

JANUARY 2008 CONNECTING INITIATIVE

The following report contains information explaining the Parks Department's contributions to the community, a calendar featuring opportunities for engagement with our community members, and lastly, the community connections made during the month of January.

MEMORANDUM



TO: NOVI PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION
FROM: TRACIE RINGLE, COMMUNICATIONS & RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISOR
SUBJECT: CONNECTING INITIATIVE
DATE: FEBRUARY 7, 2008

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tracie Ringle', is positioned to the right of the 'FROM' and 'SUBJECT' lines.

The Commission and the Department staff have been in agreement about the need to expand our outreach in the community to foster more support and awareness. The direction of the department and the profession is to develop a benefits-based message. This increases the recognition that parks and recreation are essential to the growth, health and prosperity of a community.

We have identified five benefits that Novi Parks programs and facilities provide that are easily communicated, documented and understood by the commission, staff and community. Our five primary benefits are:

- Promoting a Healthy, Active Lifestyle
- Enhancing Economic Development
- Stewards of the Environment
- Creating Safer Neighborhoods
- Instilling a Sense of Community

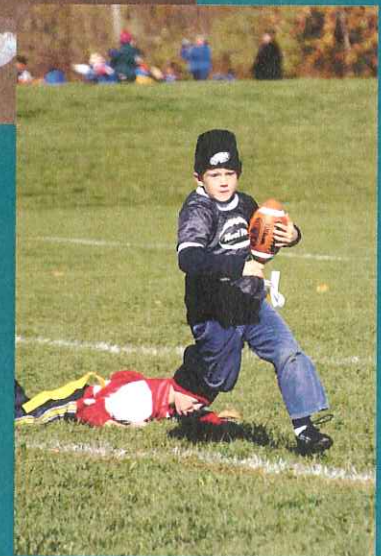
Attached are easy to follow pages explaining our contributions to the community. Much of the language used is directly from our 2007-2010 Strategic Plan, City Council goals, the Mayor's State of the City address and research documentation. The pages are meant to be a resource for sharing this message with the community in a variety of avenues.

Also attached is a calendar featuring opportunities for engagement with our community members. We invite our Commissioners to attend these events and interact first-hand with our participants. This calendar will continue to be included in the Commission packet.

Lastly, we have included a report that highlights connections that we have made with our community during the last month. This also will continue to be included in the Commission packet.

Promoting Healthy, Active Lifestyles

The Benefits of Parks & Recreation in Novi



Michigan has adult obesity rates of 25.6 percent, ranking it the 11th heaviest in the nation. We also rank 13th in the nation for adult diabetes levels and 13th for rates of hypertension. This is epidemic also reaches to children. 12% of Michigan adolescents in grades 9-12 are considered obese.

Studies prove that regular physical activity has a benefit on the health and well being, both physical and mental, of community residents. In turn, the physical and mental benefits associated with these activities lead to cost savings in health care.

For Example:

- Each mile walked by a sedentary person would give him/her an extra 20 minutes of life
- Starting an activity program reduce the risk of dying in men compared to those who remained sedentary
- Moderate physical activity, on a regular basis, reduces the symptoms of mild or moderate depression and anxiety neuroses by improving self-image, social skills and mental health

By offering access to physical activity for residents through recreational programs the Novi Parks department provides health benefits to communities and residents.

In 2006, participation numbers for Novi Parks recreation programs were over 250,000. Our senior center alone has expanded its fitness offerings by 50% including Pilates, yoga and aqua exercise. Our programs and facilities played a large role in Novi receiving the Gold Promoting Active Communities Award from the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness. Novi is the only community in the state to achieve this recognition.



For more information contact: Randy Auler,
Director at 248.347.0405 or visit cityofnovi.org

Novi Parks | 45175 W. Ten Mile Road
Novi, Michigan 48375 | 248.347.0400
Enriching Lives...Strengthening Community

Enhancing Economic Development

The Benefits of Parks & Recreation on Novi



Economic Development is widely viewed as being central to a community's economic prosperity because it is viewed as a means of enhancing the tax base. Novi Parks, Recreation and Forestry contributes to Economic Development through:

Attracting Businesses with a Highly-Educated Workforce

In today's society, businesses are keen on retaining their talent and attracting more. In the intensely recruited high-technology, research and development field, decision makers rate quality of life as the most important determination to locate their business. No matter how quality of life is defined, park and recreation opportunities are a major component of it.

