



CITY OF ST. CLAIR

PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN 2018-2022

ADOPTED: FEBRUARY __, 2018

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Assisted by the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission

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CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION



INTRODUCTION

Recreation and open space play an important role in the lives of the residents of St. Clair. The most recent Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan was updated in 2011. It included both short and long-term goals, some of which were accomplished in the following years. Significant accomplishments realized since the last plan have included the installation of an ADA-accessible kayak launch at the St. Clair Boat Harbor, further development of the ball diamonds at Legacy Park, and securing a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant to renovate the Palmer Park boardwalk.

The purpose of the current St. Clair Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan is to guide recreation planning and development efforts of the Recreation Department over the next five-year planning period, through 2022. The revised and updated Plan is intended to meet state standards for community recreation planning, which is necessary to gain eligibility for grant programs.

WHAT THIS PLAN CONTAINS

This Plan follows the format suggested by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) in the *Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (2016)*. This first chapter provides a description of the community, including a summary of both the social and physical characteristics of the area, as well as a discussion of current planning initiatives affecting the area. The Administrative Structure chapter includes a description of how parks and recreation services are administered in the City, including budget and funding information. The Recreation Inventory chapter describes the existing parks and recreation facilities in the community, including state and regional recreation amenities. The inventory also includes an accessibility assessment and an inspection of previously grant-assisted park projects. The Public Input and Planning Process chapter presents the input received from local officials, the project steering committee, City staff, and residents - all of which helped in formulating the Goals and Objectives and Action Plan chapters. The Action Program chapter outlines an action plan with strategies for implementation. Following these main chapters is an appendix which includes various supporting documents gathered throughout the planning process, as well as the official resolutions and notices documenting the Plan's adoption by City Council.

PLANNING PROCESS

The process used to generate the Parks and Recreation Master Plan consisted of three phases: background studies, evaluation, and plan development. Background studies involved gathering and updating data from existing documents, plans, and surveys. The information is organized under the first three chapters: Community Description, Administrative Structure, and Recreation Inventory.

The second phase in the planning process included an evaluation and analysis of the gathered

data and included garnering input from City officials and residents to determine recreation facility and program needs.

Finally, the last phase in the process involved plan development and adoption. Goals, objectives, and an action program were formulated based on the input gathered.

The City of St. Clair Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed from input from members of the project steering committee, the Recreation Commission, the Harbor Commission, the Recreation Department, City officials, and the residents of St. Clair.

PLAN JURISDICTION: ST. CLAIR, MICHIGAN

The City of St. Clair is the jurisdiction of this Plan. It is located in St. Clair County, Michigan, along the St. Clair River. The river has played a major role in the settlement, growth, and development of the County and the City. Early settlers used the river as a means of transportation. The City of St. Clair developed and prospered through waterborne commerce. Shipbuilding was a major source of employment during the early years until the 1920s when an increased reliance on rail and automobiles, as well as changing economic needs, caused a shift away from water transportation. Today, salt products and plastics remain as the City's major employment source and source of tax revenue.

The St. Clair Recreation Department serves not only the recreation needs of the City's residents, but also the needs of residents throughout neighboring communities. Therefore the service area considered throughout this document consists of the City of St. Clair, St. Clair Township, China Township, and East China Township.

POPULATION AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

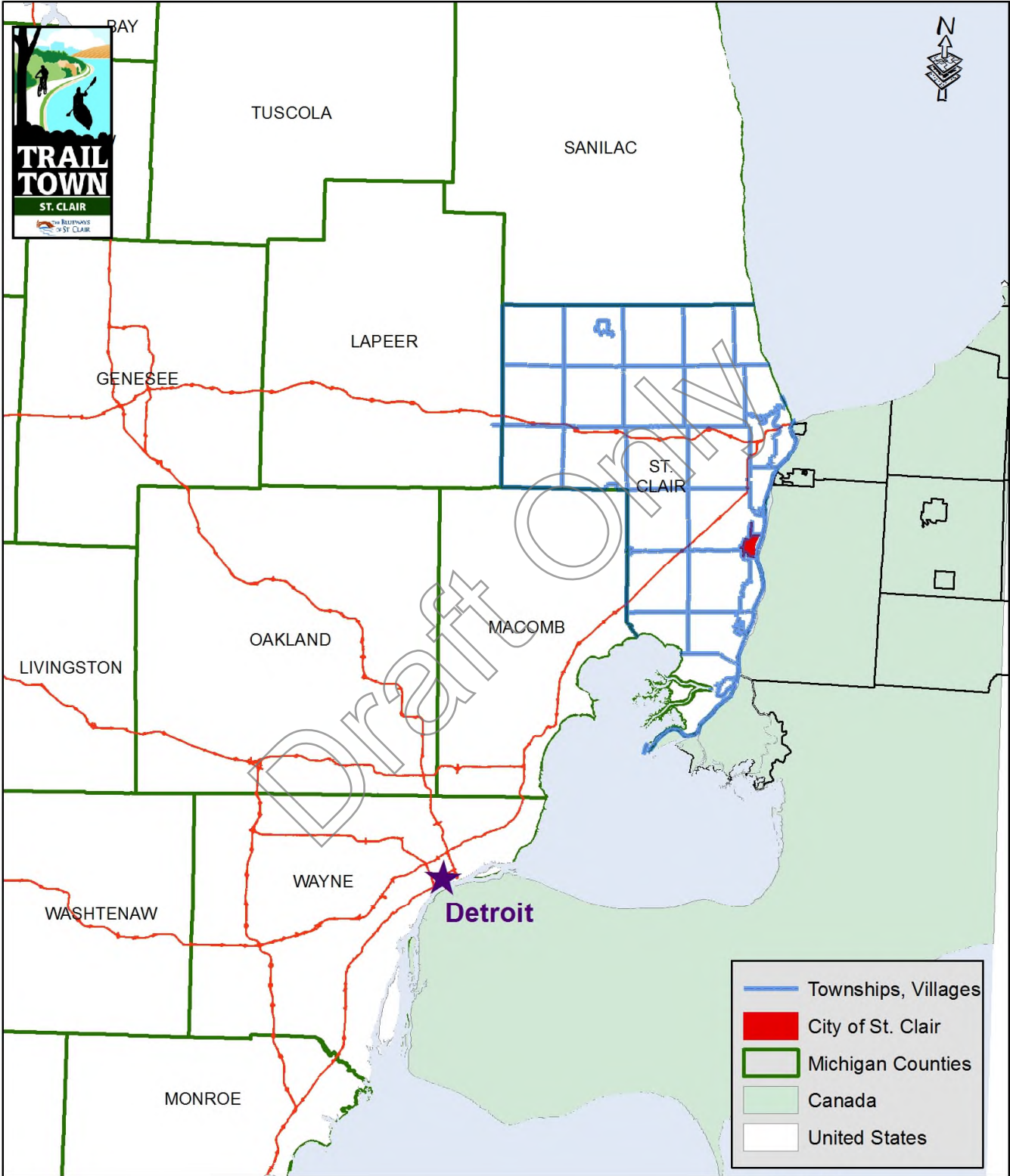
The population of St. Clair saw a steady growth between 1980 and 2000, but has seen a steady decline since. The rate of decline since the year 2000 is greater than that of St. Clair County, while the surrounding townships have continued to see growth. Projections provided by the

TABLE 1-1: HISTORICAL POPULATION, CITY OF ST. CLAIR AND ENVIRONS

Community	1990	2000	2010	2015 ACS	% Change 1980-2015	% Change 2000-2015
City of St. Clair	5,116	5,802	5,485	5,394	12.85%	-7.03%
St. Clair Twp	4,614	6,423	6,817	6,728	69.68%	4.75%
China Twp	2,644	3,340	3,551	3,494	41.69%	4.61%
East China Twp	3,216	3,630	3,788	3,737	19.70%	2.95%
City + Townships	15,590	19,195	19,641	19,353	35.02%	0.82%
St. Clair County	145,607	164,235	163,040	160,429	15.58%	-2.32%
Region	4,521,177	4,833,493	4,704,743	4,712,709	0.64%	-2.50%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

Regional Area



MAP 1-1

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TABLE 1-2: POPULATION PROJECTIONS, CITY OF ST. CLAIR AND ENVIRONS

Community	2020	2040	% Increase 2020-2040
City of St. Clair	5,626	5,776	2.67%
St. Clair Twp	6,899	7,035	1.97%
China Twp	3,329	3,798	14.09%
East China Twp	3,954	4,515	14.19%
St. Clair County	161,508	167,621	3.78%
Region	4,646,938	4,742,083	2.05%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

Southeast Michigan Council of Government (SEMCOG) indicate that St. Clair will continue to have a smaller growth rate than St. Clair County and the surrounding townships except St. Clair Township.

In addition to examining the number of people in St. Clair, it is important to understand the characteristics of the community. These qualities can suggest a need for certain types of recreational facilities or programs. The following tables present basic information about City residents based on the most current Census and SEMCOG data.

TABLE 1-3: AGE CHARACTERISTICS, 2010-2040, CITY OF ST. CLAIR

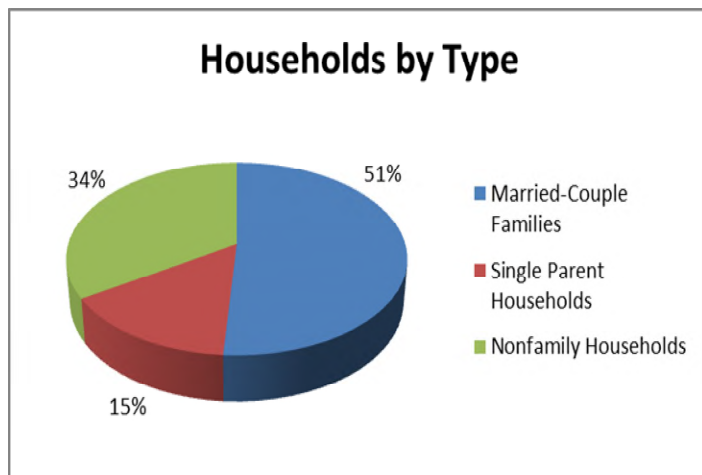
	2010		2040	
	Number	%	Number	%
Preschoolers, up to 5 years	281	5.12%	246	4.26%
School aged, 5-17 years	1,028	18.74%	947	16.40%
Young adults and families, 18-34 years	974	17.76%	1,067	18.47%
Families, 35-64 years	2,370	43.21%	2,042	35.35%
Seniors, 65 years and over	832	15.17%	1,474	25.52%
Total	5,485		5,776	

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

Children below the age of 18 make up about 24 percent of the total population in St. Clair. The proportion of children in the City is projected to decrease by 116 to represent about 21 percent of the total population in 2040. Seniors will be the fastest growing segment of the population through 2040. The proportion of the population over 65 years of age is projected to increase by 642 in St. Clair, to represent an increase in the proportion of seniors in the City from 15 to 26 percent.

Approximately 66 percent of the City's population is living in family households and most of these are married-couple families (51%). The remainder of the City's population is made up of non-family households (34%). Non-family households are households which comprise a group of unrelated persons or one person living alone. This number is consistent to the number for the County (31%). About 30 percent of the City's households have children under 18 years and 26 percent of households have seniors 65 years or older.

FIGURE 1-1: HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE, CITY OF ST. CLAIR



Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

TABLE 1-4: HOUSEHOLDS IN THE CITY OF ST. CLAIR, 2010

Households	2010	
	Number	%
Total Households	2,306	100.0%
Households with children	698	30.3%
Households without children	1,608	69.7%
Households with seniors 65+	593	25.7%
Households without seniors	1,713	74.3%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

According to Census information, personal income for St. Clair residents decreased by 15 percent between the years 2000 and 2010. The 2010 median household income was \$45,223. St. Clair County (6%) and the State of Michigan (8%) both experienced growths to their incomes, while St. Clair decreased.

