

# 2023

## HIGHLIGHTS

Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services



Thank you for your interest in Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services. We're proud to share achievements that enhanced the experiences of our 2023 program participants, park visitors, volunteers, partners and sponsors.

Our accomplishments and customer service priorities are reflected in our core values of Inclusion, Excellence, Integrity, Environment, and Innovation.

This report is a quick look at the department's successes. As always, we encourage you to reach out with any questions, comments, or suggestions by emailing [noviparks@cityofnovi.org](mailto:noviparks@cityofnovi.org) or calling 248.347.0400.

Jeff Muck,  
Director, Novi Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services



# inclusion

## GETTING BETTER WITH AGE

Novi's older adults enjoy a variety of programs, services and amenities designed specifically for them. In January 2023, the Older Adult Needs Committee was formed to advise the City Council regarding activities, needs, and volunteer community opportunities, identify best practices for programs and service delivery needs for Novi older adults, and to formulate and recommend plans to assist in meeting the critical needs of older adults and adults with disabilities. In October, the committee presented its findings related to transportation, expanded programming and gathering space, providing housing options to encourage aging in place, and ensuring Novi has the resources seniors need to thrive. Immediate changes were made to enhance communications and make it easier for seniors to find programs and volunteer opportunities, as well as increasing a part-time OAS staff position to full-time to assist with the continuation and expansion of programs. The committee will continue to meet in 2024 and deploy a survey to residents, gathering broader, quantitative data regarding housing needs, programs/services and volunteer needs, gauging residents' interest, willingness and means of funding programs and a facility, and develop the profile of a potential senior center.





# excellence



## PICKLEBALL – A BIG DILL FOR YEARS TO COME

The national pickleball craze is a big dill in Novi. The demand for lessons, leagues and open courts has increased year-over-year. In 2023, the City had four dedicated courts at Wildlife Woods Park and portable nets on two courts at ITC Community Sports Park. Thanks to a \$150,000 grant from the Oakland County Senior Centers Grant Program, the court count in Novi will increase by eight courts in 2024. Four new courts will be added at Wildlife Woods Park and four on the grounds of Meadowbrook Commons. All courts are open to the public; however, there will be some reserved times for lessons and other programs.

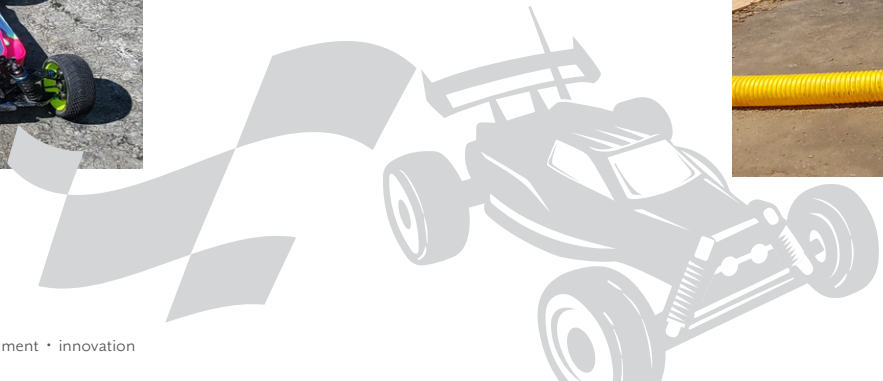
## MAKING A SPLASH

Jessica's Splashpad at Bosco Fields is set to open Memorial Day weekend 2024. The splashpad will honor the memory of Jessica Starr, a former Fox 2 Detroit Meteorologist who passed away in 2018. The Starr-Rose family, together with the Novi Parks Foundation, has raised over \$300,000 for the construction of the splashpad, with the goal of reaching \$400,000. With a successful campaign, individual and corporate donations have ranged from \$10 to \$35,000. The splashpad features will commemorate Jessica's love of the weather and provide opportunities for families to create lasting memories.



## SPEEDING INTO THE RECORD BOOKS

In summer 2022, the R/C Raceway at Water Tower Park was opened to race fans in Novi and beyond. The reception of the park was tremendous and continues to draw dozens of visitors at any of the eight races held in 2023. The park has a very active social media presence and numerous volunteers who regularly help maintain the track. This innovative project was recognized for Excellence in Park Design at the 2023 mParks annual conference.



# integrity

## WILDERNESS EXPLORERS

In late November 2023, the development of Northwest Park was completed with financial support from a \$150,000 Oakland County Parks Grant. The park, which borders Andelina Ridge Subdivision and Catholic Central High School, now includes a crushed gravel pathway that passes through wooded areas and a meadow, as well as a nature-based playground in which most of the amenities are made from natural materials – boulders and wood. The playground encourages kids to explore, run, jump, climb, crawl, feel, smell, and more. The pathway and placement of the playground were strategically designed to preserve as many trees as possible. Some of the cut trees were repurposed into benches and borders of the playground. Novi is the first municipal customer of Kalamazoo-based Nature Playscapes and we've already received inquiries from other local agencies. We are planning an official opening of the park in spring 2024.



