Red Oaks Park - Fact Sheet

October 2026









In October 2022, the Oakland County Board of Commissioners approved the *Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan*, a $20.2 million program aimed at enhancing park and recreation opportunities utilizing *American Rescue Plan Act* (APRA) funds, with additional funding from Oakland County Parks (OCP).

The dedicated funds support park improvement projects located in areas most disproportionally impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community Impacts

- Transform and eliminate historic inequities in the distribution of the benefits of the OCP system and significantly enhance our capacity to serve residents of densely populated and diverse urban areas.
- Expand accessibility and use of existing community park facilities to serve regional recreational needs.
- Make investments in park infrastructure that will have the greatest impact on improving the health and well-being of our residents.

Red Oaks Park Construction

As part of OCP's *Healthy Communities Plan*, a long-term partnership was developed with the City of Madison Heights to enhance park and recreation opportunities. Red Oaks Park, formerly known as Ambassador Park, preserves 7 acres in a lush, urban setting. The park will continue to be owned by the City of Madison Heights but will be operated and maintained by OCP.

The goal for Red Oaks Park was to cultivate a connection to the community and the natural world, and to foster an eagerness to explore. It reflects Mission 26, OCP's framework for expanding access to high-quality parks, natural spaces and recreation opportunities across the county. Among the updates were:

- A newly configured parking lot with improved stormwater retention
- New playground and tot garden
- Hammocks
- Sledding hill improvements
- A restroom building with attached shade structure and porch swings

McGillivray Play Garden

A centerpiece of Red Oaks Park is the McGillivray Play Garden, honoring Gary R. McGillivray, who served as an Oakland County commissioner from 2008-23 and on the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission from 2011-23. He was serving as chair of the Parks Commission when he died in 2023.

A dedicated champion of Red Oaks Nature Center, Commissioner McGillivray was a key architect of the partnership between Oakland County Parks and the City of Madison Heights. He was passionate about public service and creating opportunities for residents to enjoy the outdoors and connect with their communities. The McGillivray Play Garden creates a place for families to come together, have fun outdoors and make special memories.

Funding Sources

Oakland County Parks invested $7.1 million to transform the 7-acre Red Oaks Park. The project was funded through the OCP's *Healthy Communities Park and Outdoor Recreation Investment Plan*, including $2.75 million in ARPA funding and $4.39 million from OCP's Capital Improvement Program.

Red Oaks County Park

Red Oaks Park is part of the 163-acre Red Oaks County Park campus, an active recreational hub that includes Red Oaks Waterpark, Red Oaks Dog Park, Red Oaks Golf Course and Red Oaks Nature Center. The park is located atop the enclosed George W. Kuhn Drain and is a unique example of how urban land can be repurposed for recreational use.

General Park Information

Red Oaks Park is located at 600 E. Thirteen Mile Road in Madison Heights. The park, which is open from 8 a.m.-dusk, will be open to the public free of charge.

Questions or Comments

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