Residents of St. Clair are employed in a range of occupation categories. The largest categories include management, professional, and related occupations, and employment related to sales and office.

HOUSING AND BUILDING TRENDS

The number of housing units in St. Clair has increased from 2,454 in 2000 to 2,689 in 2010. While single-family homes are predominant accounting for 68 percent of the housing stock, 20 percent of housing units are composed of apartments, and 11 percent are single-family attached or duplex units. The median house value for the City in 2010 was \$158,700, up from \$137,100 in 2000.

Although St. Clair has seen an increase in housing units since 2000, the majority of those units were built in the early 2000s. The population and number of households in St. Clair have decreased during the same time period. As Table 1-6 shows, there has been a decline in building permits issued since 2002 with only 10 permits issued since 2007.

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Land use patterns in existence today are largely the result of the early platting of St. Clair. The oldest section of St. Clair is bounded by the St. Clair River to the east and the Pine River to the south. The City generally developed north and south of this area. Settlement can be traced back to its desirable location on the St. Clair River, which was the means of transportation in and out of the City.

TABLE 1-5: HOUSING UNITS IN THE CITY OF ST. CLAIR, 1990-2010

Housing Type	1990	2000	2010 ACS	Change 2000-2010
Single-Family Detached	1,475	1,793	1,837	44
Duplex	148	105	155	50
Townhouse/Attached Condo	46	64	133	69
Multi-Unit Apartment	432	475	551	76
Mobile Home/Manufactured Housing	2	17	13	-4
Other	18	0	0	0
Total	2,121	2,454	2,689	235

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017; US Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, 2017.

TABLE 1-6: BUILDING PERMITS, CITY OF ST. CLAIR, 2000-2016

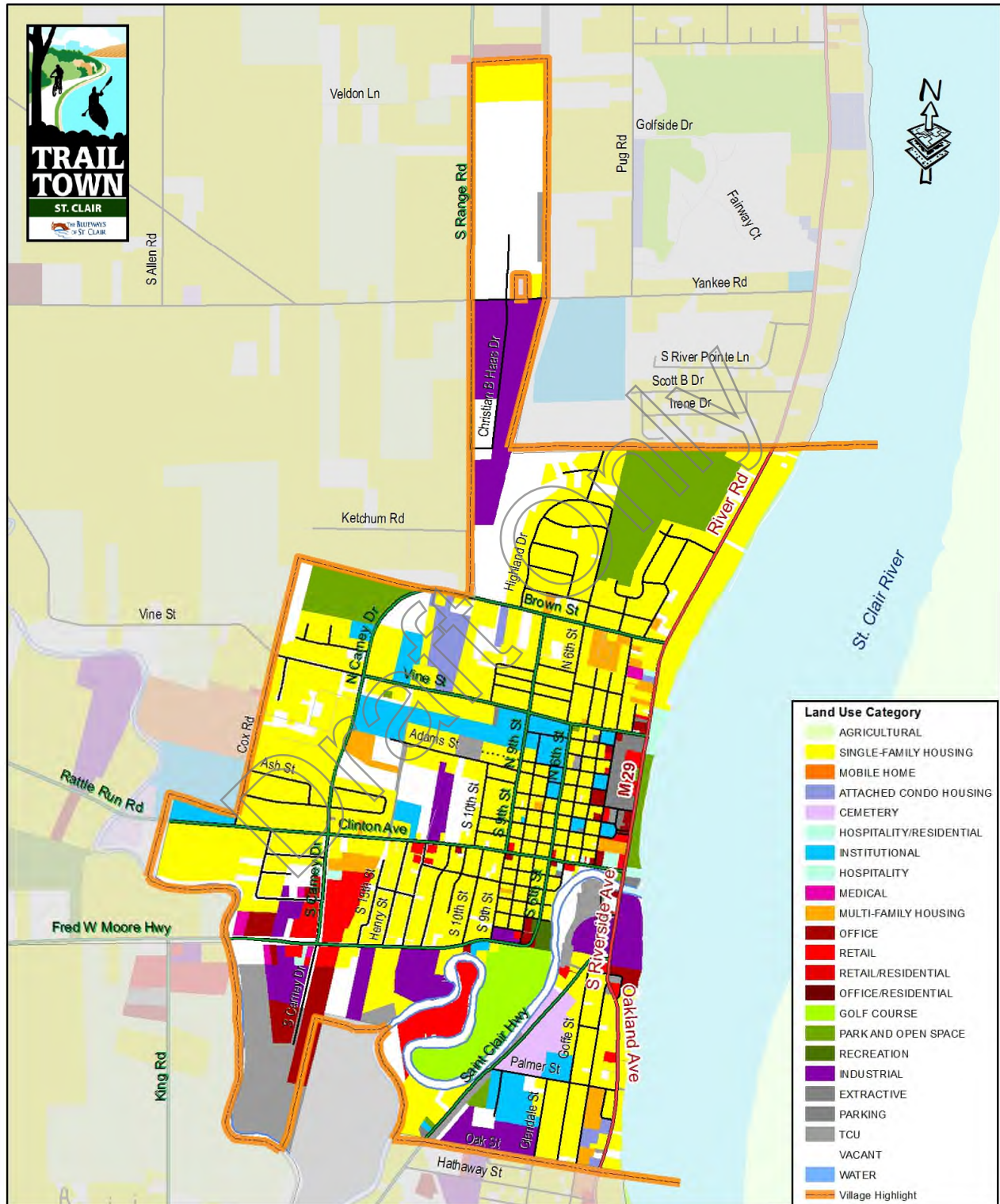
Year	Single Family	Two Family	Attach Condo	Multi Family	Total Units	Total Demos	Net Total
2000	7	0	0	0	7	1	6
2001	9	14	10	5	38	1	37
2002	4	4	33	0	41	2	39
2003	7	0	22	0	29	0	29
2004	19	0	0	0	19	1	18
2005	14	0	0	0	14	3	11
2006	4	0	0	0	4	1	3
2007	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2008	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2010	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2011	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
2012	2	0	0	0	2	0	2
2013	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014	3	0	0	0	3	0	3
2015	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
2016	3	0	0	0	3	0	3
Totals	74	18	65	5	162	9	153

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

Today, the predominant land use in St. Clair is residential with single-family residential land uses at almost half of the City's land area at 50 percent. Multi-family homes make up another 2 percent. Industrial, commercial, and institutional land uses amount to 29 percent of the City's land area. Finally, cultural, outdoor recreation, and cemetery amount to 8 percent.

Recreation and parks are important catalysts for City growth. Combined with arts, culture, and preserving history, recreation programming, and quality parks are essential features that can attract new residents.

Land Use



Map Source: SEMCOG 2010 Land Use

MAP 1-2

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TABLE 1-7: CITY OF ST. CLAIR 2010 LAND USE ACREAGE		
	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	2	0.1 %
Single-Family Residential	934	49.6 %
Multi-Family Residential	38	2.0 %
Commercial	125	6.7 %
Industrial	197	10.5 %
Government/Institutional	224	11.9 %
Park, Recreation, and Open Space	155	8.2 %
Transportation, Communication, and Utility	166	8.8 %
Water	41	2.2 %
Total	1,882	100.00 %

Source: SEMCOG Community Profiles, 2017.

NATURAL FEATURES

The natural features of the City of St. Clair have played a major role in influencing and attracting growth and development in the area. Like much of Michigan's southern lower peninsula, the City's landscape was formed through glacial action. The glacier's movement shaped the topography and created many different types of soils. Plant communities, in turn, developed in response to soil conditions.

TOPOGRAPHY

St. Clair is located in an area which is characterized by relatively flat to gently undulating topography. The County's land surface consists of a broad, clay-based glacial lake plain with several end moraines that are one to three miles wide and which have been reshaped by water and runoff. Elevations throughout the City range from approximately 580 feet to 605 feet above sea level. The highest natural point is located northwest of the City and the lowest area is located along the St. Clair River shoreline. The land is gently sloping from the northwest to the southeast.

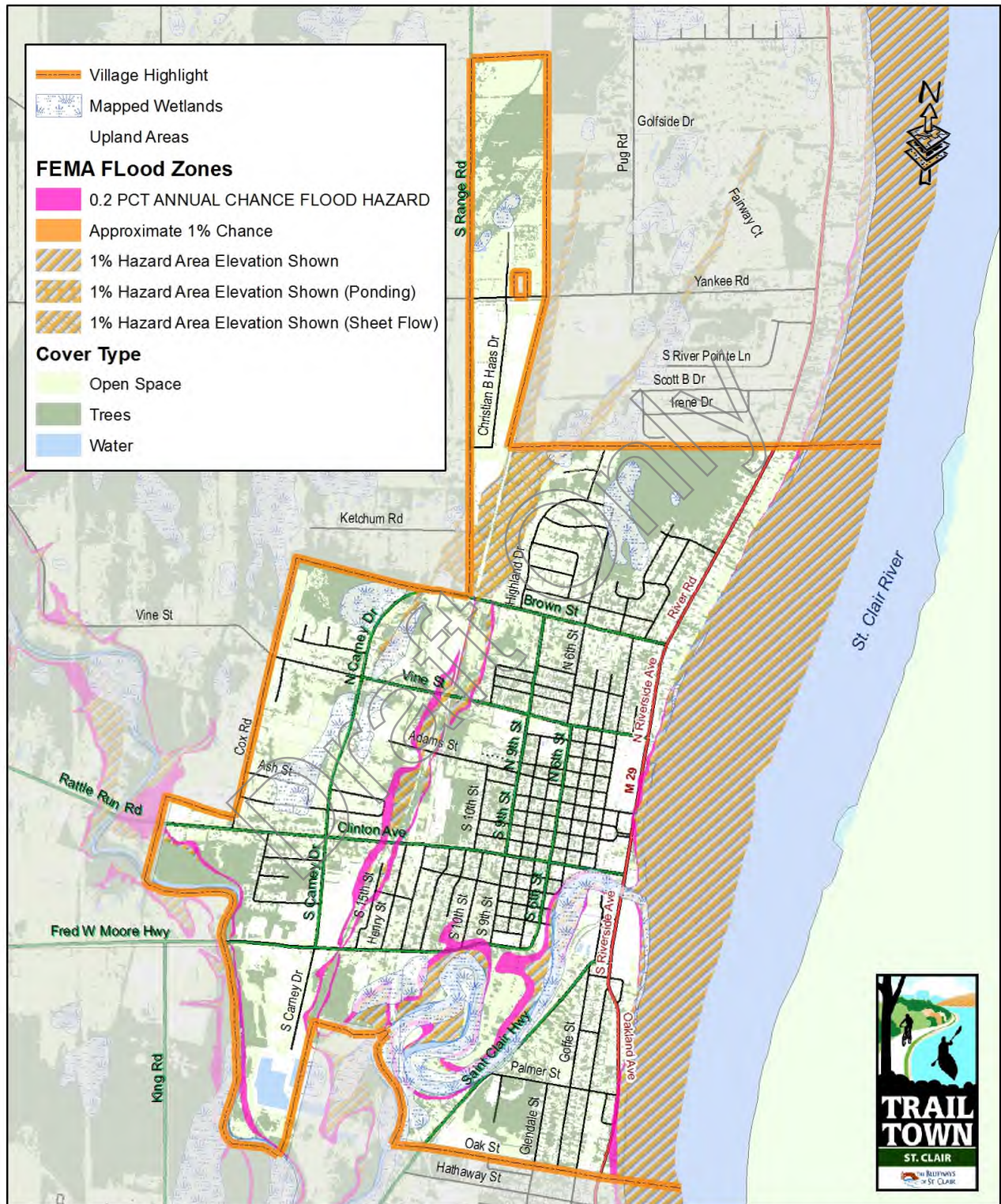
SOILS AND VEGETATION

According to the U.S. Conservation Service, the soil types found in the City are composed of clays and loamy sand over clay which exhibit poor drainage. Old beach ridges and old dunes run parallel to the Lake Huron and the St. Clair River shores. Evidence of this type of terrain can be seen at Greig Park.

