



# RECREATION INVENTORY

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## ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION PROPERTY

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### OVERVIEW

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St. Clair County currently owns eight properties devoted to parks and recreation activities that total 1,010 acres. These are:

- Goodells County Park 366 acres
- Columbus County Park 411 acres
- Fort Gratiot County Park 30 acres
- Woodsong County Park 33 acres
- Fort Gratiot Light Station 5 acres
- Wetlands County Park 5 acres
- Marine City Dredge Cut Access .34 acre
- Wadhams to Avoca Trail 160 acres (12 miles long)

For the purposes of comparing the County’s Parks and Recreation property inventory with the recommended standards, it is also valuable to mention the St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency’s 111-acre Pine River Nature Center, which is adjacent to Goodells County Park. By adding that acreage to the parks and trails inventory above, PARC property totals 1,121 acres.

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### GOODELLS COUNTY PARK

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On January 1, 1996, the St. Clair County Board of Commissioners gave the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission responsibility for maintenance, development, and operation of the County-owned **Goodells County Park**. At that time, the property was commonly known as “the poor farm” or “the fairgrounds” because of its previous uses as a residence for indigent senior citizens as well as the ongoing site of the 4-H County Fair.

Facilities at the park include the Visitors Center, two playgrounds, river and fishing access, a seasonal ice skating rink, trails, four picnic shelters, a community center, historic buildings, a BMX track, a radio-controlled **model airplane airfield and truck track**, a **butterfly garden**, **five special events buildings**, the “**Splashpad**,” equestrian facilities, and areas for outdoor events.

The “**Splashpad**” has 11 spray features that include two water cannons, five dumping buckets, ground geysers, and a rainbow water tunnel. The “**Splashpad**” is open daily from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and

admission is free. In February 2006, the County received a Facility Design Award from the Michigan Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) for the Goodells County Park Splashpad. This award recognized the Splashpad as the first water play facility in the state that uses and recycles water that is supplied by a well rather than a municipal water system.

The Historic Village at Goodells County Park contains the Lynn Township Schoolhouse (1885), and the C.C Peck and Company bank (1908). Visitors will also see the Columbus Bible Church (1860), the Murphy/Ryan farmhouse (1872) and the Mudge Log Cabin (1863). The latest addition to the Historic Village is the Columbus Bible Church. The Church was moved to the park and restored, complete with its twelve-foot tall windows and spectacular bell tower.

Goodells County Park is not just facilities and infrastructure. It is also a place where the community meets for many annual events, such as the St. Clair County 4-H Fair, dog shows, auctions, sewing bees, the Blue Water Humane Society Vaccination Clinic, regional cross country meets, Can-Am BMX bike racing, the Earth Fair, and Earthkeepers. The facilities are used throughout the year by dozens of organizations and families alike. On any given day at the park, one may see a wedding, family reunion, birthday party or day camp. The St. Clair County Farm Museum stores and demonstrates antique farm equipment at the park. The property is an essential part of the history and the future of St. Clair County.

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## COLUMBUS COUNTY PARK

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Through five separate transactions, the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) owns 411 acres of property in Columbus Township. PARC used a \$65,800 Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) grant in 2016, to secure the final 26 acres. In 2007, PARC used a \$1.4 million MNRTF grant to secure 291 acres for the park.



COLUMBUS COUNTY PARK



PARC contracted with Landscape Architect, Pamela Blough, to develop the park master plan. PARC held a public visioning session to get citizen input into the development of Columbus County Park on November 27, 2007 at the Columbus Township Hall. A second session was held in January of 2008 and in June, the Parks and Recreation Commission formally adopted the Columbus County Park Master Plan.

Phase 1 construction at Columbus County Park was completed in early 2010. Phase 1 included constructing the main entrance on Bauman Road, a park roadway, a 100-car parking lot, erosion control and drainage improvements, underground utilities, a water well and development of a lighted sledding hill.

Other facilities at the park include mountain biking trails, walking trails, horse trails, fishing access, and permit-only hunting. The Belle River runs through the park, totaling 1.6 miles of frontage. A historic gambrel roof barn is located at Columbus County Park near Bauman Road and is used for maintenance and storage. The barn was restored by Columbus Township.

Construction of an energy efficient park Lodge with modern restroom facilities, a picnic pavilion, offices and storage rooms was completed in 2012. The Lodge uses geothermal technology for heating and cooling as a **result of funding from the Environmental Protection Agency's Energy Efficiency Community Block Grant (EECBG)** program.

Activities at the park include picnics, weddings, educational programs, and meetings.

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## FORT GRATIOT COUNTY PARK

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Fort Gratiot County Park is located in the northeast part of St. Clair County, just off M-25 on Metcalf Road. This 30-acre park offers breathtaking views of Lake Huron and 852 feet of shoreline and beach. It also includes **picnic areas, restrooms, a children's playground, and paved walking trails.**

In Fall 2005, the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission purchased 16 acres of property from Citizens First Bank for \$3.1 million using a \$2.2 million grant from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, administered by the Department of Natural Resources. PARC also purchased a beach easement from an adjacent property owner to move forward with the development of Fort Gratiot County Park.

PARC formally approved an updated Fort Gratiot County Park Master Plan that incorporated the use of the adjacent 14 acres leased from the Great Lakes Water Authority.

**Phase 1 of the park's development began in 2006 and included the installation of water and sewer lines, underground electrical lines, roads, paved trails, and parking areas.**

Fort Gratiot County Park is also home to the 1971 Tunnel Explosion Memorial which commemorates the construction accident that took the lives of 22 men working on the water intake tunnel located beneath the park. The 1971 Water Tunnel Explosion committee raised funds for the memorial which was erected in 2007. The Michigan Historic Commission dedicated a State Historical Marker at the site to mark the 40th anniversary of the tragedy.

Other improvements at the park include ADA-accessible restrooms and a playscape in 2007, as well as an overflow parking area in 2008. In early 2009, two picnic pavilions were completed and additional sections of boardwalk were installed on the beach. An information kiosk was built, as well as a vending machine shelter and a beach gateway pavilion. All park improvements and equipment were funded by the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation millage.

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## WOODSONG COUNTY PARK

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On December 30, 2008, St. Clair County purchased the 33-acre Camp Woodsong site from the Michigan Waterways Council of the Girl Scouts of America. The property is located off of Abbottsford Road, at the east end of Rynn Road, in Clyde Township.

St. Clair County purchased the property for \$400,000 using a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. Under the grant, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund reimbursed St. Clair County for 64% of the purchase price and eligible costs. St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Millage funds were used to fund the balance of the purchase costs.

