

# 7 Public Facilities

## 7.1 Introduction

Painesville Township, like many Ohio townships, does not have the same level of amenities as incorporated urban and suburban areas. In a citizen survey, residents were satisfied – but not enthusiastically – about public facilities in the township; schools, parks, and other municipal facilities. The township has a reputation for excellent schools and good public safety services. However, poor recreational facilities and parks hurt the livability of the township. As the population grows, though, existing public facilities may become stretched. There is much room for improvement, without sacrificing the rural character and independent spirit of the township.

The intent of the Public Facilities element of the Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that schools, parks, public safety facilities, community centers, and other government-provided amenities continue to meet, if not exceed, the needs of township residents and visitors, contribute positively to enhancing the overall quality of life, and preserve the rural character of the township.

*Please note this is not a capital improvement plan. A capital improvement plan is a budgetary document that links the programming of capital projects, such as public facilities, to the planning goals found in this document.*

## 7.2 Schools

Not surprisingly, Painesville Township is located in the Painesville Township School District. At the time this plan was written, the township schools had an excellent reputation, and could possibly be one element fueling population growth. Resident surveys conducted as part of the planning process revealed that residents were very happy with the quality of township schools. This plan concerns itself with the location and capacity of public schools, not the curriculum.

Hadden Elementary School and Buckeye Elementary School are located in the southwest portion of the township. Madison Avenue Elementary School, Hale Road Elementary School, and the Riverside Campus – John R. Williams Junior High School, Riverside High School and the district offices – are located in the southeastern portion of the township. With the exception of the existing structure in Grand River Village, there are no public schools in the northeast or northwest portions of the township, and no private, parochial or charter schools.

School name	Address	Grades	Year built	Enrollment 1995	Enrollment 2004	Capacity	Acreage
Buckeye Elementary School	175 Buckeye Road (SW)	K-5	1964	273	282	220	8.3 ac 3.4 ha
Clyde C Hadden Elementary School	1800 Mentor Avenue (SW)	K-5	1940	186	283	200	8.8 ac 3.6 ha
Hale Road Elementary School	56 Hale Road (SE)	K-5	1925	345	358	280	35.6 ac 14.4 ha
Madison Avenue Elementary School	845 Madison Avenue (SE)	Pre K-5	1928	377	359	260	13.6 ac 5.5 ha
Riverside High School / John R Williams Junior High School	585 Riverside Drive (SE)	6-12	1956	1,741	1,711	1,615	71 ac 29 ha
<b>Total</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<b>2,922</b>	<b>2,993</b>	<b>2,575</b>	<b>137.3 ac 55.9 ha</b>

*Attendance boundaries for individual schools may extend beyond township borders. Riverside High School is the only high school in the district, with students from Painesville Township, Grand River Village, Concord Township and Leroy Township. Source: Fanning/Howey Associates, Inc. 2001.*

Enrollment has remained stable through time at all township schools except Hadden Elementary, where enrollment increased from 186 students in 1995 to 283 students in 2004. All the schools sit on large parcels, and their future expansion would not involve acquiring additional property.

The 1960 Lake County Comprehensive Plan proposed three more elementary schools for Painesville Township, based on very optimistic population projections at the time. The Painesville Township School District has no current plans to build new schools in Painesville Township. The projected residential growth pattern in northern Painesville Township should be closely monitored to determine future school needs.