ITC Holdings Corporation saw that quality of life in Novi, therefore decided to locate their headquarter here. ITC demonstrated their commitment of enhancing Novi's quality of life by making a \$500,000 donation to the Novi Parks Foundation.

Enhancing Real Estate Values

Studies show people frequently pay more for homes located close to a park or natural area. The enhanced value of these properties results in the owners paying higher property taxes to governments.

Oakland County is experiencing continued residential growth and Novi is at the helm with 1 out of every 4 new Oakland County residents moving to Novi. An Oakland County study has shown that property adjacent to natural assets enjoys higher property values.

Attracting Retirees

It is estimated that by 2030, the number of people 65 years or older residing in Novi will increase by 269%, making up 18% of the population. Their decision where to locate with their substantial retirement incomes is primarily governed by two factors: climate and recreational opportunities. Retired household contribute a great deal to the community, studies indicate if 100 retired households come to a Novi in a year, each with a \$40,000 retirement income, their economic impact is similar to that of a new business spending \$4 million annually in the community.



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Stewards of the Environment

The Benefits of Parks & Recreation in Novi



One of the roles of the Novi Parks Department is to be a champion for green infrastructure and advocate for green building and maintenance practices while educating the community on best practices.

Green Infrastructure

Linking parks, greenways, and other natural or restored lands together to create an interconnected green space system provides great benefits for people, wildlife and the economy. It helps connect people and neighborhoods, provides opportunities for exercise that can counter today's trends in obesity and adult onset diabetes and, enhances emotional wellbeing.

In 2006, City Council adopted the Pathway and Sidewalk Prioritization Analysis and Process. This plan exemplifies our commitment to enhancing our infrastructure and creating links to compliment a healthy, active lifestyle.

Reducing Energy Costs/Clean Air

The shade and evapotranspiration provided by trees act as natural air conditioners to help keep both individual homes and cities cooler, reducing the amount of energy and cost needed to do this. Additionally, trees and vegetation improve air quality by removing pollutants and chemicals from the air. Urban areas have a higher concentration of these pollutants from traffic, boilers, generators, and other sources, and trees are a relatively inexpensive way to mitigate these pollutants.

In 2007, Novi's forestry division planted over 1,700 trees as a part of replacement initiative to enhance our green space. Our long-standing dedication to the environment has been acknowledged by the Arbor Day Foundation by receiving the Tree City USA award for the last 15 years.



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Enriching Lives...Strengthening Community

Instilling a Sense of Community

The Benefits of Parks & Recreation in Novi



"A sense of community is not a place, but a shared consciousness"

Parks, recreation facilities, programs and community events are key factors in strengthening community image and creating sense of place. Studies that identify the components of quality of life always focus on the kinds of recreation opportunities and the characteristics of the environment.

Parks and programs provide a meeting place where community members can develop social ties. People gather to share experiences, socialize and to build a community bond. These public commons and events are often the glue that holds the community together and the means of improving future positive social interactions.

Novi Parks programs and facilities set the stage for lasting memories, healthy habits, and the idea that community involvement has value and great rewards. The community support from our first-class business partners, restaurants, merchants, and civic groups enrich the programs and instill them with a strong sense of our Novi community coming together for common purposes.



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Creating Safer Neighborhoods

The Benefits of Parks in Recreation in Novi



Strong evidence exists demonstrating the effectiveness of recreation programming in preventing “at-risk” youth from engaging in deviant behavior. The return on investment of such programs is substantial when it is related to the cost of staff support. The Novi Parks Department plays a key role in supporting this initiative by keeping people engaged and active in the community.

- In 2007, the Novi Parks Department introduced the FIREUP Fest to the community. Over 500 high-school students enjoyed live music, food, games and more. This event is planned to continue and improve in 2008.
- The Novi Parks Performing Arts program continually offers after-school programming for kids. Annually, over 300 children ages 3-18 participate in these programs that support self-esteem, growth and confidence.
- Participation numbers for youth sports and camp programs that encourage teamwork, sportsmanship, and exploration are over 4,000 annually.



