



# HURON MEADOWS MASTER PLAN









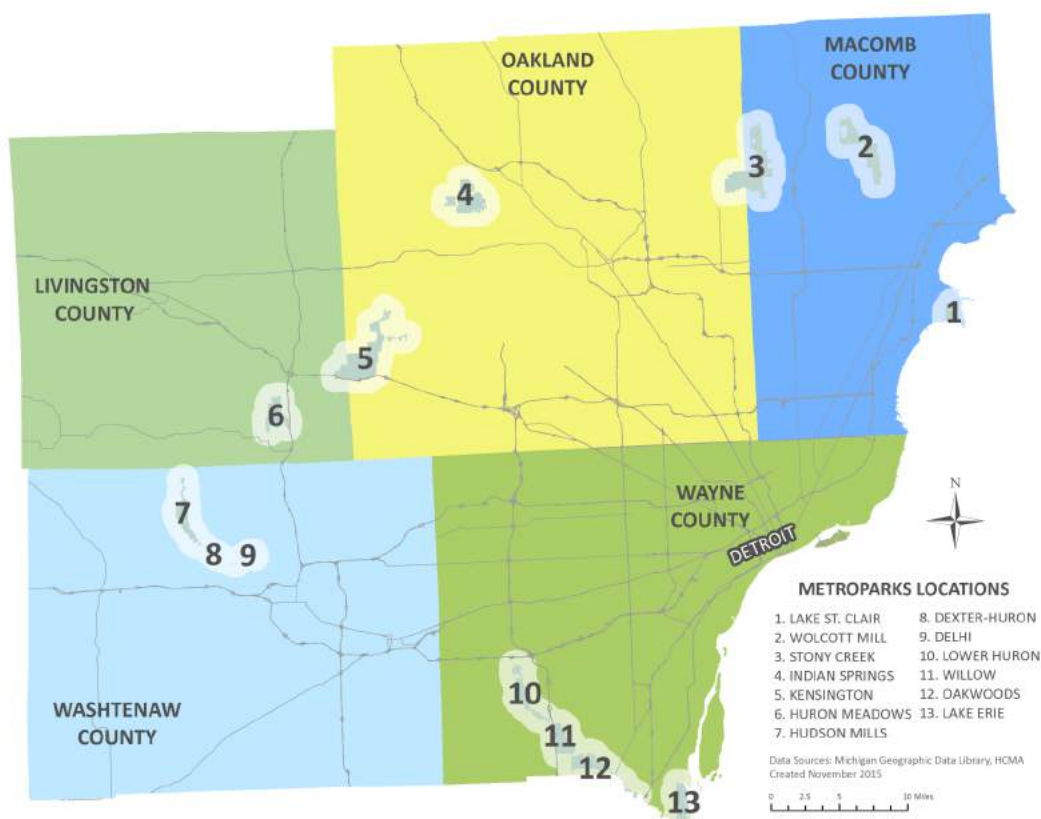


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# INTRODUCTION

## About the Metroparks

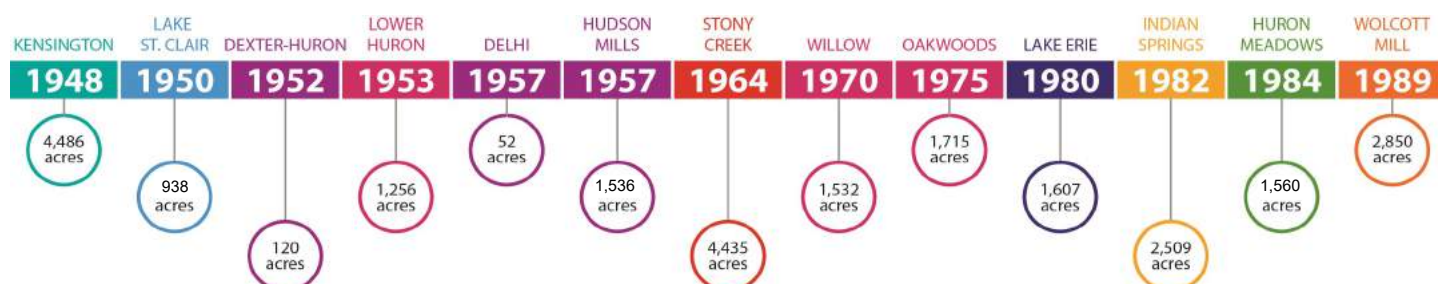


The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority was sanctioned by the Michigan State Legislature in Act No. 147 of the Public Acts of 1939. Named after the two longest rivers within its boundaries, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a regional park agency consisting of 13 Metroparks encompassing approximately 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. The 1937 vision for a park system 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.

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 .2140 mills.

### PARK DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE



# Administration & Operations

## Board of Commissioners

A seven-member Board of Commissioners governs the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority. The Board of Commissioners meets the second Thursday of each month, where they make policy decisions for the Authority, including approving expenditures, acquiring land, planning of new parks and facilities, approving fees and charges, awarding contracts through competitive bidding and other matters necessary to provide regional recreation. The Board appoints staff officers for the Metroparks.

Two commissioners, appointed by the Governor of Michigan for a term of four years, serve as representatives at large. Five commissioners, one each to represent the counties of Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Livingston and Washtenaw are appointed for a term of six years by the board of commissioners of the above-named counties.

**Director** is the Chief Executive Officer of the Metroparks, provides leadership and executive oversight of all administrative and operational activities.

**Administrative Departments** provide administrative support to operations and guide the organization towards its mission.

**Operational Departments** facilitate the day-to-day operations of the parks, making sure patrons have enjoyable and educational visits. They include Maintenance and Interpretive Services.

**Metropark Police** ensure that everyone can enjoy the parks in a safe and secure environment.





## Introduction

# Planning Process

Several factors contribute to the recommendations that will be proposed for Huron Meadows in the master plan. One of the most important is the public input collected through meetings, questionnaires and online comments. This reveals the public's hopes and expectations for the park and significantly influences plan recommendations. A master plan steering committee was formed to include park employees with exceptional knowledge of Huron Meadows and the surrounding community, who along with the experienced Metroparks department heads provide their professional opinions.

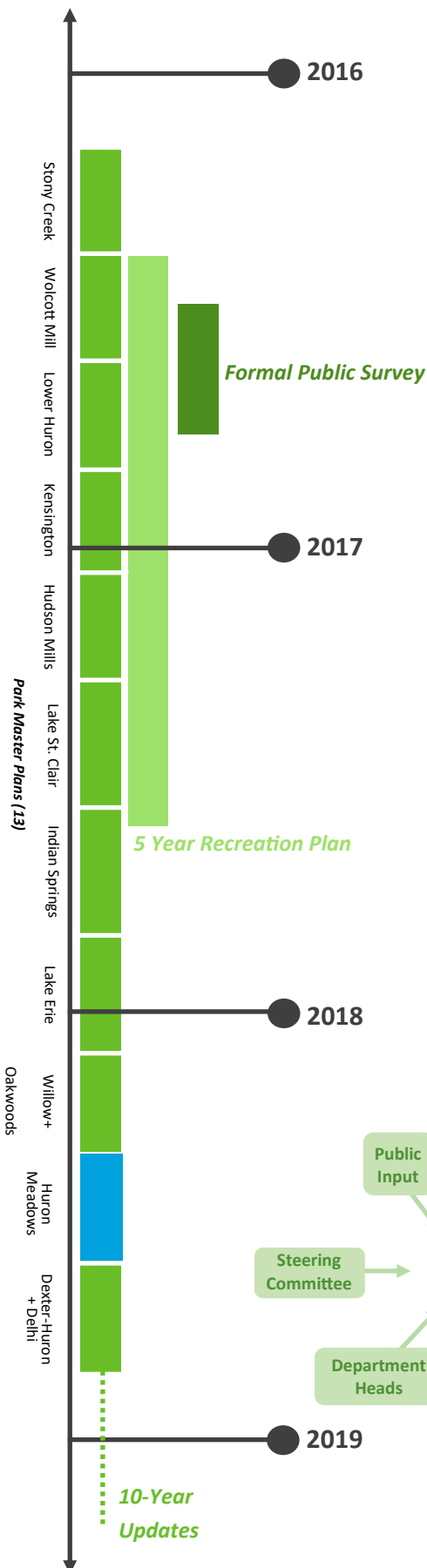
In 2016, the Metroparks Planning Department scheduled an aggressive timeline for completing all 13 park master plans in three years. Each park will be given a planning window of six months, with overlap between parks. Some master plan timelines may be extended or delayed if the Board of Commissioner's recommend further public input following their review of the draft plan. The order of the parks in the planning process was determined by staff based on current and planned park projects, planning need, geography and park popularity.

The Planning Department collects demographic and spatial data to inform master plan recommendations. Demographic data looks at the density, age, race, income, language and other factors of the regional population. Spatial data, usually analyzed through Geographic Information System software, looks at the physical location of the parks in relation to other recreation opportunities, transportation facilities, population centers, important natural resources and more. Finally, the Planning Department conducts a review of park conditions to identify areas needing improvement and areas experiencing success.

The master plans are intended to be living documents, modified as needed to reflect changing conditions in the parks. However, they focus on park developments over the following ten years and will be updated every decade through a formal planning process similar to the current one.



