, City Beach and Boat Launch, Lion's Pavilion Park, Riverfront Park, the Municipal Transient Marina and Sari Asher Memorial Park. The City leases the Turtle Pond Natural Area from a private landowner. The City works cooperatively with New Buffalo Area Schools and New Buffalo Township to operate the Skate Park.

The City of New Buffalo is continually upgrading and improving recreational facilities. Recently, Oselka Park-Phase II was a \$1,600,000 project which consisted of several improvements including new play areas, a "square court", sledding hill, new parking lot, fitness stations, irrigation system, parks maintenance building, shelter, band shell, and "green" stormwater management control measures with a rain garden. The Oselka Park-Phase II was the final phase of park improvements for this park with a goal of establishing a premier multipurpose and cross-generational recreation destination on the south side of the City. Oselka Park is extensively used by many individuals and groups including residents and many non-residents as well.



Sari Asher Memorial Park was added to the City's parks system during the summer of 2008. It contains an enclosed off-leash dog park area.

The City's waterfront area is one of the most heavily used waterfronts in the State of Michigan and serves a Chicago metropolitan area of more than 6 million people. A master plan was developed for the City's waterfront area (City Beach, Boat Launch, Lion's Park, Riverfront), but never approved by the City. This conceptual plan consisted of a complete makeover and renovation of the City's marquee waterfront area including river shoreline improvements (\$1,445,000), Galien River shoreline connector bridge and walkway (\$1,292,000), Whittaker Street and Lions Park improvements (\$747,000), beach access and building improvements (\$2,046,000), riverfront improvements (\$1,874,000), dune access improvements (\$346,000), breakwater arm access improvements (\$480,000), and boat launch area improvements (\$271,000).

In May 2012, a scoping study for the Riverfront area was completed. The study suggested the following improvements: shoreline stabilization, a 785 foot riverwalk (10 foot wide concrete)


from the beach parking lot to the sidewalk on N. Whittaker Street, outdoor display walk (5 foot wide gravel path), 2 police emergency boat slips, fishing dock, bike racks, geese reduction with vegetation, benches, signage, historical marker, trash and recycling receptacles. landscaping and beautification and lighting. Also in May 2012, a Great Lakes Restoration grant submitted by Michigan Department of Environmental Quality included improvements for the riverfront area. The proposal is a Green Storm Water Infiltration Project that will capture non-point runoff from the 2.1-acre city beach parking lot, 0.75-acre lawn contaminated with waterfowl feces, and 1 acre of Whittaker Street. Runoff from these sources will be conveyed into a 0.5-acre green storm water infiltration area. The proposed solution is to capture the drainage from each of these areas through a combination of catch basins, piping and open channels. The drainage will flow through filtration areas into a treatment area containing a variety of hydrophilic vegetation. The treatment area may be characterized as a “rain garden.”





The following is a list of Local, County and State owned lands that may be used for recreational purposes. Lands owned by public schools and some private properties have been included as well. The park classification corresponds to the classification system in Appendix C of the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plans* published by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in December 2004. The accessibility ranking listed in the **Accessibility Rating** column (also taken from the *Guidelines*) is as follows:

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 principles of universal design

### City Of New Buffalo Recreation Facilities


City Beach		
	<b>Size</b>	15 acres
	<b>Classification</b>	Special Use – Public Beach
	<b>Ownership</b>	City of New Buffalo
	<b>Facility Description</b>	800 Feet of Lake Michigan Beachfront; 7.25 acres of sandy beach, 6 acres of dunes, 2.1 acres of parking with 207 spaces plus 6 handicap spaces.
	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>	3 (Ramps available, accessible play equipment, sand wheelchair available.)
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	A swimming beach with lifeguards, a parking lot, a dunewalk nature trail, picnic tables, play structures, fitness equipment, volleyball nets, restrooms, food concession and kayak rentals. In the winter, sledding on the dune.

Boat Launch		
	Size	4.75 acres
	Classification	Special Use – Boat Launch
	Ownership	City of New Buffalo
	Facility Description	Boat launches and parking lot.
	Accessibility Rating	2
	Facilities/Programs	8 boat launch ramps, parking lot
Lions Pavilion Park		
	Size	2 acres
	Classification	Mini-Park
	Ownership	City of New Buffalo
	Facility Description	The pavilion is located at 101 Marquette Drive, which is across the street from the City Beach.
	Accessibility Rating	3
	Facilities/Programs	Pavilion with 2 fireplaces, picnic tables, grills
Riverfront Park		
	Size	0.75 acres
	Classification	Mini-Park
	Ownership	City of New Buffalo
	Facility Description	Open space along Galien River with fishing access.
	Accessibility Rating	2
	Facilities/Programs	2 fishing decks

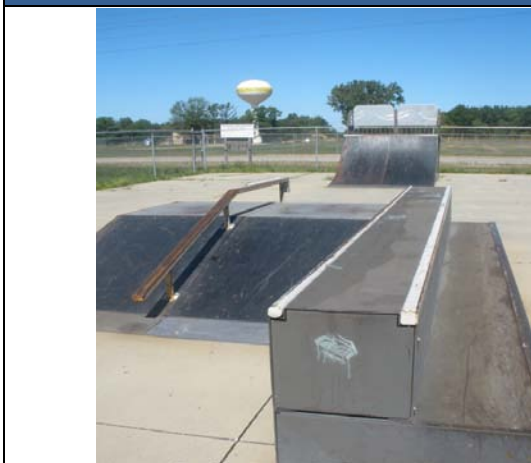
Transient Marina		
	<b>Size</b>	3.5 acres
	<b>Classification</b>	Special Use - Marina
	<b>Ownership</b>	City of New Buffalo
	<b>Facility Description</b>	A transient marina for boaters visiting New Buffalo for a short time. 1.5 acres of the 3.5 is submerged land.
	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>	2 (Ramps, restrooms and comfort station fully accessible).
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	33 boat slips, comfort station, picnic tables, eclectic and water pump-out station. Marine channels 16 and 9 are manned.
Oselka Park		
	<b>Size</b>	17.5 acres
	<b>Classification</b>	Community Park
	<b>Ownership</b>	New Buffalo City
	<b>Facility Description</b>	Multi-purpose community park and sports complex
	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>	3 (Barrier-free play equipment).
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	3 baseball diamonds, a soccer field, picnic area, picnic shelter, band shell, playground, fitness equipment, sledding hill, square court, open areas, park maintenance building,



### Turtle Pond Natural Area

	<b>Size</b>	2 acres
	<b>Classification</b>	Natural Resource Area
	<b>Ownership</b>	City of New Buffalo has a 25-year conservation lease (2002-2027)
	<b>Facility Description</b>	Forested area with natural pond.
	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>	2 (Boardwalk is accessible).
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	Nature trail, boardwalk and bridges.

### Skate Park



	<b>Size</b>	0.1 acre
	<b>Classification</b>	Special Use – Skateboard
	<b>Ownership</b>	City of New Buffalo in partnership with New Buffalo Township and School District
	<b>Facility Description</b>	A skate and bike challenge area.
	<b>Accessibility Rating</b>	2 (access to the facility is barrier free)
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	Half pipe, ramps, and various rails.

### Sari Asher Memorial Park

	<b>Size</b>	1.8 acres
	<b>Classification</b>	Special Use – Dog Park
	<b>Ownership</b>	City of New Buffalo
	<b>Facility Description</b>	Dog Park
	<b>Accessibility Rating*</b>	2 (access to the site is barrier free)
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	A fenced in enclosure for dogs (0.5 acres or 20,000 square feet)



## New Buffalo Area Schools Facilities

New Buffalo Middle/High School		
		
	<b>Classification</b>	School – Park
	<b>Ownership</b>	New Buffalo School District
	<b>Facility Description</b>	School Grounds with athletic fields and indoor facilities.
	<b>Accessibility Rating*</b>	Not assessed
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	Indoor track, gym, weight room outdoor football field, baseball field, track, tennis courts, playground, nature trail, two baseball diamonds, two basketball courts, and one soccer field.
West Elementary School		
		
	<b>Classification</b>	School – Park
	<b>Ownership</b>	New Buffalo School District
	<b>Facility Description</b>	School Grounds with athletic fields
	<b>Accessibility Rating*</b>	Not assessed
	<b>Facilities/Programs</b>	Playground, nature trail, two baseball diamonds, one soccer field, two basketball courts

## Private and Quasi-Public Recreation Facilities

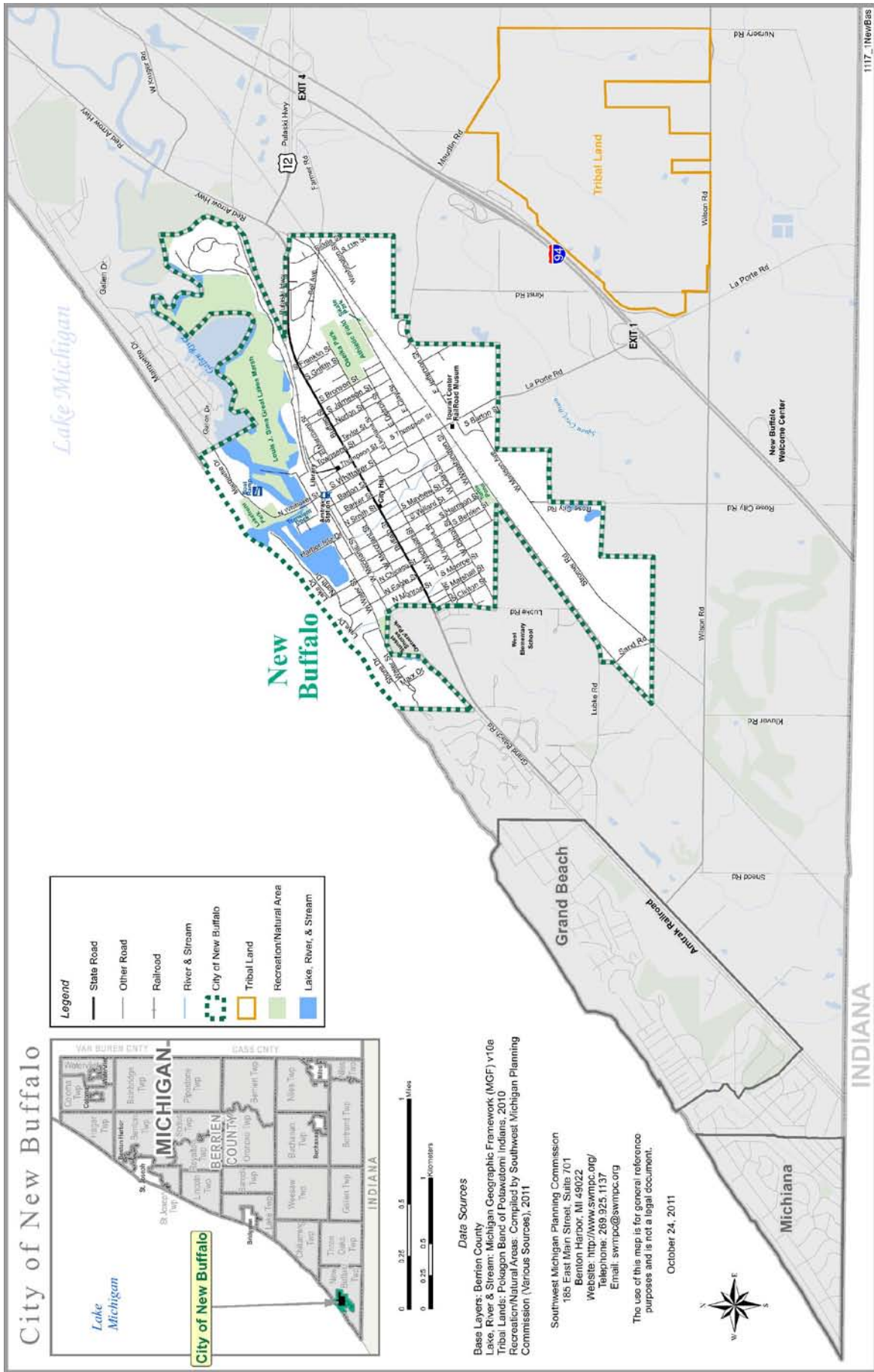
Private and Quasi-Public Recreation Facilities in and around New Buffalo City		
Name	Description	Facilities
St. Mary's School	Private Catholic School, located in the City of New Buffalo.	Playground, basketball courts, multi-purpose play field, pre-k day care program, gymnasium and theater.
The Nature Conservancy	Robinson Preserve, 80 acres of land held for protection by international land conservancy.	1 trail, parking for two cars.
The Nature Conservancy	Grand Beach Preserve, 10 acres of protected land. Owned by international land conservancy.	Study area only, no parking.
Bible Baptist Church	Not officially available for public use.	Playground, volleyball court, soccer goal.
Journey Lutheran Church	Not officially available for public use.	Green space, picnic pavilion
Chikaming Preserve	Owned by local land conservancy - natural area on Galien River, islands and marshlands.	Natural area, access only by boat.
Adrenaline Fitness	Privately owned, membership offered.	Swimming pool, volleyball court, outdoor basketball, aerobics, personal training, karate, running track, weights and strength/fitness, training equipment.
Third Coast	Surf shop and headquarters for New Buffalo Fresh Water Surfers Association	Surfing equipment and lessons.
Outpost Sports	Kayak and canoe sales rental.	Offers trips on Galien River and nearby shoreline.
New Buffalo Yacht Club	A private club established in 1956 on the New Buffalo harbor.	Clubhouse with bar and restaurant and docking
Lake Michigan Yacht Club	A private club on Lake Michigan and New Buffalo harbor.	Beachfront clubhouse and marina facility, Private Beach, Children's outdoor/indoor play areas, shower and laundry facilities, Slips include water, electric, phone and cable TV, "In-slip" pump-out service, Parking at the slip, Security gated
Oselka Marina	Full service marina	Almost 1,000 boat slips, boat and jet ski rentals, fuel, repair services, valet boating, boat storage