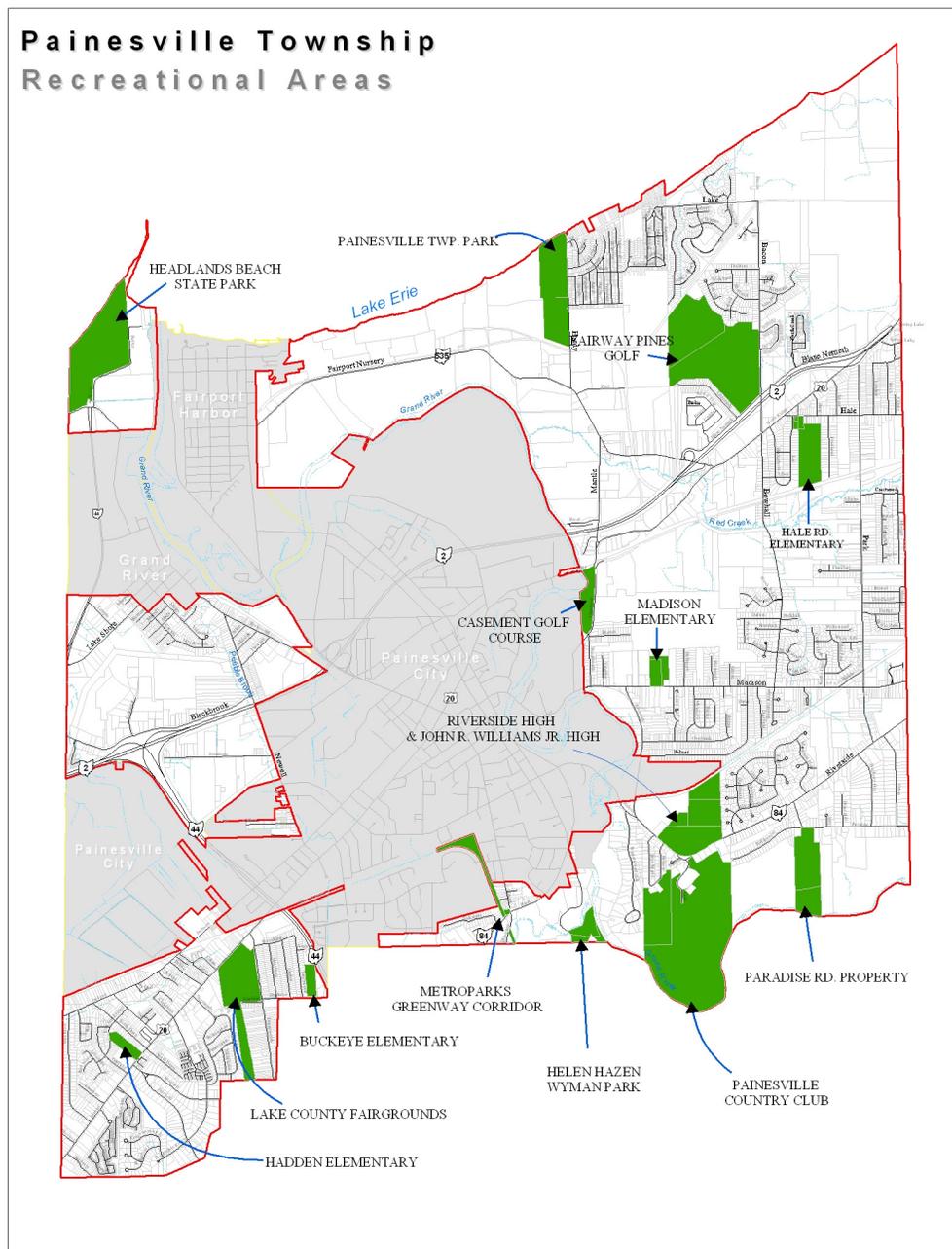
The Auburn Career Center services students from Riverside High School.

### 7.3 Parks and public open space

There are only four public parks in Painesville Township, two of which are small portions of much larger parks. (For this section, schoolyards, golf courses, privately maintained open space in subdivisions, the Lake County Fairgrounds and other semi-public and private recreational areas are not considered parkland.) The 1996 township comprehensive plan stressed the growing need for more parks in the township, especially neighborhood and community parks.

#### Headlands State Park

Most of Headlands State Park and Nature Preserve is in northwestern portion of



Painesville Township, on Lake Erie west of the mouth of the Grand River. The park is far from residential areas in the township, separated by industrial areas and Grand River Village. Portions of the park are within the City of Mentor.

The federal lighthouse is located at the terminus of the federal breakwater near the state park. This lighthouse should be considered an asset to the community and be included in any open space or historical planning programs. Efforts should concentrate on maintaining the structure for public uses. Improvements, including a boardwalk to the lighthouse, would make the feature an extremely attractive spot for citizens and tourists.