WATER RESOURCES

The most important water feature of the community is the St. Clair River. It extends from Lake Huron to Lake St. Clair for a distance of 34.3 miles. The River provides fishing opportunities for anglers and a great location for sailboarders when the winds are strong. It is lined by some parkland and older buildings which provide a pleasant place for people to stroll and enjoy a close look at Great Lake freighters that pass along the waterway. The Pine River, a tributary of the St.

Natural Features



Map Source: SEMCOG LiDAR Project,
St. Clair County Master Plan

MAP 1-3

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COUNTY OF ST. CLAIR

Surface Type	Acres	Percent of city
Impervious Surface	545	28%
Tree Canopy	605	32%
Open Space	644	34%
Urban, bare earth	36	2%
Water	81	4%



MAP 1-4


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 Port Huron, MI
 COUNTY OF ST. CLAIR

Clair River, also runs through the City of St. Clair and includes the largest watershed, about 126,000 acres, of the County.

FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Both the St. Clair and Pine Rivers are good fishing areas. They provide fishing opportunities for brown trout, lake trout, steelhead, salmon, smelt, walleye, perch, bass, pike, muskellunge, carp, catfish, and pan fish. These open waters and varied ecosystems support a wide variety of wildlife resources. Wildlife species in St. Clair County include whitetail deer, cottontail rabbit, fox squirrel, gray squirrel, raccoon, skunk, fox, coyote, beaver, muskrat, badger, opossum, pheasant, quail, ruffed grouse, crow, woodcock, wild turkey, and others. The Great Lakes Basin is also a major flyway for thousands of North American waterfowl and bird species. Bird watching is an extremely popular recreational activity in St. Clair County.

PLANNING INITIATIVES

While change is inevitable and growth in both population and development will occur, the City of St. Clair is committed to managing that growth to enhance recreation opportunities and overall quality of life for all residents. A number of planning initiatives related to parks and recreation have taken place in the City and the region that have relevance to the current plan. They include:

- ◆ St. Clair County Master Recreation Plan 2017-2021
- ◆ Regional Trails and Greenways
- ◆ M-29 Corridor Analysis
- ◆ Downtown Vision Plan
- ◆ City Pool Feasibility Studies

ST. CLAIR COUNTY MASTER RECREATION PLAN 2017-2021

The County's Master Recreation Plan has identified several goals and objectives that relate to parks, trails, and recreation facilities and services in the City. They include:

- ◆ Continue to distribute 25 percent of the annual millage revenues to local units of government for planning, maintenance, and development of parks and recreation facilities and programs;
- ◆ Maintain grant programs for local units of government to assist in the acquisition of small parcels for waterfront preservation, skate parks, dog parks, trails, and canoe/kayak launches;
- ◆ Connect the Bridge to Bay Trail to the Macomb Orchard Trail along Gratiot Road as part of the statewide Great Lake to Lake Trail;
- ◆ Coordinate with local units of government to complete the Bridge to Bay Trail by providing technical assistance and funding support for the required local matching funds for acquisition and development grants;
- ◆ Work with transportation agencies to provide non-motorized access to trail, parks, and greenways consistent with the St. Clair County Non-Motorized Guidelines, the Regional Trails and Greenways Vision for St. Clair County and the Southeast Michigan Greenways Plan; and
- ◆ Continue to develop and promote the Blueways of St. Clair and partner with local units of government to provide additional canoe and kayak launches along the Blueways.



TRAILS AND GREENWAYS

In the late 1990s, the seven-county region of southeast Michigan developed a Michigan Greenways Vision for the establishment of an interconnected system of greenways and trails. In 2006, this southeast Michigan vision was refined and updated to reflect the existing and desired greenway and trail connections in the region. This initiative was facilitated by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan. Counties worked together with local municipalities and community interest groups to develop a long-term vision for an interconnected system of greenways and trails. Map 1-5 depicts the St. Clair County Trails and Routes Action Plan (TRAP) and identifies the regional framework in which the City of St. Clair belongs.

The vision for trails in St. Clair County includes the Bridge-to-Bay Trail, planned to extend from the Blue Water Bridge in Port Huron to Anchor Bay and Algonac through the City of St. Clair. The City's planned route follow Riverside Avenue, Carney Drive, and King Road, with other trail connections on Clinton Avenue/Rattle Run Road, Fred Moore Highway, and St. Clair Highway. Portions of the trail have been built and include the multi-use path along Carney Drive and Freed Moore Highway connecting to China Township through King Road. Plans to continue developing the Bridge-to-Bay Trail along the M-29 corridor between the north and south City limits have been initiated. The City also has built a pathway segment connecting to the Middle School.

St. Clair County also works at promoting the Blueways of St. Clair. The Pine River Paddle in the City is one of the identified routes. This Blueway extends from the St. Clair Municipal Marina to Turtle Beach, a picnic area located south of Fred Moore Highway on the BP property.

Locally, the City of St. Clair had formulated a bicycle plan in 1998 which recommended an interconnected network of bicycle routes and design treatments from separate multi-use pathways to bike and wide curb lanes.

CITY OF ST. CLAIR DOWNTOWN VISION PLAN

Local initiatives have included a downtown development plan prepared by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) in 2007. The plan includes several improvement projects affecting parks and recreation in St. Clair. Some of the priorities of the plan include beautification, walkability, and connectivity:



Trails and Routes Action Plan Overview

Executive Summary



- ◆ Realignment and improvement of Fred Moore Highway and Riverside Avenue;
- ◆ Addition of safe pedestrian crossings;
- ◆ Street tree plantings;
- ◆ Cohesive streetscape enhancement with uniform design elements – hanging baskets, banners, lights, paving;
- ◆ Riverview Plaza renovation; and
- ◆ Connections to the Pine River and the natural area on the Dome Petroleum Property.

M-29 CORRIDOR ANALYSIS

In the fall of 2017, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) began working with an engineering consultant to study the M-29 corridor through the City of St. Clair to assess how the road functions, identify safety concerns, and identify a preferred alternative for enhancing pedestrian safety and mobility in connecting Palmer Park to the downtown plaza. These safety enhancements are more critical than ever as the iconic St. Clair Inn is being redeveloped into a mixed-use destination hotel. This study will look at a variety of treatments, including new pedestrian crossings, pedestrian-activated crossing lights, and restriping M-29 to convert it from four lanes to three lanes - also known as a “road diet.”

The M-29 corridor has been studied carefully in past years, including during the City’s Master Plan update in 2011 and a corridor study that was prepared in 2010, which called for a divided boulevard section with on-street parallel parking and eight-foot sidewalks along both sides of the street.

MUNICIPAL POOL FEASIBILITY STUDIES

In 2006 and 2007, the City has explored the feasibility or replacing the existing City pool with an updated aquatic facility including enhanced features such as zero depth entry, waterslide, and other features. Scenarios were examined for renovating the existing pool, replacing and enhancing the pool at the same location, and a new aquatic facility which could be built at Greig Park. The studies included an examination of the target market, financial projections, and a potential development program with rough costs.

Draft Only

CHAPTER 2

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



INTRODUCTION

The St. Clair City Council is the governing elected body which has authority over all City operations including parks, recreation, municipal golf course, and the harbor.

In 1975, the Council created a Recreation Department and an Advisory Recreation Commission under the authority of P.A. 156 of 1917. In 2008, the City Council officially renamed the Recreation Commission to Recreation Commission. The Recreation Commission is a nine-person advisory group which is responsible for policy matters and physical development. It meets on a monthly basis.

ADMINISTRATION

The Recreation Department is responsible for the overall planning and management of the City's recreational services. The Recreation Director is responsible for the development, planning, and programming of parks and recreation facilities. The Director serves as the liaison between the Recreation Commission and City Council. The Director reports to the City Superintendent. Figure 2-1 shows the organizational chart for parks and recreational services in the City of St. Clair.

Park maintenance functions are carried out through the Parks Division of the Department of Public Services.

FUNDING AND BUDGET

The Recreation Department is supported by the City's general fund and by user fees, grants, and donations. A summary of revenues and expenditures for the current year is presented in Table 2-1.

St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Millage

The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) has a countywide millage for parks and recreation in St. Clair County. PARC dedicates 75% of the millage revenues to parks and recreation facilities that serve a countywide audience. PARC distributes the remaining 25% of the County Parks and Recreation Millage revenues to local units of government to enhance or expand local parks and recreation programs and facilities. Since 1994, the amount of money distributed to local communities has totaled more than \$12.6 million. This distribution has had a positive impact on the delivery of local parks and recreation services in every community in St. Clair County. The amount of local distribution is based on the number of residents living in each municipality or township. From 1994 to 2016, a total of \$443,440.86 has been distributed to the City of St. Clair for parks and recreation activities.

In order to receive these funds, communities must submit an annual report and show evidence of "maintenance of effort" to assure the funding is used to expand opportunities rather than to supplant existing local funding. In effect, local units of government must document that they have maintained their local financial support for parks and recreation services at a level equal to or greater than the amount they spent prior to the 1994 millage election.

FIGURE 2-1: PARKS AND RECREATION ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

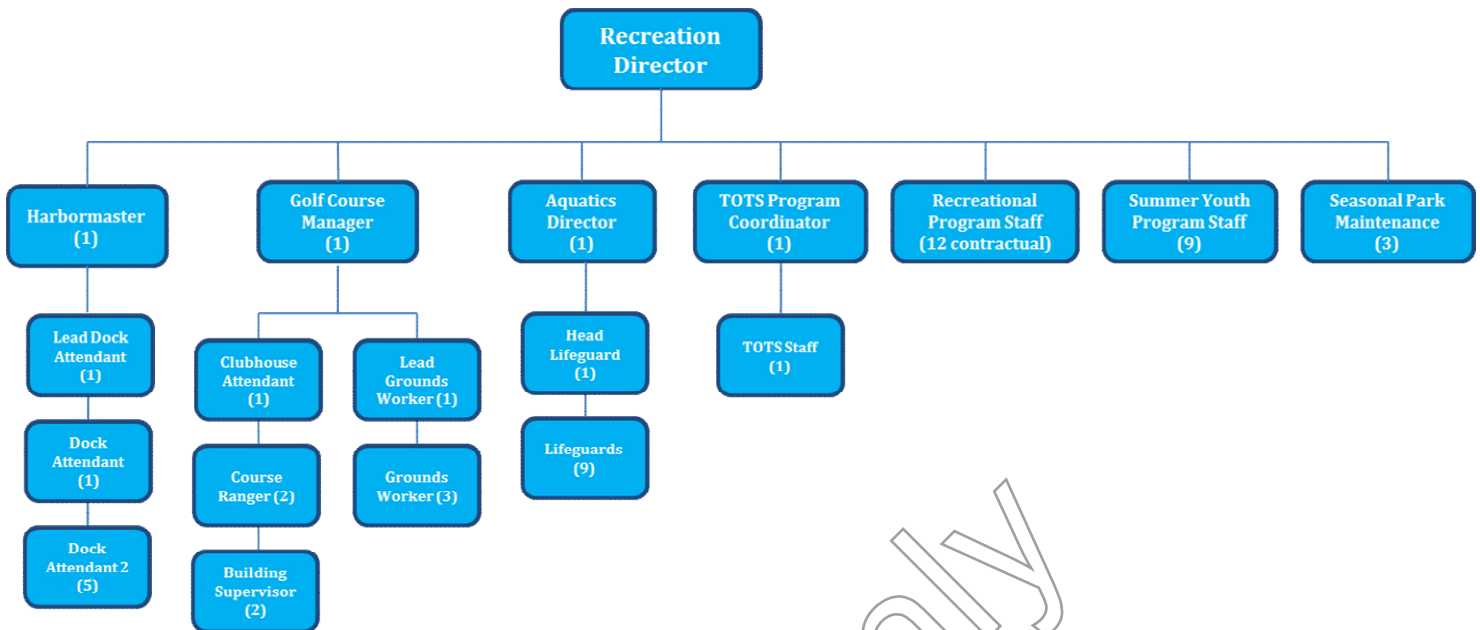


TABLE 2-1: CITY OF ST. CLAIR RECREATION BUDGET SUMMARY, 2017-2018

Revenues - Recreation	
County Contribution	\$23,147
Recreation Class Fees	\$55,718
Swimming Pool Fees	\$18,633
Dance Recital Fees	\$1,719
Tots Program Fees	\$24,693
Community Center Rental	\$1,133
Pavilion Rental	\$560
Contributions – Private	\$3500
Contributions – Rec Concerts	\$10,000
Total Operating Revenues	\$139,102
Expenses – Recreation	
Wages & benefits	\$111,690
Operating Supplies	\$6,242
Dance Recital	\$5,514
Contractual Services	\$35,713
Travel	\$500
Printing & Publishing	\$2,460
Education & Training	\$600
Membership & Dues	\$400
Total Recreation	\$163,119
Expenses – Swimming Pool	
Wages & Benefits	\$43,281
Operating Supplies	\$2,500
Contractual Services	\$1,000
Liability/Property Insurance	\$265
Public Utilities	\$5,564
Repair & Maintenance	\$6,252
Total Swimming Pool	\$58,862
Total Expenses	\$221,981