## GOALS, RUNS, ACES, BASKETS, PICNICS, AND PLAY

Plans to renovate ITC Community Sports Park are one step closer to being shared. The park, which was originally developed in the late 1990s, has served the Novi community through major growth and changing recreational needs. Although renovations and additions have happened, including the Tim Pope Memorial Playground renovation in 2020, additional playground on the north end of the park, baseball field enhancements, construction of a maintenance building, and the trailhead for ITC Corridor Trail, much of the park remains the same.

In 2022, due to the variety of needs of the community, a consulting firm (Spicer Group) was hired to assist in the planning of the park update. Spicer Group and City Staff developed concept drawings based on information gathered through stakeholder meetings, an open house, and a community survey. The proposed plan was shared with City Council as part of their annual Early Input Budget and Goal Setting meeting. Decisions are pending on the design and funding of the potential renovations.

# Welcome to LAKESHORE BEACH

6'10" NO BIKES



## SAFE PASSAGE

Originally built over 50 years ago, the pedestrian beach tunnel at Lakeshore Park required improvements to ensure safety for years to come and to mitigate runoff into Walled Lake. Completed in May 2023, the project included a new pre-cast 7x10' tunnel, improved drainage, and reconstruction of South Lake Drive. Additional site improvements include new fencing, guardrail, sidewalk, signage, and lockable gates on both sides of the tunnel.

# environment



## PROMOTING NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

The City makes it a priority to remove invasive species in parks, wetlands, and woodlands in an effort to restore and maintain healthier natural environments. In winter, woody invasive species, primarily Buckthorn, was removed from Rotary Park. In spring, more than two dozen volunteers removed nearly 100 pounds of Garlic Mustard from Lakeshore Park. In October, a variety of woody invasive species were removed from Rotary Park, the northwest corner of Taft and 10 Mile Road, Lakeshore Park, ITC Community Sports Park, Wildlife Woods Park, the Orchard Hills Conservation Area, Bosco Park and rights-of-way across the city.



# innovation

## LAND EXCHANGE FINALIZED

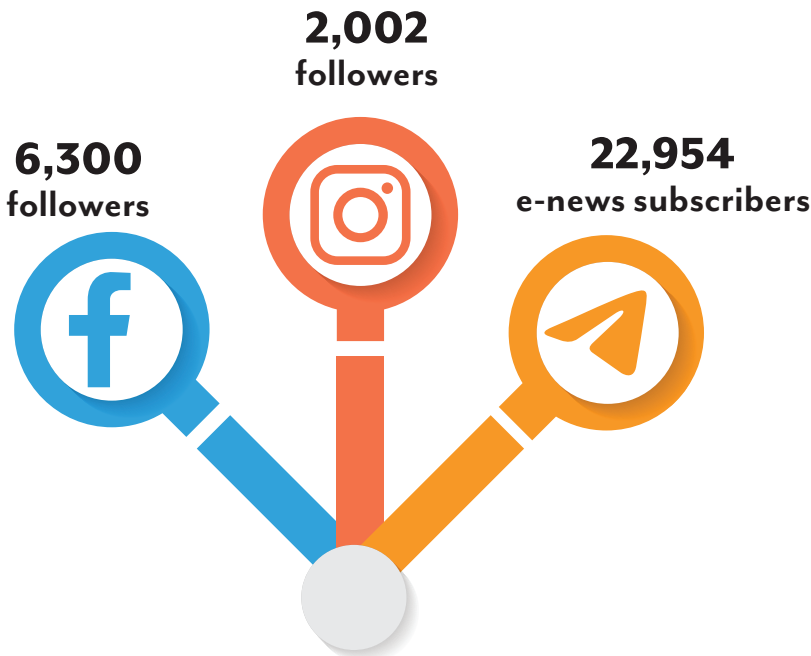
In July 2023, the City of Novi and Novi Community School District finalized a land exchange that included the schools now owning a portion of Wildlife Woods Park, adjacent to Novi Middle School, and an area behind the Novi Civic Center and Power Park that has historically been used for school athletic field purposes. The City gained a small piece of land adjacent to Fuerst Park, to square off the property, and Boco Fields, located at 11 Mile and Beck Roads.

The land exchange has allowed the City to construct Jessica's Splashpad at Bosco Fields (opening spring 2024) and the opportunity to add permanent park amenities in the future such as bathrooms, sport storage, a connector to the ITC Trail, etc.

Additionally, the City acquired an additional 3.93 acres at the corner of Beck and 11 Mile from a private owner to complete Bosco Fields.



# our digital reach



## CITY COUNCIL

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Matt Heintz  
Priya Gurumurthy

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Joe Tolkacz  
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