

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
MILL POND DAM FACT SHEET

1. **Description.** The Mill Pond Dam, which is owned by Oakland County, consists of a 370-foot-long earthen embankment and a steel and concrete drop inlet spillway. The structural height of the dam is 16 feet. Water discharges through a 4-foot-wide drop inlet into a pipe outlet and over a 10-foot-long water feature and water wheel, before dropping 5 to 6 feet and discharging into the downstream Shiawassee River. Davisburg Road sets on top the earthen embankment. While Oakland County owns the dam the County and Springfield Township have entered into an agreement whereby the County is responsible for 55% of financial obligations for the repair, maintenance, and replacement of the dam, with Springfield Township responsible for 45%.
2. **Current Condition.** A 2011 preliminary dam evaluation found several potential issues with the dam. Erosion and deterioration were noted. Deflection and sags within the outflow pipe were noted and it was determined that the pipe was likely at the end of its recommended service life. A video inspection was done by Oakland County in 2015, confirming that the pipe was close to the end of its service life. The spillway was inadequate and had overtopped at least twice since 1975, and likely would overtop during a 100-year storm event. Cracks and voids were also noted.
3. **Classification.** The dam is classified as a low hazard dam by MDEQ and must be able to pass a 100-year storm event to meet MDEQ regulations. The existing spillway system does not have that capacity.
4. **County and Township Goals.** The County and Springfield Township have extensively explored options for the dam and the adjoining parks. The goals are to enhance/expand recreation value, respect the dam's historical significance, protect and improve environmental health, and minimize short- and long-term maintenance and capital investment. To attain these goals, the Township and County commissioned a feasibility study.
5. **Feasibility Study.** The study began in October 2018. A final report was issued, dated August 7, 2019, consisting of around 50 pages of recommendations and over 100 pages of exhibits.
6. **Public Input.** Discussion regarding the study and the future of the dam included two public informational meetings at the Township in March and May of 2019, and a public meeting of the Township Board on June 6, 2019, with the draft study available for comment. Notices of meeting dates and times were posted on the Township website and at all facilities. Meeting materials were on display from March 6 to June 6, 2019 at the Township Library along with instructions on how to access the Mill Pond Dam dedicated web page and/or be added to the information distribution lists. The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission received information and discussed the alternatives for the dam at public meetings in June and July of 2019.
7. **Consultant Report and Recommendations.** The study discussed, and the Township and the County exhaustively considered, eight different options, some of which included replacing the existing spillway, constructing a new bridge over a new spillway, or removing the dam. Each alternative was carefully analyzed using eight factors including community impact, property values, recreational benefits, historical significance, ecological and environmental impact, dam safety, and cost. A decision matrix listing the factors indicated that the preferred alternative, with a significantly higher score, was to the remove the dam and restore the river corridor with an open bottom arch culvert at the Davisburg Road crossing. This was the alternative recommended by the Township Board to the County Parks and Recreation Commission. The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission at their July 2019 meeting assessed the alternatives and considered the Springfield Township Board's recommendation. The Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission concurred with the Township Board's recommendation and approved conceptually the preferred alternative.
8. **For more information,** please visit the **Mill Pond Dam web page** for a full copy of the study, the decision matrix, meeting minutes, and additional information on the dam. Go to: springfield-twp.us, select **OUR COMMUNITY**, then click on **Mill Pond Dam**.