Public input gathered at the Huron Meadows Master Plan Open House on 4/7/2018



# HURON MEADOWS TODAY

## Character



The following responses to our questionnaire highlight the many facets of Huron Meadows that form a unique experience. Visitors appreciate the wide range of recreational activities available at the park, especially those related to the trails, natural resources and golf. They see it as contributing to the surrounding community.

## NEEDS

Continue to draw diverse range of visitors to the park

Build on park character to attract new visitors

## OPPORTUNITIES

I love our time we share at the park.

The **cross-country ski trails** south of Hammel Road are the **best in the area!** Well-maintained, everyone along that trail has a big smile. Keep it up!

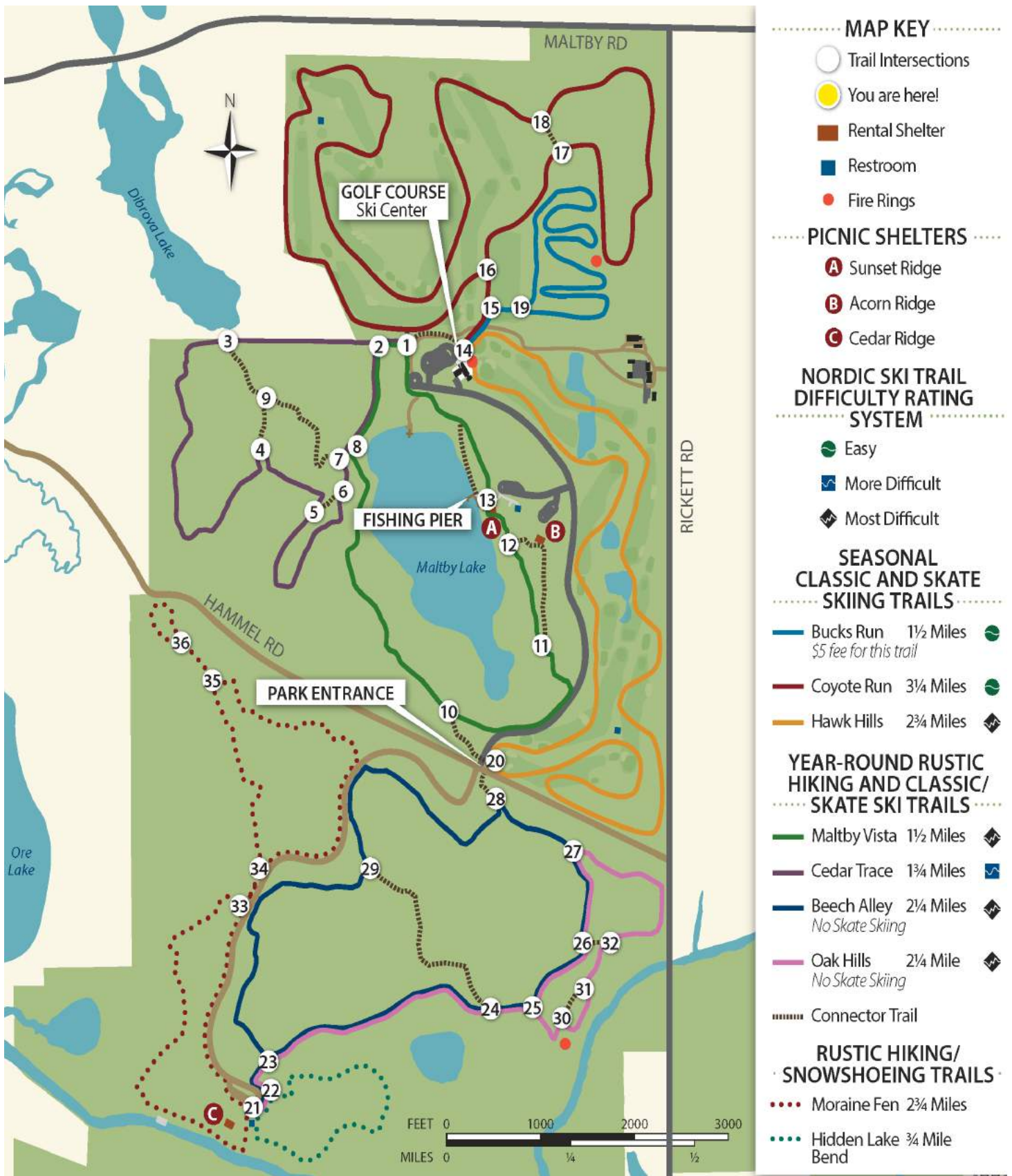
It's a well-kept secret ... enjoy the place to myself.

We enjoy **the peacefulness of the park.**

The cross-country ski trails **snowmaking has been an awesome addition.**

The **educational programs are wonderful.** I have learned a great deal of knowledge.

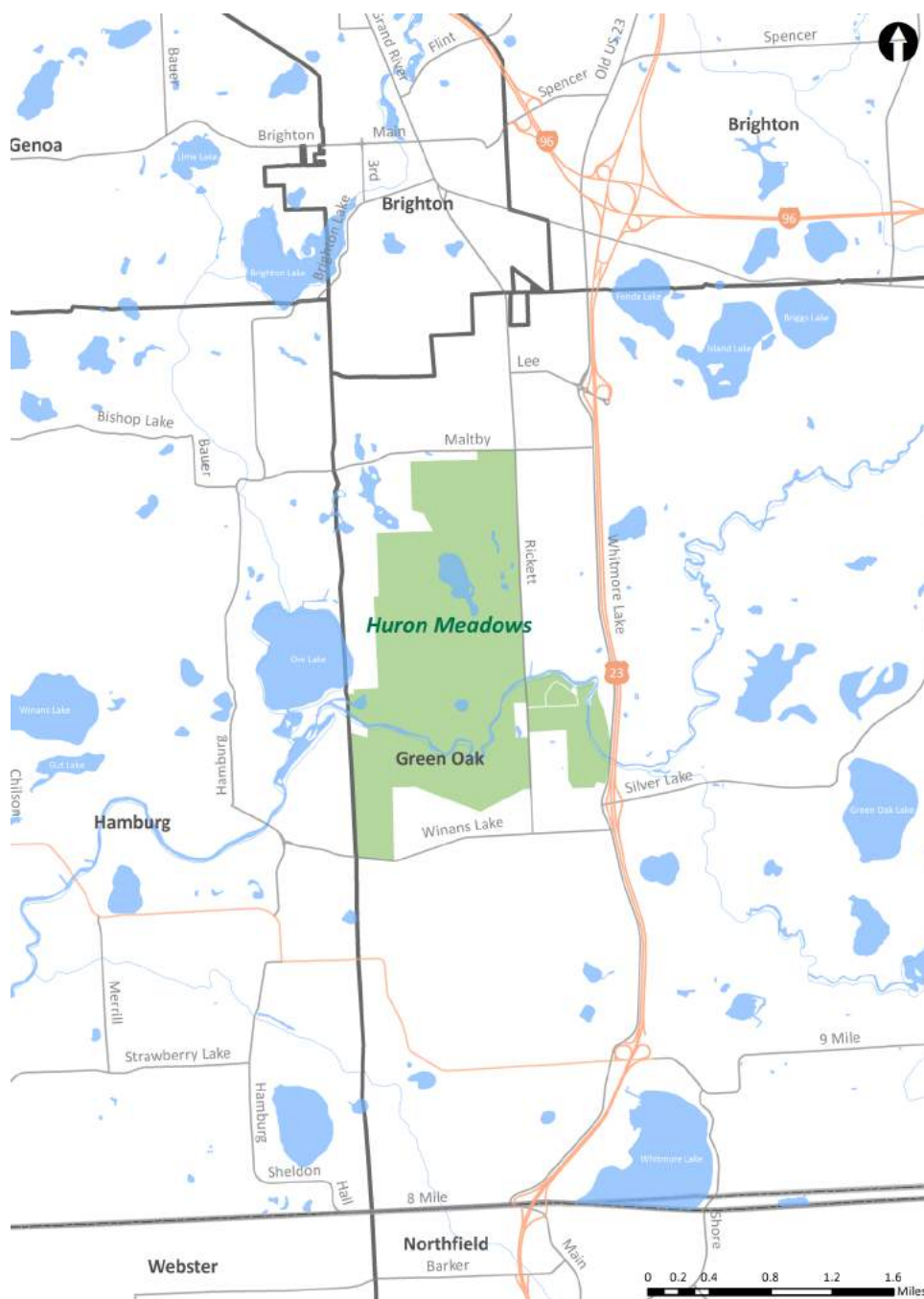




### Location

Huron Meadows Metropark is located in Livingston County, near its southern border with Washtenaw County. All of the park is within Green Oak Township and it abuts Hamburg Township.

At its northernmost extent, Huron Meadows reaches Maltby Road. To the east, it borders Whitmore Lake Road and US-23. To the west, it extends about halfway between Rickett and Hamburg Roads. Its southern boundary is Winans Lake Road. The park is situated on the Chain of Lakes creekshed within the Huron River watershed.





