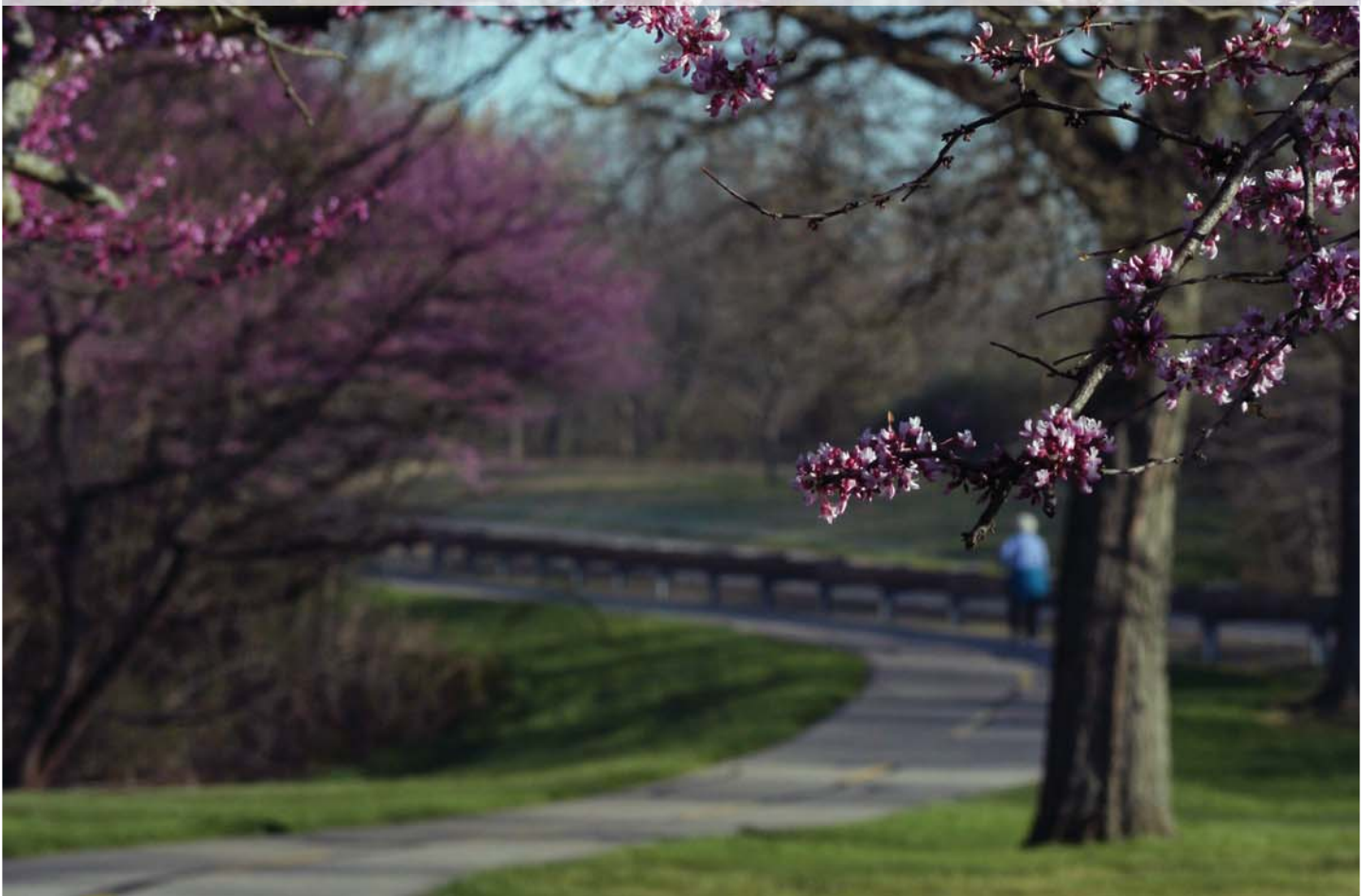




## 2 | INTRODUCTION



**THE METROPARKS SYSTEM**

**History**

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority was sanctioned by the Michigan State Legislature in Act No. 147 of the Public Acts of 1939. Named after the two longest rivers within its boundaries, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a regional park agency consisting of 13 Metroparks encompassing approximately 25,000 acres of land within a five county area in Southeast Michigan.