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
Camp Sokol	12.4 acre family oriented seasonal camp used by Chicago clientele.	Cottages/Bunk Houses, picnic tables, tennis court, basketball court.
New Buffalo Rod and Gun Club	The Club is a member of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs, (MUCC). The site is 25 acres.	Two Clubhouses, available for rent, archery, trap and skeet ranges.
Oak Hill Springs	5 acre tract of undeveloped land owned by homeowners in the Oak Hill Springs Subdivision.	None.
Schultz Park (Sunset Shores Homeowners Association)	Private/Quasi-Public park that is owned by the homeowners of Sunset Shores.	Playground
Whittaker Woods	Golf complex developed as part of a large Plan Unit Development. Proposed to be annex to the City.	18 hole pro golf course, club house, restaurant, and pavilion.
Dunes Club Limited Golf Club	Exclusive golf club, not generally available to the public.	9 hole pro golf course club house and helicopter pad.
<b>Recreation Facilities in Adjoining Communities</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
Village of Michiana	One acre site which serves as the village activity area.	Community center with indoor stage, playground, playfield, tennis courts, recycling center, municipal offices, police and fire stations.
Village of Grand Beach	One acre site which services as the village activity area	Community center, municipal offices, playground, playfield, tennis courts, and police station.
Village of Grand Beach/Golf Course	Golf Course	9 hold course
New Buffalo Township / Galien River County Park	This 87 acre park is owned by Berrien County and is along Red Arrow Highway. It has a mix of wetlands and uplands along the Galien River. It is part of the Galien River Marsh complex.	Planned developments include an interpretive center, observation platforms and boardwalk trails.
New Buffalo Township/Memorial Park	Located next to the Township Hall.	Playground, basketball, splash pad, pavilion, picnic tables, grills, trails
New Buffalo Township/Maudlin-Becktell Cemetery	A 0.5 acre historical site and cemetery	None

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
New Buffalo/Glassman Park	47 acre parcel bordered on three sides by the Galien River and by I-94.	Undeveloped open space
New Buffalo Township & Chikaming Township /Townline Road Beach Access	Townline Road beach, a 33 foot stretch of beach at the road ending, next to Chikaming Township which owns an additional 33 feet of frontage. No parking is available, this site is not accessible to those with mobility limitations.	Bike rack, bench, stairs and deck.
Chikaming Township/River Valley Senior Center	Senior Center	Senior activities, food service and meeting hall.
Chikaming Township/Park and Preserve	263 acre natural resource area on Warren Woods Road. Property has woods, ravines, 5 acre lake, restored prairie, and Galien River floodplain.	2 gravel parking lots, bike rack, 3 miles of trails and interpretive signs, 1.13 miles of rough bike trails, fishing platform, picnic pavilion, grills, drinking fountain

### State of Michigan Recreation Facilities

<b>State of Michigan Recreation Facilities Outside the City of New Buffalo</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Facilities</b>
Red Arrow Landing – MDNR Access	3.6 acre launch site provides access to the upper portion of the Galien River.	Paved Boat Launch (small boats), outhouse, and public fishing access trails.
Michigan Welcome Center	Interstate Highway travelers information center and rest area.	Information center and restrooms.
Warren Dunes State Park	This state park is nearly 2,000 acres in size, with more than 2 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline and sand dunes rising 240 feet above Lake Michigan.	Picnic, area and shelter, playground, beach house, interpretive program, hunting, swimming, hiking and skiing, and wildlife areas.
Warren Woods State Park	311 acre state park located in Chikaming Township to the northeast of New Buffalo, on the Galien River	Rare beech/Maple climax forest, hiking trail, and picnic area.
Grand Mere State Park	Designated as a "National Natural Landmark" by the federal government due to its rarity, this 985 acre park is managed for preservation.	Hunting, fishing, wheelchair accessible picnic shelter, accessible hiking area.





**City of New Buffalo**

**Legend**

- New Buffalo Property Ownership**
  - City (Red)
  - School (Pink)
  - Township (Purple)
- City of New Buffalo** (Green dashed line)
- Parcel** (White)
- Tribal Land** (Orange)
- Recreation/Natural Area** (Green hatched)
- Lake, River & Stream** (Blue)
- State Road** (Thick black line)
- Other Road** (Thin black line)
- Railroad** (Black line with cross-ticks)

**Locator Map:** Shows the location of New Buffalo within Michigan, highlighting Berrien County and its surrounding areas.

**Data Sources:**

- Base Layers: Berrien County
- Parcel: Berrien County - New Buffalo, 2011 - Outside City Limits, 2004
- Lake, River & Stream: Michigan Geographic Framework (MGF) v10a
- Tribal Lands: Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, 2010
- Recreation/Natural Areas: Compiled by Southwest Michigan Planning Commission (Various Sources), 2011

**Southwest Michigan Planning Commission**  
 185 East Main Street, Suite 701  
 Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
 Website: <http://www.swmpc.org/>  
 Telephone: 269.925.1137  
 Email: [swmpc@swmpc.org](mailto:swmpc@swmpc.org)

October 24, 2011

Base Layers: Berrien County  
Parcel: Berrien County - New Buffalo, 2011 - Outside City Limits, 2004  
Lake, River & Stream: Michigan Geographic Framework (MGF) v10a  
Tribal Lands: Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, 2010  
Recreation/Natural Areas: Compiled by Southwest Michigan Planning  
Commission (Various Sources), 2011

October 24, 2011





## 2. *Non-Motorized Road and Trail Inventory*

Trails, paved shoulders on streets, bike lanes and sidewalks are not only important for transportation, but also provide recreational opportunities for walking and biking. Many are beginning to understand the numerous benefits that these facilities bring to a community. The benefits are very diverse and include advantages in economic, social, environmental, health, and overall quality of life.

The streets of our cities are an important part of the livability of our communities and ought to be for everyone, whether young or old, motorist or bicyclist, walker or wheelchair user, bus rider or shopkeeper. New Buffalo City institutes a Complete Streets policy ensuring that road projects are designed with **all users** in mind - including bicyclists, public transportation vehicles and riders, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities. For example, Jefferson Street was repaved with extra wide shoulders to allow for bicyclists. Further, the City reviews other regional plans such as the Harbor Country Hike and Bike Plan for each street project.

Recently, the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission completed a non-motorized plan for southwest Michigan which includes Berrien and eight other counties in the Michigan Department of Transportation southwest region. On-road facilities are defined as paved shoulders with a minimum width of four feet and bike lanes with a minimum width of five feet. There are just over 800 miles of roads with non-motorized facilities (paved shoulders and bicycle lanes) in southwest Michigan with 100 miles in Berrien County. Often on-road facilities are easier to construct than off-road facilities because the road agency usually has all or most of the required right-of-way and would not need to purchase property, which can be a major expense.

In addition, many of the roads in southwest Michigan, where traffic is low (less than 2,500 average daily traffic count) and where sight distances are not problematic, offer important connections, especially in rural areas. In the nine-county region of southwest Michigan, there are over 2,858 miles of paved roads with average daily traffic (ADT) counts of fewer than 2,500 vehicles per day (358 miles in Berrien County). This figure does not include many roads for which traffic counts are not available, so the number of miles is quite higher than reflected, especially in rural areas. These roads provide experienced bicyclists with many miles of biking opportunities in a shared-use configuration.

Local priority routes in the Southwest Michigan Plan near New Buffalo include US Bike Route 35, connecting to the Marquette Greenway in Indiana and paved shoulders on the entire length of US 12.

## June 24, 2011

[illegible]

COUNTRY

Southwest Michigan Planning Commission  
185 East Main Street Suite 701  
Benton Harbor, MI 49022  
Website: <http://www.swmpc.org/>

This is a working map used for general reference purposes and may not be complete, in content, consistency, and accuracy. Therefore do not use this product for final analyses or as a legal document.



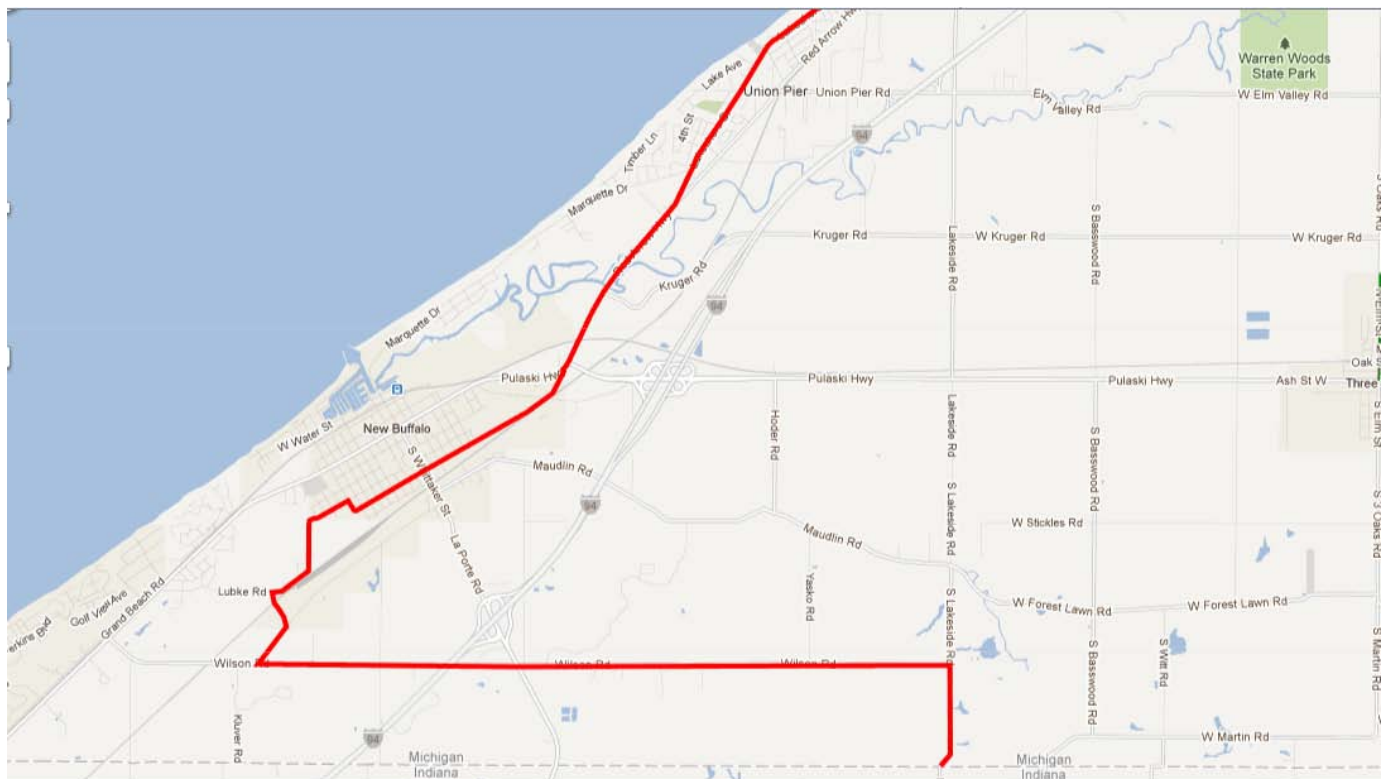
**Figure 6. Regional Priority Corridors**

## US Bike Route 35

On May 19, 2012, Adventure Cycling Association and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) held a ribbon-cutting celebration for the newly designated US Bike Route 35. USBR 35 is a mapped bicycle route intended for experienced long distance touring bicyclists. It is not a trail, and no construction is proposed related to this route. It is meant to be a mapped recommendation as the best way to ride a bicycle long distance along the Lake Michigan coast from New Buffalo to Sault Ste. Marie.

The route from the Indiana state line to New Buffalo, is as follows: Lakeside, Wilson, Stromer, Sand, Lubke, W. Detroit, S. Eagle, Clay, Red Arrow Highway (see map below).

View the entire USBR 35 route here <http://biketouringroutes.com/section.php?sectionid=5>



Michigan's U.S. Bicycle Route 35 will attract bicycle tourists from near and far, providing economic, social, and health benefits to the communities that the route intersects.

Approximately 500 miles in length, the route runs from New Buffalo to Sault Ste. Marie, Canada. USBR 35 is comprised of a network of state highways, county and local roads, and regionally significant multi-use trails. It passes through dozens of small lakefront towns, past sandy beaches, scenic and historic destinations, as well as services and cultural attractions. Notable attractions along the route include: the Mackinaw Bridge, Mackinac Island, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Traverse City the "Cherry Capital," Holland, the "Tulip City," and South Haven, the "Blueberry Capital." USBR 35 will allow bicyclists to experience endless summer festivals where communities large and small celebrate farm fresh produce, as well as their heritage and culture. Once complete, USBR 35 will continue south through Indiana and eventually down to Mississippi.

**Back Road Bikeways**

On-road signed or mapped bike routes are also found in southwest Michigan. In the New Buffalo area there are the back-road bikeways in and around Three Oaks. The signed and mapped bikeway system consists of 14 tours ranging from 5 to 60 miles and follow secondary roads. For more information please visit <http://www.visitharborcountry.org/attractions-three-oaks-backroads-cycle-routes-bikeways.php>.