## NEEDS

Define and protect areas with important biodiversity features

Create a resilient network of biodiverse areas in the park

## OPPORTUNITIES

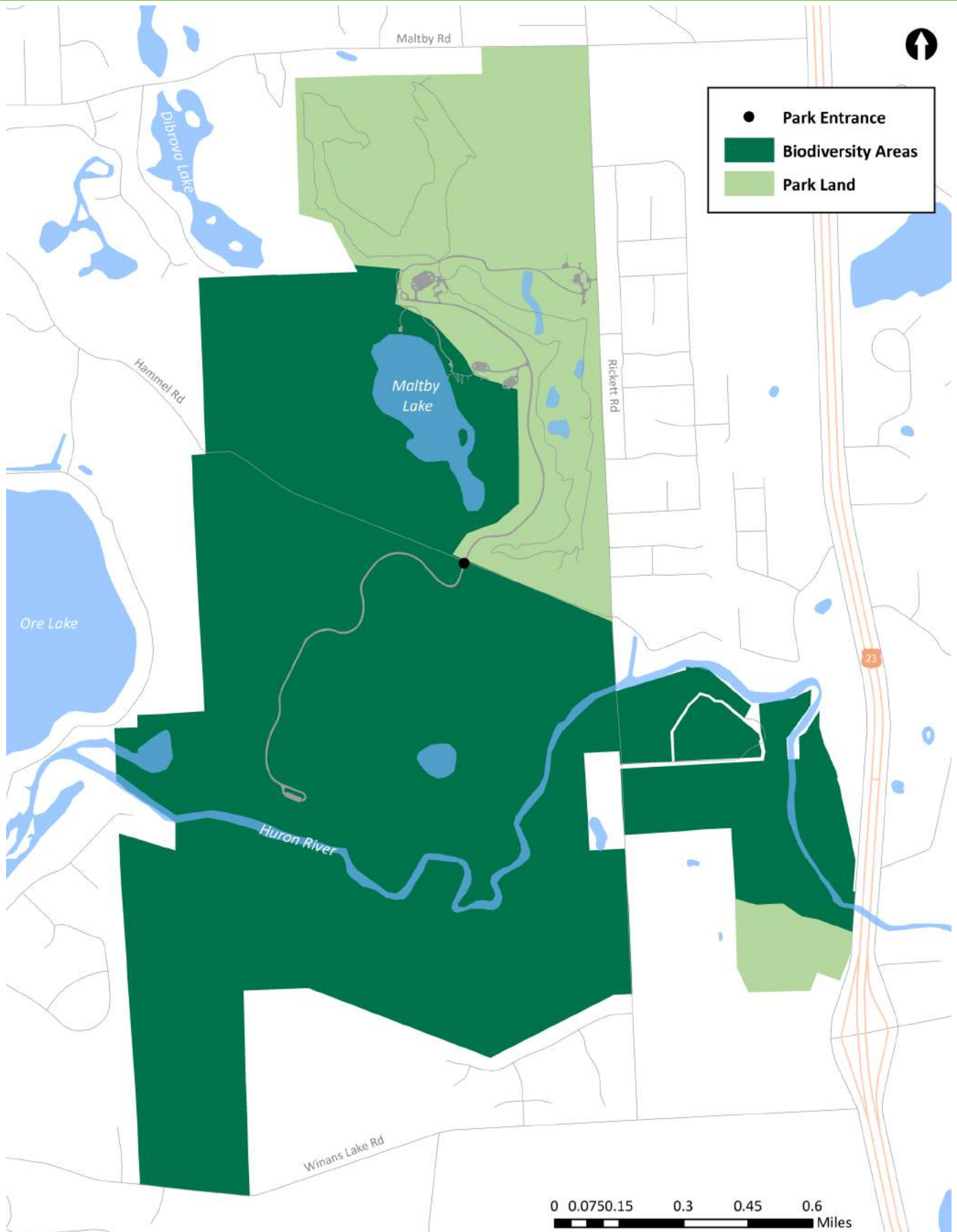
Biodiversity refers to the variety of life present in a given area, often measured by number and distribution of species. It is important to preserve because it provides humans with ecological services such as clean water and oxygen, leads to greater resistance and resilience during natural and human-caused disturbances and reduces the risk of disease.

## Biodiversity Areas

Identifying biodiversity areas can help inform the development of current and future park amenities, allowing the Metroparks to fulfill its mandate and mission statement of protecting the natural resources of the communities it serves. Development within biodiversity areas is carefully reviewed to minimize unnecessary disruption.

The following criteria for determining biodiversity areas were adapted from a matrix that the Natural Resources Department uses to determine work priorities throughout the park system. The following page shows a map of proposed biodiversity areas in Huron Meadows.

Metric	What	Why	Metric	What	Why
<b>Elemental Occurrence</b>	the presence of a species under legal protection, or of a complete system recognized as in condition similar to pre-settlement	statutory, occurrences protected by law from intentional take	<b>Percent Invasive Species Cover</b>	percentage of total acreage with invasive plant coverage	areas with few invasive species require less work, have greater return on investment
<b>FQA (Floristic Quality Assessment)</b>	presence of plant species likely to occur in conditions similar to pre-settlement	determines the ecological value of a system based on its floral assemblage	<b>Community Ranking</b>	rank assigned by the state due to natural community rarity or rate of decline	assesses the vulnerability of each natural community within the state
<b>FQI (Floristic Quality Index) Connectivity</b>	the presence of a quality habitat (greater than 35 FQI) within 100 feet of another	connected habitats provide diverse resources and facilitate migration, increase species fitness	<b>Wetlands</b>	the presence of wetlands	wetlands tend to have greatest diversity and are also critical to promote healthy water resources
<b>Size</b>	acreage of the habitat in question	large habitats provide more diverse resources and facilitate migration, increase species fitness, resilience	<b>Habitat Connectivity</b>	the presence of a complementary habitat within 100 feet of another	connected wetlands promote genetic diversity conservation and water quality





### NEEDS

Better educate the importance of preserving important cultural features

Draw new visitors with programming/education based on history of park

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Early Settlers

The area enclosed by Huron Meadows Metropark was the first land to be tilled by settlers in Livingston County. Stephen Lee and Almon Maltby were recent arrivals from New York when they arrived in Michigan to take advantage of the fertile soils. Lee built a saw mill on Ore Creek north of the park in what is now Downtown Brighton. Their children, Hannibal Lee and Henry Maltby, purchased more land in the area for agriculture and grazing. Other land holders purchased land south of where Hammel road is now, but the Blackhawk War in Illinois and Wisconsin raised the fear of attack. The war never came this far east, but the land changed hands several times.

The land that is now the golf course and that surrounds Maltby Lake was acquired in 1977, completing Huron Meadows Metropark. The herd of cattle and bison that

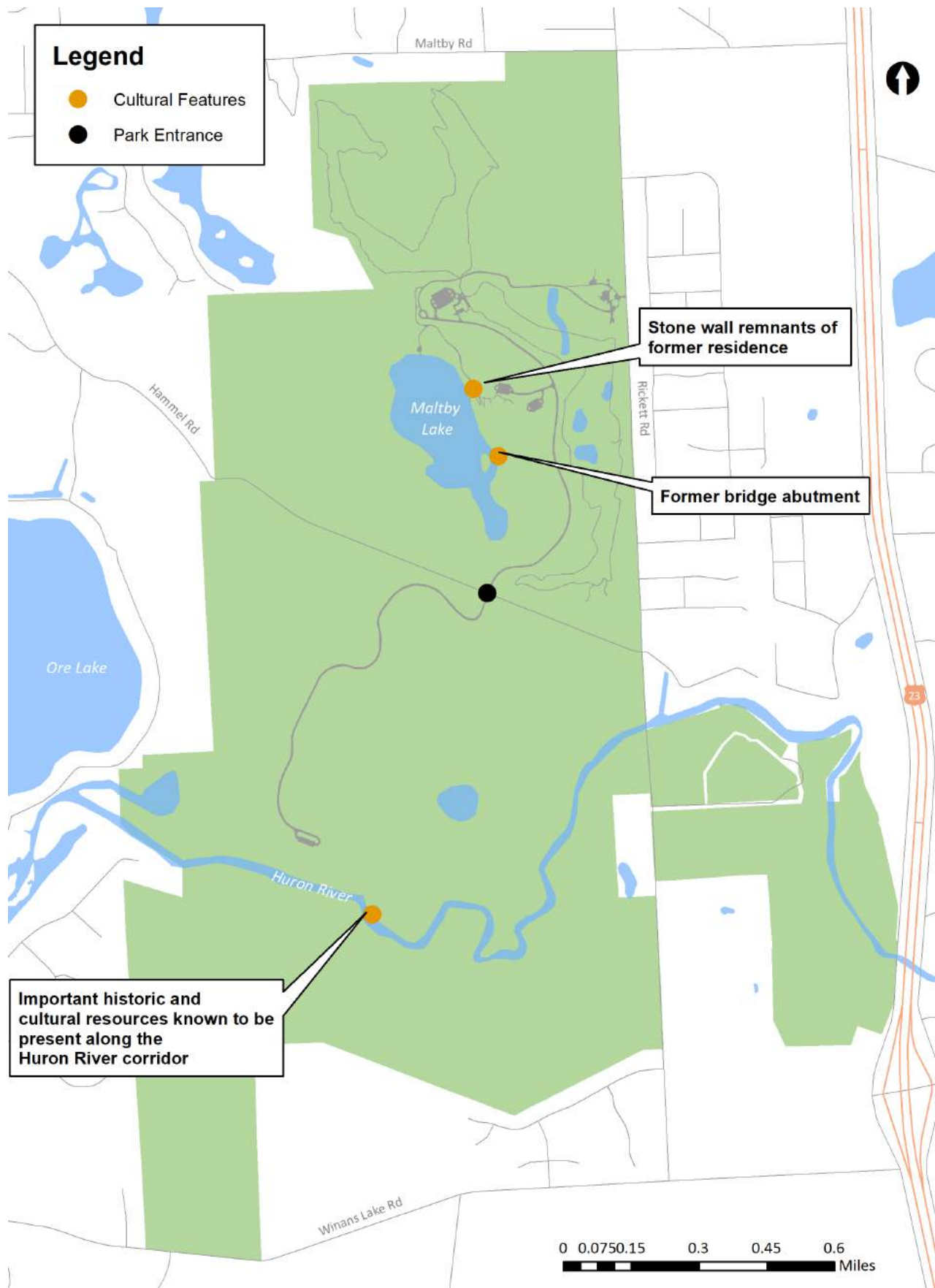
## Cultural History

grazed here are gone, replaced by white-tailed deer and Canada geese. Because the land was never heavily developed, many portions of the park are rich in biodiversity. The names Lee and Maltby live on as the names of local roads and Maltby Lake in Huron Meadows Metropark.