GRANT-ASSISTED PROJECTS

Since 1989, the City of St. Clair has been awarded five Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) grants. Grant funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund has been instrumental in developing recreation facilities on park properties. Table 2-2 presents a description of all MDNR grants received.

VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

The City of St. Clair Recreation Department recognizes the importance of developing successful long-term and strategic relationships in the community. Current partnerships include: government agencies (townships, County, and State), area recreation departments, private and public schools, volunteers, service clubs, professional organizations (Michigan Recreation and Parks Association), community groups, and private businesses.

The East China School District athletic fields, game courts, and indoor facilities including the pool, gymnasiums, and classrooms are used for programming by the Recreation Department through a

TABLE 2-2: MDNR GRANT ASSISTED PROJECTS IN THE CITY OF ST. CLAIR

Grant Number	Description	Grant Amount	Current Use/Description
2016 MNRTF TF-16-0154	Palmer Park: Removal and replacement of the Palmer Park Boardwalk along the St. Clair River.	\$225,000	Work on removal and replacement of the Boardwalk will begin in 2018.
2004 MNRTF TF04-168	Greig Park: Property acquisition of 7-acre adjacent wooded property	\$100,000	The expanded parkland has been developed as a skate-bike park.
1993 MNRTF 26-01544TF	Klecha Park: Accessibility improvements; safety surface for playground/pavilion area, picnic tables, bathroom, parking, and handicap signage.	\$11,444	The park features developed with these funds are in good condition.
1992 BF92-046	Greig Park: Development of picnic pavilion with picnic tables, grills, sand volleyball, free play area, environmental kiosks, natural ice rink, and warming shelters.	\$386,720	The ice rink has been replaced with a roller hockey rink; the park features developed with these funds have been maintained in good condition.
1989 BF89-190	Greig Park: Development of a nature and fitness trail, cross-country ski trails, signage, and landscaping.	\$219,724	The park features developed with these funds have been maintained in good condition.

facility-use agreement in effect since 2005. The agreement allows the Recreation Department to use the facilities in coordination with the schools schedule of activities. Volunteer parent organizations run some of the youth sports. They include the American Youth Soccer organization (AYSO), St. Clair Little League, St. Clair Junior Football, and Blue Water Swim Club. These organizations use the facilities offered by the City and the schools.

Private businesses contribute to community, recreation, and special event programs through sponsorships and donations. Service clubs and community groups also play an active role in supporting parks and recreation. They include:

Civic Organizations:

- ◆ Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
- ◆ Beautification Committee

Local Service Clubs:

- ◆ Community Foundation of St. Clair County
- ◆ Lions Club
- ◆ Boy/Girl Scouts
- ◆ Rotary Club of St. Clair
- ◆ St. Clair Women's League
- ◆ St. Clair Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ St. Clair Art Association
- ◆ St. Clair Theatre Guild
- ◆ St. Clair County ARC
- ◆ St. Clair County Council on Aging
- ◆ St. Clair Garden Club



CHAPTER 3 RECREATION INVENTORY



INTRODUCTION

The residents of the City of St. Clair are able to take advantage of a variety of recreational resources at the regional, county, and local levels, as well as through privately-owned facilities. This chapter describes those resources

LOCAL PARKS AND RECREATION

CITY PARKS AND FACILITIES

The City operates over 100 acres of parks, bicycle/walking paths, a community center,, a public outdoor pool, a municipal golf course, and a boat harbor.

St. Clair includes four community parks: Greig, Klecha, Palmer, and Legacy parks. Greig Park, located on Carney Drive, includes both active and passive activities. Klecha Park, on the south part of the City, includes the former Little League ball fields. Palmer Park is a passive riverfront park on the St. Clair River. Legacy Park, on Fred Moore Highway, is the current home of the Little League ball fields and has access to the Pine River. Legacy Park has an additional 26 acres of undeveloped parkland. The City owns 1.7 acres of undeveloped parkland along the Pine River.

In addition to those amenities, the City owns and maintains three smaller pocket parks: Diamond Point, Patrick Sinclair, and Rotary Club Park, which include landscaped and seating areas. The City also maintains multi-use paths along Carney Drive, Fred Moore Highway, and a segment connection to St. Clair Middle School.

The Community Center includes a multi-purpose room used for senior and youth programs, and is available for public/private use. The Historical Museum, located on the upper floor, occupies most of the building for display and storage. An annex and customs house is also on-site. The outdoor pool provides swim lessons, competitive and synchronized team, open, and family swim for City residents during the summer. Year-round aquatic programs are offered by the Recreation Department at the school's indoor pool.

SCHOOL FACILITIES

The East China School District includes a High School and Middle School located on the outskirts of the City. Two public elementary schools and other private or parochial schools are located within St. Clair. These schools provide recreation facilities for City residents and include playgrounds, athletic fields, open space, and indoor facilities for both students and residents.

PRIVATE FACILITIES

Private recreational facilities in St. Clair include a marina, a bowling alley, BP nature trails, and a Michigan Nature Association nature sanctuary.

MAP 3-1

Page 3-3

GREIG PARK

CARNEY DRIVE



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 36.5 ACRES
- ◆ "IMAGINATION STATION" PLAY STRUCTURE
- ◆ SAND VOLLEYBALL
- ◆ ROLLER HOCKEY RINK
- ◆ BASKETBALL COURTS
- ◆ PICNIC SHELTER
- ◆ PAVED PATHWAYS
- ◆ NATURE INTERPRETIVE TRAILS
- ◆ MODULAR SKATE-BIKE PARK
- ◆ BMX PUMP TRACK
- ◆ PORTABLE RESTROOM
- ◆ ARTWORK

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4

KLECHA PARK

PALMER ROAD AT GOFFE STREET



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 4.9 ACRES
- ◆ 3 BALL FIELDS
- ◆ PLAYGROUND
- ◆ RESTROOMS
- ◆ CONCESSIONS
- ◆ PAVED PATHWAY

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4



PALMER PARK

M-29/RIVERSIDE AVENUE - DOWNTOWN



Photo Source: Bluewater.org



Photo Source: Bluewater.org

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 5.9 ACRES
- ◆ RIVERFRONT BOARDWALK
- ◆ PAVED PATHWAY
- ◆ ART SCULPTURES
- ◆ SEATING AREAS
- ◆ FREIGHTER WATCHING
- ◆ DOWNTOWN ACCESS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4

LEGACY PARK

3020 FRED MOORE HIGHWAY



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 52 ACRES
- ◆ 7 IRRIGATED BALL FIELDS
- ◆ 4 PICNIC SHELTERS
- ◆ STORAGE SHED/TRAILER
- ◆ CONCESSION TRAILER
- ◆ OFFICE TRAILER
- ◆ PINE RIVER ACCESS
- ◆ 26-ACRES UNDEVELOPED



ST. CLAIR BOAT HARBOR

902 S. SECOND STREET



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 6 ACRES
- ◆ 120 BOAT SLIPS
- ◆ BOAT LAUNCH
- ◆ ADA-ACCESSIBLE CANOE/
KAYAK LAUNCH
- ◆ CANOE/KAYAK RENTALS
- ◆ FISH CLEANING STATION
- ◆ RESTROOMS
- ◆ PICNIC SHELTER

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4

PINE SHORES GOLF COURSE ***515 FRED MOORE HIGHWAY***



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 51 ACRES
- ◆ NINE-HOLE GOLF COURSE
- ◆ CLUBHOUSE FACILITY

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4



DIAMOND POINT PARK OAKLAND AVE & S. RIVERSIDE



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.7 ACRE
- ◆ LANDSCAPED AREA
- ◆ ART SCULPTURE

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 3

PATRICK SINCLAIR PARK

29 CLINTON AVENUE



Photo Source: St. Clair Chamber of Commerce

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.6 ACRE
- ◆ LANDSCAPED AREA
- ◆ WALKWAY
- ◆ ART SCULPTURES
- ◆ PICNIC TABLE
- ◆ SEATING AREAS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 3



CENTENNIAL PARK

CLINTON AVENUE



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.3 ACRE
- ◆ BOARDWALK
- ◆ BOAT MOORING ON PINE RIVER
- ◆ PINE RIVER ACCESS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 3

PINE RIVER ACCESS

FRED MOORE & THE PINE RIVER

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 1.2 ACRES
- ◆ UNDEVELOPED
- ◆ PINE RIVER ACCESS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 1



PALMER/OAKLAND ACCESS

OAKLAND AVE AT PALMER RD

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.1 ACRE
- ◆ UNDEVELOPED
- ◆ ST. CLAIR RIVER ACCESS
- ◆ PARK BENCH
- ◆ FREIGHTER WATCHING

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 1



ST. CLAIR COMMUNITY CENTER AND HISTORICAL MUSEUM

308 S. 4TH STREET



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.12 ACRE
- ◆ MUSEUM
- ◆ HISTORICAL CUSTOMS BUILDING
- ◆ MUSEUM ANNEX
- ◆ MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM
- ◆ KITCHEN
- ◆ MEETING ROOMS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4

ST. CLAIR COMMUNITY POOL

715 ORCHARD STREET



HIGHLIGHTS:

- ◆ 0.7 ACRES
- ◆ PUBLIC OUTDOOR POOL
- ◆ RESTROOMS

ACCESSIBILITY RATING: 4

TABLE 3-1: SCHOOL FACILITIES

School	Acreage	Amenities
Gearing Elementary	12	Playfields and gymnasium
St. Clair High School	40	2 ball fields, 1 softball field, 7 tennis courts, outdoor track and field, indoor pool, and 2 gyms
Riverview East High School	2.5	Playfield, weight room, auditorium, and gymnasium
St. Mary Catholic School	2.5	Basketball court and play equipment
Solis Field		1 football/soccer field
Theo V. Eddy Elementary School	10.5	Playfields, play equipment, and gymnasium
St. Clair Middle School	54.8	2 ball fields, 1 football/soccer field, 1 football practice field, 400 meter track, basketball hoops, seating, and 2 gymnasiums

TABLE 3-2: PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

Facility	Acreage	Amenities
Alice W. Moore Woods Nature Sanctuary	66	Nature preserve with trails
Pine River Club Marina	-	19 boat slips, picnic tables, 2 kiosks
BP Nature Trails	165	Nature preserve with 3 miles of trails

ADJACENT TOWNSHIP PARKS**TABLE 3-3: CHINA TOWNSHIP**

Facility	Acreage	Amenities
Indian Trail Road Site	62	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	Playground, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, fire pit, restrooms
Recor Road Site	5.3	Undeveloped

TABLE 3-4: ST. CLAIR TOWNSHIP

Facility	Acreage	Amenities
Fred Meiselbach Park	5	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, river access, fishing access, picnic areas, pavilion, restrooms

TABLE 3-5: EAST CHINA TOWNSHIP

Facility	Acreage	Amenities
East China Park	81	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	0.2	Playground, river access, fishing access, picnic areas
Manor Park	1.6	Playgrounds
Springborn Park	0.2	River access, fishing access, picnic tables, ADA accessible, kayak launch
Township Hall Site	13	

ADJACENT TOWNSHIP PARKS

St. Clair Township includes a five-acre park with active and passive areas, as well as boat and fishing access.