The western half of the property features existing buildings that include a garage, pavilion, two vault toilets and group camping areas. The eastern half of the property has scenic, steep slopes that travel down to 2,800 feet of Black River shoreline. The site also has a rustic parking lot, and an ADA trail and kayak launch on the Black River is planned for the future.

The preservation and acquisition of land for outdoor recreational use is the highest priority in the County Master Recreation Plan. The purchase of Camp Woodsong allows the County to preserve it for continued outdoor recreation use, including nature study, hiking, biking, and water activities such as canoe, kayak and fishing access to the Black River.



WOODSONG COUNTY PARK



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## FORT GRATIOT LIGHT STATION

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The Fort Gratiot Light Station is the oldest lighthouse in Michigan. As the shipping needs on the Great Lakes increased in the 1820's, so did the need for a navigational aid at the mouth of the St. Clair River. In August of 1825 the first lighthouse in Michigan was built at Port Huron. The original tower was located near the base of the present day second span of the Blue Water Bridge. It was 32 feet high above ground level, 18 feet in diameter at the base, and tapered to nine feet across at the top. The original tower did not last long, as poor construction and September storms would lead to its demise when it crumbled in November of 1828.

In the 1850's, the Lighthouse Board began a series of reforms that would affect the Fort Gratiot Light Station. The first such change was the addition of a Fresnel lens. From the 1860's to the 1930's, the property expanded with the addition of the Keeper's Duplex (1874), the Fog Signal Building (1900), the Single Keeper's Dwelling (1932), the Coast Guard Station (1932) and the Equipment Building (1938).

When most of the Great Lakes lights were automated in the 1930's, the need for light keepers faded into the sunset. The Coast Guard maintained the Fort Gratiot Light Station from the 1930's until they moved next door into the new station that was built in 2004.

The property was officially transferred to St. Clair County in 2010. Restoration of the lighthouse was completed in 2013, and other property repairs and additions have been made using Michigan Coastal Zone Management Grant funding. The restoration of the tower was made possible by the "Save America's Treasures" grant program and a match from the City of Port Huron. The tower reopened for tours in the summer of 2012. The Port Huron Museum serves as a partner in leading tours of the site, programming, and private reservations. Friends of the Fort Gratiot Light Station raise funds for building restoration projects and provides volunteers.






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## PINE RIVER NATURE CENTER (RESA)

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The St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency's Pine River Nature Center is an educational facility whose mission is to promote the awareness, understanding and stewardship of the Blue Water Area's natural and cultural heritage. The center provides programs for local schools to enhance their science and mathematics curricula with outdoor-based field studies correlated with the Michigan Curriculum Framework and offers outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities for area residents.

The Pine River Nature Center opened to the public in the May of 2003. The Nature Center sits on 111 acres of property, with over 4,800 feet of the Pine River meandering through it. Since opening, over 21,900 students from around St. Clair County have visited the center for programs. Activities and events at the center include the following:

- Opportunities to hike over two miles of trails (open daily from dawn to dark).
- Browse the indoor displays and live animals.
- Read about nature or do research in the library.
- Attend public programs, including star gazing parties and nature walks.
- Volunteer to help with special events and school programs.
- Adopt-a-Trail.
- Visit the universally-accessible (ADA) tree house.

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## GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

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Greenways are corridors of land recognized for their ability to connect people and places together. According to the EPA, greenways promote outdoor recreation, catalyze economic development, increase adjacent property values, celebrate historical and cultural assets, promote conservation and environmental education and improve quality of life.

Greenways have multiple purposes, but from a recreation perspective they have two major functions:

1. To link and facilitate hiking and biking access between residential areas and parks.
2. To provide opportunities for the linear forms of outdoor recreation (i.e. hiking, jogging, bicycling, equestrian riding, and walking) in which many St. Clair County residents engage today. These recreation activities require the development of trails along the greenways.

There are two primary trail systems within St. Clair County: the Wadhams to Avoca Trail and the Bridge to Bay Trail.



### ***Wadhams to Avoca Trail***

In 1999, PARC purchased the surface rights to 9.82 miles (100 acres) of right-of-way from CSX Railroad and began developing it as the Wadhams to Avoca Trail. In 2001 and 2004, PARC purchased two additional properties totaling 17.65 acres adjacent to the trail north of Imlay City Road for a trailhead and parking. In 2003, PARC purchased the surface rights to an additional two and a half miles of CSX Railroad right-of-way totaling 17.66 acres from Wadhams Road to Griswold Road. The trail is over 12.4 miles long and contains 160 acres.

To date, the 640-foot Mill Creek Trestle has been decked and railed for pedestrians and bike riders. Three acres of land southeast of the Trestle was purchased to create a horse crossing at Mill Creek.

At the south end of the trail in Kimball Township, over five miles of trail have been paved starting at McLain Road running southeast to Griswold Road. The paved section of the trail passes through a developing residential area and is heavily used by residents.

In a joint effort with the St. Clair County Road Commission, a hybrid pedestrian signal was installed in 2010 where the trail crosses Wadhams Road. It was the first time this type of signal has been used for a trail crossing in Michigan. The signal prompts flashing lights to stop traffic when a pedestrian wishes to cross the road.

Designated parking areas are located at the Wadhams Road, Imlay City Road, Lapeer Road and Avoca Road trailheads. The non-motorized trail is open to walkers, bicyclists and equestrians.

### ***Bridge to Bay Trail***

The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) is working in conjunction with 13 local units of government to develop a 54-mile paved trail from Lakeport State Park to New Baltimore. St. Clair County helps





BRIDGE TO BAY TRAIL IN PORT HURON

to plan and promote the trail while each local unit of government is responsible for constructing their section of the trail. Even though PARC plays an instrumental coordinating role in the development of the Bridge to Bay Trail, the property that makes up that trail is owned by various municipalities and townships. Most trail construction projects are funded by grants. PARC usually helps to fund the local match required for trail construction grants.

**The Bridge to Bay Trail extends from St. Clair County's northern border; under the Blue Water Bridge; through Port Huron, Marysville, St. Clair, Marine City, and Algonac; and past state and municipal parks, museums, gazebos, and lighthouses. Sometimes the trail is within reach of the water's edge and sometimes a few miles inland.** It connects communities together for walkers, joggers, strollers, and bicyclists of all ages. The trail varies from a ten-foot wide separated paved pathway in the right of way along a road, or a five-foot wide dedicated bike lane.