#### Huron River

The natural features of Greek Oak Charter Township have historically played a major role in influencing growth and development. The Huron River that flows through the park is one of the key natural features which was designated a “Country Scenic Natural River” in 1979. This protective designation has contributed to the “up north” feel of the Huron River and provides unique access to the wild beauty of Southeastern Michigan for anglers and paddlers alike. The fascinating heritage of the Huron River for both Native and European settlers is also significant to the natural and cultural history of the entire park and has influenced how and where development has occurred over the years.







## Infrastructure

In order to serve the varied needs of park visitors, Huron Meadows contains a number of buildings, surfaces, facilities and activity areas. Many of these were constructed years ago or decades ago and may require replacement in the near future.

The infrastructure necessary to maintain the activities available in Huron Meadows includes roads, parking lots, boardwalks, trails, utilities and much more. Since maintaining infrastructure is costly, it is important going forward to avoid overbuilding and collocate facilities to minimize paving and to reduce maintenance. Several recreation areas managed by both public and private entities are close to Huron Meadows, a goal in the planning process is to ensure that the facilities in the park complement others nearby, rather than to create duplication.



### NEEDS

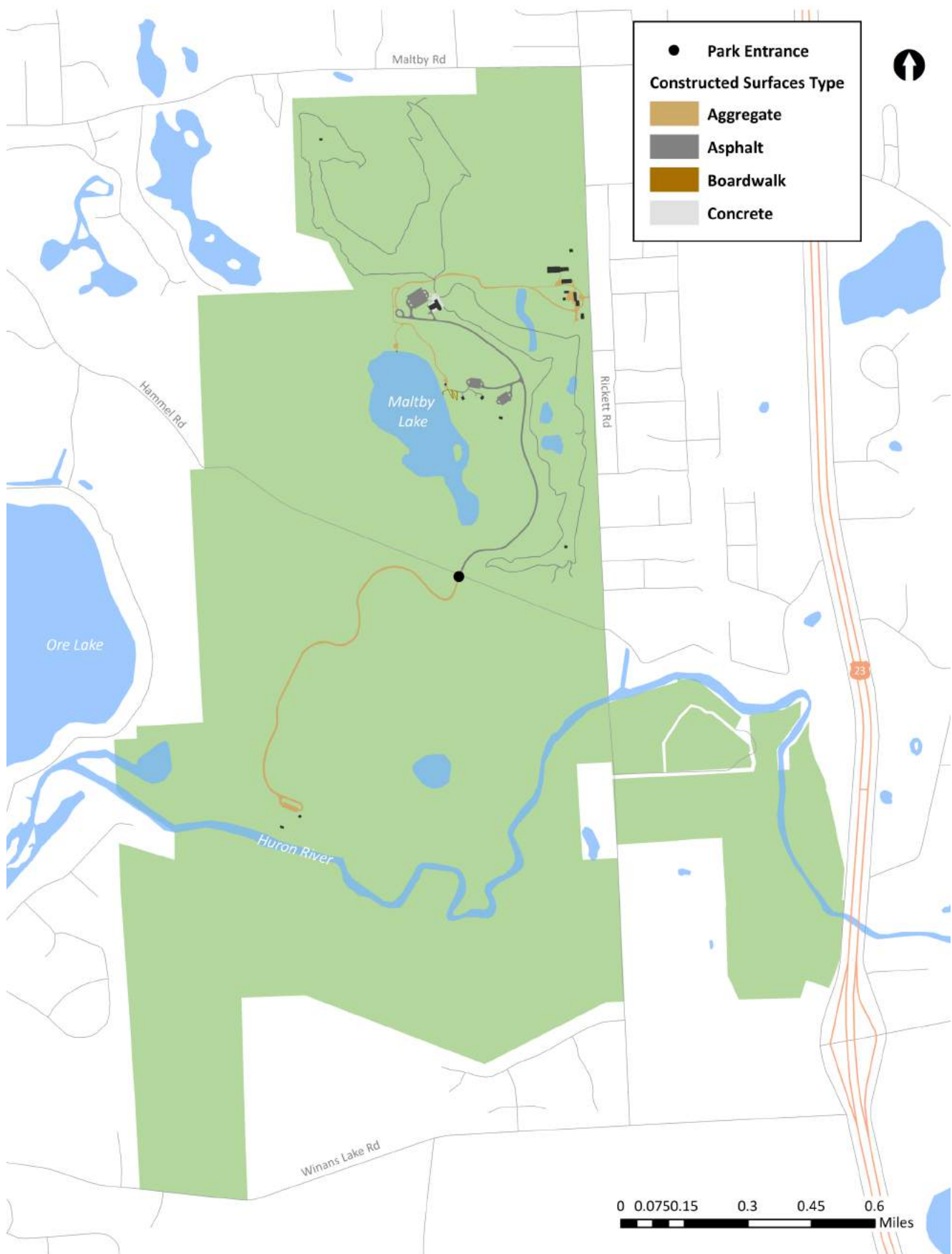
Address aging and overbuilt infrastructure

Redevelop park areas to better serve visitors and the environment

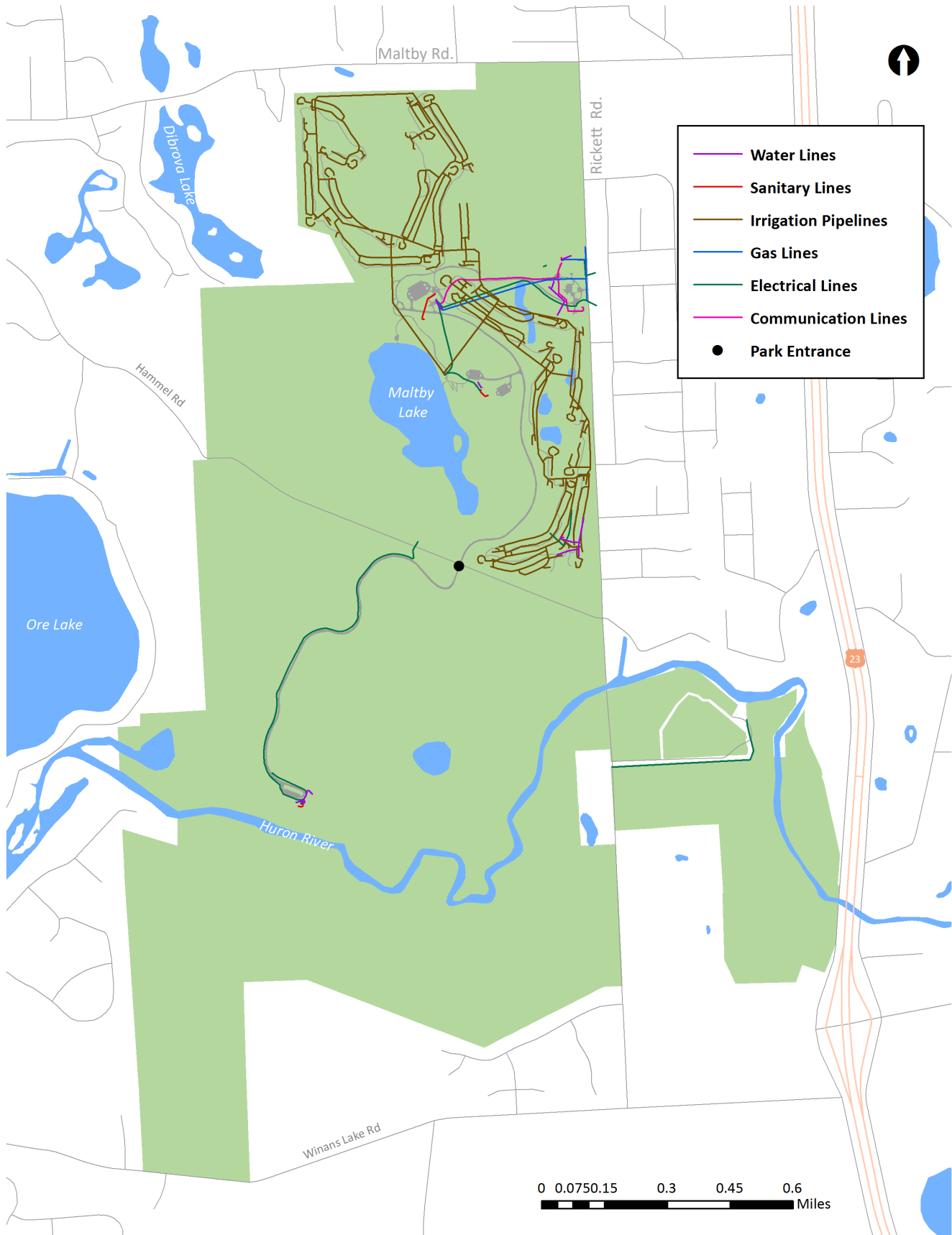
### OPPORTUNITIES

Huron Meadows Infrastructure	
Public bldgs / avg age	1 / 15
Service bldgs / avg age	6 / 50
Comfort stations / avg age	2 / 13
Road miles	2.12
Parking lot acreage	2.36
Playgrounds	2
Percent of park mowed	2.8
Picnic shelters	3
Sand volleyball courts	2
Baseball fields	1
Fishing platforms	2
Tennis courts	0
Ice skating rinks	0
Basketball courts	0
Public canoe/kayak launches	1