Four parks are located in China Township: Indian Trail Road Park, which includes sports fields and nature trails; Administration Park, which includes a community center with sports fields and more; the King Road/Belle River park, which includes a new ADA-accessible canoe and kayak launch; and the Recor Road park.

East China Township has a total of six parks and recreation facilities. Four of these are neighborhood parks including fishing access, picnic areas, and play equipment. East China Park includes a large number of sports fields and other facilities, while the Township Administrative Building is the location for a variety of recreation programs. In addition, East China Stadium is a school-owned property where football programs take place.

RECREATION PROGRAMMING IN THE CITY OF ST. CLAIR

The City is one of the largest providers of recreation programs in St. Clair County. The Recreation Department offers outstanding youth and adult team and individual sports opportunities, as well as special events to City residents and non-residents. The following programs are offered by the St. Clair Recreation Department:

Recreation Programs

- ◆ ABC Gymnastics
- ◆ Adult Tennis
- ◆ Adult Dance
- ◆ Adult Tap
- ◆ After School Rallyball (Indoor Tennis)
- ◆ Ballroom Dancing
- ◆ Casino Trips
- ◆ Co-Ed Volleyball
- ◆ Creative Tots
- ◆ Fitness Classes
- ◆ Golf Instruction
- ◆ Indoor Soccer
- ◆ Itty-Biddy Youth Basketball
- ◆ Lacrosse
- ◆ Learn to Play/Drop-in Bridge
- ◆ Men's Basketball
- ◆ Men's Basketball League
- ◆ Pi-Yoga
- ◆ Safety Town
- ◆ Senior Social Card Play
- ◆ Soccer Tots
- ◆ Summer Dance
- ◆ T-Ball Tots
- ◆ Tae Kwon Do
- ◆ Tiny Tots Play Group
- ◆ Travel-Bus Trips
- ◆ YAPS (Youth Activities for Summer)
- ◆ Youth Dance-Jazz/Ballet/Tap
- ◆ Youth Wrestling
- ◆ Youth Tennis
- ◆ Youth Theatre
- ◆ Zumba

Special Events

- ◆ Summer Outdoor Concert Series
- ◆ Family Outdoor Movies
- ◆ Kids Bike Parade
- ◆ Classic Car Show
- ◆ All-American Kids Fishing Derby
- ◆ Daddy-Daughter Valentine Dance
- ◆ Kids Garage Sale
- ◆ Mother-Son Bowling
- ◆ Cirque Amongus
- ◆ Skate-Bike Summer Jam & Fall Grind

Aquatic Programs

- ◆ Lessons
- ◆ Competitive Swim Team
- ◆ Synchronized Swim Team
- ◆ Open Swim
- ◆ Adult Swim
- ◆ Lap Swim
- ◆ Swimmercise

Services

- ◆ Amusement Park Tickets



Other community events are sponsored by the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the Chamber of Commerce, Riverview Mall Association, and service groups. They include craft shows, 5K running races, the St. Clair Art Fair, farmers' market, fireworks, concerts at Riverview Plaza, and the offshore boat races.

City walking routes have been mapped out. They include the Pine River Trail, the Riverview Run, Joellyn's Stroll Around Town, the St. Clair Loop, and the Historical Home Walk.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

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
◆ Woodson 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)

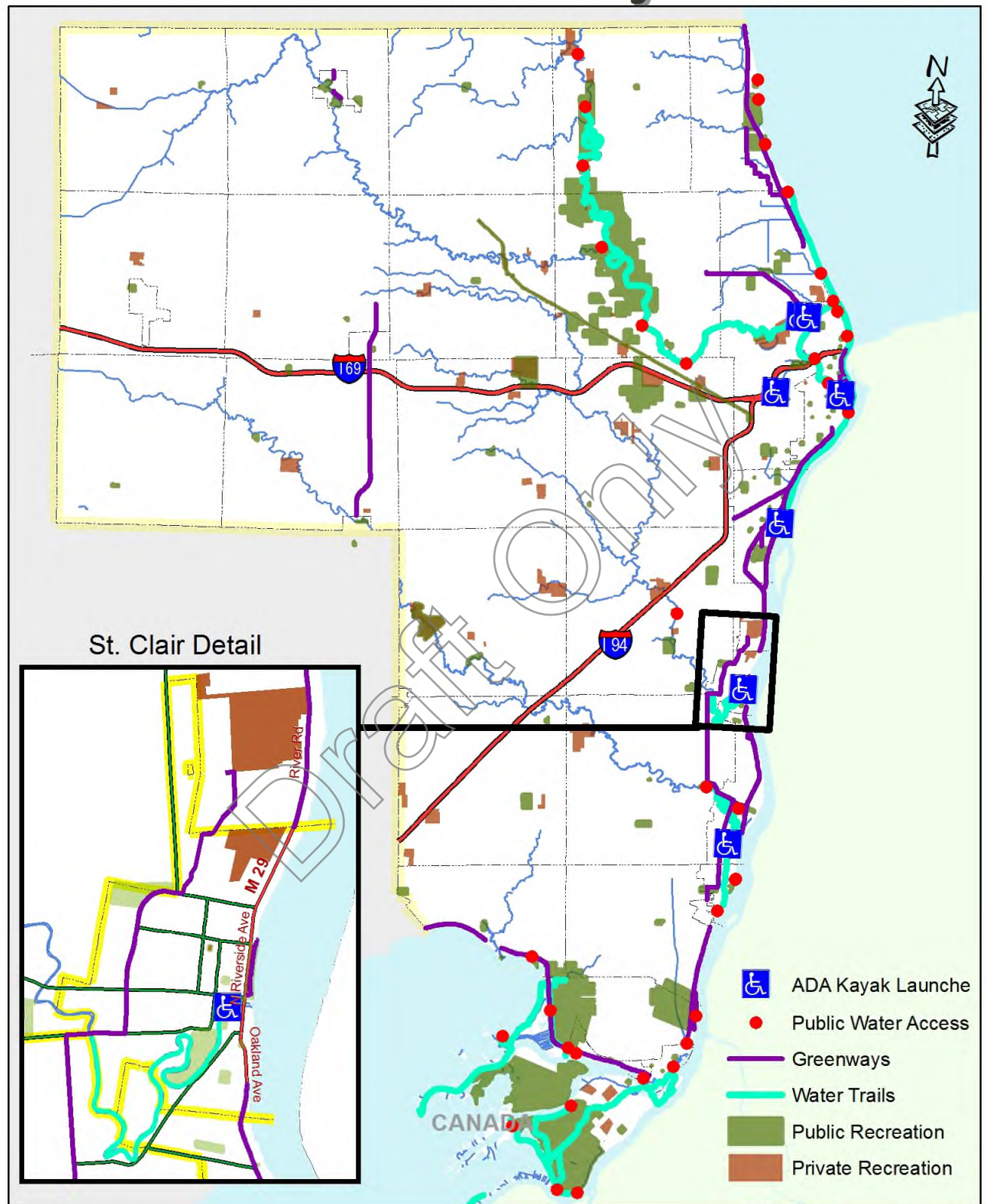
GOODELLS COUNTY PARK

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



St. Clair County Recreation



Map Source: St. Clair County Master Plan

MAP 3-2

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.

COLUMBUS COUNTY PARK

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.

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

FORT GRATIOT COUNTY PARK

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.

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.

WOODSONG COUNTY PARK

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. 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.

FORT GRATIOT LIGHT STATION

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 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.



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.

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.

PINE RIVER NATURE CENTER

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.

TABLE 3-6: STATE OF MICHIGAN RECREATION FACILITIES

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

- ◆ Adopt-a-Trail.
- ◆ Visit the universally-accessible (ADA) tree house.

STATE OF MICHIGAN RECREATION FACILITIES

The State of Michigan owns and manages 22,178 acres of resource-based facilities in St. Clair County, including Algonac State Park, Lakeport State Park, the Port Huron State Game Area, the St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Refuge, the St. John's Marsh Recreation Area, and a mini-game area in St. Clair Township. See Table 3-6.

GREENWAYS AND TRAILS

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, St. Clair County 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 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 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 2017, 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).

U.S. BIKE ROUTE 20

US Bike Route 20 is an established bicycle route in Michigan from the Marine City/Sombra Ferry, where it connects to the Trans-Canada Trail via local trails, to Ludington, Michigan, where the route continues across the car ferry S. S. Badger to Manitowoc, Wisconsin. The Michigan segment operates on bicycle paths, county roads and state roads, favoring paved roads that have either low to moderate traffic or paved shoulders. Bicyclists on the route will encounter historic small towns like Marine City and Vassar, the old-world Bavarian charm of Frankenmuth, and the Manistee National Forest.

At present, US Bike Route 20 follows the Bridge to Bay Trail along Carney Drive in the City of St.





Clair. In 2016, the City applied to have an alternate route come into the City and run through downtown St. Clair. See the map on the next page.