### Hazel Wyman Park

Hazen Wyman Park, Lake Metroparks initial facility, extends into Painesville Township off SR 86. Like Headlands State Park, this passive recreational area is difficult to reach from residential areas in the Township, separated by the City of Painesville.

### Painesville Township Park

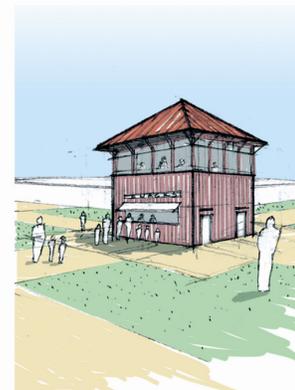
The only park entirely in the township and convenient for some township residents is Painesville Township Park. The 65 acre park is located on the Lake Erie shore, between Hardy Road and the former Diamond Shamrock/Uniroyal site. The park provides much-needed open space for the nearby Painesville-on-the-Lake neighborhood, and provides some amenities that draw visitors from outside the township.

The park was established in the early 1920s as a recreational area offering baseball fields, a dance hall, picnic areas, an open-air pavilion and a beach. Lake Erie has claimed the beach and pavilion by erosion, but five softball fields and the dance hall remain as amenities. In 1991, Lake Metroparks entered a cooperative lease agreement with the township park board to operate and manage the park. Since then, more than \$1,000,000 of improvements were made, including renovation of the dance hall and ball fields.

Potential improvement to the Park could include a better configuration to the ball diamonds to attract regional competitions, better parking schemes and offshore breakwaters to create beach access. On a larger scale, providing a lakefront trail linkage to the proposed Lakeview Bluffs project and westward to Fairport Harbor's Lakefront Park would create an immeasurable asset to the community.



Proposed ballfield configuration



Proposed concessions / press

### Park shortfall

National and state park and recreation organizations and individual governmental agencies have established a varying range of definitions and standards including park type, size, access requirements, and site development guidelines. The standard derived from early studies of park acreages located within urban areas was the expression of acres of parkland per person. Over time, six to ten acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents – mini-parks and tot lots, neighborhood parks, and community parks, not nature preserves, undeveloped parks, school grounds, private open space or school grounds – came to be the accepted standard recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association. This ratio is used by a majority of communities in the United States.

Painesville Township Park is the only developed park in the township, resulting in just 2.6 acres (1 hectare) of parkland per 1,000 residents. There are no parks in the southwest, northwest and southeast portions of the township, which are the most heavily populated. Painesville Township also lacks the variety of park types recommended to serve the population as a whole.

According to national standards, with a population of about 15,000 residents, there should be a minimum of 150 acres (61 hectares) of developed parkland in the township. For a future population of 30,000, there should be at least 300 acres (121 hectares) of developed parkland. Painesville Township now has only 25% of the amount of parkland recommended for a community of 15,000 people, and 12% of the amount recommended for 30,000 residents. (Table 7.2, 7.3) With the exception of baseball diamonds, the active amenities offered in parks in Painesville Township are far below what is needed to serve its current and future population. (Table 7.2)

