



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Oakland County Parks expands in southeast Oakland County with ribbon cutting for transformed Oak Park Woods

\$6.2 million investment marks Oakland County Parks' 17th county park and first location in the City of Oak Park

OAK PARK, Mich. (June 22, 2026) – A major renovation of Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park opened to the public with a ribbon cutting today.

Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park is Oakland County Parks' 17th county park and its first in the City of Oak Park. The park is owned by the City of Oak Park and operated in partnership with Oakland County Parks, creating a long-term county parks presence in one of southeast Oakland County's most densely populated communities.

The opening is part of Oakland County Parks' expanded presence in more populated communities across the county, including new and planned county park locations in Pontiac, Southfield, Oak Park, Bloomfield Township, Rochester/Rochester Hills, and Troy.

At the same time, Oakland County Parks is wrapping up multi-million-dollar investments in existing and newly added parks, including major renovations, improved amenities and restoration of natural features at Pontiac Oaks in Pontiac, Catalpa Oaks in Southfield, Southfield Oaks at the former Beech Woods Golf Course and Red Oaks County Park in Madison Heights. Openings at these locations will occur throughout the summer and fall.

Together, these projects show how local partnerships can grow the county park system, improve existing public land, bring county parks service closer to residents and create welcoming outdoor places that support health, connection and quality of life. Improvements at Oak Park Woods feature a large, nature-themed playground, new warming kitchen, trails and boardwalk improvements, year-round restrooms, parking lot repairs, grills, bike racks and native plants and trees.

The project represents a total investment of \$6,210,168. Initial funding included \$3.25 million through the Healthy Communities Plan, with \$2.5 million from the American Rescue Plan Act and \$750,000 from Oakland County Parks capital improvement funds. Oakland County Parks later added additional capital improvement funding to complete the transformation.

"Parks are more than places to gather, they are investments in the health and quality of life of our residents," Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter said. "The transformation

of Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park is a great example of what happens when communities create welcoming and accessible spaces where families can connect with nature and build memories.”

“Oak Park Woods is an investment in a community that deserves high-quality outdoor spaces close to home,” Oakland County Commissioner Yolanda Smith Charles said. “This project brings new energy, new amenities and a long-term county parks presence to Oak Park, while showing what can happen when local and county partners work together for residents.”

“Oakland County’s parks have long been places where memories are made and communities come together. As someone who spent many afternoons at this park as a child, it’s especially meaningful to celebrate this transformation,” Oakland County Parks Commission Chair Ebony Bagley said. “This investment reflects our commitment to ensuring every resident has access to safe, welcoming and vibrant outdoor spaces where families can connect with nature and each other for generations to come.”

Partnership made improvements possible

“Through this partnership with the City of Oak Park, Oakland County Parks is establishing a long-term presence in southeast Oakland County and bringing county parks service closer to more residents,” Oakland County Parks Director Chris Ward said. “Oak Park Woods shows how we can grow the park system by working with local communities to invest in existing public land, improve access and create outdoor places that support health, connection and quality of life.”

Oak Park City Manager Erik Tungate said the project is an investment in “our residents’ quality of life. It will provide families, children and visitors with a welcoming place to play, explore and connect for years to come. We’re proud to unveil this space that will create lasting memories for our community.”

Oak Park Woods at Shepherd Park is located at 24198 Church Street in Oak Park. Park entry is free. Hours are 8 a.m.-dusk.

For more information about Oakland County Parks, visit OaklandCountyParks.com.

#

About Oakland County Parks

Founded 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.