THE BLUEWAYS OF ST. CLAIR

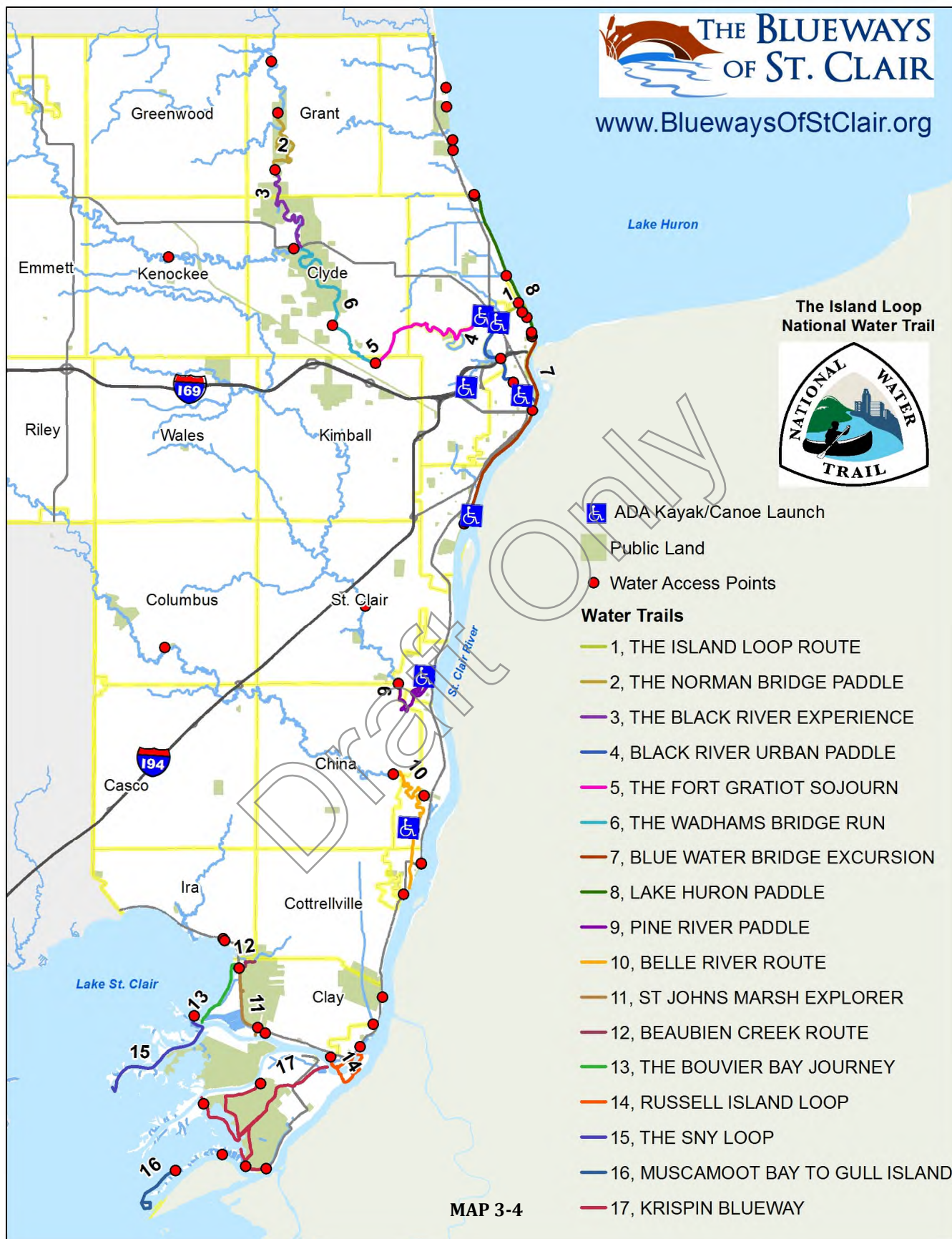
In 2009, the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), in partnership with PARC, applied for and was granted a Michigan Coastal Zone Management Grant to create a 'Blueways vision' website for the shoreline of St. Clair County.

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.

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 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.



CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC INPUT & PLANNING PROCESS



THE PLANNING PROCESS

The success of any planning process is reliant upon stakeholder involvement. The City of St. Clair has committed itself to pursue a proactive public outreach effort throughout the development of this plan. Efforts focused on soliciting community involvement to maximize awareness of the recreation planning process.

2018-2022 Parks and Recreation Plan Development

The process that led to the development of this five-year Parks and Recreation Plan included:

- ◆ A decision by the St. Clair Recreation Commission to update the City's five-year recreation plan.
- ◆ Contracting the services of the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission to manage the project and complete the update.
- ◆ A review of existing City planning documents by the St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission.
- ◆ An online leadership survey distributed to members of the St. Clair City Council, Planning Commission, and other key stakeholders in City administration.
- ◆ Formation of a project steering committee to help guide the direction of the planning process.
- ◆ A steering committee kickoff meeting on March 16, 2017 to discuss the results of the local leadership survey and identify next steps.
- ◆ An online communitywide survey that ran from June through September 2017, garnering 226 responses.
- ◆ A steering committee meeting held on October 24, 2017 to discuss goals and objectives.
- ◆ Drafting of the Parks and Recreation Plan.
- ◆ A presentation of the Parks and Recreation Plan to the City Council on January 15, 2018.
- ◆ Review of the Parks and Recreation Plan document by the Recreation Commission and the City Council.
- ◆ A 30-day public review and comment period that began on **January 16, 2018** and ended on **February 14, 2018**. The 30-day public review and comment period is required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources in order for a community to be in compliance for grant applications.
- ◆ A public hearing held on **February 19, 2018** to receive additional citizen comments.
- ◆ Adoption of the Parks and Recreation Plan by the St. Clair City Council at its **February 19, 2018** meeting.
- ◆ Transmission of the 2018-2022 Parks and Recreation Plan to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR).
- ◆ Transmission of the adopted Parks and Recreation Plan to the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG).

OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC INPUT

Input from citizens and local leaders was essential for the development of the Parks and Recreation Plan for St. Clair.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP SURVEY

At the start of this planning process in 2017, members of the City Council, Planning Commission, City Administration, and other members of City boards and commissions were given an online survey to establish a framework on the key planning issues related to the update of the City's Parks and Recreation Plan. A summary of input from the leadership surveys can be found below.

Summary of input on parks and recreation issues from February 2017 Leadership Survey

- ◆ Renovating/updating the community pool.
- ◆ Adding a splash park at an appropriate location.
- ◆ Explore options for a dog park in town.
- ◆ Develop Klecha Park into an all around park for the community.
- ◆ Renovate the boardwalk in Palmer Park.
- ◆ Renovate current park playgrounds.
- ◆ Develop Legacy Park beyond the Little League ball fields.
- ◆ Identify a permanent home for pickleball.
- ◆ Repave and stripe the parking lot at the Boat Harbor.
- ◆ Update restrooms at all facilities.
- ◆ Develop more programs and activities for our teens and younger children.
- ◆ Look for ways to hold more movies and concerts in the park or plaza.
- ◆ Increase marketing and promotion of all parks and programs.
- ◆ Update and refresh existing amenities at City parks.
- ◆ Increase canoe and kayak rentals at the Boat Harbor.

Summary of what Local Leaders like best about parks and recreation in St. Clair

- ◆ Access to the St. Clair River and Pine River.
- ◆ Having a community pool.
- ◆ The Boat Harbor.
- ◆ Palmer Park and the boardwalk downtown.
- ◆ The variety of parks - some are active and others are not.
- ◆ The City offers a diverse array of quality recreation programs.
- ◆ Biking/walking paths.
- ◆ Proximity to residential areas.
- ◆ The parks are clean and well-maintained.

Summary of what Local Leaders like least about parks and recreation in St. Clair

- ◆ The boardwalk is falling apart.
- ◆ The community pool needs to be rebuilt.
- ◆ "Imagination Station" needs repairs.
- ◆ Non-existent pocket parks in between the riverfront and Carney Drive.
- ◆ Dead trees in the City parks need to be removed.

- ◆ Portable restrooms should be replaced.
- ◆ Not enough indoor space to provide year-round activities.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

From June 1, 2017 through September 30, 2017, a community input survey was available online for residents and other stakeholders to provide input on specific questions, as well as ideas and suggestions on open-ended questions. The community survey garnered 226 individual responses and provided the planning team with a great deal of feedback on parks and recreation issues in the City of St. Clair. In total, 75% of the respondents were St. Clair residents and the other 25% lived outside of the City - predominantly in St. Clair Township, China Township, and East China Township.

Roughly 36% of respondents indicated they visited a City park a few times each week, and another 21% said they visit once a week. Over 67% said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the recreational programming offered by the City. Nearly 64% indicated the City should offer additional programming.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding Greig Park

- ◆ Add a splash pad/water park like Algonac and Marysville.
- ◆ More permanent, real restrooms.
- ◆ Update the outdated play structure/maintain curb appeal.
- ◆ Need more play options for 5-10 year olds. Seems geared toward 3-5 year olds.
- ◆ "No events happen there...it's like the City itself is afraid to touch it."
- ◆ Update and check safety measures.
- ◆ Clean up back woods and deal with dead trees.
- ◆ Make ice rink suitable for ice hockey.
- ◆ Consider disc golf and mountain bike trails.
- ◆ Nature trail more accessible for strollers.
- ◆ Add more seating/benches.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding Legacy Park

- ◆ Add a playground/play structure.
- ◆ Legacy Park needs a bike path to the facility for better access.
- ◆ Sidewalks to each field.
- ◆ Add a splash pad.
- ◆ Need more seating and picnic tables.
- ◆ Pave parking and driveway. Improve ingress/egress.
- ◆ Add lighting for parking lot and ball fields.
- ◆ Is there room for disc golf around the ball fields?
- ◆ River access/kayak launch.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding Klecha Park

- ◆ Updated play structure. Upgraded picnic and play area.
- ◆ Develop a splash pad/possible new City pool location.
- ◆ Add a dog park.
- ◆ Add a market/music venue - an amphitheater or outdoor stage.

- ◆ Add tennis courts/badminton/multi-use courts.
- ◆ Walking trail along the Pine River/hiking trails.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding the Boat Harbor

- ◆ Make Boat Harbor more “citizen friendly,” not just boaters.
- ◆ Add more rentals (kayaks, canoes, bikes, paddle boats).
- ◆ Nicer/cleaner bathrooms.
- ◆ More community events
- ◆ Invite food trucks and vendors.
- ◆ Upgrade/expand the camping area.
- ◆ More launch spots.
- ◆ Add a playground for families with kids.
- ◆ Interactive business kiosk directing foot traffic to local businesses.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding Golf Course

- ◆ Food trucks and vendors.
- ◆ Food options/restaurant/weekly BBQ events/lunch counter.
- ◆ Resident rates/discount.
- ◆ Offer golf lessons. Have children’s days to introduce kids to game.
- ◆ Junior golf memberships and lessons.

Community Survey: Summary of input regarding Community Pool

- ◆ Year-round aquatics center.
- ◆ Larger pool area with grass/trees and better amenities.
- ◆ Pool is not family friendly.
- ◆ Community recreation center like Macomb Township - courts, gym, pool, etc.
- ◆ Pool and splash pad in same location.
- ◆ “I had no idea we have a community pool.”
- ◆ Relocate pool to Klecha Park and include a splash pad.
- ◆ Lack of shade in current location.
- ◆ Splash pad would be better fit at Greig Park or Palmer Park than at current location.
- ◆ Whether existing pool is upgraded or a new pool is built elsewhere - the City needs to have a community pool.

Community Survey: Summary of other comments and suggestions

- ◆ Importance of pool and strong desire for a splash pad.
- ◆ Focus on improving existing parks instead of new parks.
- ◆ Freshen up existing parks, they look tired and worn.
- ◆ Expand the pool season and expand programming hours.
- ◆ More activities by the boardwalk at Palmer Park.
- ◆ Better marketing, increased use of social media, and enhanced website.
- ◆ Desire for indoor, multi-purpose facility.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND FACILITY COMPARISON

An essential task in the recreation planning process is to determine the needs of the community as a basis for an action plan. This task can be accomplished not only by asking people what they desire, but also by comparing the City to established recreation standards based on the size of the community and its service area. In addition, the Recreation Commission can simply make observations of what is needed to improve the community's park system.

PARK ACREAGE AND FACILITY COMPARISON

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a minimum amount of park land and park facilities to adequately serve a given population size. The purpose of the NRPA guidelines is to provide minimum park land and facility development standards that are applicable nationwide for recreation planning purposes. While the NRPA standards are a helpful guide in determining minimum needed park acreage and facility, it should not be interpreted to be the only measure of whether the City's needs are being met. A parks and recreation system should be tailored to meet the needs of the community.

According to the NRPA, parks are categorized as mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks. The mini, neighborhood, and community parks are the close-to-home parks, designed to satisfy the recreational needs of local communities. All the City parks are considered close-to-home parks. According to NRPA standards, the suggested amount of close-to-home parkland is 6.25 to 10.5 acres for every 1,000 residents.

Regional parks serve a broader area (about one hour drive or 40-mile radius) and focus on meeting the recreation needs of the region as well as preserving unique areas. For the City of St. Clair, regional parks include the state and county-owned parks and recreation areas described in the preceding chapter. The NRPA also recognizes other types of parks such as special use facilities, schoolyards, and private recreation facilities, which can contribute to the local parks and recreation system. This would include the municipal harbor and golf course as well as the public school and private recreation facilities in St. Clair.

Table 4-1 presents a comparison of the NRPA suggested park land standards with existing area parks based on a combined population of about 20,000 which includes the City of St. Clair and the adjoining townships of St. Clair, China, and East China. According to these standards, the area currently meets the needs for total local "close to home" and regional park land both at the City and the area levels.