Park type	Area/1000 residents	Size of park	Service radius	Notes
<b>Mini park</b> Designed to provide recreational opportunities for a small area in a neighborhood. Typically designed for young children, however in some cases it may be designed for aesthetic purposes.	1 ac (0.4 ha)	0.5 to 1 ac (0.2 to 0.4 ha)	0.25 to 0.5 mi (0.4 to 0.8 km)	Painesville Township has no mini parks.
<b>Neighborhood park</b> Designed to serve recreational needs of children 6-15 years of age, as well as adults, pre-schoolers, and seniors. Typically includes family picnic areas, unlighted open turf areas for informal sports, and play equipment. Lighted athletic fields would not be included.	3 ac (1.2 ha)	4 to 12 ac (1.6 to 5.0 ha)	0.25 to 0.75 mi (0.4 to 1.2 km)	Painesville Township has no neighborhood parks.
<b>Community park</b> Designed to serve a wide variety of needs for youths and adults in both active and passive recreation. Facilities for sports fields (lighted when appropriate), open turf areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and off-street parking. Should include restrooms and related facilities. May include a community center. Components of neighborhood parks and mini-parks should be included in the community park.	6 ac (2.5 ha)	20 to 50 ac (8 to 20 ha)	1 to 2 mi (1.6 to 3.2 km)	Painesville Township Park or Helen Hazen Wyman function as the only community parks.
<b>Regional park</b> Open space areas characterized by significant natural resources that provide passive recreation for nearby residents and the surrounding metropolitan area. Small portions of a regional park might be allocated to fulfill neighborhood park requirements.	15 ac (6 ha)	100 ac (40 ha)	Lake County, east Cuyahoga County	Headlands State Park functions as a regional park, but most of it is in Mentor.
<b>Conservancy /open space area</b> Land kept mostly in its natural state. Used to preserve natural areas such as riparian zones, bluffs, wetlands and other lands of recreational and scenic interest. May also include areas devoted to preservation of historic or cultural resources. Could include smaller portions of the area needed to satisfy local neighborhood recreational needs.	n/a	Sufficient to provide or preserve the resource	Northeast Ohio	Headlands Nature Preserve functions as a regional park.

**Table 7.3 Active recreation facility inventory and requirements**  
Painesville Township

<i>Park/facility type</i>	<i>Target park/facility size</i>	<i>Existing assets</i>	<i>Year 2000 minimum requirements</i>	<i>Deficiency</i>	<i>** Buildout minimum requirements</i>	<i>Deficiency</i>
Neighborhood park (including acreage for mini-parks)	4-12 ac / 1.6-5.0 ha; 4 ac / 1.6 ha:1,000 residents	0 ac 0 ha	60 ac 24 ha	60 ac 24 ha	120 ac 49 ha	120 ac 49 ha
Community park	20-50 ac / 8-20 ha; 6 ac / 3.4 ha:1,000 residents	37 ac 15 ha	90 ac 36 ha	53 ac 21 ha	180 ac 73 ha	143 ac 58 ha
Tennis courts*	1:2,500 residents	0	6	6	12	12
Basketball courts	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	6	6
Volleyball courts	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
Baseball diamond	1:5,000 residents	5	3	0	6	1
Softball diamond	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	6	6
Soccer/football fields	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	5	5
Swimming pool	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
¼ mile running track	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
Handball/racquetball court*	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
Dog park	2-5 ac / 0.8-2.0 ac; 1:25,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2

\* Ratio may be decreased due to the declining popularity of racquet sports.

\*\* Assumes population of 30,000 and no city annexation of residential areas.

### Acquiring new parkland

The loss of a large industrial tax base, and the lack of a large commercial tax base, makes it challenging for the township to generate the revenue needed to create and operate a large park system, nor is this their mission. Under current state law, townships do not have the power to levy impact fees for new development. This includes park impact fees or parkland acquisition/park-in-lieu fees. Open space desires should be discussed during initial planning meetings between the developer and township for large-scale communities (Lakeview Bluffs and Casement). Agreed upon areas should be a part of the overall development plan and ultimately be turned over to the local homeowners association.

Lake Metroparks traditionally maintains large parks, rather than smaller neighborhood and community parks that the township needs. Planning, development, management, and operation of regional parks are much different than smaller parks with more active recreation space.

When a centrally located public facility is closed, such as a school, or a large tract of land owned by a government agency is up for sale, the township could pursue conversion of part or all of the now-available land to public parkland. Should the current site of the Lake County Fairground become available, at least 25 acres (10 hectares) of the site should be acquired, for use as a community park serving the southeast portion of the township.

State and federal grants may be available to help fund the acquisition of parkland. The township should use every opportunity it has to find and acquire funding for new parkland where appropriate.

School grounds provide valuable opportunities for active recreation. However, there are constraints to their use as community recreational space. With educational use of school grounds as the primary use, schools are often unavailable for general public use. The new field house is a successful example of the school district and community partnering to meet recreational needs.