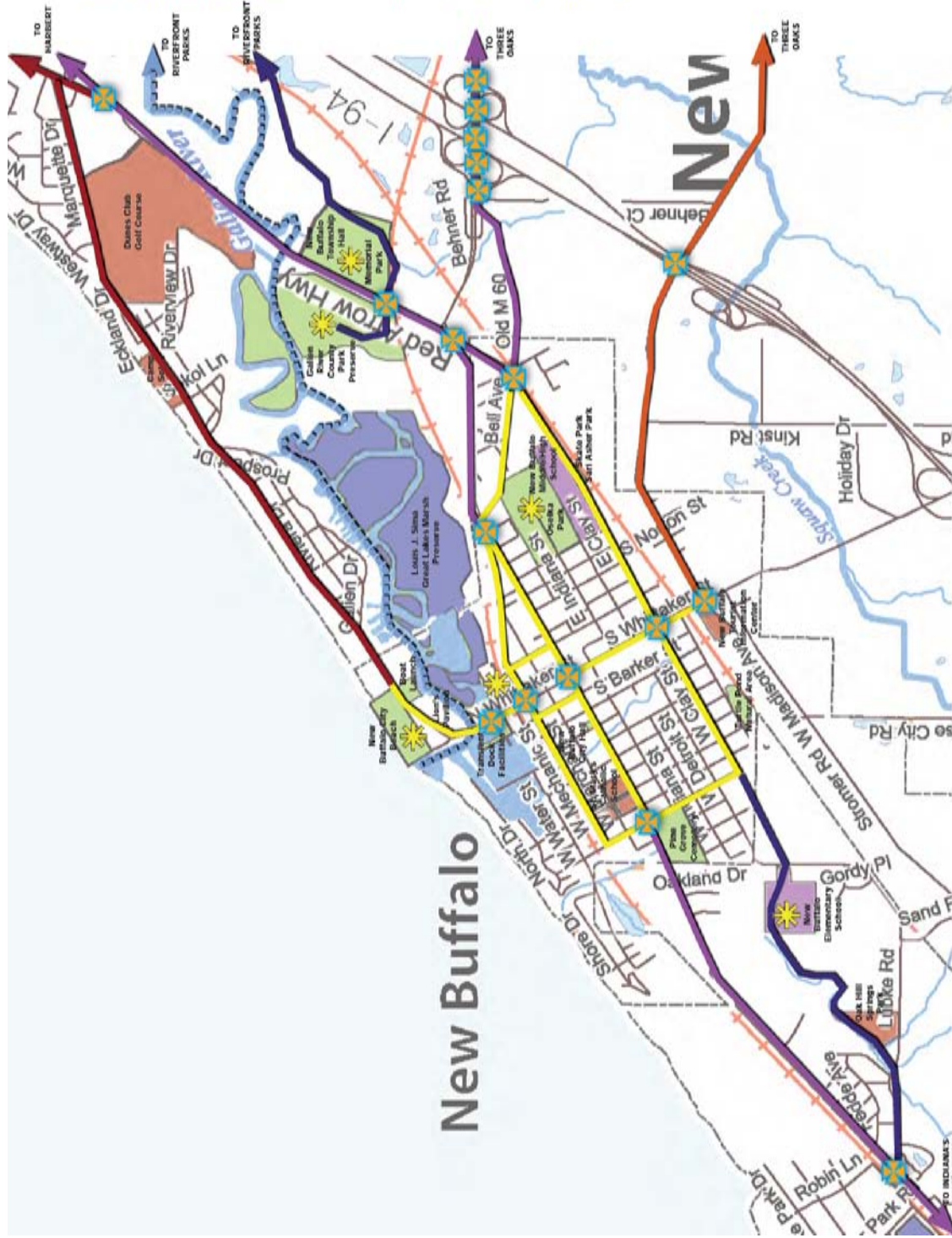
**Harbor Country Hike and Bike Plan**

In 2008, a group of individuals representing interests in the New Buffalo area came together to form a vision for connected on-road and off-road facilities for Chikaming Township, City of New Buffalo, New Buffalo Township, Three Oaks Township, Grand Beach, and the Village of Three Oaks. The Harbor Country Hike & Bike Trail project is a long-term comprehensive project to bring a network of interconnected non-motorized facilities to the corner of Southwest Michigan known as Harbor Country. When complete, the Hike & Bike Trail project will offer bicyclists and hikers the ability to connect between New Buffalo, Three Oaks, Sawyer, Grand Beach, Harbert, Union Pier, Michiana, and points in between using safe, convenient, attractive paths and shared access ways. <http://harborcountrytrails.org/>



# LEGEND

- Township Boundary
- State Land
- Township/Local Land
- Private Land
- Public Schools
- NGO Conservation Land
- Trail Head
- Crossings
- Shared Use Road
- Bike Lanes and Shared Use Path
- Shared Use Path
- Bike Lanes
- Bike Lanes and Sidewalks
- Water Course



New Buffalo

New

### 3. *Water Trail Inventory*

#### **Lake Michigan Water Trail**

When completed, the Lake Michigan Water Trail will offer safe, legal and adequate access around the entire 1,200 mile long lakeshore of America's Greatest Lake, Lake Michigan. The Lake Michigan Water Trail will be the longest continuous- loop water trail in the world. In 2011, 75 miles (from Chicago to New Buffalo) was designated as the Lake Michigan Water Trail National Recreation Trail by the National Parks Service. Both Indiana and Wisconsin have completed detailed inventories for access to Lake Michigan in support of trail development. Michigan is in the process of completing an inventory in 2012. For more information visit <http://www.lmwt.org>.

#### **Galien River Marsh Water Trail**

The Galien River Marsh Water Trail is approximately three miles between the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) boat launch on U.S. 12 (near Kruger Road) and the City of New Buffalo's public boat launch. In 2011, the Galien River Marsh Water Trail was officially opened and it meanders through woodlands, the marsh for which it is named, which includes the 156-acre Louis J. Sima Great Lakes Marsh and the soon-to-be-developed 86-acre Galien River County Park Preserve, and a number of privately owned residential properties before arriving at the city's harbor and, ultimately, Lake Michigan. Brochures and a sign showing the way along the Water Trail are located at the DNR boat launch, courtesy of Chikaming Open Lands, the American Electric Power Foundation, the National Park Service and the Michigan DEQ.

## Welcome to the Galien River Marsh Water Trail

The marsh represents an ecosystem that was once prevalent along the coast, but is now rare.

#### **Great Lakes Marsh: Synchronized to the Rhythms of Lake Michigan**

The marsh ecology and the plants and animals found there are influenced by the climate and water levels of Lake Michigan.

In addition to being closely linked to a great lake, a great lakes marsh has the following communities:



1. A deep marsh with submerged plants, largely under water.

2. An emergent marsh with plants whose roots are in standing water, but whose leaves emerge from the water.

3. A wet meadow whose soil may be inundated with water, but at other times may be dry.

4. A shrub boundary between the marsh and the forest.

5. A dry forest containing oaks, hickory, black cherry and other trees.

#### **Migration Rest Stop**

The coast of Lake Michigan is a migration route for waterfowl, raptors and songbirds. As the birds migrate in the spring and fall, the marsh provides a resting and feeding area. The calm water, protected from storms, serves a vital function for many species.



**Water Trail Tips**  
Length: 2 miles from the MDNRE boat launch to the City launch in New Buffalo.

Time: approximately 90 minutes

**Conditions:** The river current is slow and the route has few obstacles and no rapids. Most paddlers will have no problem paddling upstream. Marshy banks make stopping along the route difficult.



#### 4. *Open Space and Greenway Inventory*

There are features in any community that many residents would readily recognize as important to the character of the area and to their personal quality of life. Some of these features may be cultural, such as a downtown business district, historic buildings, lighthouses, or other similar man-made features. Other features used to connect a community to its residents will be natural resources such as lakes, woods, wildlife, scenic views, and other similar features. How these elements are integrated in the fabric of a community can have a profound influence on their value. Clearly there are some resources, which, if lost, would significantly detract from the environment and the community as a whole.

Natural resource areas perform important functions such as:

- filtering out water pollutants,
- recharging groundwater supplies
- removing air pollutants
- providing recreational opportunities
- providing wildlife habitat
- enhancing the overall quality of life of a community

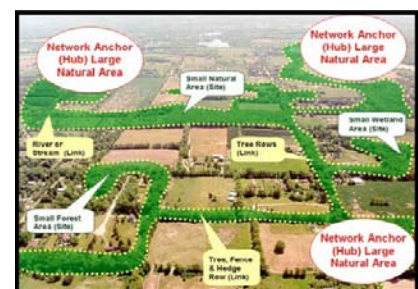
Natural features such as native vegetation, woodlands, wildlife habitat and wildlife corridors add to the natural features that lure people to the New Buffalo area. Degrading these natural features will not only alter the landscape of a community but it can also lead to water quality issues such as increased runoff, erosion and flooding.

The Potential Conservation Areas map represents the last remaining remnants of the area's ecosystems and natural plant communities. The map ranks areas where the landscape is dominated by native vegetation that has various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. These areas provide critical ecological services such as maintaining water quality and quantity, soil development and stabilization, habitat for pollinators of cropland, wildlife travel corridors, stopover sites for migratory birds, sources of genetic diversity and floodwater retention.

**Potential Conservation Areas (PCAs)** are defined as places on the landscape dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. Scoring criteria to prioritize areas included: total size, size of core area, length of stream corridor, landscape connectivity, restorability of surrounding land, vegetation quality and biological rarity score.

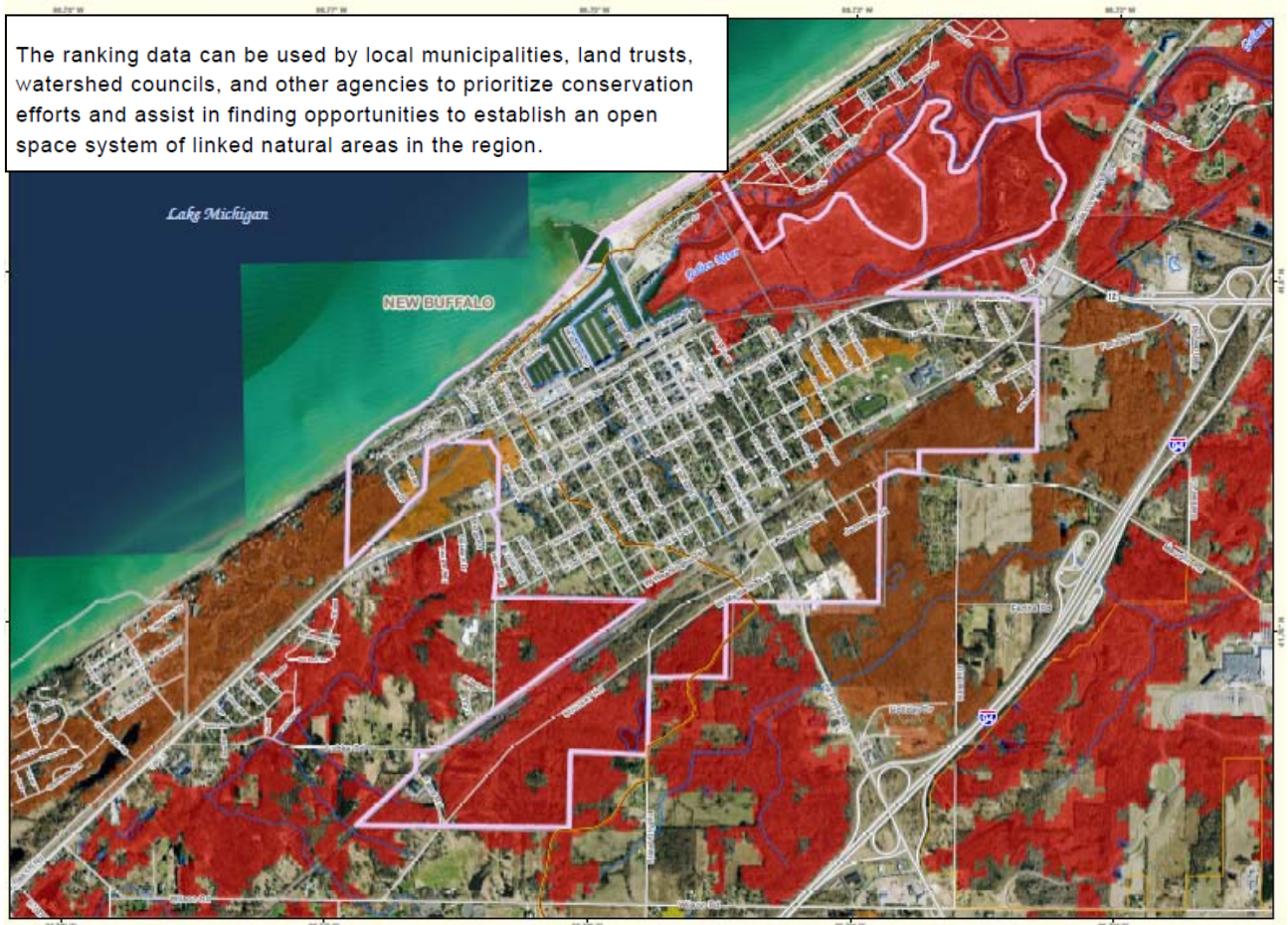
The City is surrounded by large areas of some the highest ranking natural areas in southwest Michigan. It is to a community's advantage that these sites be carefully integrated into the planning for future development. This information can be used to create a connected system of green infrastructure. Striking a balance between development and natural resource conservation and preservation is critical if the New Buffalo area is to maintain its unique natural heritage and offer a high quality of life for residents and visitors.