Table 4-2 presents a comparison of the City's park facility standards against some of NRPA's suggested park facility standards. Using these standards, the area generally appears to meet and exceed most of the suggested minimum standard for recreation facilities.

RECREATION TRENDS: 2017 TOPLINE REPORT

Recreation trends provide insight into activities that show the greatest growth in popularity and may affect the future direction of parks and recreation. The Outdoor Foundation publishes the

TABLE 4-1: COMPARISON TO SUGGESTED PARKLAND ACREAGE STANDARDS

Type of Park	NRPA Standard Acres/1,000 Population	Acreage per NRPA Standard Based on 20,000 Population	Existing
Close to Home City Townships Total	6.25 to 10.5 acres	130 to 218 acres	159 acres 186 acres 352 acres
Regional Parks	15 to 20 acres	312 to 415 acres	35,198 acres
Public Schools	-	-	122 acres
Linear Parks	-	-	1.8 miles
Special Use Facilities: Boat Harbor & Golf Course	-	-	58 acres
Conservancy Sites: Alice Woods	-	-	66 acres

TABLE 4-2: COMPARISON TO SUGGESTED FACILITY DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Activity/ Facility	NRPA Standard Unit/Population	# per NRPA Standard	City	School	Townships	Total
Swimming Pool (Outdoor)	1/20,000	1	1	-	-	1
Swimming Pool (Indoor)	None	N/A	-	1	-	1
Baseball Fields	1/5,000	4	11	4	7	18
Softball Fields	1/5,000	4	-	1	-	1
Soccer Fields	1/10,000	2	-	2	12	14
Football Fields	1/20,000	1	-	3	1	4
Roller Hockey Rink	-	-	1	-	-	1
Tennis Courts	1/2,000	10	-	7	-	7
Basketball Courts	1/5,000	4	1	2	3	6
Volleyball Courts	1/5,000	4	1	-	-	1
1/4 Mile Track	1/20,000	4	-	2	-	2
Golf Course	1/50,000	1	1	-	-	1

Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report each year to provide a snapshot of American participation in outdoor activities, with a focus on youth and young adults. The report is based on an online survey of 24,134 Americans ages six and older. The following graphics summarize key findings from the report.

2017 OUTDOOR FOUNDATION TOPLINE REPORT SUMMARY: RECREATION TRENDS

Most Popular Adult Outdoor Activities *By Participation Rate, Ages 25+*

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
14.8% of adults, 32.0 million participants
2. Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)
14.6% of adults, 31.5 million participants
3. Hiking
13.7% of adults, 29.7 million participants
4. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)
12.8% of adults, 27.7 million participants
5. Camping (Car, Backyard, Backpacking and RV)
11.7% of adults, 25.2 million participants

Favorite Adult Outdoor Activities *By Frequency of Participation, Ages 25+*

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
81.0 average outings per runner,
2.6 billion total outings
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)
76.0 average outings per cyclist,
1.4 billion total outings
3. Fishing
40.1 average outings per fishing participant,
627.9 million total outings
3. Hiking
98.2 average outings per hiker,
445.3 million total outings
4. Wildlife Viewing
25.2 average outings per wildlife viewer,
384.6 million total outings

Most Popular Youth Outdoor Activities *By Participation Rate, Ages 6 to 24*

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
25.3% of youth, 20.3 million participants
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)
22.6% of youth, 18.2 million participants
3. Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)
19.5% of youth, 15.6 million participants
4. Camping (Car, Backyard and RV)
19.0% of youth, 15.3 million participants
5. Hiking
15.5% of youth, 12.5 million participants

Favorite Youth Outdoor Activities *By Frequency of Participation, Ages 6 to 24*

1. Running, Jogging and Trail Running
81.3 average outings per runner,
1.7 billion total outings
2. Bicycling (Road, Mountain and BMX)
58.0 average outings per cyclist,
1.1 billion total outings
3. Fishing (Fresh, Salt and Fly)
16.1 average outings per fishing participant,
251.4 million total outings
4. Skateboarding
46.8 average outings per skateboarder,
212.2 million total outings
5. Camping (Car, Backyard and RV)
12.4 average outings per camper,
189.0 million total outings

American's Favorite Summer Outdoor Activities

An online survey conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association asked 1,000 Americans, ages 18+, what their favorite summertime outdoor activities are.

All top 3 results reflect activities that can be enjoyed at public parks nationwide.

TOP 3 ACTIVITIES:



HAVING A PICNIC
OR BARBECUE
55%



GOING FOR A
WALK/HIKE
49%



GOING TO THE
BEACH
40%

FAVORITE ACTIVITIES BY GENERATION:

MILLENNIALS



GOING TO
THE BEACH
43%



HAVING A PICNIC
OR BARBECUE
40%



GOING TO
THE POOL
39%

GEN X'ERS



HAVING A PICNIC
OR BARBECUE
54%



GOING FOR A
WALK/HIKE
46%



GOING TO
THE BEACH
37%

BABY BOOMERS



HAVING A PICNIC
OR BARBECUE
64%



GOING FOR A
WALK/HIKE
58%



GOING TO
THE BEACH
43%

www.nrpa.org

Based upon a survey conducted for the National Recreation and Park Association by Wakefield Research among 1,000 nationally representative Americans, ages 18+, between May 5th and May 12th, 2016, using an email invitation and an online survey. Quotas have been set to ensure reliable and accurate representation of the U.S. adult population ages 18+. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. For the interviews conducted in this particular study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 percentage points from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. Survey respondents were allowed to choose up to 3 choices.



**National Recreation
and Park Association**

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CHAPTER 5

GOALS & OBJECTIVES/ STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



DRAFT



INTRODUCTION

The City of St. Clair Recreation Commission has formulated the following goals and objectives for the next five-year planning period. The goals and objectives are broad enough to encompass the needs expressed by the public, City officials, and staff, as well as respond to the observed deficiencies in the recreation resources. They also consider current demographic and economic trends and projections, the area's physical resources, and recreation trends.

PARKS AND RECREATION GOALS

The City of St. Clair is committed to providing recreational opportunities for persons of all ages and abilities that are clean, safe, functional, and attractive.

The focus of parks and recreation in St. Clair should continue to be on the maintenance and improvement of existing parks and trails, as well as continuing to provide outstanding programming for residents and non-residents alike.

OBJECTIVES

1. MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE EXISTING PARKS.

The continued maintenance and update of park facilities is important to the quality of parks and recreation in St. Clair. Park facilities should be safe, functional, and well-maintained. This includes upgrading aging facilities, removing barriers to accessibility, and maintaining the parks. There is also a desire to continue improving park facilities to respond to the changing needs of residents, such as renovating or relocating the City pool, renovating Klecha Park, updating Greig Park, and improvements at other existing parks and the boat harbor.

2. ESTABLISH A CONTINUOUS CITYWIDE BIKE/WALK WAY SYSTEM.

The establishment of a network of bike and walk ways to form a continuous system tying parks, schools, neighborhoods, businesses, and community facilities is a continued priority for the City. This system should be tied to the regional trail system planned for the area and to a complete streets policy for the City of St. Clair. Coordination with City Council, the Planning Commission, and the Downtown Development Authority will be necessary to develop and implement the system.

3. ACQUIRE AND DEVELOP NEW PARKS.

Potential land acquisition and parkland dedication should focus on providing areas for active recreation use and community gathering. Coordination with City Council and the Planning Commission will be necessary to acquire new parkland.

4. CONTINUE TO IMPROVE RECREATION SERVICES AND PARTNERSHIPS.

The Recreation Department strives to provide quality and diverse recreation programs which respond to residents' desires and interests. The Recreation Department has maintained a high level of services that is well-appreciated by residents.

The continued coordination with area recreation providers including adjacent townships and the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission, as well as the schools, civic groups, and business organizations, is important to maximize the City's recreation potential. The Recreation Commission should play a role in the coordination of such services by focusing on increasing public awareness and support for park development projects and meeting community recreational needs for recreation programs.

The City should also encourage and participate in discussions with neighboring jurisdictions and St. Clair County on a potential regional community recreation center in an appropriate location to serve residents.

5. PROVIDE FOR THE EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION AND FUNDING OF PARKS AND RECREATION.

A quality parks and recreation system is dependent on available funding. Park improvements and operations have been funded through the City's general fund, the County's parks and recreation millage, and grants. A means of generating revenues through grants and fundraising where possible must continue to be a priority to implement capital improvement projects.

STRATEGIC ACTION PROGRAM

The Action Program details the manner in which the goals and objectives will be met. It includes a list of specific improvement projects, as well as strategies for implementation.

The following outlines a list of specific projects and strategic actions which are recommended for accomplishment during the five-year planning period. They are based on the needs identified in the community-wide survey, discussions with the project steering committee, and input from City staff and commissions.



1

Maintain and upgrade existing park facilities

This action includes replacing or repairing old equipment and facilities that are in a state of disrepair, are outdated, or dangerous. It also includes improving the appearance of the City parks through appropriate landscaping and maintenance. All upgrades must meet safety and accessibility standards. Proposed actions include:

- ◆ Remove/replace outdated play equipment;
- ◆ Maintain safety surfaces under play structures to regulated depth and fall zone;
- ◆ Refurbish athletic field surfaces as needed;
- ◆ Make ADA-accessibility improvements at all facilities as needed;
- ◆ Refurbish parking area, walkway, and court game pavement surfaces as needed;
- ◆ Replace/add park furnishings such as benches, trash receptacles, and signs;
- ◆ Explore the development of a field house or other shared use facility to host pickleball and other activities.
- ◆ Maintain buildings, structures, and picnic shelters in good condition with roof repair, exterior painting, and other improvements;
- ◆ Manage existing plant materials with the removal of dead trees and replace with tree/shrub plantings; and
- ◆ Work with the DDA, Beautification Commission, and other civic groups to continue to add attractive landscaping by park signs, park entrances, and at other locations.

2

Improve Palmer Park

Because of its primary location along the St. Clair River, Palmer Park is a high priority for future park improvements. Proposed actions include:

- ◆ Provide a community gathering space for special events;
- ◆ Promote the park's access to the river, highlight community events at the park, and market the park's amenities, such as the bollards for boater access;
- ◆ Explore providing active and passive recreation facilities, including opportunities for outdoor fitness and physical activity;
- ◆ Promote the area's maritime history through interpretive displays and enhanced tools to enjoy the river and its variety of boating and shipping activities;
- ◆ Use MNRTF grant as a match for a MDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant to improve pedestrian access from Riverview Plaza to Palmer Park that leads to the Boardwalk;
- ◆ Explore options for working with community partners to provide appropriate areas within the park for food trucks.

3

Improve Greig Park

Greig Park is the main active park in the City of St. Clair. Proposed improvements include:

- ◆ Install a permanent restroom building;
- ◆ Maintain the multi-use surfaces and replace equipment as necessary;
- ◆ Provide recycle containers in the park;
- ◆ Improve, reorganize, and resurface the parking area;
- ◆ Prepare a stewardship plan for the management and enhancement of the wooded area;
- ◆ Redesign/rebuild the “Imagination Station” play structure;
- ◆ Improve and maintain the nature trail; and
- ◆ Redesign the non-motorized bicycle track and add components to the skate park as needed.

4

Develop the Legacy Park property

Legacy Park is an important addition to the City’s park system, providing ball fields for the area’s baseball and softball leagues. Additional land acreage remains undeveloped. Proposed improvements include:

- ◆ Develop a master plan for the undeveloped land at Legacy Park;
- ◆ Provide nature trails and paved walkways around the park;
- ◆ Support the St. Clair Little League’s development and maintenance of the existing and planned ball fields, including
 - ⇒ The addition of support facilities and park furnishings, including a picnic shelter, tables, restrooms, benches, drinking fountains, etc.;
 - ⇒ The development of playground facilities; and
 - ⇒ Making improvements to the parking and driveway areas.

