Grand River Ravines
Georgetown Township

Project Description: The Grand River Ravines County Park property is composed of the 68-acre former Fillmore at the Bend Open Space purchased in 1999 and two more recent purchases of 100 acres and 19 acres to create this 187-acre park site with over 2600' of Grand River frontage. The property is adjacent to Grand Valley State University’s southern border and includes deep wooded ravines similar to those that extend along GVSU’s riverfront. The ravine system in this area ranked among the County’s highest quality natural lands in a 1988 survey by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory. The site also features an existing home with outstanding views of an undeveloped portion of the Grand River valley.

With major land acquisitions completed, park staff have begun to develop a master plan to guide development of the site for appropriate public use. Ideas to be considered in the planning process include trails for hiking and cross-country skiing as well as paved pathway for biking, roller-blading and other non-motorized uses. The paved pathway will be part of a future Grand River Greenway trail which is proposed to link GVSU to Kent County and ultimately connect to Grand Haven. Hiking trails are proposed to connect with trails through GVSU ravines providing significant hiking opportunities. Fishing access and docks are proposed along the waterfront,
and nature interpretation will focus on the ravines. The existing home, with its open floor plan and fully accessible design will be used as a multi-purpose building for interpretive programs and group rentals including meetings and retreats.
**Project Updates:**

**11.24.14** Renovation work on the lodge is scheduled to begin in December.

Detailed site design continues by our consultant for bidding in early 2015.

Proposals for repairs to the barn on Fillmore Street have been solicited, although response has been extremely slow. We have one proposal and are waiting on two more.

**10.30.14** Plans for the lodge renovation have been completed and the project is out for bids. Results and a recommendation will be presented at the next Parks Commission meeting with the intent of construction starting in December and completed by summer.

Detailed site analysis including topographic survey, soil borings, and wetland determinations are in progress as required for site design work by our landscape architectural consultant. Work is aimed at having this work out for bids in February for construction to be completed by late summer.

Proposals for repairs to the barn on Fillmore Street have been solicited.

**09.27.14** Construction is complete on the South (Fillmore Street) parking area.

Additional discussion and a public meeting have helped to refine our concept for the dog park. Based on this concept, work to smooth the rough field areas and plant new turf grass seed is in progress.

Work on the detailed design and engineering of the lodge renovations continues and is on schedule for bidding in October and construction over the winter.

Our consultant for the site design and construction portion of the project will begin work in October.

**08.27.14** Construction is substantially complete on the South (Fillmore Street) parking area and is open for public use. Some final cleanup items will be completed in the next couple of weeks.

Work on the detailed design and engineering of the lodge renovations continues and is on schedule for construction over the winter.

Results of our request for proposals for professional services for the main park site improvements will be presented at the next parks commission meeting.
**07.31.14** Mass grading, installation of drainage structures, concrete curbs and walkways, and placement of gravel for the south parking area are complete. Amenities including the main sign and vault toilet are in progress. Work is also in progress on the by-pass lanes along Fillmore Street.

Work on the detailed design and engineering of the lodge renovations is in progress and on schedule for construction over the winter. An RFP for professional design services for the remaining major site work has been prepared. Proposals are due on August 31, and will be presented to the Parks Commission at its September meeting.
06.25.14 Major earthwork is now completed for the main south parking lot area, and new base materials are being installed. Work along the road will begin soon. A previously unknown well was discovered during excavation which needed to be properly abandoned, and a large amount of buried debris was also discovered and removed.
05.28.14 Earthwork has begun for the South Entrance and parking area. Heavy clay soils and rain have caused delays, and the clay has required additional earthwork and importation of sand for the parking area. Weather permitting, construction should be complete by mid to late June.

04.25.14 The contractor will start construction on the Fillmore parking area after frost laws are removed from county roads. The contractor has indicated that they would like to complete work in less than a month. Our architectural consultant has begun work on detailed planning and design of the house/lodge renovation.

03.27.14 The contract for the Fillmore parking area has been approved, and construction is scheduled to begin in April. The application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to fund the accessible pathways in the park will be submitted by April 1. Proposals for architectural services to renovate the existing house have been received. A recommendation will be made at the Parks Commission meeting.

02.26.14 Bids for construction of the Fillmore entrance parking area will be presented at the Parks Commission meeting. Additional planning is in progress to finalize other phase one project scope items, funding, and schedule. This includes a proposal to fund the majority of the paved trails in the park utilizing a Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant that will be presented at the next commission meeting. Also, a request for proposal for architectural services to renovate the existing house has also been advertised and will be received later in March.

09.25.13 Detailed design and construction drawings for the new parking area at the Fillmore Street (South Grand River Ravines) access are in progress with construction anticipated in the spring. Work to improve the small parking area at Grand River Ravines North and to install safety fencing along three sections of the path near the steepest part of the ravines have been completed. Special design considerations are needed because of utility and fiber optic facilities in this area. Additional planning is in progress to finalize other phase one project scope items, funding, and schedule.

08.28.13 Design work on the new parking area off from Fillmore continues by park staff with construction rescheduled for 2014. The outbuilding/garage has been demolished. Work to improve the small parking area at Grand River Ravines North and to install safety fencing along three sections of the path near the steepest part of the ravines will begin in September. Survey work for the easements for trails on adjacent properties has been completed.

07.29.13 Bids to demolish an existing outbuilding/garage have been received with work to begin at any time. Bids for additional gravel parking at the north access and safety fencing along the entrance drive near steep drop-offs are due on August 9. The locations of trail easements on adjacent University and private property have been flagged and reviewed by the respective owners. Survey work to define and map theses easements began on July 29.

06.28.13 Design work on the new parking area off from Fillmore and improvements to the existing area at North Ravines is in progress by park staff with the goal of completing construction this year. Bids to demolish an existing outbuilding/garage have been received with work to begin in July. Survey work to define easements on adjacent properties will also be completed in July.

05.29.13 Design work on new parking areas is in progress by park staff. Work to demolish an existing outbuilding/garage is out for bid with the goal of completion in July. Survey work to define easements on adjacent properties is also out for bids.

04.25.13 Application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust fund to assist with first phase development was submitted on April 1. Until that grant is approved or denied, several smaller projects will proceed including improvements to parking, barn stabilization, and benches.
03.28.13 Application to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust fund to assist with first phase development will be submitted on April 1

02.28.13 The master plan was approved at the last Parks Commission Meeting. Details about the proposed phase 1 improvements and grant application will presented at the March Parks Commission Meeting.

01.18.13 The proposed final master plan and cost estimate will be presented at the next Parks Commission meeting for approval

12.27.12 Work continues to refine the master plan concept. Additional details will be presented at the January Parks Commission Meeting

11.28.12 A public meeting to discuss the project was held on November 28. Results of that meeting area available on the parks website.

10.31.12 Park planning staff have completed initial analysis including evaluation of existing trails and the existing barn. Work is in progress with Mark Oppenhuizen to evaluate the potential of the house for renovation, and a company specializing in adventure play including zip lines will be visiting later this week to do a site evaluation. A meeting to coordinate with GVSU in regard to both trails in the ravine area on their property and for the future Grand River Greenway paved trail through the campus is being scheduled. A public input meeting has been tentatively scheduled for November 27.