The trail can potentially link to the Wadhams to Avoca Trail within St. Clair County, the Discover Michigan Trail, the Macomb Orchard Trail, and the St. Clair Parkway Trail in Lambton, Ontario, Canada via ferry. As of 2016, roughly 25 miles of the 54-mile Bridge to Bay Trail is complete.

Funding for the Bridge to Bay Trail comes from the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Millage, local government funds, and grants. Grant money for the trail has been provided by the United States government through federal transportation grants, and by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF).

### ***Blue Water River Walk and Wetlands County Park***

The Blue Water River Walk is almost one mile long and runs along the St. Clair River shoreline immediately south of the mouth of the Black River in Port Huron. It is less than a mile downriver from the Blue Water Bridge to Sarnia and the southern end of Lake Huron. Owned by the Community Foundation of St. Clair County, the Blue Water River Walk is open to the public year-round. The river walk features an observation deck, a pedestrian trail, an outdoor classroom, shoreline and habitat restoration, a fishing pier and public art.

BLUE WATER RIVER WALK ALONG THE ST. CLAIR RIVER IN PORT HURON. SOURCE: MICHIGAN SEA GRANT



The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission purchased 4.85 acres of land using two MNRTF grants and received a \$1,039,500 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to develop a 2.75-acre wetland on the very southern end of the river walk.

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## THE BLUEWAYS OF ST. CLAIR

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One of the goals included in the 2007-2011 Master Recreation Plan was to explore developing a system of water trails in St. Clair County. The St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission, in partnership with PARC, applied for and was granted a Michigan Coastal Zone Management Grant to create a Blueways Vision website for the shoreline of St. Clair County.

Research began in 2009 to find all the public access points along waterways in the county. Next, public input was gathered for popular paddling routes and put-ins. The website was built up with paddling routes, access pictures, information on restaurants, motels, museums and other points of interest. One will find information on the major rivers in the County, including the Black River, Belle River, Pine River, Lake Huron, St. Clair River, and the St. Clair River delta, which is the largest freshwater delta in North America.

The Blueways website lists 17 different paddling routes, totaling 151 miles, in nine unique bodies of water and lots of valuable information related to paddling and shoreline recreation. The website is very dynamic, with driving directions between favorite points, aerial imagery maps, weather report links, and a “Birds Along the Blueway” section for birding enthusiasts.

Check out St. Clair County’s Blueways website at [www.BluewaysOfStClair.org](http://www.BluewaysOfStClair.org).

### *Island Loop National Water Trail*

The 10.2-mile Island Loop National Water Trail was the first national water trail to be designated in Michigan and the 14th in the United States. The trail makes a loop from the Black River, to the Black River Canal, to Lake Huron, into the St. Clair River and back to the Black River. It also passes the oldest lighthouse in



KAYAKING ALONGSIDE FREIGHTERS ON THE ST. CLAIR RIVER NEAR MARINE CITY

Michigan, the Thomas Edison Museum, the Huron Lightship Museum, and the Acheson Maritime Center. It also navigates between the United States and Canada for 2.5 miles and meanders through Fort Gratiot Township, Port Huron Township, and the City of Port Huron.

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## RECREATION STANDARDS

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Two recreation standards are applicable to parks and recreation facilities within St. Clair County:

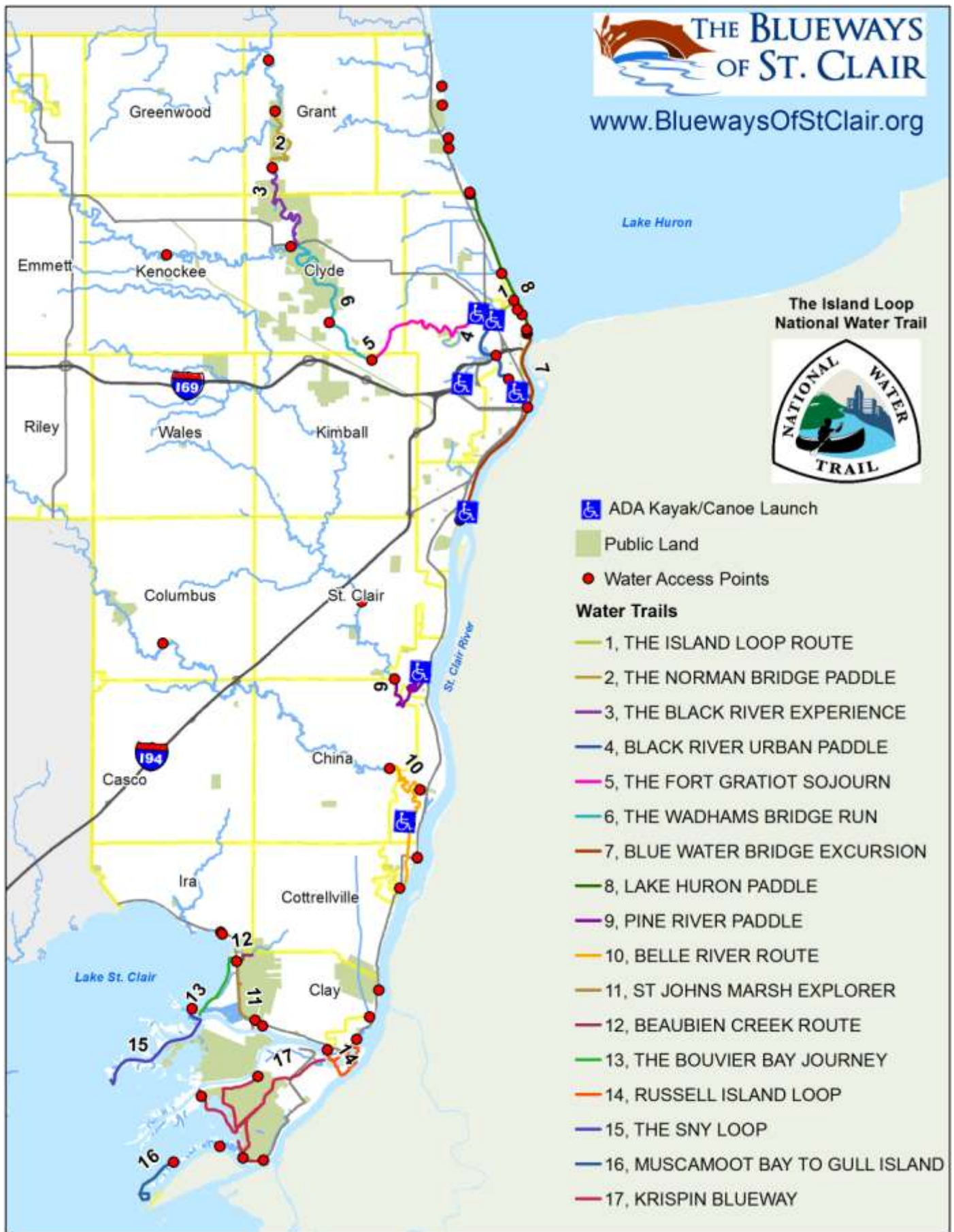
1. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), which relate to park acreage requirements.
2. Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards, developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which relate to a variety of park facilities and features as well as acreage requirements.

