

Chapter 4. Recreation Inventory

This section provides a listing of the existing recreational facilities available within the City of Charlevoix and neighboring areas. It includes thorough descriptions of those facilities, park classifications as well as facility compatibility with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). A summary of these facilities can be found in the Facilities Detail and Classification Chart in Appendix E.

The MDNR has established a ranking system to determine the accessibility status of each recreation facility. This ranking system uses points 1 through 5 to rate a facility based on the ADAAG. A visual inspection was conducted of each site, as well as interviews with staff to determine compliance with ADAAG standards in regards to routes of travel, ramps and stairs, parking and drop off areas, entrances, doorways, vertical relationships, signage, and restrooms. The MDNR rating system (below) was then applied to each site. Additionally, yearly projects directed at upgrading the facilities to better meet the ADAAG standards have been on-going in the park system over the last ten years. Each park/facility description in this section includes an ADAAG rating based on the MDNR system given below:

1. None of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
2. Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines

3. Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines
4. The entire park meets accessibility guidelines
5. The entire park was developed / renovated using the principals of Universal Design.

As noted in the inventory, not all sites meet the standards of accessibility. However, as sites are improved, the City will continue its efforts towards improving accessibility and is strongly encouraged to focus on the concepts of universal design whenever possible.

4.1 City of Charlevoix Parks and Recreational Facilities

The City of Charlevoix owns more than 125 acres of park and recreation land. This acreage is comprised of the Charlevoix Golf Club, numerous walking trails, and a wide array of parks. The City's parks include special use (Carpenter Avenue Ball Fields, Elm Street Tennis courts, City Skate Park, and Mt. McSauba), parks with public beaches (Depot Beach Park, Coast Guard Park, Ferry Beach Park, and Michigan Beach Park), community/mini neighborhood parks (Bridge Park, East Park, Veterans Park, Hoffmann Park, Water Tower Park, and West Dixon Park).

(City Park Map on Next Page)



Figure 4.1 Air Photo with Park Locations. (Excludes the Charlevoix Golf Club and tennis courts)

The Charlevoix Golf Club

The City's nine-hole, par thirty-six golf course sits in the northern part of the City, divided by US-31 and Division Street. This is one of the oldest municipally owned courses in Michigan. Its prime location at the City's northern gateway, as well as its gentle, sloping terrain, four sets of tees and walkability make it one of the City's prized assets.

John P. Wilson, a prominent Chicago attorney who joined the Chicago Club in 1883, and Edward C. Waller, also of Chicago, founded the Charlevoix Golf Club in 1896. The course, designed by renowned golf course architect Willie Watson, is identified as one of the earliest regulation golf courses in the United States.

The original course was designed as nine holes, located west of Mercer Boulevard. Total yardage was 2,645 yards. In 1899, a brochure was published by the Pere Marquette Railroad advertising two golf tournaments to be played in July and August. It describes the golf course as "for the most part level with sandy soil, topped with light sod, and comparatively free from difficulty for the average player." In January 1900, over 100 acres of additional land was purchased by members of the Chicago Club, and by 1903 the golf course became 18 holes. A new watering system was added in September 1908 to make it the finest and most beautiful course in this part of the country.

On April 14, 1937 the Chicago Club turned their golf course over to the City of Charlevoix for the sum of one dollar. The City has successfully maintained and operated it as a public nine-hole course ever since.

Over the years the course has played host to such legends as Walter Hagen, Tommy Armour, and Michigan Amateur champion Chuck Kocsis. In 1996, the Charlevoix Golf Club held a Charlevoix Area Centennial Tournament in celebrating its proud historic presence.

By the end of the 20th century, the Charlevoix Golf Club completed the primary goals of the Golf Course Master Plan that was established by the Charlevoix City Council, on July 9, 1990, in renovating the Golf Course to further beautify and improve the historic course.