5

Renovate Klecha Park

With Legacy Park housing the Little League ball fields, Klecha Park can be transformed into a neighborhood park by implementing the Klecha Park Master Plan, which includes:

- ◆ Maintain one ball field and replace the others with a multi-use court and open grass areas;
- ◆ Remove and relocate the play structure and pavilion closer to Goffe Street;
- ◆ Remove the storage building;
- ◆ Add walkways, seating areas, shade trees, and shrubs; and
- ◆ Develop a new parking area with ADA-parking and accessible sidewalk connections to restroom facilities.

6

Improve and add small parks and open spaces

Diamond Point, Patrick Sinclair, and Rotary Club parks should be maintained and improved by providing walkway connections to the citywide walkway system. Other small public open spaces could also be added on vacant or underutilized lots. Proposed actions include:

- ◆ Create seating areas and continue to incorporate artwork along with pedestrian amenities;
- ◆ Continue to maintain and add attractive landscaping; and
- ◆ Add walkway connections to the citywide bike/walkway system.

7

Acquire parkland and open space

Work to acquire and dedicate new parkland and open spaces as significant parcels and acquisition opportunities occur.

- ◆ Acquire land for the development of parks adjacent to existing parks, providing access to the Pine and St. Clair rivers, and land that provides linkages and opportunities for both active and passive recreation; and
- ◆ Work with City Council and the Planning Commission to ensure parkland dedication is considered in development proposals.

8

Maintain high quality recreation services and provide efficient/effective administration

Financing the development of new facilities will have to be supported by grants, donations, and other funding sources. Recreation Department staff should continue to provide outstanding customer service and recreational opportunities for citizens. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Continuously evaluate and monitor recreation programs;
- ◆ Stay abreast of current recreation trends at the regional, state, and national level;
- ◆ Ensure that City recreation programs have safe, up-to-date equipment and supplies;
- ◆ Evaluate fees and chargers for programs and services to increase cost recovery;
- ◆ Continue to pursue state and federal grants for parkland acquisition and development;
- ◆ Continue to maintain and develop volunteer opportunities;
- ◆ Expand use of web-based communication tools such as Facebook, Twitter, E-mail blasts, and other online services for registration and communication;
- ◆ Increase marketing efforts to promote the City's parks and recreation programs and ensure that all citizens are aware of City facilities, programs, and events; and
- ◆ Establish a memorial bench/tree planting program.



9

Actively support and participate in the continued development of bicycle and walking trails/pathways

Work with City Council, the Planning Commission, and other partners to continue developing the multi-use pathway system by developing missing links, providing connections in and outside of the City, and adding complete streets features. Proposed actions include:

- ◆ Continue to partner with MDOT, St. Clair County, the Michigan Fitness Foundation, and other stakeholders to promote active community initiatives such as Safe Routes to School and Promoting Active Community Gold Level, and to generate ideas, interest, and support for a community-wide bike/walk way system (www.mihealthtools.org/communities/);
- ◆ Consider the feasibility of dedicating bike lanes along the City's primary arteries;
- ◆ Provide safe pedestrian crossings along primary arteries in conjunction with pedestrian refuges, enhanced crosswalks, pedestrian-activated signals, and other features;
- ◆ Install site amenities along the bike/walk system to include kiosks, maps, benches, trash receptacles, mile markers, bike racks, and a wayfinding system;
- ◆ Work with St. Clair County and other partners to implement recommendations and design treatments outlined in the Blue Water Trail Towns Master Plan;
- ◆ Develop a marketing strategy to attract support and sponsors including the development of a walking brochure and club;
- ◆ Encourage the creation of a U.S. Bike Route 20 alternate route through downtown St. Clair;
- ◆ Utilize St. Clair County recreation millage funds to repair and maintain pathways throughout the City;
- ◆ Update the City's vision for an interconnected system of bike/walk ways with the preparation of a City of St. Clair Non-motorized Transportation Plan or Complete Streets Plan; and
- ◆ Develop the following pathway connections:
 - ⇒ Fred Moore Highway/King Road multi-use pathway to Legacy Park,
 - ⇒ Rattle Run Road to Legacy Park,
 - ⇒ Carney Drive to St. Clair High School,
 - ⇒ Rotary Park extension,
 - ⇒ M-29/Riverside Drive segment, and
 - ⇒ Brown Street from existing path end point to M-29

10

Maintain partnerships to enhance parks and recreation opportunities for citizens

Facilitate and promote the use of City parks and recreation facilities by community groups including seniors, sports leagues, and public schools. Parks and Recreation Commissioners must continue to advocate and promote the social, economic, and environmental values and benefits of parks and recreation by reaching to the community and the region. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Continue to coordinate the shared use of facilities and programs with area sports organizations, public schools, adjacent communities, regional recreation providers, and other recreation groups;
- ◆ Explore partnership opportunities with private and nonprofit entities for key regional impact projects, such as the redevelopment of the ECSD Education Center as a potential recreation/education/arts center;
- ◆ Continue to seek public/private partnerships including adjacent communities, St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission, or private groups for the area's parks and recreation services or for implementing a particular project such as a regional community center and work with those partners to identify appropriate locations and funding opportunities; and
- ◆ Provide opportunities for volunteers and promote park stewardship opportunities.

11

Work with community partners to further improve and promote water trails

The City of St. Clair is fortunate to be located in an area that offers phenomenal opportunities for water-based recreation and enjoyment. Paddling sports have seen enormous growth in popularity in St. Clair County due in large part to the establishment of the Blueways of St. Clair, a countywide system of water trails. With the Pine and St. Clair Rivers, there are tremendous opportunities for water trail recreation in the City. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Continue to work with the Blueways of St. Clair to promote area water trails and increase marketing efforts for City-specific water trails;
- ◆ Identify an optimal location for an additional ADA-accessible canoe/kayak launch;
- ◆ Enhance signage for water trails, river access, and connectivity to downtown and other City amenities;
- ◆ Develop fishing and canoe/kayak access on the Pine River; and
- ◆ Implement the recommendations of the Blue Water Trail Towns Master Plan.



12 Improve the St. Clair Boat Harbor

The St. Clair Boat Harbor is an asset to the City of St. Clair and the larger region. Pleasure boating is hugely popular throughout the Metro Detroit area and the Boat Harbor provides excellent amenities for boaters looking to take advantage of the area's beautiful water resources. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Seal and restripe the parking lot and explore reorganizing the lot configuration to increase the efficient flow of traffic and improve parking;
- ◆ Continue to improve and maintain the seawall and caps, ensuring structural and aesthetic integrity;
- ◆ Renovate and improve the restrooms;
- ◆ Increase the size of the fleet of canoes and kayaks available for rent at the Boat Harbor;
- ◆ Identify the most cost-efficient and effective treatment for dock repairs and dock replacement;
- ◆ Continue to make improvements to enhance the Harbor pavilions;
- ◆ Renovate and update the Harbor office; and
- ◆ Pursue dredging grant funds as needed.

13 Improve the City's community pool and develop a splash pad

Two important takeaways from the community survey are that residents love the community pool and wish for it to remain - whether renovated in its current location or constructed new at another location. They also have a strong desire for a splash pad to be developed somewhere in the City. Recommended actions include:

- ◆ Make improvements to the community pool at its current location or identify an appropriate location to develop a new community pool;
- ◆ Look for ways to partner with neighboring townships on a community pool; and
- ◆ Develop a splash pad at an appropriate location in an existing City park.

14

Continue to maintain and promote Pine Shores Golf Course as a recreational destination

The City operates the Pine Shores Golf Course, a nine-hole course that offers lessons, league play, and banquet facilities. The community survey revealed that many residents are not aware of the various services the golf course offers.

- ◆ Maintain the clubhouse facility and improve the parking lot as necessary;
- ◆ Explore opportunities for food truck vendors to periodically operate at the golf course;
- ◆ Improve and maintain the irrigation system;
- ◆ Explore options to provide additional fishing opportunities at the golf course;
- ◆ Work with partners to manage invasive species and protect habitat in the Pine River;
- ◆ Look into other community uses for the parking lot across from the clubhouse; and
- ◆ Maintain and replace golf course equipment on an ongoing basis.



IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

In order to accomplish the recommended actions during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current budget provides a limited amount of money for parks and recreation facilities. Therefore, the following strategies are recommended in order to proceed as planned.

APPLY FOR FEDERAL FUNDING

At the federal level, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) funds the federal Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). To be eligible, a project must be an eligible TAP activity and relate to surface transportation. A minimum 20 percent local match is required for proposed projects and applications are accepted online on an on-going basis. Additionally, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) also holds an application process, giving the City two opportunities to apply for TAP funding. Activities which may apply to the City of St. Clair include:

- ◆ Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles including new or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps, bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges, and underpasses;
- ◆ Provision of safety and educational programs for pedestrians and bicyclists designed to encourage walking and bicycling; and
- ◆ Acquisition, planning, designing and constructing abandoned railway corridors.

APPLY FOR MDNR GRANT FUNDING

At the state level, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) offers a number of grant programs for parks and recreation acquisition and development, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the Recreation Passport grant program.

The MNRTF provides funding for the purchase and development of parkland for natural resource-based preservation and recreation. Grant proposals must include a local match of at least 25 percent of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum for acquisition projects. For development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$500,000. Applications are typically due April 1 each year.

The Recreation Passport program provides grants up to \$75,000 for development projects and requires a 25 percent match. The program is focused on renovating and improving existing parks, but the development of new parks is eligible. The minimum grant request is \$7,500. Applications are typically due April 1 each year.

The Land and Water Conservation Fund is a federal appropriation to the National Park Service, which distributes funds to the MDNR for development of outdoor recreation facilities. Minimum grant requests are \$30,000 and maximum requests are \$75,000. LWCF grants require a 50 percent match of the total project cost. Applications are typically due April 1 each year.

Other funding conducted in partnership with the MDNR is available through other state

government divisions, such as the Fisheries Division (Inland Fisheries Grant) and the Forest, Mineral, and Fire Management Division (DTE Energy Foundation Tree Planting Grant and Forest Stewardship – Outreach and Education Grant). The Inland Fisheries Grant program considers projects that enhance habitat and fisheries, riparian property for public fishing use, water quality, and ecology.

APPLY FOR MICHIGAN WATERWAYS COMMISSION FUNDING

The MDNR Waterways Commission is a seven-member advisory body responsible for the acquisition, construction, and maintenance of recreational harbors, channels, and docking and launching facilities.

Waterways Program Grants are funded through the Michigan State Waterways Fund from state marine fuel tax and watercraft registrations. These grants provide funding assistance for design and construction of public recreational harbor/marina and boating access site/launch facilities throughout the state. Only local units of government and public universities are eligible to apply. On-site investigation by MDNR, Parks and Recreation Division staff may be required to determine suitability of proposed work. Greater priority is typically given to projects for which the applicant documents matching funds equal to or greater than the percentage of the project cost they are required to provide. The local match can include in-kind services. These grants provide funds for engineering services (i.e. preliminary design/engineering, feasibility studies, market analysis, soil borings, utility surveys, bathymetric surveys, and many more) and construction components for boating facilities (i.e. utility work, dredging, breakwater and seawall work, dock/pier work, boat launch work, paving work, fueling system work, ice suppression, lighting, entrance/parking lot work, pump-out system work, and more). Applications are typically due April 1 each year.

SEEK OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

There are also a variety of smaller grant programs available for the establishment of greenways/pathways or greenway-related facilities. Additionally, the City of St. Clair should investigate additional sources of funding, such as donations, attracting sponsors, holding fundraising events, and exploring other revenue sources to raise funds for park acquisition and development.