### Picnic Areas

Three picnic areas are located within the park. Sunset Ridge Picnic Area has a picnic shelter, children's play area, softball field, restrooms and accessible fishing pier. Acorn Ridge Picnic Area has a picnic shelter, sand volleyball court, horseshoe pits, children's play area and restrooms. Both of these picnic areas are located north of Hammel Road and are adjacent to Maltby Lake. Cedar Ridge located south of Hammel Road is located near the Huron River. It has a picnic shelter, sand volleyball court, swings, slide, large open sports field area and access to several hiking trails. It also has a canoe or kayak launch to access the Huron River.

### Fishing Pier

A large barrier-free fishing pier, accessible by ramp or steps, is located at the Sunset Ridge Picnic Area. Ice fishing is allowed when weather conditions permit.

### Ski Center (Golf Starter Building)

Huron Meadows Metropark is one of just a few parks in southeast Michigan that offers skate-style and classically



## Facilities & Centers

Huron Meadows features a number of facilities that define its 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.

groomed cross-country ski trails. The Ski Center (Golf Starter Building) features classic-style and skate-style ski rentals and a heated lounge, restrooms and snacks. Groups of 10 or more can make arrangements to rent skis during the week.

### Buck's Run

The Ski Center also provides access with additional fees to Buck's Run, a 1.5-mile loop made from snow shot from snow guns. The trail is lighted at night and includes a fire pit.

### Golf Course

The 6,663 yard, par 72 golf course with rolling fairways is scenic and challenging. It includes a starter building, driving range, practice green and cart paths.





# Huron Meadows Today

The Metroparks are moving towards a more data-driven approach to developing facilities. In order to best serve the residents of southeast Michigan and use resources wisely, the Planning Department has identified the location of similar facilities and programs. The goal for future development is to avoid duplication and instead offer unique facilities that fill recreation voids in the geographic area where the park is located.

The map below shows the location of aquatic facilities, golf courses, boat launches, neighborhood sports facilities and interpretive programs that compete with those offered at Huron Meadows. There are relatively few facilities and programs available in the five-mile radius that compete with the park's unique and significant features. This may present opportunities for Huron Meadows to meet the recreational needs of the area in new ways distinct from other recreational opportunities moving forward.

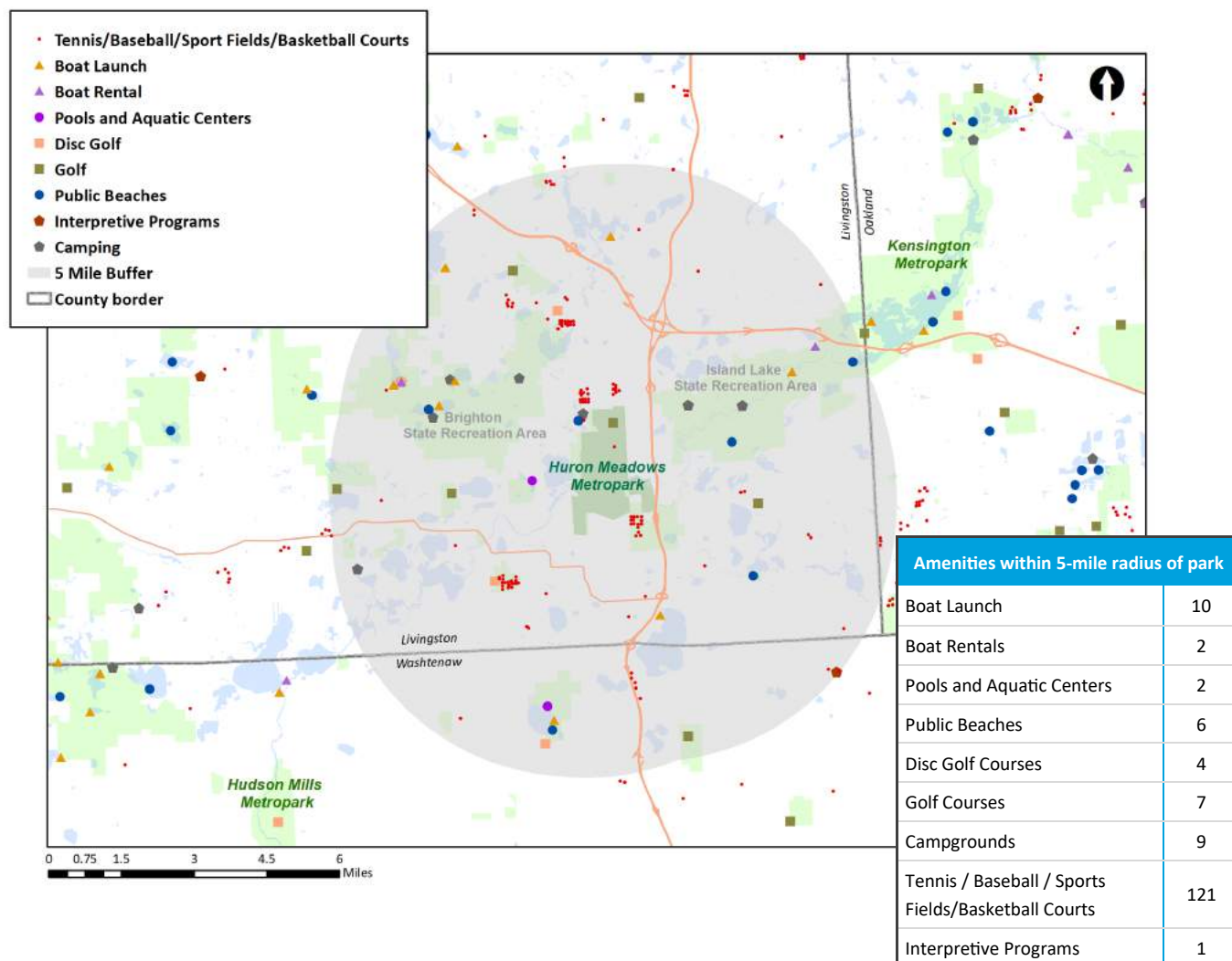
## NEEDS

Identify areas of facility duplication for repurposing and consolidation

Provide unique recreational facilities to draw visitors from across the region

## OPPORTUNITIES

## NEARBY FACILITIES



## NEEDS

Work with county and local communities to address any park boundary issues

Create good working relationships with neighbors and partner organizations

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Grants

Over its history, Huron Meadows has received two grants from the DNR (Department of Natural Resources). One pertaining to the purchase of a property and the other for recreational access and a play area at Maltby Lake. 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. Approximately 0.4% of Huron Meadows is encumbered, as shown on the following page.

The generous grants from the DNR and other sources have contributed to Huron Meadows Metropark developing the high-quality recreation it offers to the public today.



### Encroachments

The Planning Department has worked with Huron Meadows park staff to identify external encroachments on park boundaries. These include private development on park property, dumping waste and breaking through fence lines. Together with a new combined map of county parcels in relation to historic Metroparks-created parcels, this will help staff resolve existing property issues.

Since Huron Meadows abuts several residential areas, it is important to work with neighbors to discourage illegal paths into the park and identify areas where a formal pedestrian entry point may be necessary to serve a neighborhood.