Much credit can be given to Henry S. Curtis and Harlow O. Whittemore for making the Metroparks a reality. Their 1937 vision proposed a series of parks connected by a long parkway extending from Lake St. Clair, along the Clinton and Huron rivers to Lake Erie, below the mouth of the Detroit River.

The first acquisition took place in 1944. when a 385-acre parcel of land formed the beginning of Lake St. Clair Metropark. In 1945, 2,600 acres were acquired to form Kensington Metropark. The land for Lower Huron was secured with the help of a \$1,000,000 grant from the State Legislature in 1946. Only eight years after the Authority was established, land acquisition reached 6,300 acres.

Funding of the parks began in 1942 with a property tax levy, limited to one-quarter of one mill. The rate today has been adjusted to .2146 mills.



**Land**

Over their history the Metroparks have received several grants from the DNR for land acquisition and development of recreational facilities.<sup>1</sup> The land specified as the project area of those grants was encumbered in perpetuity, meaning it may never be converted into a private or non-recreational use. The grants from the DNR and other sources have allowed the Metroparks to develop high-quality recreational facilities.

**Trails**

Trails have become increasingly popular and contribute to the character of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks. The extent and diversity of trails mean that residents have numerous opportunities to get out and enjoy the natural areas of the Metroparks.

**Infrastructure**

The Metroparks contain a number of buildings, surfaces, and utilities. Many of these were constructed years or decades ago, and require maintenance to serve the recreational needs of park visitors.

Facilities	
Golf Courses	8
Disc Golf Courses	5
Playgrounds	78
Picnic Shelters	87
Picnic Areas	57
Tennis Courts	8
Pickleball Courts	3
Basketball Courts	15
Sand Volleyball Courts	38
Baseball Fields	28



<sup>1</sup> Grants received are listed for each park in Chapter 7 | Recreation Inventory



### Facilities and Centers

The Metroparks feature a number of facilities that define their character and enhance the recreational experience of visitors. Some of these either require an admission fee, are available for rentals, or sell concessions, supplementing park revenue. As with all park infrastructure, it is a priority to keep the facilities well-maintained and replace them when no longer functional.

### Seasonal Activities

The Huron-Clinton Metroparks offer a variety of recreational activities available year-round. During the warmer months, aquatic facilities such as pools are open to the public. Visitors can also take advantage of lakes through boat rentals, boat fishing, and swimming.

During the colder months, visitors can enjoy winter recreation activities. Sledding and cross-county skiing are popular, and some parks also offer ice fishing, snowboarding hills, and ice skating rinks.

### Water Features

The Huron-Clinton Metroparks were established along two major waterways in Southeast Michigan: the Clinton River and the Huron River. The park system also features 14 miles of Great Lakes shoreline and 3,634 acres of inland lakes.



Land	
All land (acres)	~25,000
Encumbered for recreation	14,761
Leased for farming	595
Leased for recreation	450
Leased for utilities	24

Trails	
Nature/hiking	58
Paved/shared use	84
Equestrian	36
Snowshoeing	1
Cross country ski (traditional/skate)	64
Mountain biking	19
Maintenance path	81
Total (miles)	343

Aquatic Facilities	
Pools	4
Beaches	5
Spray pads	4
Boat launches	50
Boat rental facilities	6
Fishing platforms	12

Winter Facilities	
Ice skating areas	4
Sledding areas	6
Cross country skiing	10
Snowboarding	2

Infrastructure	
Buildings	489
Roads (miles)	68
Parking Spaces	20,480



## MISSION

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority, a regional park system created in 1940 by the citizens of Southeast Michigan, provides excellent recreational and educational opportunities while serving as stewards of its natural resources. Our efforts are guided by the belief that the use of parks and exposure to natural environments enhance society's health and quality of life.

## VISION

The Metroparks offer 365-day access to open space, outdoor experiences, and abundant resources for the communities of Southeast Michigan now and into the future.

## CORE VALUES

The Metroparks provide unique quality-of-life amenities to Southeast Michigan through our commitment to:

- Excellence in public service, stewardship, and programming;
- Sustainability in balancing the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the Metroparks;
- Responsibility in planning, development, and maintenance; and
- Connectivity to the places and people we serve.