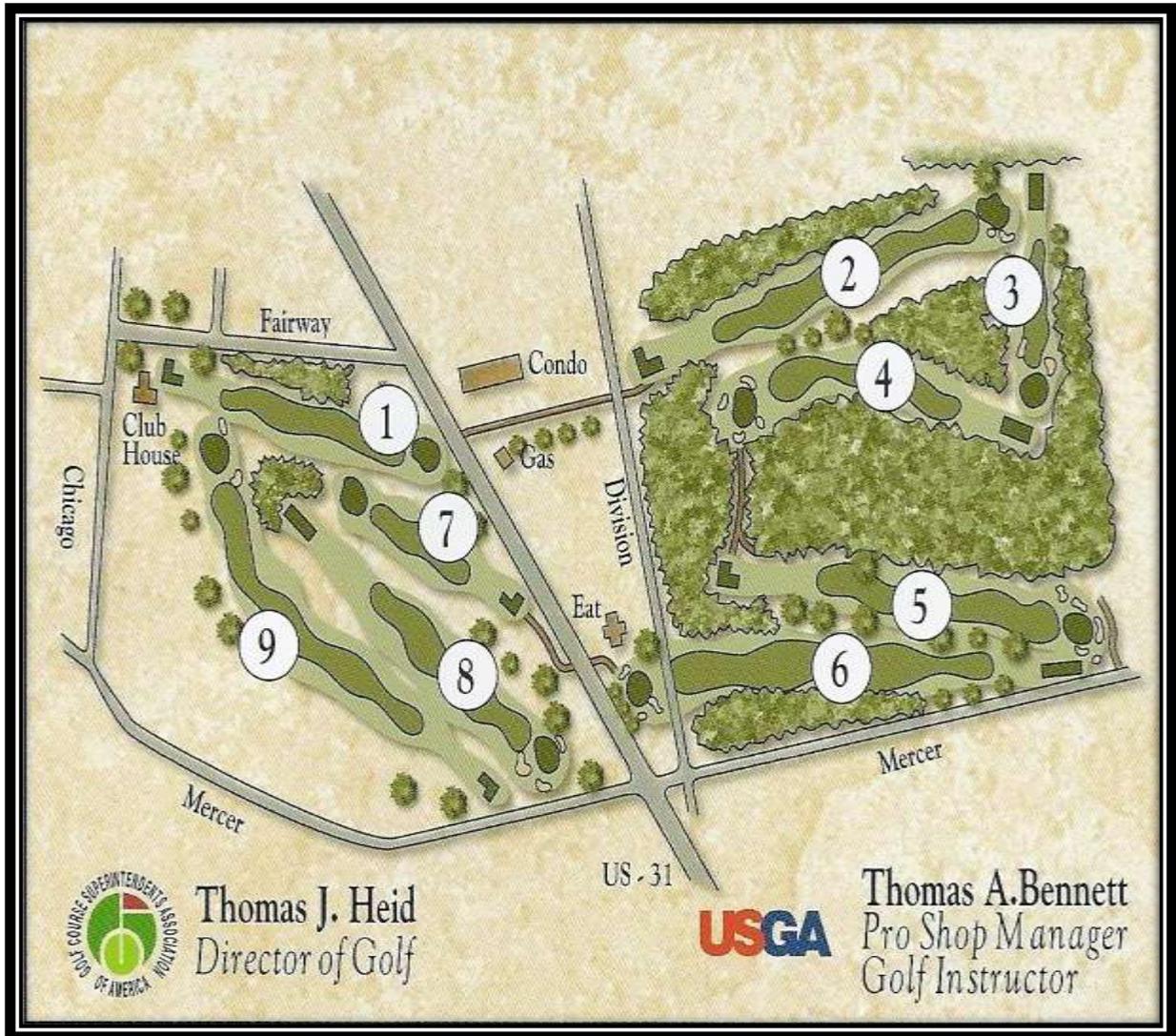


Figure 4.11 Golf Course Layout and Location Map.

The Charlevoix Golf Club, like other recreation facilities, are facing financial challenges resulting from shrinking City budgets and the impact of Michigan’s troubled economy. Golf course staffs have made every effort to cut costs and increase revenue. An updated website, Facebook page, and advertising have been implemented to help increase users. A suitable location is lacking for a driving range, which makes it difficult to

plan for building that amenity, which could have a positive impact on revenues.

Carpenter Avenue Ball Fields

The Carpenter Avenue Ball Fields are located off West Carpenter in the southwestern portion of the City. They are used extensively during the summer months in the community’s recreation program. These parks are used for

league play during the summer, and by the City's t-ball, little league, and softball programs. The facility underwent a substantial renovation in 1996, during which parking areas and surrounding landscaping were improved, and new fencing, night lighting, restroom facilities, and access walkways were added. In 2008, the park's little league field was renovated. Adjacent to the ball fields, the Rotary Club financed the installation of playground equipment and a basketball court, adding additional activities to this park. *(Park type: Special Use; ADAAG rating: 4)*



Elm Street Tennis Courts

The Elm Street Tennis Courts are four fenced-in, hard-surface courts located in the north-central portion of the City, adjacent to the Charlevoix Golf Club. The courts also have a double-sided practice wall and a small, fenced-in play area for younger children. These courts have also been used for pickle ball, which is increasing in popularity. *(Park type: Special Use; ADAAG rating: 4)*