### Informal Access Points

Certain spots on the park border are open to pedestrian access but not formally designated as an entrance. These must be monitored and considered in the planning process. Individuals may park on adjacent streets and enter the park on foot, affecting the tolling revenue of the park and potentially causing negative traffic impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

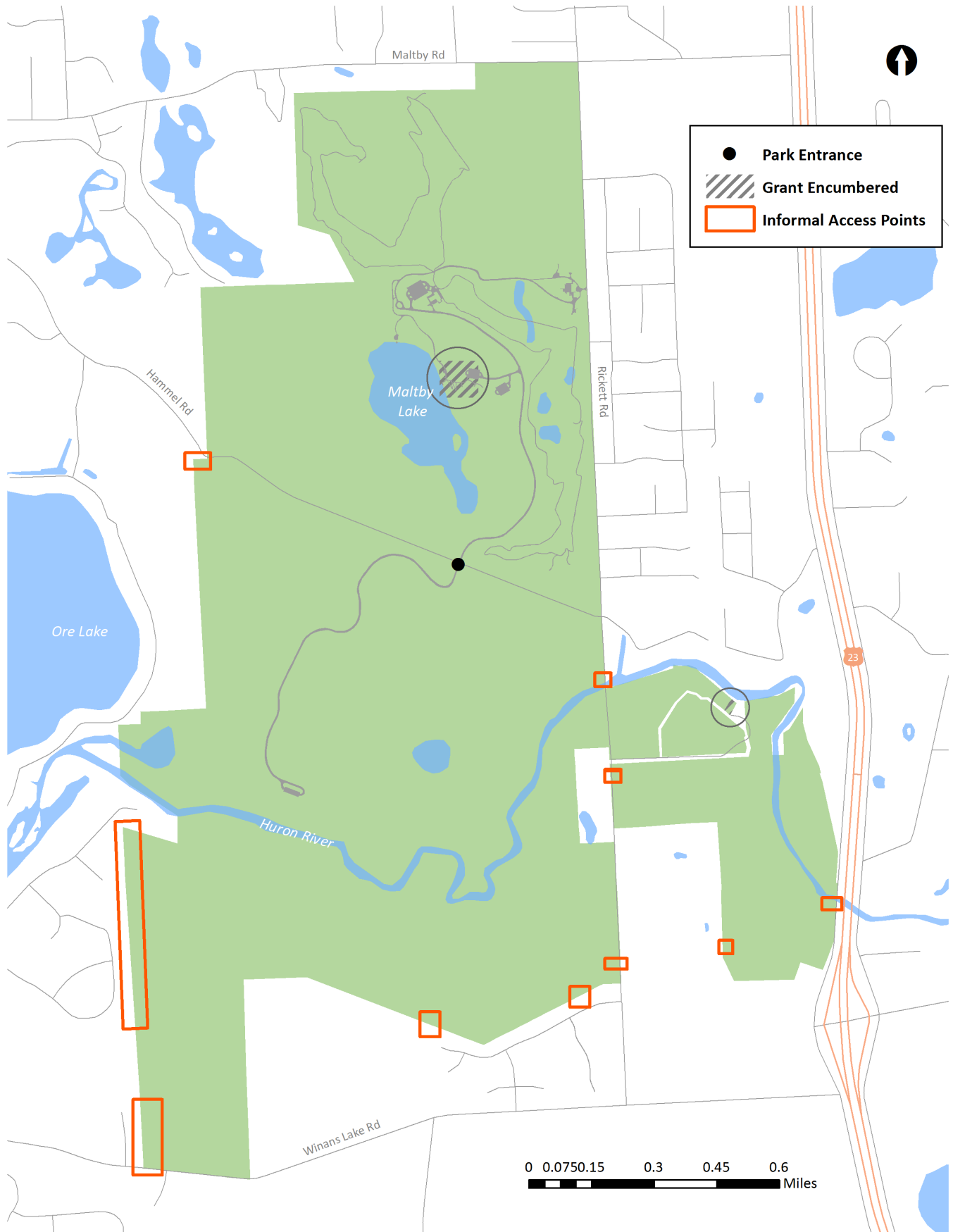
### Easements

Huron Meadows contains various utility easements, meaning that utility providers are allowed to use certain sections of land to run power lines or other equipment, in order to provide service to the surrounding area. In the future, the Metroparks will collaborate with surrounding municipalities and agencies to link into existing utilities rather than building park-specific utilities. This will help create the vision of a clean, efficient park system.

### Adjacent Property Uses

Surrounding the park is predominantly single family residential. The Legacy Center Sports Complex, a large planned unit development, abuts the southeast property boundary.







## Wayfinding

### Vehicular Wayfinding

#### Standardization

Recently Metroparks updated signage installed at various times with new standards and designs.

#### Simplicity

In many parks, including Huron Meadows, an abundance of signage was not necessarily useful for directing visitors. Efforts were made to minimize the duplication of signs to express sign information simply in order to make navigation easier for users of the park.

#### Symbols

Symbols are useful for expressing information in a small amount of space and also make park facilities more accessible for visitors who have trouble reading or speaking English. A standard set of symbols has been developed to be used in wayfinding signage.

### Trail Wayfinding

#### Standardization

Trail types present in the Metroparks include shared use, mountain bike, ski, nature and rustic and equestrian. Despite their different functions, these trails together create a complete recreation system, so signage will be based on a uniform template.

#### Flexibility

In order to serve the differing needs of users on these various trail types, the signage template will allow for removable panels and be customized to fit the needs of that user group.

#### Legibility

For many people, the easiest way to orient oneself in a new environment is through use of a map. For greater ease of use, all new trail wayfinding signs will include a map marked with a “you are here” symbols and the location of important park features and amenities.

#### NEEDS

Replace outdated, confusing, inconsistent signs

Create consistent, convenient wayfinding system to give visitors confidence

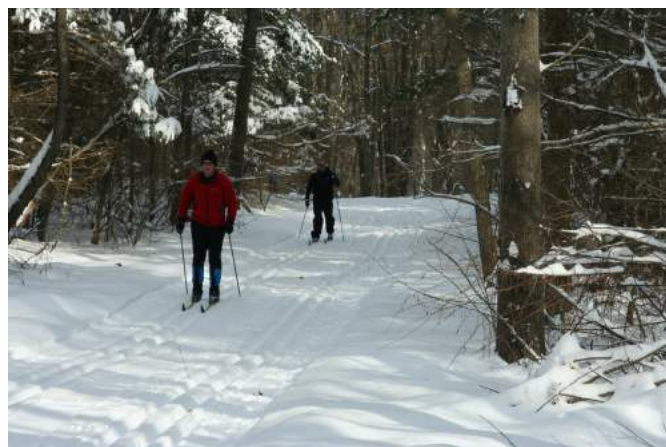
#### OPPORTUNITIES





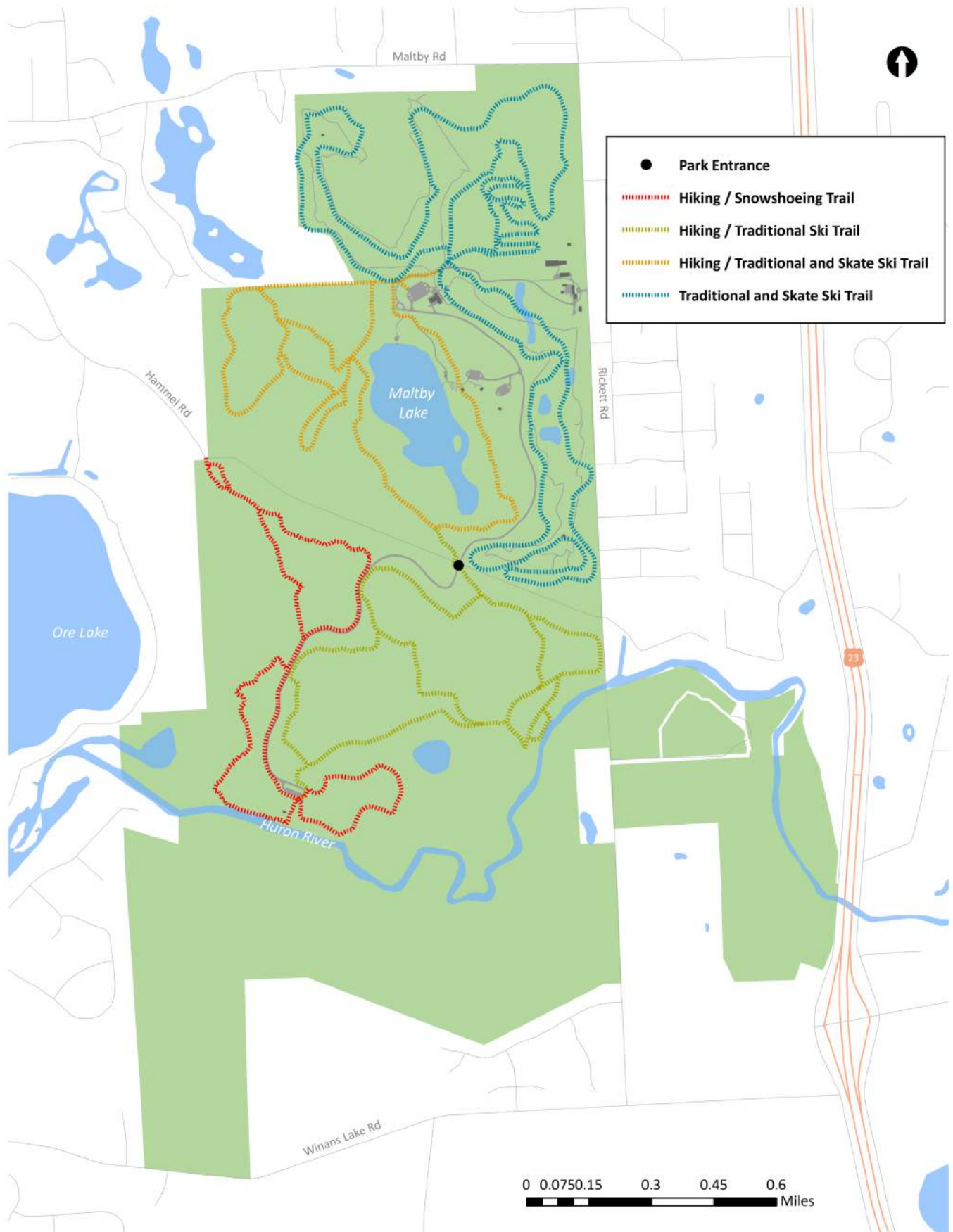
### Trails

As part of the master planning process, staff have categorized and defined the various types of trails in the park, inventoried the miles and specified the uses and design of each. This formal listing allows for assessment of availability of trails for various users in comparison to user group demand. It will also lead to more standardized maintenance and rule enforcement processes.