Green infrastructure is a connected network of natural areas and other open spaces planned and managed to conserve natural ecosystems and the services that they provide. These lands provide multiple benefits to people and wildlife such as maintaining clean air and water, providing areas for recreation and providing wildlife habitat. Green infrastructure elements can be in urban, suburban and rural areas and may or may not be open to the public. **Green infrastructure is essential to the health, safety and welfare of the area residents.**



Green infrastructure is an interconnected network of public, private, and working lands with assets such as large natural areas called hubs (vineyards, orchards, farmlands, wetlands, forests, parks, beaches) connected by rivers corridors, tree lines and trails.

Natural resource conservation is a fundamental component of a community’s long-term environmental and economic health. Communities that incorporate both the built and natural environment into their future land use map or vision will ensure that the areas that provide important natural functions such as filtering drinking water supplies, recreational opportunities for residents and habitats for wildlife, will be protected. In effect, the features that the community has grown to enjoy will be there for generations to come. A community with a clean environment, clean water, green spaces and trails will be the community that has a stable, sustainable future and offers a high quality of life for its residents and visitors. Communities that provide this high quality of life will be able to retain talented workers and attract new residents and businesses.



## Potential Conservation Areas (PCA)

### RANK

- Highest
- Higher
- High
- Medium

Potential Conservation Areas (PCA) are defined as places on the landscape dominated by native vegetation that have various levels of potential for harboring high quality natural areas and unique natural features. Scoring criteria used to prioritize sites included: total size, size of core area, length of stream corridor, landscape connectivity, restorability of surrounding land, vegetation quality, and biological rarity score.

## **5. *Recreation Programs, Events and Activities***

There are no recreational programs organized by the City of New Buffalo. Organized baseball, softball, and other programs are administered on an individual basis through area churches, schools, businesses and recreation organizations. Following is a list of recreational and cultural programs and activities available to the public:

### ***a. Four Winds Casino***

Four Winds Casino Resort is located just off I-94 in New Buffalo Township. The Four Winds Casino is over 130,000 square feet with 3,000 slot machines. Connected to the casino is a hotel with 165 rooms and there are several dining options available on the property.

### ***b. Local Color Gallery***

This art gallery in Union Pier offers a series of week-long children's summer classes in sculpting, clay, painting and drawing.

### ***c. Shopping at Union Pier***

Union Pier is full of small art galleries, unique boutiques, and antique furniture shops. This area located in Union Pier attracts many of the area's seasonal residents and tourists.

### ***d. Blue Chip Casino, Lighthouse Place, and Other Attractions in Michigan City***

The Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City, Indiana offers various games of chance as well as live entertainment on weekends. Lighthouse Place, also located in Michigan City is a large, successful retail outlet mall that attracts shoppers from long distances.

### ***e. New Buffalo Public Library***

Summer reading programs are offered at the New Buffalo Public Library for children.

### ***f. Vineyards***

The unique microclimate of the lakeshore provides a perfect setting for growing grapes used by a number of local vineyards. Michigan's oldest, largest, and most awarded winery, St. Julian Winery, is located in Union Pier and offers free wine tasting.

### ***g. U-Pick Farms***

Fresh fruit, including blueberries, apples, cherries, peaches, pumpkins, asparagus, raspberries, nectarines, plums, pears, grapes, as well as other fruit and vegetables in plentiful in the New Buffalo area.

### ***h. Bed and Breakfasts***

The attractiveness of the New Buffalo area to tourists has encouraged the success of Bed & Breakfast establishments and Inns for those individuals who are looking for that "out of the way place".

i. New Buffalo Railroad Museum/ Chamber of Commerce

Located on South Whittaker in New Buffalo, the Museum was established to highlight the role the railroad played in the area's development. The Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor's Center occupy a portion of the building.



**New Buffalo Railroad Museum and Visitor's Center**

j. Other Area Museums

Old Lighthouse Museum, Great Lakes Museum of Military History, and Alyce Bartholomew Children's Museum, Michigan City, IN  
Door Prairie Auto Museum, LaPorte, IN  
Three Oaks Museum and Three Oaks Bicycle Museum, Three Oaks, MI

k. Snowmobiling

The Tri-County Southwest Michigan Snowmobile Council has established a snowmobile staging area at Exit 1 off Interstate 94 in New Buffalo Township, at the intersection of LaPorte and Wilson Roads. A marked State Snowmobile Trail starts just south of Wilson Road on M-239 and travels east to Galien.

l. Boat Charters

There are several charter operators providing service from New Buffalo Harbor.

m. Area Film Theaters

Celebration Cinema, Benton Harbor  
LaPorte Cinema, LaPorte, IN  
Kerasotes Theaters, Michigan City IN

n. Area Live Theaters

Vickers Theater, Three Oaks  
Acorn Theatre, Three Oaks  
Dunes Summer Theatre, Michigan City IN

o. Annual Events

**Art Attack**

On the fourth weekend in April, New Buffalo and Harbor Country offer a celebration of art with gallery receptions, artist's demonstrations, exhibitions, theatre, music, wine tasting and open houses.

**Harbor Country Arts & Crafts Show**

On Memorial Day weekend, this show offers a variety of quality art of all kinds, and unique handcrafted items. It is held at St. John United Church of Christ, 200 W. Buffalo, corner of Buffalo (U.S. 12) & Barker. Free admission. For more info call (269) 469-2884 or (734) 277-3180.



### **Memorial Day Parade**

An annual tribute to Veterans, the parade leaves downtown New Buffalo and proceeds along US-12 to the Cemetery where a memorial service is conducted.

### **St. Mary of the Lake Festival**

Sponsored by St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church and held on the church/school campus, the Family Festival is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend each year. This Festival is the official start to summer activities in New Buffalo and annual fundraiser for St Mary of the Lake School. The festival offers fun for the entire family with food, carnival rides, games, a silent auction, and live music.

### **New Buffalo ARTigras!**

This is a juried art competition. The open-air event is held at the corner of Merchant and Thompson streets (downtown). ARTigras is being produced by Amdur Productions and is co-hosted by the New Buffalo Fine Arts Council and the New Buffalo Business Association. Admission is Free.

### **Independence Day Fireworks**

Independence Day fireworks display at dusk on the beach. Admission is free to the public.

### **Skimboarding Contest**

The annual Skimboarding Classic is sponsored by Third Coast Surf Shop at the New Buffalo City Beach. Call (888) 932-4575 for participation details.

### **Ship & Shore Festival**

The first weekend in August, New Buffalo hosts the largest street fest in Southwest Michigan. Three days packed with live music, food and kids activities. The highlight of the event is watching the floating parade through the harbor when yachts, sailboats and more are transformed into floating pieces of art decorated with lights. The parade is followed by a huge fireworks display over Lake Michigan.

### **Michigan's Longest Garage Sale**

Michigan's longest yard sale held every year during the second week of August is on U.S. 12 from New Buffalo to Detroit. The highway, nation's second oldest, stretches along an old Native American trail.. The yard sale has been an annual event since 2003. For more information and an online, interactive map showing sale locations, visit [www.us12heritagetrail.org](http://www.us12heritagetrail.org).

### **Greek Fest**

This family festival is held on Labor Day weekend and is sponsored by St Paraskevi Greek Orthodox Church. It is held on the grounds of the American Hellenic Center at 17760 Behner Road in New Buffalo.

### **Apple Cider Century Bicycle Tour**

Every fall, Three Oaks hosts a nationally recognized recreational 25, 50, 75 and 100-mile bicycle tour. For more information call (269) 756-3361

### **Harvest Days and Chili Cook-off**

On Columbus Day weekend, Harvest Days is a celebration of the bountiful fall season in Harbor Country. Shops, galleries, restaurants and lodging facilities host open houses, gallery and artist receptions, culinary demonstrations and tastings, special sales and family fun activities.

### **Fall Arts & Crafts Show**

More than 90 arts and crafts booths, baked goodies and luncheon. Located at New Buffalo High School Gym. Sponsored by the New Buffalo Service League. Admission: \$1. Call (269) 469-3180 for the details.

## **6. *City of New Buffalo Parks and Recreation Grants***

The City has received three Development Grants from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Following is a description of each grant:

### ***a. Lakefront Park Improvements – Grant # CM99-198***

Scope Items and Status:

- Renovate Parking Lots (with lighting): Parking lot surfaces were improved and new lighting was installed and is being maintained
- Landscaping: Landscaping was installed and is being maintained.

### ***b. Transient Marina – Grant # TF89-236***

Scope Items and Status:

- Bulkhead
- Sidewalk
- Landscaping
- Parking lot
- Comfort station
- Water service
- Sanitary sewer
- Pump out station
- Electrical & lighting

All scope items have been installed and are maintained.

### ***c. New Buffalo Boat Launch – Grant #26-01089***

- Parking lot and drive
- Boat launch
- Landscaping

All scope items have been installed and are maintained.



## **D. DESCRIPTION OF THE PUBLIC INPUT PROCESS**

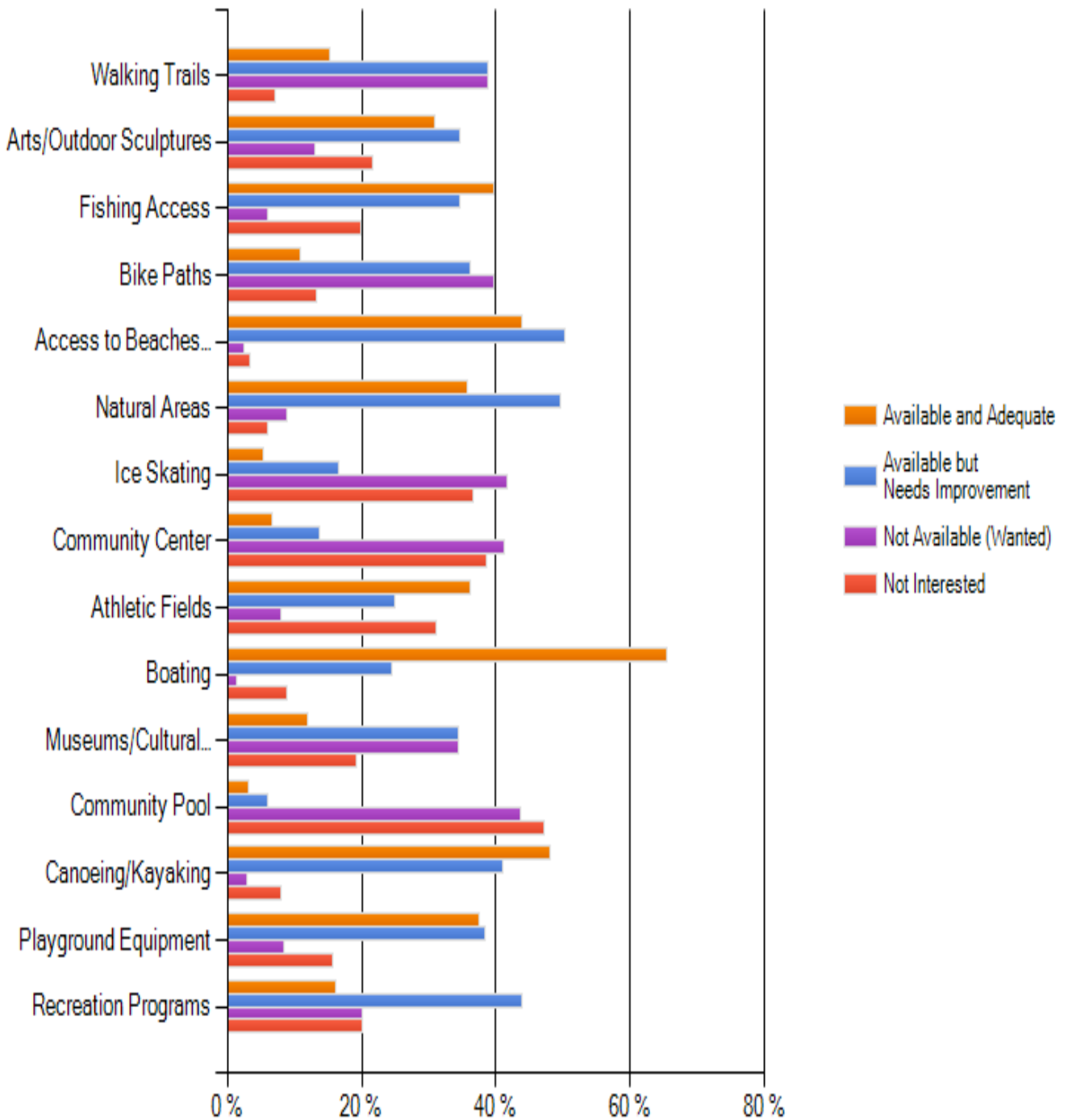
### **1. *Statement of Public Representation***