Community Skate Park

Located on West Carpenter Avenue, adjacent to the Charlevoix Electric Department, the Skate Park is a custom-built wood skate park, constructed in mid-2006. A number of community members provided financial support and assistance in constructing the skate park. The park charges a low user fee, and has facilities for skateboarding, rollerblading, scooters and biking. Safety equipment is required, and is available for rental if needed. *(Park type: Special Use; ADAAG rating: 4)*

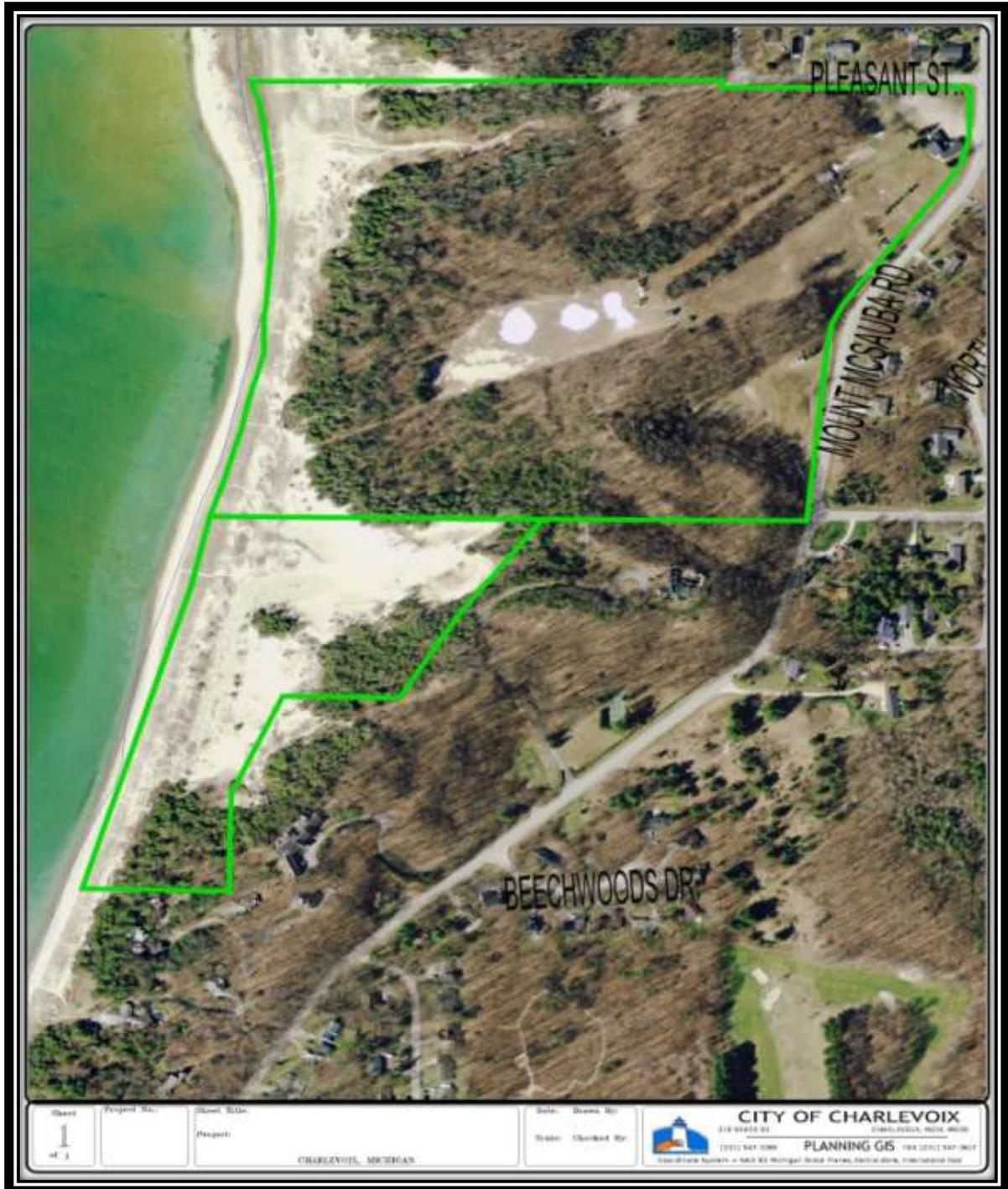


Mt. McSauba Recreation Area

Mt. McSauba is a fifty-nine acre multi-season park owned by the City, but located within Charlevoix Township, north of the City limits. The park is characterized by Mt. McSauba, the high-

est geographic point near the City. The park has extensive beach frontage on Lake Michigan, which is accessible from many points throughout the park.