Trail Type	Miles in park	Allowed Uses	Prohibited Uses	Surface
<b>Rustic Hiking Trail</b>	9.45	Pedestrian use only; running, jogging and pets. Snowshoes and cross-country skiing are permitted on designated trails only.	Motorized vehicles, bikes and horses.	Width and material vary, often dirt trails.
<b>Cross-Country Ski Trail</b>	12.67	Cross-country skiing only. Many are used for other activities during the summer.	Motorized vehicles, snowshoes, hiking, bikes, horses and pets.	Snow covered.
<b>Huron River Trail</b>	2.8	Canoeing and kayaking	Other uses are present in river but are not considered part of water trail.	Water

Huron Meadows includes over 24 miles of trails. Cross-country skiing has become an extremely popular activity at this park due to the extensive, well-maintained trails. This requires trail maintenance and grooming, as well as snow-making in dry periods. The park also includes a 2.8 mile segment of the Huron River Water Trail which is recognized as a National Water Trail. Other paths totaling over 5 miles located south of the Huron River are planned to be evaluated for future trail use.



# Accessibility

To remain compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Metroparks are responsible for ensuring that park space is accessible to all members of the public. In the development of this master plan, planning staff has taken an active role in locating the less accessible park amenities, so that all guest can enjoy the park. A survey of several areas has resulted in a list of accessibility issues present at Huron Meadows Metropark. These areas are highlighted below and shown on the map on the following page.

## NEEDS

Pursue improvements to park accessibility

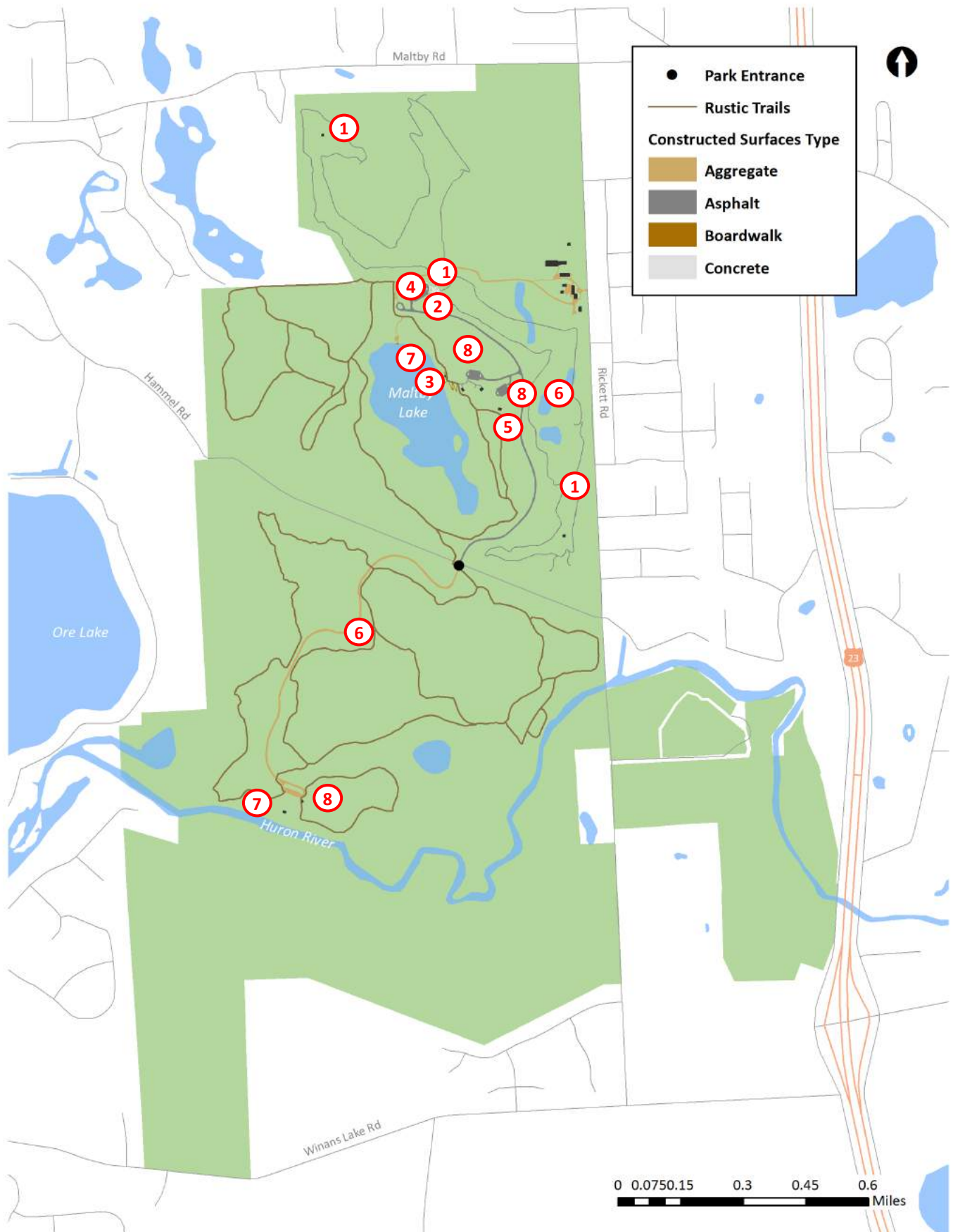
Ensure that users of all abilities feel empowered to take full advantage of the park

## OPPORTUNITIES

Area	ID #	Description
Golf course	1	Not designed to meet ADA, restrooms are not ADA compliant
Golf course starter building	2	Inaccessible front door and baggage drop area
Fishing pier	3	Repair uneven walkway and add curbs for barrier
Parking lot	4	Parking lot striping, signage and improved ramp access
Acorn Ridge	5	Inaccessible picnic shelter and restrooms
Rustic trails	6	Inaccessible surface, exceeds maximum slopes
Kayak/boat launch	7	Inaccessible surface, exceeds maximum slopes
Cedar Ridge	8	Inaccessible sport fields

By working with the ADA Checklist provided by the ADA National Network and the Institute for Human Centered Design, the Metroparks are able to prioritize accessibility improvements of park entrances, services, public restrooms and other park amenities. The areas mentioned, in addition to others, were identified using the recommended methods for all HCMA parks.





# REVENUE

## Revenue Sources

### NEEDS

Diversify sources of revenue

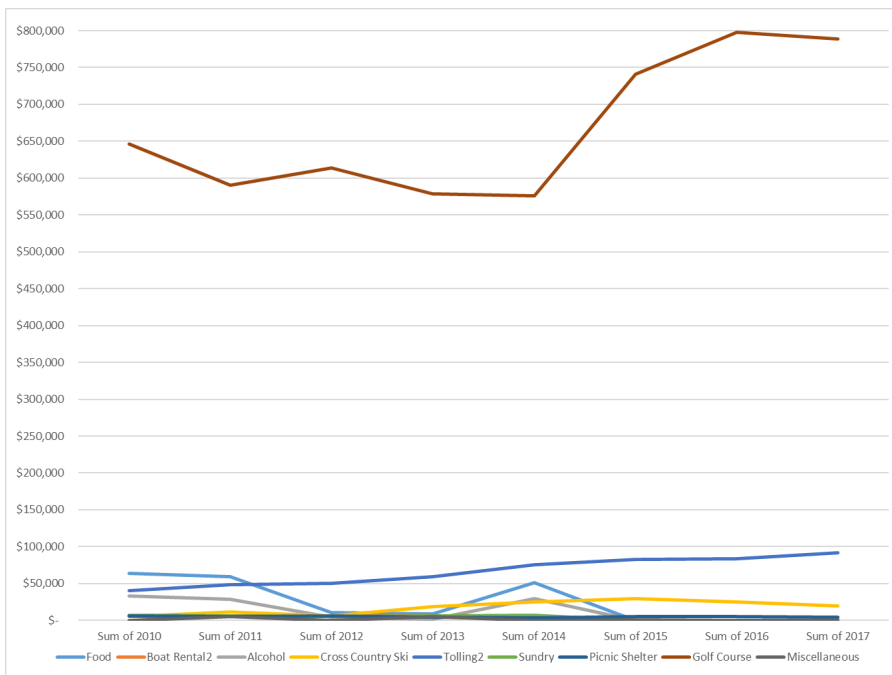
Offer new and exciting activities/  
programs to visitors to both boost  
tolling and gather user fees

### OPPORTUNITIES

The Metroparks 2017 General Fund revenue equaled \$51,974,301. Huron Meadows 2017 operations revenue was approximately \$905,593 comprising 1.7% of all Metroparks revenue.

Huron Meadows budgeted 2018 operations revenues are \$904,684, while estimated 2018 operations expenses are \$1,093,055. Property tax and other revenue is estimated to subsidize 17% (\$188,371) of the Huron Meadows operating budget.

