



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS ANNOUNCES CLINTON RIVER OAKS, THE COUNTY'S NEWEST PARK LINKING ROCHESTER AND ROCHESTER HILLS**

***\$8 million county investment expands access to nature, restores the Clinton River, and strengthens regional resilience***

**Rochester/Rochester Hills, Mich. – (Oct. 27, 2025)** – Oakland County Parks and Recreation is thrilled to announce plans to create Clinton River Oaks Park, a new 235-acre county park stretching along 2.5 miles of the Clinton River. The park will connect trails, waterways, and public lands across Rochester and Rochester Hills, expanding recreational access and preserving natural resources in one of Michigan's most scenic and historic corridors.

This landmark initiative represents an \$8 million county investment, part of a broader \$12 million regional partnership to restore the Clinton River corridor, enhance connectivity, and strengthen environmental resilience for generations to come.

"This project shows what's possible when local and county governments work together toward a shared vision," said Commissioner Brendan Johnson, who represents the Rochester Hills area and helped lead the effort to make this partnership a reality. "Clinton River Oaks will expand access to nature, protect the river for future generations, and deliver a lasting return on public investment. It's exactly the kind of forward-looking collaboration our residents expect and deserve."

"It's hard to overstate just how remarkable this place is," said Chris Ward, Director of Oakland County Parks and Recreation. "Clinton River Oaks is a landscape of incredible abundance — miles of trails that link into a statewide network, scenic overlooks of the Clinton River, and thriving wildlife habitats that feel untouched by time. It's also deeply rooted in local history, nestled beside Yates Cider Mill, a favorite destination for countless families every year. We're thrilled to be able to protect and share such a special place with the people of Oakland County — a place that will inspire new generations to explore, learn, and connect with nature."

**Linking Communities Through Conservation and Recreation**

### **Partnership with Rochester Hills**

A new interlocal agreement brings a northern portion of Bloomer Park (108 acres) and the Yates Park area under OCPR management. Oakland County will contribute \$4 million to the city to acknowledge prior investments and assume full operations in April 2026, under an agreement extending through 2043. The agreement has been approved by both the Rochester Hills City Council and the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

“The City of Rochester Hills is proud to join Oakland County Parks in preserving and activating this incredible stretch of the Clinton River,” said Mayor Bryan Barnett. “This project represents a shared commitment to sustainability, outdoor recreation, and the quality of life that defines our region. I’m pleased that Oakland County Parks has made reinvesting local tax dollars back into this city a priority.”

### **Protecting Land and River Health**

OCPR will acquire 128 acres of undeveloped riverfront property adjacent to Bloomer Park and the Clinton River Trail, preserving more than two miles of shoreline. The acquisition supports a \$1.4 million river restoration project funded by the Great Lakes Fisheries Commission, which will remove invasive-species risks at Yates Dam and improve water quality and habitat along the river.

“The former Letica property is a key acquisition for both recreation and conservation,” said Chris Bunch, Executive Director of Six Rivers Land Conservancy. “Protecting this land keeps pollution out of the Clinton River, preserves vital wetlands and floodplains, and ensures that future generations can experience a healthy, connected natural corridor in the heart of our communities. This is exactly the kind of project that demonstrates the power of partnership between local governments and conservation organizations.”

### **Restoring and Reconnecting Trails**

After a 2024 washout destroyed a section of the Clinton River Trail in Rochester, OCPR will provide \$700,000 toward a \$3.7 million rebuild led by the City of Rochester, in partnership with the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, the Michigan DNR, and the Friends of the Clinton River Trail. The project will restore universal access, stabilize the riverbank, and reconnect a critical regional trail link.

“We are deeply grateful for the support of Oakland County Parks for this vital effort to restore a key section of the Clinton River Trail,” said Mayor Nancy Salvia of Rochester. “This partnership not only repairs essential infrastructure but enhances access, safety, and enjoyment for residents and visitors throughout the region.”

### **Future Collaboration with the City of Rochester**

OCPR continues to explore opportunities with the City of Rochester to expand access and connectivity along the Clinton River corridor. While no formal partnership has been approved, future collaboration remains a shared goal.

## **Investing in the Future of the Clinton River Corridor**

When complete, Clinton River Oaks Park will encompass more than three miles of river corridor, providing new opportunities for recreation, conservation, and community connection. The project underscores Oakland County Parks' commitment to protecting natural resources, expanding public access, and fostering partnerships that strengthen the region's environmental and civic vitality.

Guided by Mission 26, Oakland County Parks' long-term strategy to expand equitable access, promote public health, and advance environmental stewardship, this initiative reinforces the county's leadership in building a sustainable and inclusive park system for the next generation.

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### **About Oakland County Parks**

Founded nearly 60 years ago, Oakland County Parks has 17 locations boasting more than 7,000 acres of natural areas and miles of scenic trails that provide guests with year-round opportunities for recreation, wellness and connection to nature. From championship golf courses and a destination waterpark, to accessible playscapes and flourishing wildlife habitats, Oakland County Parks offers something for everyone while staying committed to promoting inclusion, environmental stewardship and strengthening communities through innovative programs, partnerships and events that bring people together. Learn more: [OaklandCountyParks.com](https://OaklandCountyParks.com).