The park has a two-story lodge, used during both the summer and winter.



In the wintertime, Mt. McSauba is a focal point for recreational activities, including downhill skiing, cross country skiing on trails along the base of the hill, snowboarding, snowshoeing, and ice skating. Many families and youth groups from all over northern Michigan come to Mt. McSauba for winter activities due to the location, quality facilities, friendly staff, and lower prices on lift tickets, rentals, and lessons.

The City's Recreation Department operates a very successful day camp, Camp McSauba, for children during the summer months. Camp McSauba offers a variety of activities and classes for youth ages five to thirteen.

The trail system at Mt. McSauba is extensively used for hiking, particularly in the warmer months and some biking. In 2011 City Council also approved an 18 hole disc golf course that was designed to minimize impacts to existing uses and the natural environment. This initiative will be paid for by private donations and grants. At this point some basic course work has taken place. Mt. McSauba is not only a park, but many also consider it a natural area along with the adjacent North Point Preserve in Charlevoix Township. Environmental considerations should be made with any new activity or associated construction to ensure minimal impacts to the dunes, vegetation, wildlife, and forest. *(Park type: Sports Complex / Natural Resource Area; ADAAG rating: 4)*

Depot Beach Park

Depot Beach Park, acquired by the City in the late-1940s, is located along the northwestern City limits, on the shore of Lake Charlevoix. The park is adjacent to the former C&O Railroad Depot, a historical building owned by the Charlevoix Historical Society. The beach itself is long and narrow, with considerable green space east of the shoreline. The park is equipped with a handicap-accessible covered pavilion, picnic tables, playground equipment, grills, volleyball net, and bathroom facilities. The beaches swimming area is staffed by lifeguards during the summer season. The last renovation was completed in 2001, when the bathroom facilities and storage areas were constructed. *(Park type: Community Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*



Coast Guard Park

Coast Guard Park is an undeveloped park located just south of Depot Beach

Park, adjacent to the US Coast Guard Station. The park is located on the former C&O Railroad right of way, which was purchased in 1999 with a grant from the State of Michigan. This park is proposed to be developed with a deep-water, handicap-accessible fishing pier and associated parking.

Ferry Beach Park

Ferry Beach Park is located in the southeastern part of the City on the shore of Lake Charlevoix. It is one of the City's most frequently used parks and facilities in the summer months due to the location and numerous amenities.



The beach has two separate swimming areas seasonally staffed by lifeguards. The beach areas are split by a pier that, at times of higher water levels, was once used by swimmers as a platform for jumping into the water; however, during times of low water, use of the pier is prohibited. There are two separate sets of playground equipment, one on the southern beach, and another on the grassy area behind the northern beach. The park is also equipped with a volleyball court, basketball courts, picnic tables, three covered pavilions, and horseshoe pits. The park has restrooms, a seasonal concession stand operated by a private vendor, and substantial parking.

The Ferry Avenue boat launch, which has four ramps and parking for vehicles and trailers, is located on the park's southern end. The municipal boat launch is heavily used by Charlevoix residents and visitors, and is one of the most used municipal boat launches in the region. The boat launch allows immediate access to Lake Charlevoix, as well as, easy access to Round Lake and Lake Michigan. The boat launch is frequented by fishermen, pleasure cruisers, and sightseers alike. Fishermen can utilize the free fish cleaning station on the west end of the parking lot, which is a valued amenity not common with other boat launches. The City charges a day use fee as well as seasonal passes for parking. Fees are regulated by the City of Charlevoix, and a seasonal employee is staffed at the launch for fee collection

in the summer months. (*Park type: Community Park; ADAAG rating: 4*)

Michigan Beach Park

Michigan Beach Park is the City's original park property, acquired by the City from Amos and Ella Fox in 1882 for a consideration of \$840. The City acquired the land for the purpose of building a life saving station, which later became a Coast Guard station. Several small houses that were built along Palmer Street to support the station were sold to their occupants in the 1950s. The City also constructed a water collection system on the site. The old Coast Guard building is now the location of the MDNR Fisheries Division operations. Later, the City constructed a water processing plant on the southwest portion of the property, along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

Michigan Beach Park has approximately two thousand feet of beach frontage on Lake Michigan, from the Pine River Channel to the west City limits. The park has a wide, sandy beach seasonally staffed by lifeguards, walking paths, playground equipment, a volleyball net, basketball courts, picnic tables, and a covered pavilion. The park has restrooms, and a seasonal concession stand operated by a private vendor. The southwest portion of the property is comprised of large forested areas. The forested areas contain a number of walking trails, benches, trash and Mutt Mitts receptacles, and stairways leading down to the beach. The forested areas

are accessible from the beach below, parking area, or from numerous parking areas on Park Avenue, which bounds the forest to the east. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board has identified Michigan Beach Park as one of the

most important recreation areas in the City, due to the location, access to water, picturesque sunsets, and amenities.