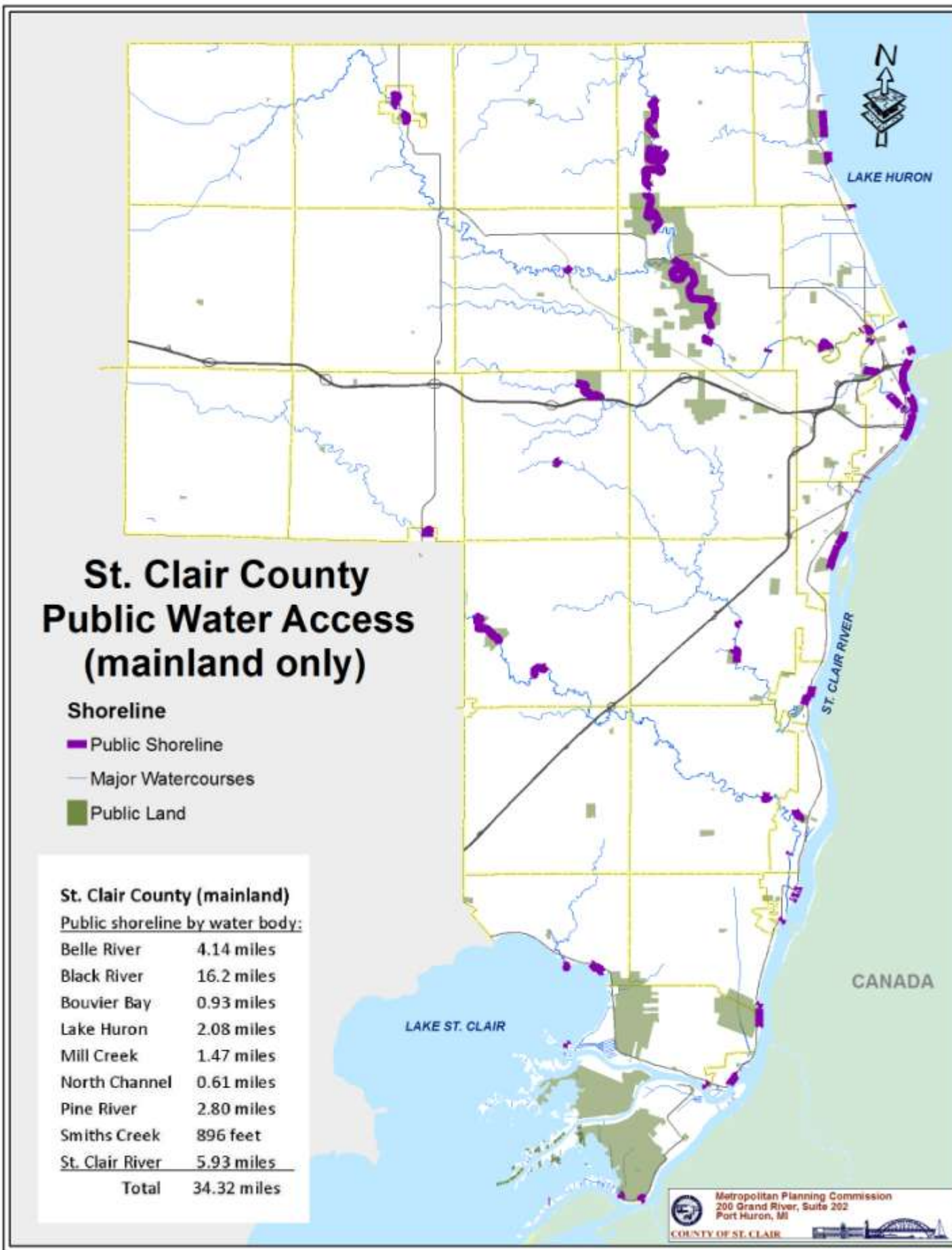
### *National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards*

National Recreation and Park Association's Open Space Guidelines and Standards, known as the NRPA Standards, are used by many state, regional, and county parks and recreation agencies throughout the United States to aid in the development of master recreation plans.

The sections of the NRPA Standards that are relevant to properly assessing the amount of parks and recreation acreage and facilities in St. Clair County are:

- Mini-Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Community Parks
- Regional Park
- Regional Park Reserves





<b>TABLE 3-1: ST. CLAIR COUNTY, REGIONAL PARK NEEDS - ACREAGE</b>		
<b>REGIONAL PARK NEEDS: CURRENT POPULATION (BASED ON 2010 CENSUS) - 163,040</b>		
5 acres per 1,000 people	Current Acreage	Acres Needed
815	1,121	+306 over
10 acres per 1,000 people	Current Acreage	Acres Needed
1,630	1,121	-509 deficit
<b>REGIONAL PARK NEEDS: PROJECTED POPULATION (2040 SEMCOG FORECAST) - 167,621</b>		
5 acres per 1,000 people	Current Acreage	Acres Needed
838	1,121	+283 over
10 acres per 1,000 people	Current Acreage	Acres Needed
1,676	1,121	-555 deficit

All three of these types of parks and recreation facilities can be found within St. Clair County, and all are included in the recreation inventory on the previous pages and defined in the following text.

**Mini, Neighborhood, and Community Parks**

Mini, neighborhood, and community parks are small parks, designed to satisfy the recreational needs of a local community within a service radius of up to two miles.

These parks are under the ownership of, and considered the responsibility of, local units of government. While these properties are listed in the recreation inventory matrix on pages 53-61 and a share of the **County’s Parks and Recreation Millage is distributed to the local units of government, plans for mini, neighborhood, and community parks lie outside the realm of this countywide Master Recreation Plan.**

**Regional Parks**

Regional parks are culturally significant, ecologically significant and/or large parks (over 200 acres) that typically result from the need to protect a cultural, natural, or historical resource of regional significance, or to provide a new regional attraction. They are designed to serve several communities within a service radius of **up to one hour’s driving time.**

Regional parks within St. Clair County are the primary subject of this Master Recreation Plan.