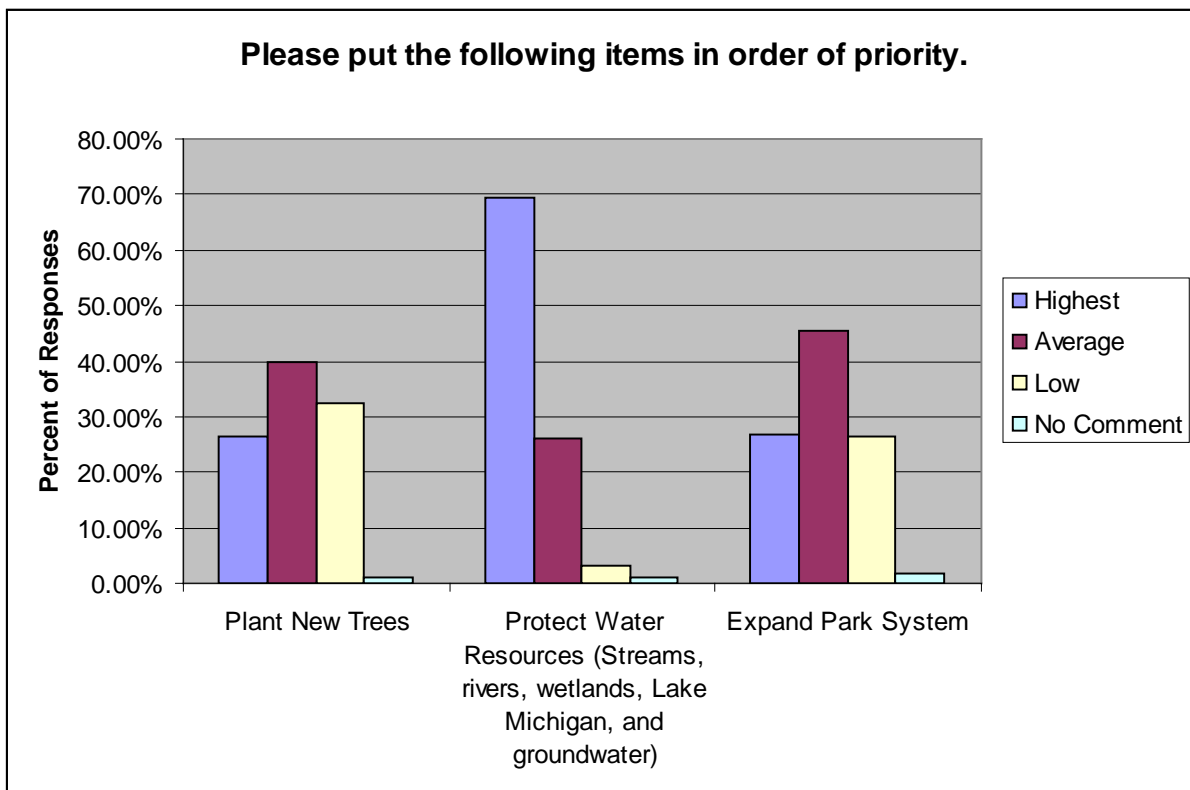
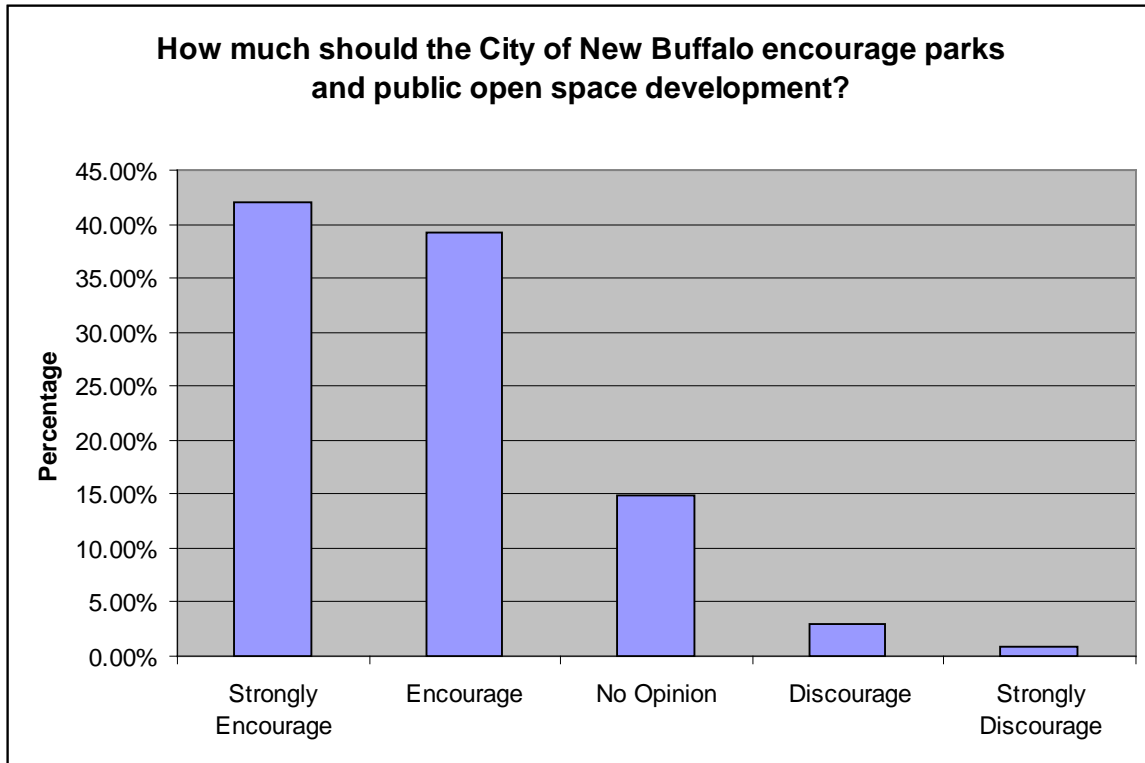
The methods used for soliciting public input included steering committee meetings, an online survey, a public workshop, and review and public hearing by the Planning Commission and City Council—were broad enough to represent the community at large. Participants included members of the public at all age and socioeconomic levels as well as key stakeholders in parks and recreation programs within the City.

### **2. *On-Line Survey***

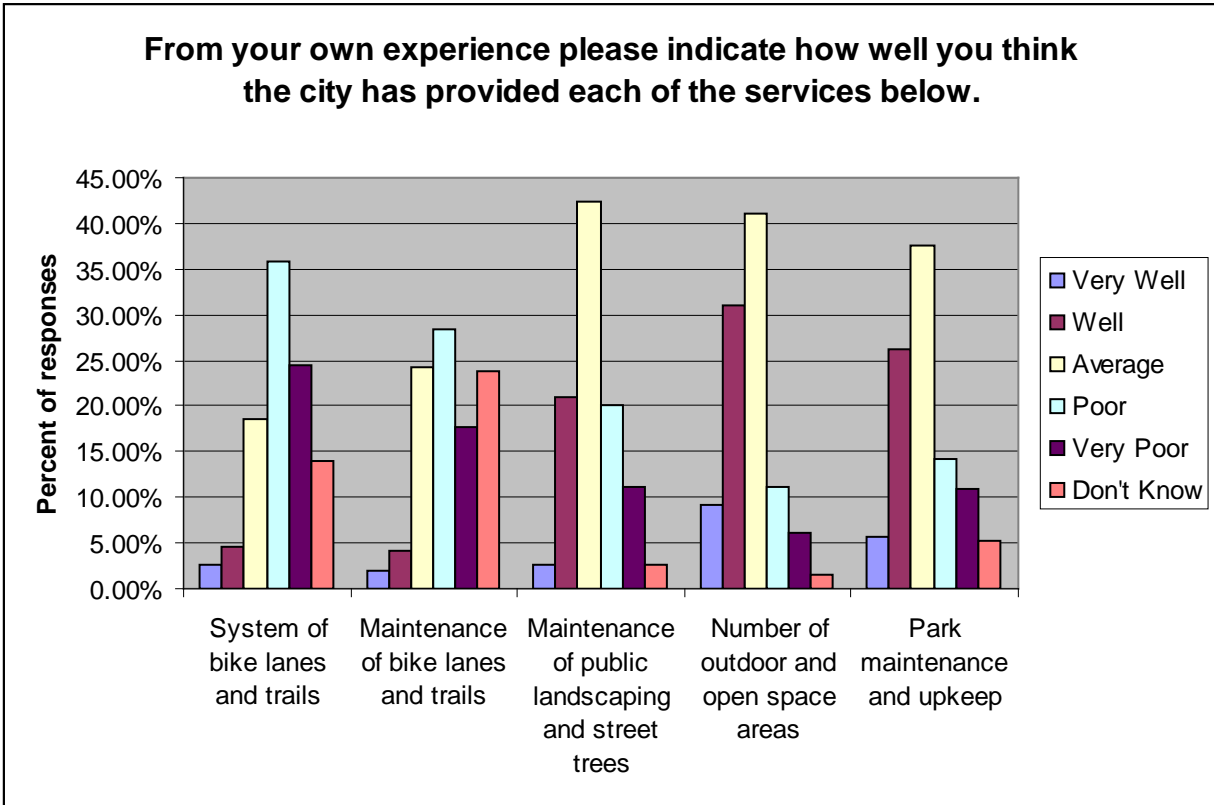
As part of the master plan update, an online survey was conducted in 2011. The survey contained several questions pertaining to recreation, open space and parks. There were 305 responses received from the survey. Of the 305 respondents, 34% were full-time city resident, 42% were part-time city residents, 20% were a resident of a township or village nearby, 3% were visitors, 6% were business owners and 65 were employed in the City. Of the 305 respondents, 17 used a wheelchair, walker or white can (and 69 respondents did not answer the question). The following graphs illustrate some of the survey responses relating to parks and recreation.

**How available and adequate are these opportunities in and near the City of New Buffalo? (Please click one response for each item.)**

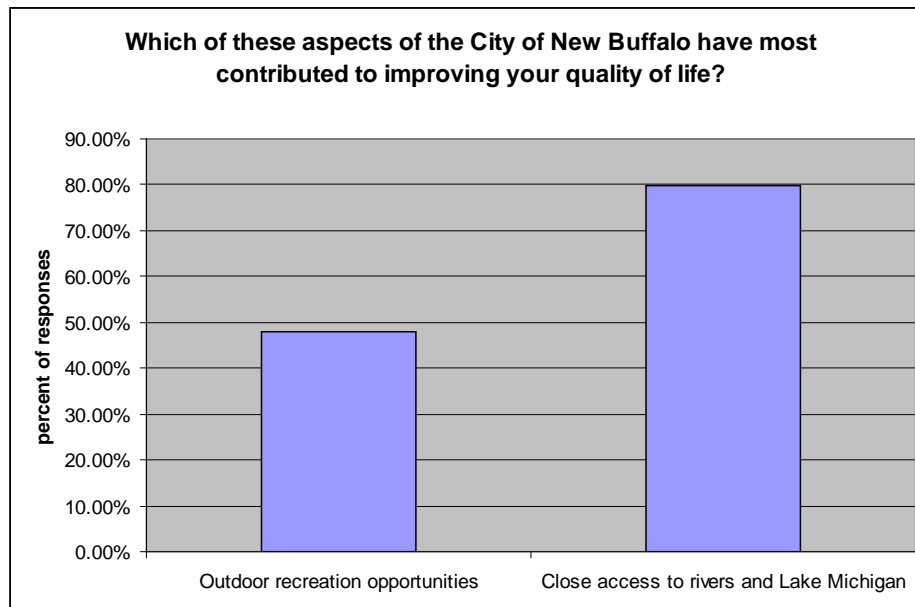




Protect water resources (streams, rivers, wetlands, Lake Michigan, and groundwater) ranked the highest in priority.



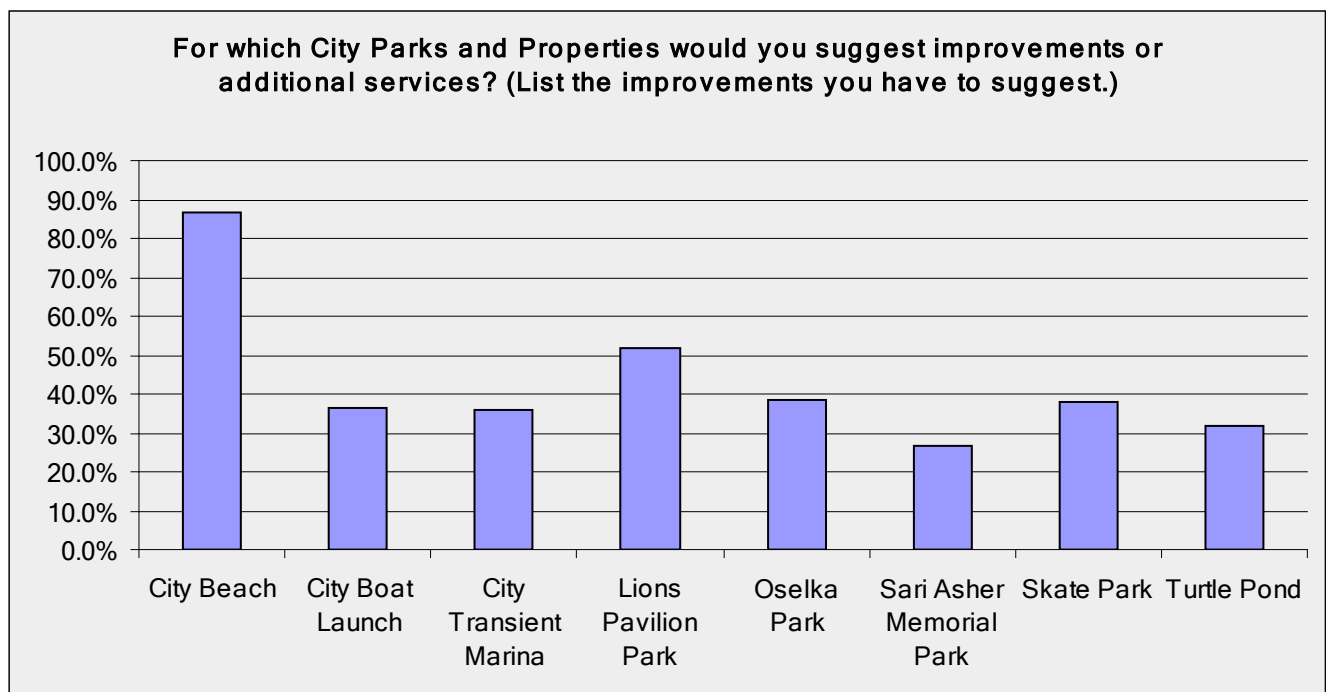
From the listed city services above, a system of bike lanes and trails ranked the poorest. The number of outdoor and open space areas and the maintenance of public landscaping and street trees ranked the highest in level of city service.