(Park type: Community Park; ADAAG rating: 4)



Robert Bridge Memorial Park

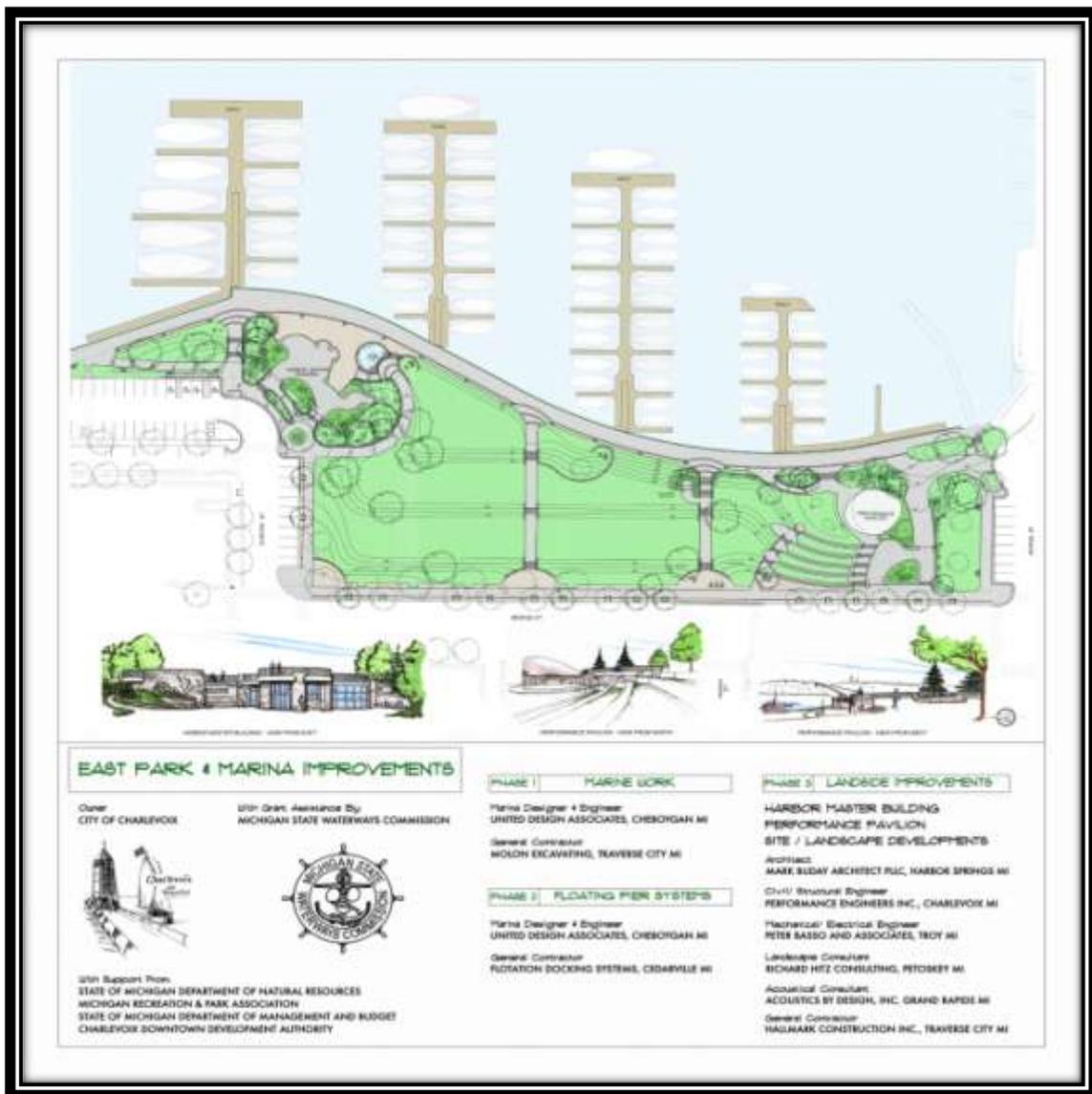
Robert Bridge Memorial Park is a passive green space on the western shore of Round Lake, just south of the historic drawbridge. At one point in time, the park sloped from Bridge Street to Round Lake. However, the park was drastically changed in the late 1990s when the offices of the Beaver Island Boat Company and United States Coast Guard were constructed below the park, leveling the topography. The office construction and grade modification within the park changed the area from a grassy, sloping surface, to a flat grass, concrete, and brick surface. The surface was altered to maintain the grade of Bridge Street over the top of the offices below. The northern portion of the park, however, maintains its original character, sloping gently from Bridge Street to the walkway along the Pine River Channel. Partly due to the view corridor to Round Lake that it offers, the park is commonly used for events. The park contains a large anchor and plaques commemorating Coast Guard operations. Other than benches and picnic tables (some with umbrellas, some without), there are no developed facilities on this half-acre site, and due to its small size, there are no planned or proposed developments. *(Park type: Community Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*