**Regional Park Reserves**

Regional park reserves are parks of 1,000 acres or more, designed to serve several communities within a **service radius of up to one hour’s driving time.**

All regional park reserves in St. Clair County are Michigan State Parks and Michigan State Game Areas. **These are the responsibility of, and managed by, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ Parks and Recreation Division and Wildlife Division.**

Though many St. Clair County residents use these state-owned facilities, the one-hour service radius of these properties also serve residents in all or part of Macomb, Oakland, Wayne, Lapeer, Genesee, Sanilac, Tuscola, and Huron counties as well as international visitors from Canada.

The Michigan State Parks within St. Clair County attract campers, bird watchers, boaters, and anglers. The vast majority of State Game Area property in the county is dedicated for wild game management and hunting purposes.

Since these regional park reserves are state-owned property and are the responsibility of state government, plans for how these properties are used and managed are not included in this Master Recreation Plan.

**St. Clair County's Regional Parks**

The purpose of the “Regional Park” category in the NRPA Standards is to help identify whether a certain geographic area or unit of government – in this case, St. Clair County – possesses sufficient park acreage to satisfy the recreational needs of its citizens.

Both the 366-acre Goodells County Park and the 411-acre Columbus County Park specifically fit the NRPA standard for a regional park.

Due to its adjacent location to Goodells County Park, the County Parks and Recreation Commission has also listed RESA’s 111-acre Pine River Nature Center as part of the County’s required total parks and recreation acreage.

Fort Gratiot County Park (30 acres), Woodsong County Park (33 acres), and the Wetlands County Park (five acres) are considered regional parks due to their significant frontage along important bodies of water. **Woodsong’s location along 2,800 feet of Black River shoreline and the existence of threatened flora are two factors that make it very valuable.** The shores of Lake Huron and the State Historical site at Fort Gratiot County Park classify it as a Regional Park. Wetlands County Park provides access to the St. Clair River.

Finally, the park at Fort Gratiot Light Station (five acres) is a regional park due to its historic significance in the Great Lakes system.

The Wadhams to Avoca Trail is technically classified as a linear park. However, since the County Parks and Recreation Commission has acquired trailhead property and intends to acquire more land for that purpose, **the total trail acreage (currently 160 acres) is included within the county’s regional parks inventory.**

The total acreage for these properties currently stands at 1,121 acres.

The acreage devoted to the Bridge to Bay Trail is not included because that land is owned by the various local units of government through which the trail passes.

**Park Acres Needed**

The recognized NRPA Standard for Regional Parks is at least five to ten acres for every 1,000 persons in the **service area. Based on St. Clair County’s current and projected population, Table 3-1** shows how much additional park acreage the County should acquire to meet current and future standards. It is the policy of the Parks and Recreation Commission to meet the higher acreage standard - ten acres of regional park space per 1,000 people.

***Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Standards***

In addition to the NRPA Standards, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) has identified 30 Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards.

Like the NRPA Standards, these MDNR standards identify acres required for parks and recreation purposes. They also identify the number of units, such as boat launch sites or feet of fishing access, needed to serve the population within a defined area.

The MDNR Standards also recognize that no one agency, such as a county parks and recreation commission or department, is responsible for meeting all of the recreational standards in a given region. Therefore, the MDNR suggests that facilities managed by state and county governments, as well as those owned and managed by cities, townships, and villages, be included in a comprehensive inventory and be measured against the numerical standard.

**Of the 30 standards identified by the NRPA and MDNR, 16 are considered to be “resource-based” facilities as opposed to “activity-based” facilities.** Resource-based facilities are more likely to be used by all citizens throughout a county or region. Swimming beaches and nature trails are examples of resource-based facilities. Tennis courts and ball diamonds are examples of activity-based facilities; these are more likely to be used by residents within a community, neighborhood, or locale.

### Subjective Interpretation of Standards

Recreation standards are often used to test the validity of information gained from surveys and through direct citizen input. Therefore, city and county planners in Michigan have historically used numerical standards as a means of determining the number of park acres and/or facilities needed to serve a given population. These standards were originally expressed only in terms of open space, but later were expanded to include a list of basic park amenities.

The strength of the standards approach to planning has been that these formulas are officially accepted by most state and federal plan review agencies.

However, even though recreation planning standards are generally constructive, they must also be used intelligently in concert with other information because they tend to either understate or overstate actual citizen needs due to regional interests, demographics, citizen mobility, unique natural areas, and the impact of tourism.

Recognizing the value of public opinion, standards, and intelligent analysis, the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission has relied on both quantitative data as well as public comments, citizen surveys, input from numerous government officials and on subjective and objective interpretation of all data sources.

This balance of subjective and objective interpretation is the basis for all St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission decisions and actions.

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## BARRIER-FREE ENDEAVORS

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The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that over 53 million Americans – one out of every five adults – are disabled. While these numbers are broad estimates, it is clear that the number of people nationwide who have disabilities is large and is growing significantly as the American population continues to age. The incidence of disability rises sharply as individuals reach their sixth and seventh decade of life. In St. Clair County, the disabled population is roughly 24,580 persons - nearly 16% of the total population (US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013).

PARC is dedicated to providing positive recreational opportunities for all citizens. With that dedication comes recognition of the importance of providing for the special needs of disabled members of the community.

To that end, PARC has removed barriers from existing facilities.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), PARC is working to ensure that all future parks and recreation projects adhere to specifications for access, inclusion, emotional well-being, and physical fitness that provide increased independence and improved quality of life for disabled individuals.

Each PARC facility was compared to the *2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design* and given a ranking from 1-5, where:

- 1=none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design
- 2=some site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design
- 3=most site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design
- 4=all site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, and
- 5=the facility meets the Principals of Universal Design

### Goodells County Park | Accessibility Ranking: 4

**Access issues have been addressed for each activity area. Both the Community Center and the Visitor's Center** have paved sidewalks and pathways for easy entrance and egress as well as convenient parking areas with a more-than-adequate number of handicapped-accessible parking spaces. These buildings also have electrically-operated handicapped-accessible doors, proper signage for direction and location, and completely accessible bathroom and shower facilities.





Paved pathways connect these buildings to other park areas, including the children’s playground, the historic village, exhibit barns, Farm Museum, and picnic pavilions. PARC has also provided handicapped and wheelchair access to the Special Events Arena. All historic buildings are barrier free with earth ramps to create "at-grade" entrances.