Close access to rivers and Lake Michigan ranked the highest out of 16 choices for quality of life.



The responses ranked high in very safe and safe for personal safely felt in the parks during the day.



### Summary of Written Comments for Specific Parks

The survey respondents suggested that **City Beach** have better maintenance, more parking, and traffic flow improvements. Many suggested having a boardwalk along the river, wider sidewalks, splash pad, pavilion, restaurant, and improve the concession stand to include local foods. Restrooms should be expanded and updated to include baby changing stations and a changing house. Several suggested to have a dog friendly area on the beach, more garbage cans, and to improve the dune boardwalk. Some wanted to control invasive plants on the dunes,



control/clean the bird waste, and remove trash on beach/lake. There was also a desire to have more bike racks and to improve walking/biking access across the bridge.

Survey respondents would like to see the parking improved and expanded at the **City Boat Launch**. Many also suggested the need for a fish cleaning station and restrooms. Respondents felt that the facilities could be cleaner and that the harbor should be dredged to improve the depth of the water. Respondents also felt that kayakers were not adequately accommodated.

Survey respondents suggested that **Skate Park** needs to be improved. There is also concern about safety at the location. Many suggest looking to Michigan City and Niles skate parks as models. Many also commented that there is a need for more and better ramps.

Survey respondents felt that the **Turtle Pond Park** needed to be cleaned up and better maintained. They also suggested improving the walking trails and leaving it natural. Some were unfamiliar with the park and suggested more signage or advertising.

The survey respondents suggestions for **Sari Asher Memorial Park** included improved drainage and better maintenance. Some also suggested better grass management, more playground equipment, and an improved shelter. Many are happy to have a dog park in the community. Others were unfamiliar with the park and suggested more signage or advertising.

The survey respondents suggested that **Lions Pavilion Park** should have an updated pavilion, restrooms, water fountains, and increased parking. They also suggested that there should be more trees, landscaping, and a band shelter. Other comments were to have playground equipment and a walking path. Respondents suggested doing something to clean up and reduce the number of goose droppings.

The suggestions for the **City Transient Marina** included adding more slips and docks for the boats. Update the building, improve the facilities, replace or repair the pump out because it is often broken. Additional pine trees were suggested. Others suggested advertising and maintaining the marina and adding concessions or a restaurant.

The survey respondents commented a desire for the construction at **Oselka Park** to be completed soon. Other suggested amenities included a splash park, ice skating rink, more picnic tables, and playground equipment with a covered play area. Some desired for the park to be better connected to the rest of the town so that people can walk there safely. Others wanted to see the replanting of removed trees. Many said they are looking forward to the completed park.

### **3. *Public Workshops***

Along with the online survey, two public workshops were held to solicit input. These meetings were noticed as a public meeting and the general public was invited to attend. The Steering Committee hosted a meeting on a week night and also on a weekend to try to attract second homeowners. The focus of the meetings was to understand what people like about parks and recreation opportunities in New Buffalo, what they don't like and what they would like to see in

the future. The workshop results are below. The numbers behind the comment, is the number of votes received by participants in a ranking exercise.

<b>What I like about the City's Parks &amp; Recreation Opportunities?</b>	
<b>Meeting #1 - Tuesday, October 25th 6:30-7:30pm</b>	<b>Meeting #2 Saturday, October 29th 10:00-11:00am</b>
Beach and Dunes - views and access (12) 4th of July music & fireworks (8) Lifeguards (5) Boating (5) Boat Launch (5) Dog Park (5) Marinas (5) Playground at the Beach (4) Kayak Rental at the Beach (1)	Beach (9) Lots of Access to Water (4) Public Marina (3) Dog Park (3) Tennis Courts (3) Summer Day Camp – City/Township/Schools (2) Township Hall Park – Splash Area/Playground Equipment (2) Gym equipment in High School (1) Lifeguards (1) Interest in Public Art/Sculpture (1) The Fact that the City wants to Improve (0)

<b>What I don't like about the City's Parks &amp; Recreation Opportunities?</b>	
<b>Meeting #1</b>	<b>Meeting #2</b>
Maintenance lacking at waterfront/beach (13) Bathrooms at beach (9) Lack of bathrooms at other parks (6) Lack of concern about waterways and shoreline (5) Parking lot location for dune (5) Lion's Park Parking lot use (3) Lack of water safety classes/opportunities (especially for kids) (3) Shelter at Oselka Park - bird perching issues (1) Appreciate police presence, but the use of four wheelers when beach is busy is not good - common sense safety (0)	Old bathrooms at the beach (not clean) (7) Walkway to beach not maintained (6) Oselka – Shelter – bird poop (2) No Pool (2) No water activities if beach is unsafe (2) Walkway to beach not long enough (2) East side of channel not maintained (landscaping) (2) Oselka ball fields – worried that the problems won't be fixed (1) Trash on beachfront (1) Lacking adequate/inviting playground equipment (0) No public tour boat options for people without personal boats (0) No overflow parking at the beach for those w/ stickers (0)

<b>What I would like to see in the future for Parks &amp; Recreation?</b>	
<b>Meeting #1</b>	<b>Meeting #2</b>
Improved sidewalks, trails, dedicated bike paths (11) Develop a river walk, sculpture garden, fishing deck along Galien River adjacent to Beach (9) At Beach – permanent walkway from parking lot to Lake Michigan (5) Recreation employee with neighboring communities to plan/implement activities, concerts (4) Goose control program (4) At beach – water spray park (3) New park at Whittaker and US12 (3) Reroute Whittaker/Marquette to connect Lion's Park and Beach (2) Boardwalk over breakwater (2) At beach – New concession stand with restrooms and eating/picnic facilities (2) North Sea Wall improvement – for walking and fishing (2) New dune boardwalk (1) Have kayaks for rent at beach (1) Community pool (1) Changing room with bathroom at beach (1) Switch location of the pavilion & parking lot at beach (0)	Recreation Employee shared with neighboring communities to plan & implement activities, concerts (8) Develop a river walk, sculpture garden and fishing deck along Galien River adjacent to Beach (8) New Dune Boardwalk (6) At Beach – Water Spray Park (5) At Beach – New Concession Stand with restrooms and eating/picnic facilities (4) – with Year Round Use Indoor Pool (3) At Beach – permanent walkway from parking lot to Lake Michigan (2) Goose Control Program (2) North Sea Wall Improvement – for walking and fishing (2) Improved sidewalks, trails, dedicated bike paths (1) Reroute Whitaker/Marquette to connect Lion's Park and Beach (1) Fish Cleaning Station (1) Have Kayaks for rent at beach (0) Outdoor pool (0) Ice Skating Rink (0) Increased pride of what we have (0)

#### ***4. Steering Committee Meetings***

The planning process was guided by a steering committee that met throughout the planning period. The steering committee utilized the results from the on-line survey, public workshops and conversations with members of the public and other local officials to develop the goals and objectives and the action plan.

#### ***5. Public Hearing/Public Review***

The final draft of this Plan was placed on display in the New Buffalo Township Public Library and New Buffalo City Hall from July 26, 2012 to August 27, 2012. A notice of availability to review the plan was published in the New Buffalo Times on July 26, 2012. Following the public review period, the New Buffalo City Council held a public hearing on the Plan on August 27, 2012. A copy of the public notice for the public comment period and public hearing is in the Appendix. After receiving public comments and making changes, the City Parks and Recreation Committee and Harbor Commission Council voted to recommend adoption of the plan to the City Council. The City Council approved the plan on \_\_\_\_\_. A copy of the resolution of approval and the minutes from the public hearing are also in the Appendix.

In accordance with MDNR requirements, copies of the final plan were transmitted to Berrien County and to the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission. Copies of the transmittal letters are in the Appendix.



## E. MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The information gleaned from the public input process was evaluated and used to formulate a mission, goals and objectives. These goals form the basis of the Action Plan in the next chapter.

**Mission:** The mission of the Park and Recreation Board is to plan, maintain, develop and acquire, in cooperation with surrounding municipalities, school district, county, state and all interested individuals and groups, a responsive, safe, environmentally sensitive, efficient and innovative community recreation system\* available to all citizens, seasonal residents and visitors with consideration of age and abilities.

*\*A community recreation system includes parks, recreation facilities, preserves, open spaces, environmentally sensitive areas, greenways, water trails, pedestrian and bicycling facilities, and historic, cultural and artistic resources.*

### Goals and Objectives

1. Maintain and improve the community recreation system.
  - Eliminate **non-barrier free conditions** in the park system when improvements occur.
  - Increase marketing efforts and use consistent **signage and way-finding** elements to improve/increase recreational tourism.
  - Ensure all maintenance and improvement activities are sensitive to and **protect sensitive lands, water quality and historic and cultural resources**.
  - **Annually evaluate** the progress of Action Plan implementation
2. Develop additional recreational opportunities to meet the current and future needs and desires of the community with a geographical balance along with safe and convenient access.
  - Develop a **non-motorized system** (including bike lanes, sidewalks, off-road separated paths, water trails, trail heads, etc.) to connect residents, businesses and recreation resources (locally and at the county and regional level).
  - Offer **recreational programming** opportunities in coordination with neighboring communities and other partners.
  - **Acquire land** or secure conservation easements to expand the recreation system as needed (such as to increase contiguous public land holdings, protect natural resources, increase accessibility to water resources and provide additional recreational opportunities that are geographically balanced in the community)
  - Ensure **year-round activities** are available.
  - Ensure all new facilities are **barrier-free**.
3. Enhance partnerships and relationships with residents (full-time and seasonal), tourists, youth and adult sports leagues, local businesses, agencies, community organizations, neighboring municipalities, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, Berrien County and the State of Michigan.
  - **Involve the community** in anticipating recreational needs and determining priorities.
  - Utilize City, Township and School District facilities to provide **year round indoor and outdoor recreation** programming and opportunities.
  - Increase collaboration and **develop partnerships** to fund park improvements and additional recreation opportunities (facilities and programming).
  - Use local funds to **leverage State and/or federal grants**..

## **F. ACTION PROGRAM**

The following action plan is intended to implement the Goals and Objectives developed through the public participation process.

### **1. *Rationale***

A number of recreation needs have been identified through the public survey, interviews, public workshops, general observations and the public hearing. The needs identified through this process are distributed among improving/expanding existing facilities and programs and acquiring and developing new ones.

### **2. *Recreation Priorities***

The following represents those recreational facilities or activities that have been identified by the community as being particular needs in the City of New Buffalo.

#### **a. Priority Projects**

The following projects are those that have been determined to be the highest priority for the community based on identified public need. The steering committee assigned a priority level 1 to 5 to each project with 1 bring the highest and 5 being the lowest priority. The priority level was based on not only need but also on realities such as costs. If resources or funding becomes available for a specific project, it might be possible to increase the priority level of a project. All proposed projects and those discussed in the Capital Improvement Schedule, will be constructed to comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), and "Barrier-Free" requirements.

#### **City Boat Launch**

- Install a new entrance gate machine, redesign the ingress/egress and re-pave the parking area and extend sewer/water lines for future bathrooms - 1
- Add restrooms - 3
- Add fish cleaning station - 3

#### **City Beach**

- Continue improvements to dune walk in a phased approach - 1
- Add a permanent walkway from beach parking lot to Lake Michigan shoreline - 1
- Implement a goose control program - 3
- Build a new concession stand with restrooms, changing rooms and storage on lower level with eating/picnic facilities on upper level and expand the parking; possibly include specific parking for kayakers - 5
- Reroute Whitaker/Marquette Drive (connect Lions Park and Beach) - 5
- Add additional playground equipment - 5

#### **Lions Pavilion Park**

- Reconstruct pavilion; potentially add a band shell - 5

## **Riverfront Park**

- Riverfront Park Improvements as described below - 3

The Riverfront Park is the property bounded by North Whittaker Street from the North end of the Whittaker Street Bridge along the western edge of North Whittaker Street and extending to the south edge of the beach parking lot then turning west to the western edge of the beach parking lot and then turning north along the parking lot to the north end of the lot where it turns west to the eastern shoreline of the Galien River turning southward and following the river bank upstream to the point where it turns east to meet the starting point at the north end of the Whittaker Street Bridge. Within this boundary will be placed shoreline stabilization, a 10 foot wide river walk path from the existing sidewalk near the end of the bridge's southwest guardrail to the north end of the beach parking lot, a 5 foot wide gravel outdoor display path, police boat docking facilities for emergency responders, a 20 by 10 foot fishing pier, storm water management system and numerous other park amenities. Outside these boundaries we have also scoped revisions to Whittaker Street that we believe will improve the overall traffic flow.

The project has been broken down into phases that would allow the work to be performed in smaller pieces or as stand-alone projects which may be more manageable and will allow the funding to be spread over several years.

- **Phase 1** would be constructing the Riverfront Park improvements from the west edge of the beach parking lot to the river directly in front of the beach parking lot area. This area is approximately 14,839 square feet with 356 feet of river bank.
- **Phase 2** would be constructing the Riverfront Park improvements from the south edge of the beach parking lot along the eastern edge of the new river walk and along the riverbank to the existing riprap. This area is approximately 20,894 square feet with 615 feet of river bank.
- **Phase 3** would be constructing the Riverfront Park improvements from the south edge of the beach parking lot along the eastern edge of the river walk and along the existing west edge of North Whittaker Street. This area is approximately 21,226 square feet.
- **Phase 4** would be constructing any roadway improvements within the right of way of North Whittaker Street to the eastern edge of the beach parking lot entrance. This is a roadway centerline distance of approximately 780 feet.