## Standards for new parks

The Land Use element described the problems with the location of open space in FPU D subdivisions, and recommended standards to make open space more visible, accessible and usable. The standards can be used as the basis for siting new mini-parks, neighborhood parks and community parks.

- At least 50% of the perimeter of a neighborhood park, and at least 30% of the perimeter of a community park, must front on a public road. Exceptions could be made for large parks (more than 20 acres, or with more than 500 feet/150 meters of street frontage), and linear parks (rails-to-trails, lakefront corridors, riparian corridors, etc.).
- Excepting trail, lakefront and riparian corridors, parks must not take the form of narrow strips.
- Convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to parks must be provided.
- Parks must not function as de facto backyards for adjacent residents.
- Parks must be welcoming, and have adequate safety features.
- Retention ponds, wetlands that stay saturated through half the year or more, areas under high tension power lines, traffic islands and medians, and entrance features cannot be used in meeting total park area requirements.
- Linking new parks to existing parks or other desirable land uses (schools, retail areas, cultural or institutional centers) will be encouraged.
- Parks must be improved with water, sanitary sewer (if available), storm sewer (if available) and electrical service. All utilities must be underground.

## Future park locations

The following are recommended locations for new developed parks in Painesville Township. This list is not intended to be a park location plan, and all locations and acreages should be considered flexible. The ultimate goal, though, is to provide about 200 acres of developed parkland throughout the township.

### Northeast

- 150 acres (61 hectares) along the Lake Erie shoreline and Grand River corridor in Lakeview Bluffs/Hemisphere area. Beaches and a 'T' shaped fishing pier are recommended at Township Park.
- 60 acres (24 hectares) along the Lake Erie shoreline east of Sunset Point



### Southeast

- 15 acre (6 hectare) neighborhood park(s) in Casement Airport area
- 5 acre (2 hectare) neighborhood park east of Bowhall Road, south of CSX/Red Creek



Expanded pier and enhanced facilities at the waters edge will increase public access and usage of the lake

### Southwest

- 25 acres (10 hectares)

### Northwest

- 5 acre (2 hectare) neighborhood park

Recommended locations for future Lake Metroparks and state park sites include the Grand River corridor in the southeast portion of the township, the Lake Erie shoreline and Grand River corridor in the Lakeview Bluffs area, and the Lake Erie shoreline east of Sunset Point. Developed portions of Metroparks and state park sites could be counted towards meeting the goal of 300 acres (121 hectares) of developed parkland in the township.

## 7.4 Public safety

Resident surveys conducted showed that residents were very satisfied with the quality and response times of police and fire protection services.