East Park

Charlevoix's award winning East Park is considered by many to be the recreational and cultural focal point of the City. The park is bounded on the west

by Bridge Street, on the east by the waters of Round Lake, on the north by Clinton Street, and on the south by Antrim Street. The park stretches continuously for two city blocks, and the majority of the storefronts in the central business district look directly over the park toward Round Lake.

The property known today as East Park was acquired one section at a time over a period of eighty-four years, and buildings were removed one by one. The park has several distinct sections. The first section runs along Bridge Street, providing a wide sidewalk and many benches that allow the public to enjoy the panoramic view of downtown Charlevoix and Round Lake. From there, the park slopes in a tiered fashion to a promenade that abuts the City's 67-slip marina. The promenade offers picnic and seating areas; amenities enjoyed both by boaters and the general public. On the park's southern edge, stands a low band shell and an expansive multi-tiered turf-and-concrete-constructed amphitheater. To the north, the city's unobtrusive, below-ground Harbormaster's Office is complete with a viewing plaza, public facilities, and the "Fountain of Youth," a water fountain that operates in both interactive and display modes, depending on the time of day. In 2009, the American Planning Association designated East Park as one of their "Great Places in America," in the Great Public Spaces category. *(Park type: Large Urban Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*



Fountain of Youth

Located in East Park adjacent to the Harbormaster’s Office, this fountain operates daily throughout the summer in both ‘display’ mode, and ‘interactive’ mode. While in interactive mode, children can play in and around it, affecting the flow of water by stepping on various parts of the fountain’s surface. While in display mode, the fountain operates automatically with a synchronized show of water, lights, and music.

Trout Stream

Located adjacent to the Fountain of Youth, the trout stream is a multi-levelled replica of what might be a trout’s natural ecosystem. It is complete with seating and viewing areas.

Veterans Park

This small park is located south of East Park, between Antrim Street, Bridge Street, and Belvedere Avenue. Eleven maple trees, each representing a

Charlevoix citizen killed in World War I, characterize the park, and surround a memorial plaque in the park's center. The park's facilities are limited to sidewalks and seating areas. *(Park type: Neighborhood Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*

Hoffmann Park

Hoffmann Park is a small observation area located between the Pine River Channel and Park Avenue, just west of Bridge Street. The park is characterized by a circular brick and concrete patio that overlooks the Pine River Channel. The park is accessible from Park Avenue via a sidewalk, and from the Pine River Channel walkway via a wide stairway. *(Park type: Neighborhood Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*

Water Tower Park

Water Tower Park is a hilltop park located one block to the west of Hoffman Park. The park, the former location of the City's watertower, overlooks the Pine River Channel. It is accessible from both the Pine River Channel walkway and Park Avenue via a stairway. The main hilltop portion of the park is marked by a large cement patio, inlaid with a compass rose. Four cement blocks around the patio mark the former locations of the water tower's struts. Benches are located at the top of the park, as well as down the park's northern face. Because of this park's slope, it is only accessible by stairs. *(Park type: Neighborhood Park; ADAAG rating: 1)*



West Dixon Park

Developed from the Dixon Avenue right-of-way that ends in Lake Michigan, this small neighborhood park includes seating areas and a stairway leading to the Lake Michigan shoreline below. *(Park type: Pocket Park; ADAAG rating: 4)*