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February 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23 Super Saturday Event at the Senior Center 4pm. (Rachel)
24	25	26	27	28	29	

March 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6 Old fashioned Pancake Supper 5:30-7:30pm Senior Center (Rachel)	7 Father Bingo (FB) Opening Night 7:30pm Middle School (Debbie)	8 FB 2 & 7:30p
9 FB 2pm	10 Japanese-Shiga Ceramic Artist Reception 6-8pm Tentative (Tracie)	11	12	13	14 FB 2 & 7:30pm St Paddy's Party 12-2pm Senior Center	15 Easter Mutt Strut 1-3pm Lakeshore Park (Derek) FR 2pm
16 Novi Concert Band 2pm Civic Center	17	18	19 Flashlight Easter Egg Hunt 8-9pm Civic Center (Mallory)	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 Spaghetti Dinner 4-6pm Senior Center (Rachel)
30	31					

April 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 Mother Son Tiger Baseball Day 3:30-6:30pm Civic Center (Derek)
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19 Soccer Opening Day ITC CSP (Wendy)
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 Arbor Day 10-Noon Lakeshore Park (Steve)
27	28	29	30			

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TO: PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY COMMISSION
FROM: TRACIE RINGLE, COMMUNICATIONS & RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISOR
SUBJECT: JANUARY 2008 CONNECTING REPORT
DATE: FEBRUARY 7, 2008



At each month's Commission meeting, the Parks, Recreation and Forestry staff provides the Commission with a staff report on items of interest. These items reflect the mission of Novi Parks to:

- Promoting a Healthy, Active Lifestyle
- Enhancing Economic Development
- Stewards of the Environment
- Creating Safer Neighborhoods
- Instilling a Sense of Community

Promoting Healthy, Active Lifestyles

The Michigan Mountain Bike Association has been a great partner to the department. We were able to negotiate Mountain Biking summer camp to be offered in Novi this summer.

During the month of January, 1,038 community members participated in Stretch and Strength, Body Recall, Pilates, Line Dance, Clogging and monthly dance with a live band at the Novi Senior Center.

Youth basketball (grades 4-6) and volleyball leagues (grades 1-2, 7 & 8) began in January. The coaches were provided a new skills manual to promote and teach new techniques for youth.

Enhancing Economic Development

A donation of original scenery, costumes and royalties for Father Bingo from 5th Avenue Production was made to the Novi Theatres. This resulted in savings of over \$29,250.

The Friends of the Novi Theatres and the Novi Theatres hosted a Mardi Gras Celebration fundraiser which brought in approximately \$18,000. This will be used to enhance to theatre by purchasing new equipment, funding musicians, and upgrading existing equipment.

Over \$2,000 was raised to sponsor the Daddy Daughter Dances. The sponsorship benefits the local businesses by providing another avenue for targeted marketing.

The Senior Transportation program provides a safe, essential service for senior residents in our community. In January over 1000 rides were provided.

Stewards of the Environment

No Report

Creating Safer Neighborhoods

The Novi Theatres has started their new set of classes for adult and young people. Some examples are Stealing the Scene (a class for young developing actors), Salsa (a dance class for ages a variety of ages), and Stinky Cheese Players (a creative acting class for the very young). Through these and other offerings, the community is offered a safe and educational environment to come and learn with friends old friends and to create new friendships.

In the month of January, Novi Senior Center presented information workshops on "Community Resources", "Soups On", "Low Vision" and "Alcoholism and the Older Adult" all of which help keep seniors informed of current safety, nutrition and health issues.

The Novi Senior Center hosted a Safety Fair for residents. Seven organizations participated in the events by bringing handouts, information and give always for the seniors.

The Novi Parks maintenance staff worked to keep the pathways and parking lots to municipal buildings clear and safe for our community members during the recent winter storms

Forestry staff spent several days making various neighborhoods safer by pruning trees that were obstructing vehicle/pedestrian roads/sidewalks.

Instilling a Sense of Community

The operations division completed the City Council Chambers renovations, making the environment more aesthetically pleasing and welcoming.

The Novi Theatres saw a tremendous turnout for auditions for the Father Bingo production. Actors who had not performed in many years returned to the theatre, as well as new actors from other community theatres. Novi was chosen to produce the community theatre world premiere of this musical and local actors and professional theatre are teaming up to make this a great show. Father Bingo premiers on March 7, 2008

For the month of January, 41 dedicated volunteers at Novi Senior Center and Civic Center worked 377 hours helping to implement and facilitate the many programs and events held for our seniors.

Our annual Super Saturday Polish Celebration in January was sold out to 128 residents who enjoyed a true Polish meal, enjoyed the musical entertainment of the Kielbasa Kings Polka Band and joined in dancing, singing and much conversation. This event rated a customer satisfaction rating of 4.89.

The department was able to display pertinent program and benefit information at the annual Homeowners Association Breakfast held on January 26. The event is attended by association leaders and the information they gather is then shared with their neighbors. We will be adding information to a number of homeowner association newsletters upon request.