### Fire protection

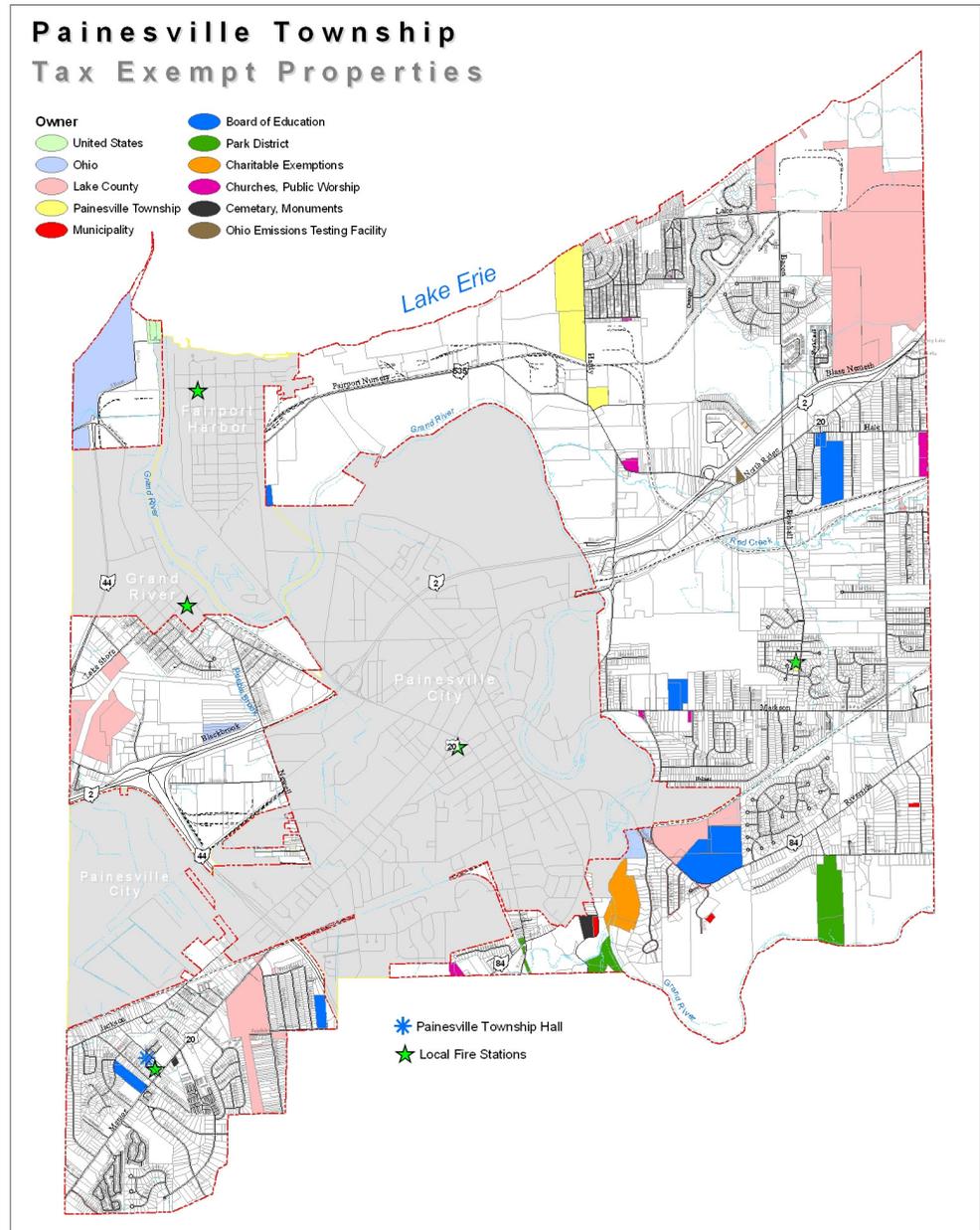
The Painesville Township Fire Department operates out of two stations; 55 Nye Road in the southeast portion of the township, and 141 Bowhall Road in the southwest portion. A third fire station location, in the northeastern portion of the township, will be built near the intersection of Post Rd. and Hardy Rd. to serve the rapidly growing residential population.

The fire department employs 21 full-time and 18 part-time firefighters to provide 24-hour protection to residents. It is also the EMS provider for the township.

The fire department has an Insurance Services Office (ISO) fire class rating of 5. The fire class rating is determined by a complex formula involving, but not limited to, distance and response time, equipment, personnel, training and water supply.

### Law enforcement

The Lake County Sheriff's Department patrols the township, with local calls dispatched from the Emergency Operations Center in Kirtland. The Sheriff's Office is located in the City of Painesville CBD, central to the surrounding township. The Sheriff operates a small substation at the Lake County Fairgrounds.



## 7.5 Township government

### Town Hall

Town Hall shares a 1.3 acre (0.5 hectare) site with the Painesville Township Fire Department in the southwestern portion of Painesville Township. Town Hall houses township administration and zoning department offices.

Town Hall sits inconspicuously on Nye Street, a short local road. There is no room to expand Town Hall on the site. If an expanded Town Hall is needed in the future, this plan recommends placing it at a more prominent location, preferably on Mentor Avenue. A more visible location would reinforce the identity of the township, and validate the importance of township government. If Town Hall is moved, the former building could be reused as a community center.

### Road Department garage and yard

The Painesville Township Road Department garage and yard is located on the northeast corner of Fairport Nursery Road and Hardy Road in the northeast section of the township.

Heavy equipment and vehicles are stored in the enclosed yard. The yard is visually screened from the Fairport Nursery Road by the garage building and from Hardy Road by a well-maintained cedar fence. Galvanized chain link fencing defines the north and east property line; there is no visual screening towards other properties.