There are paved handicapped parking spaces in the north gravel parking lot, as well as the east gravel lot. The Splashpad is also barrier-free, so that all residents and visitors can enjoy it during the summertime. Additionally, the main play structures at Goodells County Park are handicapped-accessible.

**Columbus County Park | Accessibility Ranking: 3**

Currently, there are handicapped-accessible parking spaces. The park Lodge includes an ADA-accessible family restroom and an elevator shaft, in the event that the basement will include a public use in the future. PARC is also in the process of developing a new playground at Columbus County Park that, when completed, will feature a fully handicapped-accessible play structure.

**Fort Gratiot County Park | Accessibility Ranking: 4**

Accessible parking has been addressed by dedicating handicapped parking spaces by the beach area and near both pavilions. The main picnic shelter is equipped with an ADA-accessible family restroom. Clear signage has been put in place to assist with wayfinding.

**A boardwalk leading to the beach provides access to the water. A transfer bench is located near the water’s edge, and a beach wheelchair is available for use for free. PARC’s accessible beach wheelchair is equipped with large, wide wheels which can roll across the sand without sinking.**

**Woodson County Park | Accessibility Ranking: 1**

At this time there are no developed facilities in this park. Future plans call for an ADA-accessible walkway down to the Black River and an ADA-accessible canoe and kayak launch.

**Fort Gratiot Light Station | Accessibility Ranking: 4**

The Fort Gratiot Light Station includes handicapped parking spaces. PARC also used Michigan Coastal Zone Management Grant funds in 2012 to build interpretive signage and accessible walkways near the Light Station. Barrier-free restrooms have been constructed in the Fog Signal building and the equipment building.

**Trails | Accessibility Ranking: 3**

Barrier-free access is an important component of the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission trails projects as well.

For both the Bridge to Bay Trail and the Wadhams to Avoca Trail, PARC has specified and is working toward:

- Adequate accessible parking spots and restrooms at trailheads.
- Adequate, legible signage for ease of understanding by people with visual or cognitive impairments .
- Proper substrate and finished trail surface for ease of wheelchair and ambulatory mobility.

Currently, there are handicapped parking spaces at every trailhead parking lot along the Wadhams to Avoca Trail. Accessible vault toilets are located at the Avoca, Imlay City and Lapeer Road trailheads.

Trails are built to the dimensions specified by the Americans with Disabilities Act to allow trail access for wheelchairs, while preventing passage by motorized vehicles. All bollards at road crossings are placed according to the standard.

People with disabilities encountering barriers to their enjoyment of any St. Clair County park are encouraged to contact PARC regarding the issue and are invited to make suggestions to reduce or eliminate the barrier.



*ADA-ACCESSIBLE KAYAK LAUNCHES IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY, FUNDED BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION*



**ADA access in St. Clair County:**

- Seven ADA Launches thanks to St. Clair County PARC.

**Along the National Water Trail:**

- 7<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge – City of Port Huron
- Bakers Field- Port Huron Twp.
- North River Road Park- Ft. Gratiot

**Existing south of Port Huron:**

- Chrysler Beach – Marysville
- St. Clair Boat Harbor – St. Clair
- Springborn/Belle River Road- East China Township
- 40<sup>th</sup> Street Pond, Port Huron Twp.





# PARKS AND RECREATION PROPERTY HELD BY MUNICIPALITIES, TOWNSHIPS, STATE AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS

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## OVERVIEW

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The maps and matrix that appears on the following pages show an inventory of municipal and township recreational facilities within St. Clair County. The Metropolitan Planning Commission conducted this inventory to determine the number of parks and recreation facilities and their acreage and features. The inventory was developed through the examination of community recreation plans and through discussion with local government officials.

MPC staff examined information about playgrounds, ball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, access to ponds, rivers and lakes, marinas, boat ramps, fishing access (other than by boat), ice skating, camping, trails, golf courses, picnic shelters or pavilions, community centers, hunting access, and any other special facilities.

In addition to these items, several communities indicated the existence and availability of tennis courts, volleyball courts, boardwalks, park benches, viewing vistas, landscaped areas, concession stands, track and football fields, indoor tracks, golf ranges, and golf domes. Some facilities are lighted for use at night.

The inventory also shows that several communities own vacant park land that is planned for recreational development at some point in the future. Some of this vacant land is wetland and is, therefore, not intended for development of any kind.

School facilities are not included even though all or most of those have playgrounds that are open to the public.

**CITY OF ALGONAC**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Smith Field	2.0	Skate park
Riverfront Park	5.0	River access, boat launch, fishing access, picnic areas, restrooms, freighter watching
Water Tower Park	1.0	Playground
Scout & Columbia St. Park	0.25	Playground
Lions Field	10.0	Playground, soccer fields, basketball/volleyball courts, swimming pool, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, community center, restrooms

**VILLAGE OF CAPAC**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Capac Lions Park	6.0	Playground, ballfields, picnic areas, restrooms

**MARINE CITY**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Marine City Beach	1.2	Bathing beach, river access, playground, fishing access, restrooms, pavilion, freighter watching
Broadway Park	0.75	River access, fishing access, battleship gun deck display, freighter watching
Lighthouse Park	1.0	Volleyball courts, river access, fishing access, Peche Island Lighthouse, freighter watching
Civic Women's Club River Park	0.5	River access, fishing access, picnic area, freighter watching
Drake Memorial Park	0.75	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Nautical Mile Park	1.2	River access, fishing access, picnic areas, freighter watching
Tot Lot	0.5	Playground
King Road Park	14.0	Playground, ballfields, picnic areas, restrooms, basketball/volleyball courts, ice skating, sledding hill, drinking fountain
Ward Cottrell Park	5.5	Ballfields, tennis courts, playground, running track
St. Clair Park	0.5	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Water Works Park	1.63	Playground, river access, fishing access, picnic areas, freighter watching

**VILLAGE OF EMMETT**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Emmett Village Park	10	Playground, ballfields, picnic areas, restrooms