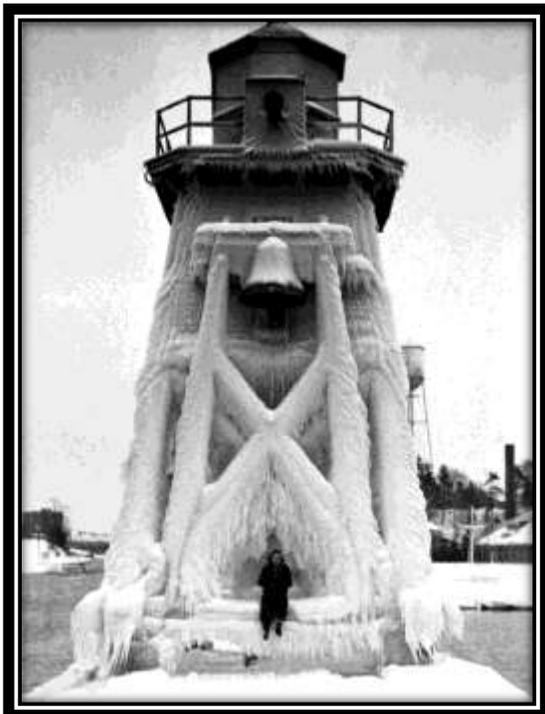
Northern Beach Access to Lake Michigan

Beach access to Lake Michigan in the north-central part of the City is provided by two narrow walkways located along Michigan Avenue. These walkways are accessible from the City sidewalk, and are denoted by signs reading "Public Walk." Parking for the beach access is located along both sides of Michigan Avenue, as well as, a small parking area at the northwest end of the avenue.

The North and South Piers / Lighthouse

Owned by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and located at the confluence of Lake Michigan and the Pine River, the north and south piers are a popular spot for viewing marine traffic and sunsets, as well as for fishing.

The fully operational lighthouse, owned by the City of Charlevoix, stands at the edge of the pier, overlooking Lake Michigan. It was renovated in 2009, during which it was repainted from white to its original red. The Charlevoix Historical Society also performs general maintenance as needed on the lighthouse.



Charlevoix Public Schools Facilities

The Charlevoix city limits are entirely within the jurisdiction of the Charlevoix Public School District. The School District boundaries also extend into several

surrounding townships. Playground equipment and sports facilities are located at the various schools, with the outdoor facilities open to the public.

(School Parks)

Charlevoix Middle School

The Charlevoix Middle School is located in the south-central section of the City on twenty-three acres of land. Its facilities include a playground, a quarter-mile track, and football field. Indoor facilities include a combined basketball court/gymnasium, as well as a full weight room.

Other School Facilities

The Charlevoix Public Schools have additional facilities outside of, but in close proximity to the City. Charlevoix Elementary School is located in Charlevoix Township on the northern boundary of the City. The High School is located two miles south of the City in Marion Township. The Charlevoix Elementary School has an indoor gymnasium, as well as extensive outdoor playground equipment, along with several informal soccer, football, and baseball fields. The high school's facilities include an indoor gymnasium, running track, and weight room. The school's outdoor facilities are comprised of baseball and softball fields with fences and dugouts, a soccer field, informal practice fields, and a five-kilometer cross-country course.

4.2 Charlevoix Township Recreational Facilities

Shanahan Field

Shanahan Field is a ten-acre parcel located north of the city limits. The park has several sports fields and parks, including, soccer, baseball, and softball. The park also features a set of fenced-in hard-surface tennis courts, a pair of half-pipes for skateboarding, a BMX track, playground equipment, a covered pavilion, a special-use concession stand, and restrooms. (*Sports Complex*)

North Point Environmental Area

The North Point Environmental Area is located adjacent to the City-owned Mt. McSauba property. The property was acquired by a joint effort between local interested citizens, the Little Traverse Conservancy, and Charlevoix Township. Acting jointly, these groups obtained a grant from the State of Michigan and raised sufficient matching funds to acquire the property. The property has significant Lake Michigan shoreline frontage, and provides for swimming, as well as hiking and cross-country skiing over miles of diverse trails. (*Natural Resource Area*)

4.3 Selected Charlevoix County Recreational Facilities

The list below is not a comprehensive catalog of the County Parks, but primarily focuses on parks most likely to be used by City of Charlevoix residents.

Whiting Park

Whiting Park is located on Lake Charlevoix in Eveline Township between Boyne City and Ironton. It is situated on approximately one hundred and sixty acres of forest land. The park includes a campground with fifty-eight campsites, ten of which are reservable. The campsites are all located on or near a stretch of Lake Charlevoix beach. A modern shower building and a pump-out station with water are available; however, the campsites are not individually serviced with electricity or water. Whiting Park also provides rental facilities, including a large pole building (with a kitchen) that seats up to 300 people, a classic 1940's-construction log cabin that seats up to 60 people, and two secluded pavilions with electricity.