The cost for the total package is estimated at: \$1,834,000.00.

These costs are allocated to: Phase 1 \$ 557,000.00. Phase 2 \$ 705,000.00.

Phase 3 \$ 235,000.00. Phase 4 \$ 337,000.00. For more information on this project see the *RIVERFRONT PARK SCOPING STUDY PROJECT*, May 2012.

## **Transient Marina**

There is a desire to increase the size of the marina and amenities to accommodate the general public, not just those renting boat slips

- Upgrade the electrical system - 2
- Repave parking lot - 3
- Construct an inside lounge area along the west side of the building with laundry, showers, vending machines and public bathrooms - 5

**City Harbor** (in partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers)

- Continue maintenance dredging - 1
- Reconstruct breakwater/north sea wall for walking and fishing - 5

**Sari Asher Memorial Park**

- Improve drainage - 1
- Increase enclosed/fenced area for dogs - 2
- Add dog agility course equipment - 4

**Skate Park Improvements** (in partnership with New Buffalo schools and New Buffalo Township)

- Install additional equipment - 5

**Oselka Park**

- Add a tot lot - 1
- Add additional playground equipment to existing playground area - 2
- Construct band shell - 4
- Add additional bathrooms – 4

**Turtle Pond**

- Improve trail, but keep the area natural - 5

**Biking and Walking**

- Add bicycle lanes/paved shoulders to roads and upgrade sidewalk facilities/street crossings within the City to provide linkages between parks, public facilities and other popular destinations; add bike parking and signage – 1
- Work with surrounding communities to implement the Hike and Bike Plan -1
- Provide better pedestrian access over the Galien River to connect the downtown and beach area. - 1
- Enhance the newly designated US Bike Route 35 by installing signage, bike lanes, paved shoulders, bike parking and other amenities. (Route of US BR 25 in the New Buffalo area: Lakeside, Wilson, Stromer, Sand, Lubke, W. Detroit, S. Eagle, Clay, Red Arrow Highway) - 5

**Water Trail Enhancements**

- Install signage or other amenities for canoe and kayak users for the Galien River Water Trail - 3
- Install amenities for kayakers for the Lake Michigan Water Trail - 5

**Other**

- Implement a recycling program for the park system, City Hall and downtown area - 1
- Acquire land for additional parks with a special interest in Lake Michigan and Galien River frontage, wetlands and other natural areas. – 1
- Hire a recreation programming coordinator jointly with surrounding municipalities -3

## **Longer Term Improvements**

- Build a community center - 5
- Build a community indoor pool - 5
- Build a cultural museum/ Offer cultural programming in partnership with the Pokagon Band - 5

The following is a description of some of the larger projects that would especially require partnerships with others.

- **Harbor Country Hike and Bike Plan Implementation for City of New Buffalo**

Based on information received from local jurisdictions and the steering committee meetings, a list of possible pilot projects and tasks are outlined below. These projects provide initial direction but are not all inclusive.

### *1. Jefferson Street/ Maudlin Road Reconstruction*

- City is looking at reconstructing this road. The Friends of Harbor Country Trails should attend public meetings and contact the City regarding this project and advocate for paved shoulders as the plan suggests.

### *2. Clay Street between High School and Elementary School*

- Complete construction of sidewalks on both sides of the road - Estimated Cost: \$348,480  
- Add bike lanes on the road - Estimated Cost: \$563,345  
- Improve crossing at Clay Street and US-12 - Estimated Cost: \$215,234  
- This project could be expanded to include *Clay Street from New Buffalo High School to US-12 and Red Arrow Highway from US-12 to Memorial Park* and involve the City and New Buffalo Township

Possible funding sources include SAFETEA-LU, CMAQ, Safe Routes to School (SR2S), Pokagon Fund, Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, Berrien County Community Foundation and City of New Buffalo.

### *3. Marquette- Riviera Shared Road Awareness*

- Friends of Harbor Country Trails should talk to each Neighborhood Association about raising shared road awareness.  
- Publish brochures on proper use of a shared road - Estimated Cost: \$3,000  
- Install shared road awareness signs for vehicular traffic - Estimated Cost: \$58,000

Possible funding sources include Pokagon Fund, Michigan Gateway Community Foundation, Berrien County Community Foundation and City of New Buffalo.

### *4. Clay Street between High School and US-12*

- Complete construction of sidewalks on both sides of the road - Estimated Cost: \$150,000  
- Add bike lanes on the road - Estimated Cost: \$230,000  
- Improve crossing at Clay Street and US-12 - Estimated Cost: \$215,234



Possible funding sources include SAFETEA-LU, CMAQ, Safe Routes to School, Pokagon Fund, Berrien County Community Foundation, Michigan Gateway Community Foundation and City of New Buffalo.

#### *5. Buffalo Street Corridor Study*

- Commission a study on Buffalo Street with MDOT to specifically look at vehicle and pedestrian safety - Estimated Cost: \$38,000

This study could also include US12 and the following entities: New Buffalo Township, Chikaming Township, Berrien County Road Commission, MDOT. Possible funding sources include Act 51 (Road Commission), SAFETEA-LU Transportation Enhancement, Pokagon Fund, Berrien County Community Foundation, Michigan Gateway Community Foundation and municipalities.

- **Community Center**

A community center that provides a meeting place for everyone in the City of New Buffalo and the surrounding area is recommended. Residents have continually expressed a need for a community meeting facilities, a day care center, senior citizen meeting area, and perhaps even a senior day care. Such services could be provided within this facility.

A community stage could also be incorporated into the design of the building with adequate light and sound systems for special events and occasions. However, this may also be an opportunity to share facilities with the School District, as the new Middle/High School has a new auditorium with state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems.

- **Community Swimming Pool**

Many local residents have expressed the desire to have an indoor swimming pool available. The two closest pools to New Buffalo are at the Michigan City Y.M.C.A., which is approximately 10 miles away, and the indoor pool located at the high school in Bridgman, Michigan about 14 miles to the north. The presence of Lake Michigan only further emphasizes the need to provide swimming and water safety classes on a year round basis.

- **Recreation Programming Position**

The City could partner with the Township to fund a position. This position could also be affiliated with programs for school district students and residents that do not directly conflict with school-sponsored sports. Therefore, this position could potentially be funded by all three entities. This arrangement could also open avenues for governmental and grant funding of health and wellness programs that are available to school districts and school-based programs.

### 3. *Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS)*

The City of New Buffalo hopes to initiate the following improvements to maintain and improve recreation opportunities within the community over the next five years. Estimated costs are included as a general reference. Many of the projects have not had preliminary plans or engineering completed and estimated costs are not available. For some of these projects, the estimated costs are based on other planning documents with similar projects. For other projects, the estimated costs are left blank because preliminary or conceptual plans or locations are needed to make an estimate. Actual costs could be more or less for a variety of reasons and these figures should only be used for general planning.

Year	Park/Location	Improvement/Project	Estimated Cost
2012-2013	City Boat Launch	Install new entrance gate machine, redesign ingress/egress, repave parking lot, extend water/sewer	\$175,00
	City Beach	Continue phased improvements to dune walk	
		Add permanent walkway from parking lot to beach	\$105,000
	City Harbor	Continue maintenance dredging	\$80,000
	Sari Asher Memorial Park	Improve drainage	
	Oselka Park	Add a tot lot	\$50,000
	In conjunction with City's Complete Streets Program	Add bicycle lanes/paved shoulders to roads and upgrade sidewalks/pedestrian crossings; add bike racks and bike parking facilities	
	Galien River at Whittaker Street	Improve access over Galien River connecting downtown and beach	\$1,200,000
	All parks, downtown area, City Buildings	Implement recycling program for park system, City Hall and downtown	\$15,000
2013-2014	Transient Mariana	Upgrade electrical system	\$40,000
	City Harbor	Continue maintenance dredging	\$80,000
	Oselka Park	Add additional playground equipment to existing play area	\$60,000
	Sari Asher Memorial Park	Increase enclosed/fenced area for dogs	\$15,000
2014-2015	City Boat Launch	Add restrooms and fish cleaning station	\$85,000
	City Beach	Implement goose control program	
	Riverfront Park	Phase I improvements	\$557,000
	Transient Marina	Repave parking lot	\$60,000
	City Harbor	Continue maintenance dredging	\$80,000
	Galien River Water Trail	Install signage, improve access and add other amenities to improve trail experience	
	New Buffalo area	Hire a recreation programming coordinator for area	\$30,000/year (City's share)
2015-2016	Riverfront Park	Continue Phase I improvements	
	City Harbor	Continue maintenance dredging	\$80,000
	Sari Asher Memorial Park	Add dog agility course equipment	\$7,000
	Oselka Park	Construct Band Shell and add additional bathrooms	\$80,000

Year	Park/Location	Improvement/Project	Estimated Cost
2016 -2017	City Beach	Build concession stand with restrooms, changing rooms, storage, eating/picnic facilities, expand parking	\$200,000
	City Beach	Reroute Whittaker/Marquette Drive (connect Lions Park and City Beach)	\$750,000
	City Beach	Add additional playground equipment	\$50,000
	Riverfront Park	Phase 2 improvements	\$705,000
	Transient Mariana	Construct inside lounge area with laundry, showers, vending, and public bathrooms	\$150,000
	City Harbor	Reconstruct breakwater/north sea wall for walking and fishing	\$480,000
	City Harbor	Continue maintenance dredging	\$80,000
	Lions Pavilion Park	Reconstruct pavilion, potentially add band shell	\$70,000
	Skate Park	Install additional equipment	\$100,000
	Turtle Pond	Improve trail (keep natural)	\$20,000
	US Bike Route 35	Enhance with signage and other amenities	
	Lake Michigan Water Trail	Enhance with signage, improve access and add other amenities	

## G. APPENDIX

### 1. *Population and Social Characteristics*

The following demographic data illustrates the nature of New Buffalo's population and helps to frame local parks and recreation needs within local conditions.

#### a. *Population and Dwelling Units*

The current United States Census count for the City of New Buffalo's full-time population is 1,883. This is a 33.2% decline from the recorded historic high in 1980 of 2,821. The reported full-time population has declined in each decennial census from 1980 until the present. From the 2000 Census to the 2010 Census the population declined by 14% or 314 full-time residents. Grand Beach Village was the only community of the three neighboring communities that grew in population from 2000 to 2010.

**Table 1: Population Counts 1950-2010 in the City of New Buffalo and Surrounding Communities**

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
New Buffalo City	1,565	2,128	2,784	2,821	2,317	2,200	1,883
New Buffalo Township	2,879	4,196	2,583	2,878	2,419	2,468	2,386
Grand Beach Village	105	86	165	227	146	221	272
Michiana Village	102	135	233	333	164	200	182

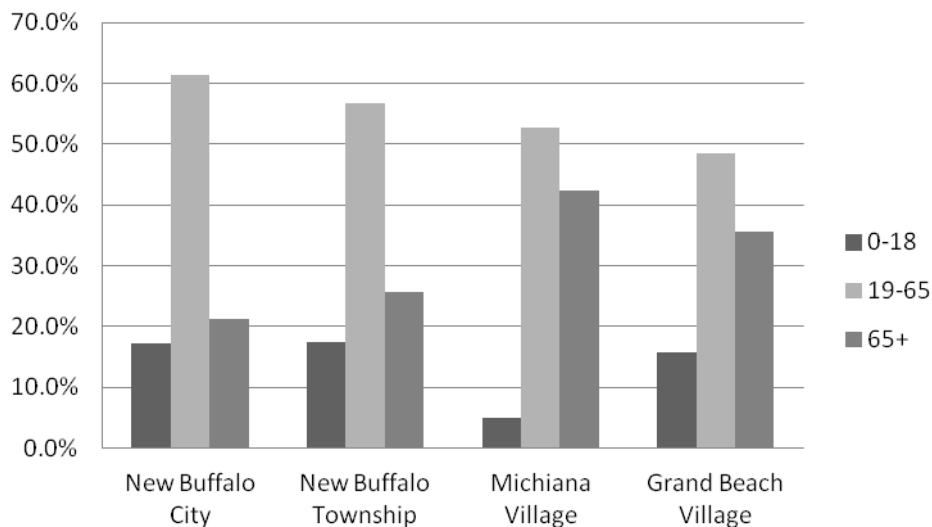
The population drop was comparable to similar lakefront communities on Michigan's West Coast. Saugatuck in Allegan County had 1,065 residents in 2000 and dropped to 925 residents in 2010. South Haven also experienced a drop from 5,021 residents in 2000 to 4,403 residents in 2010. St. Joseph City also dropped from 8,789 in 2000 to 8,365 in 2010. This does not always mean that there are less people actually living in these communities. Later in the Housing section, there is a better examination of the increase in percentage and number of dwelling units in these communities being used as seasonal and vacation homes. Persons that are "season residents" are not counted in the population of these cities. This can make it seem as if communities with high percentages of dwelling units used for seasonal residents are shrinking when they might be experiencing historic population highs during the summer and other popular travel times.