<b>CITY OF MARYSVILLE</b>		
<b>Park</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
Marysville City Park	58.0	Playgrounds, soccer fields, basketball courts, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, restrooms, amphitheater, picnic shelters, ball diamonds, sledding hill, freighter watching
Marysville Boardwalk	1.4 miles	River access, boat ramp, bathing beach, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Morton Park	10.0	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating, inline skating, picnic areas, restrooms, picnic shelters, skate park
Mermaid Park	0.7	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
4th Street Park	35	Trails
Chrysler Beach	2.0	Playground, bathing beach, river access, fish cleaning station, concessions, restrooms, charging stations, fishing pier, gazebo, trail, picnic areas, ADA-accessible kayak launch, boat launch
Ravenswood Road Park	39.0	Ice skating, trails
Washington Road Park	5.4	Native trees
Huron Road Park	1.4	Ice skating
New Hampshire/6thStreet Park	1.0	Ice skating
Delaware Road Park	0.3	Ice skating
Connecticut Road Park	0.3	Ice skating
Municipal Golf Course	152.7	Golf course, freighter watching

<b>CITY OF MEMPHIS</b>		
<b>Park</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
Musial Road Park	5.0	Playground, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, water fountain

<b>CITY OF ST. CLAIR</b>		
<b>Park</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Amenities</b>
Greig Park	29.5	Playground, basketball/volleyball courts, ice skating, trails, tennis court, skate-bike park, Fix-It station, pavilion
Klecha Park	4.9	Playground, ballfields, trails, concessions, restrooms
Palmer Park	5.9	River access, fishing access, boardwalk, freighter watching
Patrick Sinclair Park	0.6	River access, marina, fishing access
Harbor Walk	0.52	River access, fishing access, boardwalk, boat slips, freighter watching
Diamond Pointe Park	0.7	Benches (mini-park), freighter watching
Community Center	-	Community center
Outdoor Community Pool	0.7	Outdoor swimming pool
Pine Shores Golf Course	51.0	Golf course
St. Clair Harbor	6.2	Marina, boat ramps, camping, restrooms, ADA-accessible kayak launch, pavilions
St. Clair Little League	52	Ballfields, pond access, fishing access

CITY OF PORT HURON		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Lakeside Park	17.7	Playgrounds, volleyball courts, lake access, concessions, bathing beach, restrooms, splash pad, freighter watching
Lighthouse Park	7.9	Playgrounds, lake access, bathing beach, restrooms, freighter watching
Blue Water Bridge Park	3.7	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Thomas Edison Park	9.0	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Pine Grove Park	13.7	Playground, ballfields, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, restrooms, concessions, pavilion, freighter watching
Lincoln Avenue Turnout	0.5	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Kiefer Park	0.9	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Municipal Office Grounds	1.8	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Wastewater Treatment Plant	1.1	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Lincoln Park Turnout	0.6	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Fort Street Dock	0.8	River access, marina, fishing access, trail, restrooms
Quay Street Dock	1.0	River access, marina, fishing access, ADA-accessible kayak launch, restrooms
Southside Dock & Park	1.25	River access, fishing access
River Street Dock	9.1	River access, marina, fishing access, restrooms
12th Street Dock	1.8	River access, boat ramps, fishing access, restrooms
Riverside Boat Ramp	5.7	River access, boat ramps, fishing access, restrooms
Sanborn Park	41.7	Playground, ballfield, basketball court, swimming pool, trails, tennis courts, restrooms
Palmer Park	7.8	Playground, ice skating, trails, community center, restrooms
Gratiot Park	1.8	Playground, basketball courts
Mansfield Park	0.8	Playground
Optimist Park	3.2	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating, picnic areas
White Park	3.4	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating
20th & Court Street Park	2.5	Swimming pool, restrooms
11th & Division Tot Park	1.0	Playground
19th & Division Tot Park	0.5	Playground
Knox Field	6.5	Ballfields, basketball courts, restrooms
Lincoln Park	9.8	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating, picnic areas, freighter watching
16th & Dove Park	14.5	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, restrooms
Haynes Park	1.17	Playground, ice skating

**CITY OF PORT HURON (CONTINUED)**

Park	Acres	Amenities
12th & Jenks Tot Park	0.44	Playground
Heritage Park on the Quay	0.21	River access, marina, fishing access
Flag Plaza Park	1.20	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
McMorran Place		Special events, performances, concessions, restrooms
Renaissance Tot Park	0.47	Playground

**CITY OF YALE**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Yale City Park	16	Playground, ballfields, river access, fishing access, picnic areas, special facilities, restrooms

**BERLIN TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Berlin Township Memorial Park	11.0	Playground, soccer fields, basketball courts, ice skating, trails, picnic areas, community center, special facilities

**BROCKWAY TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Brockway Township Park	38.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, skate park, restrooms

**BURTCHVILLE TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Burtchville Township Park	18.0	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, lake access, bathing beach, fishing access, skate park, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, restrooms, freighter watching

**CASCO TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Casco Township Park	97.0	Undeveloped

**CLAY TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Pearl Beach Pier	0.5	River access, fishing access, fishing pier
Clay Township Hall Park	6.6	Playground, basketball courts, ice skating/inline skating, trails, picnic areas, volleyball court, splash pad, pavilion, concessions, horseshoe pits, 'Little Libraries,' restrooms



<b>CHINA TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Indian Trail Road Site	62.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, restrooms
Neiman Park	3.5	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, picnic areas, community center, horseshoe pits, restrooms
King Road/Belle River Site	14.0	Playground, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, fire pit, restrooms
Recor Road Site	5.3	Undeveloped

<b>CLYDE TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Bill Bearss Park	20.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, tennis courts, picnic areas, pavilion, basketball court, concessions, restrooms
Firefighters Park	1.0	Playground, basketball court, picnic facilities, ice skating
Clyde Township Hall Park	1.0	Playground, tennis courts, picnic areas, pavilion, restrooms
Jake Simpson Wilderness Park	17.0	Basketball courts, inline skating, playground, pickle ball court
Riverfront park	1.8	Undeveloped

<b>COLUMBUS TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Belle River Roadside Park	23.0	River access, fishing access, picnic areas

<b>COTTRELLVILLE TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Cottrellville Township Park	17	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball/volleyball courts, picnic areas, restrooms, freighter watching
Riverside Park	2.8	River access, fishing access

<b>EAST CHINA TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
East China Park	81.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, ice skating/inline skating, trails, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, picnic areas, dog park, restrooms, pavilions, freighter watching
River Park	0.20	Playground, river access, fishing access, picnic areas
Manor Park	1.6	Playground
Springborn Park	0.2	River access, fishing access, picnic tables, ADA-accessible kayak launch
Township Hall Site	13.0	

<b>EMMETT TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Emmett Township Park	3.0	Playground, basketball courts