Little Traverse Wheelway

The Little Traverse Wheelway is a 26 mile, non-motorized paved trail that extends from Charlevoix to Harbor Springs. The Charlevoix County segment of this trail is approximately nine miles long and runs along the north side of US-31 from Charlevoix to the Emmet County line at Bay Shore. This trail offers a unique boardwalk bridge over a wetland area rich with wildlife. The Wheelway has direct water access at several points along the Lake Michigan shoreline, including two state-owned roadside parks. Besides those walking or running, the trail may also be used by those biking, skating, or skiing.



Lake-to-Lake Trail

The Lake-to-Lake Trail is a proposed bicycle trail that begins at Ferry Beach in the City of Charlevoix, follows the Pere Marquette Railroad corridor south along Ferry Avenue, then turns west and crosses M-66 into Charlevoix Township. It is proposed to turn south down the St. Mary's cement plant railroad spur along both US-31S, and then continues southwest down Bell's Bay Road before ending at Lake Michigan near the entrance to Fisherman's Island State Park.



4.4 State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources Parks and Lands

The State of Michigan owns several thousand acres of land that provides recreational resources within the regional area. These parks and lands include, but are not limited to the following:

Fisherman's Island State Park

Fisherman's Island State Park is located south of the City and includes property in both Charlevoix and Norwood Townships. The park encompasses 2,678 acres with five miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The north end of the park provides a parking area, access to trails, and access to Lake Michigan. The southern portion of the park, which requires a park pass for access, has additional cross-country skiing and hiking trails, and picnic facilities. This portion of the park also includes a large public beach, and rustic camping spaces located directly adjacent to the beach.



Young State Park

Young State Park is located just approximately 16 miles southeast of Charlevoix along the Boyne City – Charlevoix Road in Evangeline Township on the southeast shore of Lake Charlevoix. The 542-acre park is a popular site for camping and day use. The park has 240 campsites, as well as miles of hiking trails, beaches for swimming and fishing, a boat launch, picnic areas, and playgrounds.

4.5 Michigan Department of Transportation Parks

US-31 Roadside Park and Boat Launch

Located in Hayes Township three miles north of the city, this 40 acre park has hundreds of feet of Lake Michigan frontage with a boat launch, picnic facilities, restrooms, a well water spigot, and parking.

4.6 Little Traverse Land Conservancy

The Little Traverse Land Conservancy owns multiple parcels around the City of Charlevoix. Most of the acreage has significant natural wetland areas that drain into Lake Michigan, and much of the land has substantial, protected vegetative and animal habitat. The public is afforded access to walking trails throughout these areas.

4.7 Charlevoix Rod and Gun Club

The Charlevoix Rod and Gun Club is located at 13064 US-31, approximately 3

miles north of the City of Charlevoix in Hayes Township. This semi-private club has skeet and trap fields, an outdoor rifle, pistol, and archery range, a 3-D archery course, and a small fishing pond. The public is invited to use the club's facilities based on a schedule of fees.

4.8 Previous DNR Grants Provided to the City

The Planning Department contacted the (former) Michigan Department of Natural Resources to receive a complete list of park projects that have received grant support through the MDNR Grants Division. The list prepared by the MDNR has been included in the following section and includes grants from 1973 through January of 2010. All of the projects are considered closed by the current Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR).

The City has also received numerous other grants from other sources such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Michigan Sea Grant Program, and the Charlevoix County Community Foundation. Each of these projects has been a vital addition to the City's park and recreation system and is enjoyed daily by residents and tourists alike. The City and surrounding area residents and visitors are forever grateful for these grants that have been so vital for parks and recreation improvements.

City staff are in the process of researching and documenting all grants received from all funding sources based on historical records. This document will be

available in the near future and will be included as a future amendment to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

PREVIOUS DNR GRANTS.

Grant Number	Year	Amount	Description
	1972	\$4,500	
	1972	\$15,000	
	1976	\$11,443	
<i>TF875</i>	<i>1988</i>	<i>\$341,201</i>	<i>Ferry Beach Park land acquisition</i>
TF89-123	1989	\$215,000	Ferry Beach Park development
	1994	\$242,500	Carpenter Ballfields improvements
TF98-077	1998	\$224,155	Depot Beach Park land acquisition
TF99-250	1999	\$270,100	Michigan Beach Park improvements