#### b. *Age and Gender*

Communities that border Lake Michigan have experienced a large influx of retired persons who wish to live in prime vacation areas. The City of New Buffalo and neighboring communities have been no exception to this trend. While many Michigan residents chose to move "up north" for a retirement area, many non-residents (particularly from the Chicago area) have chosen the southwest corner of the state as a retirement location. In addition, as transportation times have

decreased, many workers and second home owners have chosen to commute over state lines for the benefit of small town, lakeshore living.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Residents in New Buffalo City and Surrounding Communities by Age Group in 2010**



Michiana Village and Grand Beach Village have the largest percentage of residents that are 65+. The City of New Buffalo and New Buffalo Township are less dominated by age groups traditionally labeled as ‘retirees,’ and have larger percentages of working age adults that comprise their communities.

In holding with general population trends, New Buffalo has slightly more females than males. The 2010 Census reported that there were 954 females in the City of New Buffalo and 929 males.

### *c. Persons with Disabilities*

The Bureau of the Census reports mobility or self-care limitations for non-institutionalized persons 16 years and over. In 1990, there were 3 people in the City between the ages of 16 and 64 that suffered from mobility limitation, and 19 people within the same age group that suffered from a self-care limitation.

The number of people considered to have disability status in the City of New Buffalo was higher in 2000. The U.S. Census reports 55 persons with a disability in the 5- to 20-year old age group. The largest group with a disability was age 21 to 64 which recorded 245 persons with a disability. The over 65 age group reported 159 persons with a disability. The increase in the number of disabled persons in the younger age group is significant with regard to parks, recreation facilities and programs available to these individuals.

*Note: Changes to Census data collection has caused more recent data on disabled persons to be blocked for privacy reasons.*



*d. Race/Ethnic Groups*

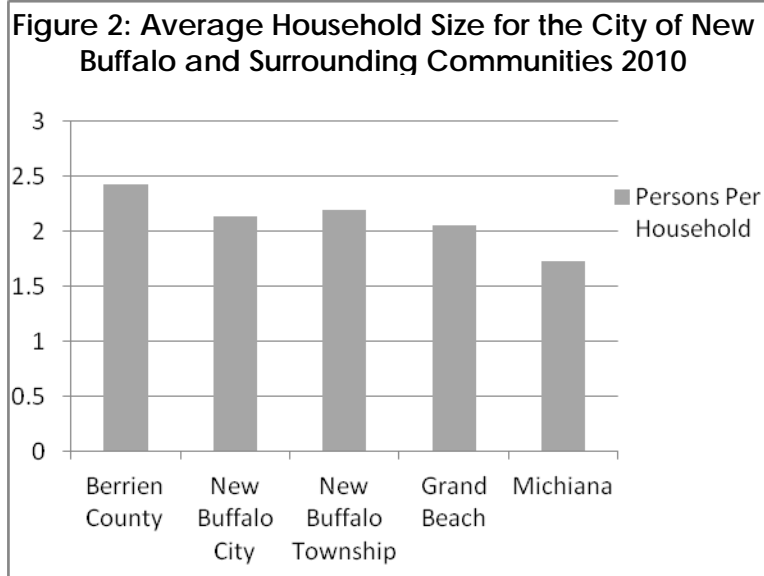
New Buffalo is a predominantly white community, with 93.4% of all residents classified as ‘white.’ This is a drop from the 2000 Census when 97% of residents reported ‘white.’ In 2010 4.4% of New Buffalo residents indicated Hispanic or Latino descent. This number was an increase from the 2.6% of residents that indicated Hispanic or Latino in the 2000 Census.

**Table 2: New Buffalo City Racial Composition**

	Count	Percentage (%)
Total population	1,883	100
One Race	1,859	98.7
White	1,759	93.4
Black or African American	31	1.6
American Indian and Alaska Native	10	0.5
Asian	6	0.3
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	4	0.2
Native Hawaiian	4	0.2
Some Other Race	49	2.6
Two or More Races	24	1.3

*e. Households*

New Buffalo households are aging, as evidenced by the greater number of households with persons 65 and over than households with persons younger than 18. 34.4% of households have persons 65 and older, compared with 32.1% of households in 2000. 21.8% of households in New Buffalo in 2010 had persons younger than 18 years of age, lower than in 2000 when 27% of households had persons younger than 18 years of age. 42.7% of City households consisted of married couples and/or married couples with children, again a decrease from 2000 when 63.7% of households were family units.



The number of persons per household emphasizes the aging of City of New Buffalo households. With an average of household size of 2.14, New Buffalo City's average is less than Berrien County and New Buffalo Township, comparable to Grand Beach, and higher than Michiana. The average household size in 2000 was 2.32, larger than current average.

*f. Income*

The median household income of New Buffalo City residents was \$39,976 in 2010, significantly lower than that of New Buffalo Township at \$63,615. Grand Beach and Michiana have higher median household incomes, with \$95,500 and \$104,583 respectively.

*g. Employment*

The largest occupation category in the City of New Buffalo is 'Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services' at 18% of the City's employment profile. The second and third largest classifications are 'Retail Trade' and 'Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities' at 15.4% and 12.8% respectively. 'Construction' occupations represented 12.4% of the City of New Buffalo's workforce in 2010. 'Education Services, and Health Care, and Social Assistance' is the last category with over 10% of the workforce and account for 12.0% of the employment profile.

**Table 3: City of New Buffalo Civilian, Non-Farm, Private Employed Population 16 Years and Over in 2010**

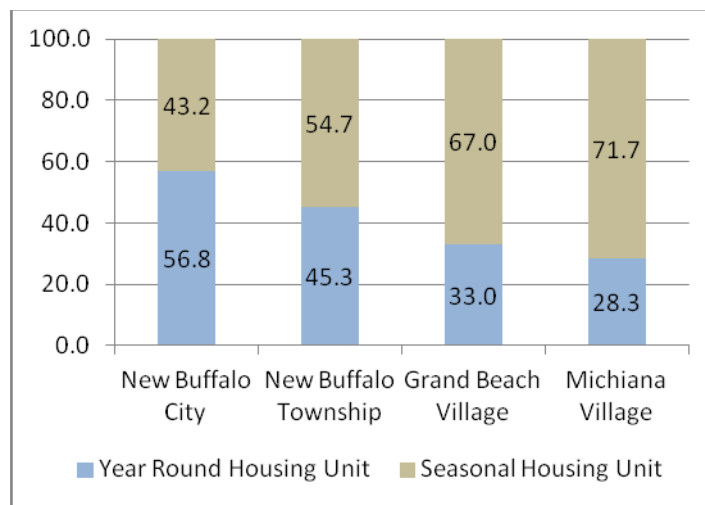
<b>Workforce</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent of total</b>
Total Workforce	877	100%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	158	18.00%
Retail Trade	135	15.40%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	112	12.80%
Construction	109	12.40%
Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance	105	12.00%
Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services	74	8.40%
Manufacturing	70	8.00%
Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and leasing	46	5.20%
Wholesale Trade	28	3.20%
Other services, Except Public Administration	24	2.70%
Public Administration	16	1.80%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	0	0.00%
Information	0	0.00%

When City of New Buffalo residents commute, 80% are alone in a car, van, or truck. This is lower than the rate of Berrien County residents, where 84% travel alone in a car, van, or truck to work. Berrien County residents commute on average of 19.1 minutes while New Buffalo residents travel on average 20.6 minutes to work. New Buffalo Township and Michiana rates are comparable to the City of New Buffalo, but the average commute time from Grand Beach to work is 35.8 minutes.

#### *h. Housing*

The total number of housing units within the City of New Buffalo in 2010 was 1,692, 266 more than in 2000, when there were 1,426 housing units. Of these, 881 (52.1%) were unoccupied. Of the unoccupied 881, 670 (39.6% of the total housing units) are for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. This leaves 211 (12.5% of total housing units) as unoccupied non-seasonal housing.

Figure 3: Percentage of Year Round and Seasonal Housing Units 2010



Like most communities in the United States and Michigan, New Buffalo saw the abrupt halt of new and second home construction in the late 2000s. The construction of new condo development dominated the area between the downtown and marina area in the early and mid 2000s. 12% of the total housing stock was constructed during the 2000-2005 period. That is only about 2% less and 22 units less than what was built in the entire 1990s, and ranks fourth for the most active period of housing unit construction in the history of the City of New Buffalo. Over 25% of the total housing stock was constructed after 1990. The 1950s and 1960s also contributed over 25% of current housing stock.

**Table 4: Year of Housing Unit Construction in the City of New Buffalo.**

<b>Year Structure Built</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Total housing units	1,692	100%
Built 2005 or later	62	3.66%
Built 2000 to 2004	217	12.83%
Built 1990 to 1999	239	14.13%
Built 1980 to 1989	105	6.21%
Built 1970 to 1979	107	6.32%
Built 1960 to 1969	197	11.64%
Built 1950 to 1959	268	15.84%
Built 1940 to 1949	128	7.57%
Built 1939 or earlier	235	13.89%

Comparing New Buffalo to other core lakefront communities in areas that cater to Chicago summer tourists shows that New Buffalo is not exceptional in the number or rate of dwelling unit construction and the increase of second/seasonal home ownership from 2000 to 2010. The next two tables show how the composition of the housing stock changed from 2000 to 2010 of the New Buffalo, South Haven, Saugatuck, Douglas and St. Joseph communities.

**Table 5: Gross Change in Housing Unit Use in Selected Michigan Lakefront Communities from 2000 to 2010**

	Total Number of Additional Housing Units	Gross Change of Housing Units Used for Year Round Residents	Gross Change In number of Vacant Housing Units	Gross Change in Number of Vacant Housing Units Used for Seasonal or Vacation Use
New Buffalo	266	-66	332	311
South Haven	367	-136	503	288
Saugatuck	764	332	432	22
Douglas	222	58	164	131
St. Joseph	201	-184	385	21

**Table 6: Percentage Change in Housing Unit Use in Selected Michigan Lakefront Community from 2000 to 2010**

	Housing Unit Percent Change 2000-2010 (%)	Percentage of Households Vacant Change 2000-2010 (%)	Percentage of Vacant Housing Units Used as Seasonal or Vacation Use Change 2000-2010 (%)
New Buffalo	18.7	14.3	14.4
South Haven	12.3	11.8	6.0
Saugatuck	82.3	7.1	-14.2
Douglas	26.0	8.8	6.9
St. Joseph	4.4	80.7	159.1

The trend of Michigan Lakefront communities over the 2000s was to add housing units and to add seasonal and vacation housing units. Only Saugatuck saw a decrease in the percentage of vacant housing units being used as a seasonal or vacation home. Douglas and South Haven saw smaller percentage gains than New Buffalo. However, St. Joseph saw a major increase in the percentage of vacant homes being used as seasonal or vacation use. No community saw as high a gross total of vacant housing units being used for seasonal or vacation use as New Buffalo did from 2000-2010. New Buffalo, South Haven and St. Joseph lost housing units used for full-time residents to either vacancy, and/or seasonal or vacation use in their communities.

Combined with the information that New Buffalo has lost 14% of its full-year population since 2000 but had an 18.7% increase in housing units and a 14.4% increase in the housing unit percentage used for seasonal or vacation use, the influx of summertime seasonal residents has become much larger in the City of New Buffalo. The 14% decrease in population reported by the United States Census undercounts the number of people living in New Buffalo at all times of the year.

City officials report that nearly 58% of all property tax bills are sent to addresses outside of the 49117 zip code. The City also estimates a significant number of persons living on their personal boats during the summer months. New Buffalo Harbor has more than 950 boat slips: 921 seasonal marina-condo association slips, 32 transient-public slips and 13 under construction for Dunescape on the Peninsula.

New Buffalo has the highest proportion of housing units used for year-round occupancy of its neighboring communities. It is also the only municipality with a majority of its housing units with year-round occupancy.

Based on 2010 Census data, the median value of a home in the City of New Buffalo was \$229,500, up 122% percent from 2000. The New Buffalo Housing stock was mostly built during two 20 year intervals. First, the 1950-1970 period accounting for 29.8% all housing units, and the 1990-2010 period accounting for 33.2% of all housing units. Together these two periods account for 63% of all housing units in the City of New Buffalo.



2. *Notice of Plan Availability for Public Review and Public Hearing*



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD  
AND PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

The City of New Buffalo will hold a Public Comment Period for the City of New Buffalo Park and Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Plan from July 26, 2012 to August 24, 2012. Written comments can be submitted by email to [clerk@cityofnewbuffalo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofnewbuffalo.org) or by mail to 224 W. Buffalo St., New Buffalo, MI 49117

The City of New Buffalo will hold a Public Hearing and Joint Meeting concerning the draft plan on Monday, August 27, 2012, at 6:30 pm, at New Buffalo City Hall, 224 West Buffalo Street, New Buffalo, Michigan. This will be a joint meeting of the Park and Recreation Board and the Master Plan Steering Committee. At this meeting, the public will have the opportunity to give oral and/or written comments and to ask questions regarding the plan.

This Public Hearing and Joint Meeting are accessible to the public. Persons requiring auxiliary aides and services or other accommodations should contact, by one week prior notice in writing or by telephone: New Buffalo City Hall, 224 West Buffalo Street, New Buffalo, Michigan 49117. Telephone number is 269-469-1500. All interested parties are urged to attend.

The plan will be available for review during business hours at New Buffalo City Hall, 224 W. Buffalo Street, New Buffalo, Michigan and also at the New Buffalo Township Public Library, 33 North Thompson Street, New Buffalo, Michigan. The plan is also available on the Internet at <http://www.cityofnewbuffalo.org>.

3. ***Copy of Legal Notice of Public Comment Period and Public Hearing***

**4.     *Minutes from the Public Hearing***

**5.     *Resolution Approving the Plan***

**6. *Letters of Transmittal***

**a. *To the Berrien County Planning Commission***



b. *To the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission*

**7.     *DNR Letter of Acceptance***