**FORT GRATIOT TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
North River Road Park	7.0	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, tennis courts, picnic areas, ADA-accessible kayak launch, restrooms
Robert E. Crawford Ball Fields	18.0	Playground, ballfields, restrooms
McIntyre Park, Fort Gratiot Canine Commons	9.0	River access, fishing access, trails, dog park
Keewahdin Road Beach	0.25	Lake access, fishing access, freighter watching
Fort Gratiot Pond	40.0	Playground, pond access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, covered fishing deck
Kettlewell Pond		Pond access, fishing access, paved trails, large observation dock

**GRANT TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Township Park	10.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, shuffleboard court, pavilion, restrooms

**GREENWOOD TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Greenwood Township Park	24.8	Playground, ball fields, basketball courts, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, special facilities, restrooms

**IRA TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Ira Township Municipal Pak	33.0	Playground, basketball courts, lake access, fishing access, ice skating/ inline skating, trails, picnic areas, disc golf, gaga ball pits, restrooms
Water Works Park	2.5	Lake access, fishing access, trails

**KENOCKEE TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Township Hall Park	16.4	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, trails, picnic areas, sledding hill

**KIMBALL TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Township Park #1 - Sutherland	46.0	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, pond access, fishing access, bathing beach, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, restrooms
Township Park # 2 - Smiths Creek Park	3.0	Playground, basketball courts, ice skating, trails, picnic areas

**LYNN TOWNSHIP**

Park	Acres	Amenities
Ohmer Township Park	4.0	Playground, picnic shelter area

<b>MUSSEY TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Capac Schools Property	12	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, trails, pavilion, restrooms

<b>PORT HURON TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Township Park #1 - Lions Club	10.0	Playground, river access, boat ramps, fishing access, picnic areas, sledding hill, restrooms
Township Park #2 - Port Huron Township RV Campground	18.4	Playground, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, ice skating/inline skating, camping, picnic areas, restrooms
Township Park #3 - Memorial Park	58.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, camping, picnic areas, restrooms
Township Park #4 - 40th Street Pond	65.0	Playground, pond access, ADA-accessible fishing piers, trails, picnic areas, restrooms, ADA-accessible kayak launch, boat launch
Township Park #5	56.0	Undeveloped
Township Park # 6 - Hoover School	1.5	Playground, basketball courts, picnic areas, restrooms
<b>Baker's Field Park</b>	61.5	River access, boat ramps, fishing pier access, trails, pavilion, restrooms, ADA-accessible kayak launch
Michigan Road Little League Park	10.6	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, river access, restrooms, concessions
Water Street Property	32.6	Undeveloped

<b>RILEY TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Riley Township Park	19.0	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, basketball courts, trails, picnic areas
Egling Road Pond	20.0	Pond access, fishing access, trails

<b>ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Fred Meiselbach Township Park	5.0	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, picnic areas, pavilion, restrooms

<b>WALES TOWNSHIP</b>		
Park	Acres	Amenities
Township Park	26.7	Playground, picnic shelter area, restrooms, water pump

## OTHER RECREATION FACILITIES IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY

**STATE OF MICHIGAN PROPERTY: 22,178 ACRES OF RESOURCE-BASED FACILITIES IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY.**

Facility	Acres	Location
Algonac State Park	1,450 Acres	Cottrellville & Clay Townships
Lakeport State Park	1,215 Acres	Burtchville Township
Port Huron State Game Area	6,627 Acres	Grant, Clyde, & Kimball Townships
St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area	10,300 Acres	Clay Township
St. Johns Marsh Recreation Area	2,477 Acres	Clay & Ira Townships
Mini Game Area	109 Acres	St. Clair Township

**GOLF COURSES: ST. CLAIR COUNTY CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING GOLF COURSES**

Golf Course	Holes	Public/ Private	Location
Belle River Golf Course	18	Public	Riley Township
Black River Country Club	18	Public	Port Huron Township
Deer View Golf Club	9	Public	Lynn Township
Elks Club Golf Course	18	Private	Port Huron Township
Fair Haven Golf Course	9	Public	Ira Township
Golden Hawk Golf Course	18	Public	Casco Township
Holly Meadows Golf Course	18	Public	Mussey Township
Leaning Tree Golf Course	18	Public	Wales Township
Marysville Municipal Golf Course	18	Public	Marysville
Michigan Meadows Golf Course	18	Public	Casco Township
Middle Channel Golf & Country Club	18	Public	Clay Township
Pine Shores Golf Course	9	Public	City of St. Clair
Port Huron Golf Club	18	Private	Fort Gratiot Township
Rattle Run Golf Course	18	Public	China Township
Solitude Links Golf Course	18	Public	Kimball Township
St. Clair Golf Club	18	Private	St. Clair Township
White Oaks Golf Course	9	Public	Wales Township
Willow Ridge Golf Club	9	Public	Fort Gratiot Township

**PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES IN ST. CLAIR COUNTY**

Facility	Location
Four Square Conservation Club	Grant Township
<b>Blue Water Sportsman's Association</b>	Kimball Township
Perch Point Conservation Club	Casco Township
Friendship Rod and Gun Club	Wales Township
Fort Trodd Campground	Clyde Township
KOA Campground	Port Huron and Emmett Township
Thousand Trails	St. Clair Township
Camp Otsikita	Columbus Township
Cross Fire Creek Paintball Course	St. Clair Township
Pine River Riding Stables	St. Clair Township
Clover Driving Range	Wales Township
Golf Country	Kimball Township
Krafft Road Driving Range	Clyde Township
Full Quiver & More (archery)	Wales Township
Silver Trails Boy Scout Camp	Grant Township
Pine River Nature Center	Wales Township
Glacier Pointe Ice Complex	Port Huron Township
YMCA Blue Water Area	Port Huron

## ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION GRANT HISTORY

**TABLE 3-2: ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARC, MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND GRANTS SINCE 1976**

Grant Number	Grant Project	Year	Amount	Type
TF96-195	Wadhams to Avoca Rail Trail	1996	\$161,000	Acquisition
TF03-129	Lake Huron Shoreline Acquisition	2003	\$2,312,000	Acquisition
TF06-099	Belle River Property Acquisition	2006	\$1,408,000	Acquisition
TF07-171	Camp Woodsong Fee Simple Acquisition	2007	\$291,800	Acquisition
TF11-116	Blue Water River Walk Expansion	2011	\$150,000	Acquisition
TF15-0063	Pine River Property Acquisition	2015	\$97,500	Acquisition
TF15-0064	Belle River Property Acquisition	2015	\$65,800	Acquisition