Access management to the facility is poor; a continuous curb cut, 255 feet (78 meters) wide, stretches along the entire Fairport Nursery Road frontage, wrapping around to Hardy Road. The access point should be clearly defined, reduced to 30 feet (9 meters), and located as far as possible from the intersection with Hardy Road. Future upgrades should encourage clearly defined access points to the main roads, thus reducing conflict points.

### Cemetery

The one acre (0.4 hectare) Mentor Avenue Cemetery, the only township cemetery, is full.

## 7.6 Community and senior citizen centers

Survey comments from residents expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of a recreation center or community center in the township. In a visioning session in March 2003, the lack of a community center was cited as a major weakness of the township.

There is a dance hall at Painesville Township Park, but it does not function as a true community center. The dance hall is relatively far from most residential areas in the township.

This plan recommends building a township community center as a high priority. A community center for Painesville Township should provide multiple meeting rooms, a large multi-purpose room, an exercise area with locker rooms, and a kitchen. Rental of community center facilities can help fund operation and maintenance of the center, and possibly provide some revenue for the township.

A community center should be located in the southwestern portion of the township. Such a location would reinforce the area as the symbolic center, if not the geographic center, of the community. A smaller scale facility could be explored as part of the new fire station complex on Hardy Rd. Community meeting room(s) could easily fit into the overall design of the station, while providing the station the independence

and security they need. Leroy Township recently added a community room to their fire station. State and federal grants have been used for these improvements in the past.

## 7.7 Goals and objectives

Each primary paragraph (in **bold type**) is a statement of a goal. The subparagraphs are objectives for implementing the goal. Some goals and policies related to land use are found in other elements. The maps in this element will also show the general location of recommended public facilities.

**PF-1 Painesville Township schools will continue to offer high quality, conveniently located public schools.**

PF-1-01 Work with the Painesville Township School District to ensure potential expansion needs are fulfilled should enrollment projections change.

PF-1-02 Assist the school district to acquire land for the potential site of an elementary school in the northern portion of the township, if needed.

**PF-2 Parks must not be considered a luxury, but an essential component needed to improve residents' quality of life, maintain and enhance the desirability of residential areas, attract new middle and upper income residents, and offset the visual impact of blighted and abandoned industrial areas. Parkland must be expanded to meet the present and future needs of township residents, serve the recreational needs of residents and visitors, protect irreplaceable natural resources, and preserve the low-density suburban character of the township.**

PF-2-01 Parkland should be distributed evenly throughout the township, with locations and facilities based on the recommendations of this plan. Encourage developers to provide public access to the Lake Erie shoreline and Grand River corridor.

PF-2-02 Work with Lake Metroparks to acquire and maintain land throughout the township for new active and passive parks.

PF-2-03 Ensure that new parks are located where they will be visible, accessible, usable and defensible, subject to the siting recommendations of this plan.

PF-2-04 Use every opportunity to find and acquire outside funding to acquire open space and new parkland.

PF-2-05 Consider opportunities for incorporating accessible open space and trails following transmission lines and abandoned railroad lines.

**PF-3 Urban-quality public safety facilities and services should continue to be offered.**

PF-3-01 Consider a site at the northern end of the township for new Fire Department facilities.

PF-3-02 Work with the Fire Department to maintain and improve the fire class rating, to lower insurance costs for residents and businesses.

**PF-4 Town government facilities will be improved.**

PF-4-01 Consider an ideal site for a future Town Hall facility, should the need arise. The site should be visually prominent, contribute to creating a sense of place, and play an important role in creating a true township center.

PF-4-P2 Remove the continuous curb cut at the town yard. Provide a defined curb cut that serves as a model of access management for others to follow. Ensure that good screening of equipment and outdoor storage areas is continued.

**PF-5 Provide a community center for Township residents.**

PF-5-01 Site a community center in the southwestern portion of the township, to reinforce the area as the symbolic center of the community.

PF-5-02 Consider reuse of the Town Hall building as a community center, if the town offices are ever relocated from the building.