As the chart illustrates, the majority of revenue (approximately 87%) comes from the golf course.



### 2017 Operations Revenue

Revenue Source	2016 Total	% of Revenue
Golf Course	789,121	87
Tolling	91,388	10
Cross Country Ski	19,867	2
Picnic Shelter	4,200	0.5
Miscellaneous	1,017	0.1

**TOTAL: 905,593**



## Revenue

### Visitors

Huron Meadows Metropark is a regional park and can draw from the approximately 2,500,000 Michigan residents that live within a 30 mile radius (approximately a 45-minute drive) of the park. Certain events and activities may draw visitors from greater distances.

Vehicle entries to Huron Meadows Metropark have hovered between 85,867 and 100,356 since 2010, fluctuating through the years but experiencing a slight rise overall. Weather often plays a role in attendance to the park; activity areas greatly affected by weather are the trails and golf course. This may explain the dip in attendance visible in 2011.

Consolidation of statistical information is needed to better assess vehicle entries, park users, event attendance, event participants and activity participation within the park. This information will help with marketing of events, activities and future analysis of the park.



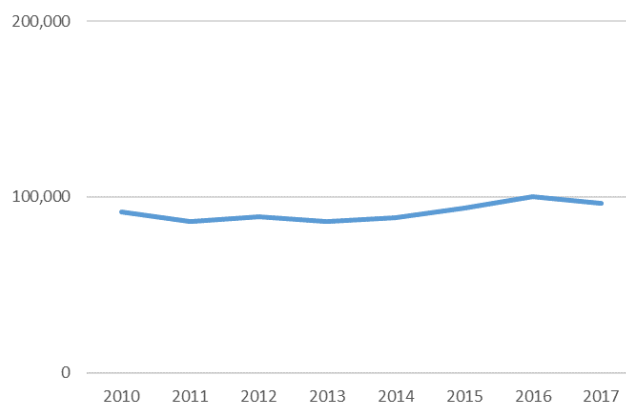
## NEEDS

Target market strategy

Take advantage of proximity to urban population to grow revenue and system awareness

## OPPORTUNITIES

Vehicle Entries Year 2010-2017



Huron Meadows Metropark 30-Mile radius





# Programs & Events



Cross-Country Ski Events



Golf Course



Day camps

## NEEDS

Increase revenue and visitation

Build on enthusiasm of Huron Meadows visitors with exciting, engaging programs and events

## OPPORTUNITIES

Huron Meadows hosts dozens of events each year, organized either by park staff or outside groups. Many of these are interpretive programs for both children and adults to explore the natural and cultural assets of the park. Some promote artistic enrichment and others encourage physical activity or advocate for a cause. Experience nature's finest at the picturesque Huron Meadows.

Recent events include:

- Junior Golf League
- Junior Championship
- Orienteering 101
- Huron Meadows Moraine and Fen Discovery
- Cross-country Runs
- Ladies Golf Championship
- Men's Golf Championship
- Senior Men's Golf Championship
- Day Camps
- Frosty Freestyle Cross-Country Skiing
- Krazy Klassic Cross-Country Skiing
- Ice Fishing for Beginners
- Paddle Camp

# COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

## Population

The population of the communities surrounding Huron Meadows is aging rapidly and changing in mobility. The percentage of households without access to an automobile is gradually rising in the region, Livingston County and at a modest trend downward for the municipalities directly surrounding Huron Meadows. The Metroparks were created at the time of the auto boom, when it was assumed that every family would have a car to take out to the countryside on the weekends. Since habits and lifestyles are changing, the Metroparks must look into innovative ways to provide access to the

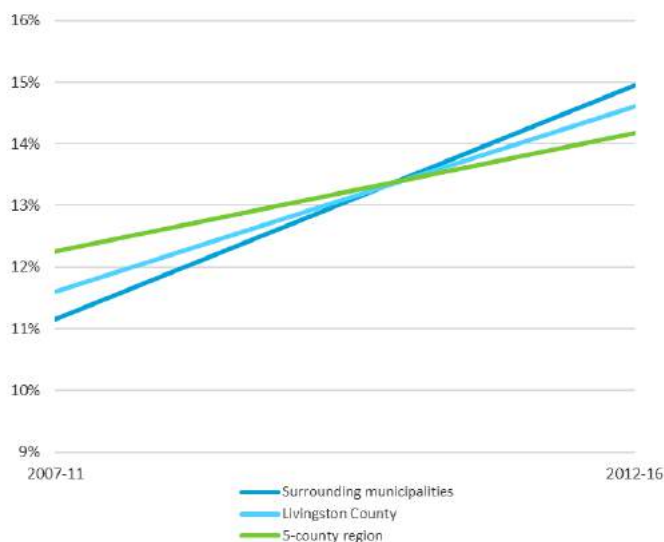
The percentage of individuals over 65 years of age is rising quickly in the region, in Livingston County and most dramatically in communities surrounding the park. Older adults have distinct needs, often requiring accommodations for mobility and accessibility of park features such as trails and buildings. This is important to keep in mind when planning the future of a park serving an older population.

## NEEDS

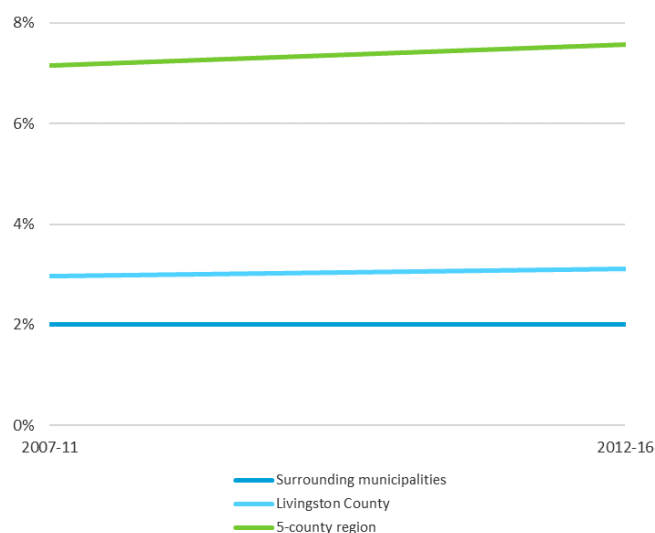
Address changing needs of new population demographics

Draw new users with a connected, accessible, welcoming and safe park environment

## OPPORTUNITIES



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF POPULATION OVER 65 YEARS, FROM 2007-11 through 2012-16 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CARS AVAILABLE, 2007-11 through 2012-16 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)





## NEEDS

Improve connectivity within the park and with the community

Create good working relationship with surrounding municipalities

## OPPORTUNITIES

Understanding the goals and plans of municipalities bordering and/or containing Huron Meadows is essential for a collaborative, comprehensive planning process. Planning staff researched the published master plans and recreation plans of surrounding municipalities, counties and other agencies. These provided a basic idea of the direction planned for each, especially regarding land use, development and recreation and current projects.

### Green Oak Township

- Construction design and easement acquisition underway from existing path on Fieldcrest from Silver Lake Road to M-36 interchange
- Construction design and easement acquisition underway at M-36 crossing to connect to Lakelands Trail
- Maltby Corridor identified as good connection for Island Lake, Huron Meadows and Brighton State Recreation Area with US-23 Corridor and to Lake to Lake Trail

### Hamburg Township

- Hamburg Township is updating its Master Plan 20/20. The current Master Plan was completed in 2011. The planning process has begun with public outreach events this summer for public involvement in helping shape the future of Hamburg Township.

### City of Brighton Comprehensive Plan 2017-2037 DRAFT

- Encourage recreation-focused businesses to locate and expand in the city, which is in close proximity to a wide variety of parks and recreation facilities

## Projects/Initiatives

### Huron River Watershed Council

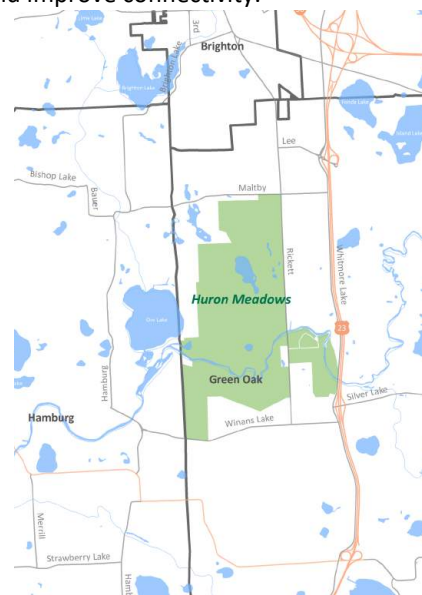
- Improve climate resiliency of communities on the watershed
- Green infrastructure for local governments program
- Collaboration in stormwater management efforts
- RiverUp! program supporting placemaking in river towns
- Huron River Water Trail partner facilitation

### Draft 2018 Livingston County Master Plan

- Facilitate conservation/park/trail coordination between area nature conservancies, camp organizations, and local/regional/state public park providers
- Collaborate with public and private partners to build green infrastructure and low impact development projects that will showcase the benefits of these techniques to the public as an educational tool
- The Legacy sports development has become a regional economic development attraction and Green Oak Township has zoned this area to accommodate a variety of additional housing, commercial, and service industry land uses.

### Southeastern Livingston County Recreation Authority

- Work with regional recreation providers to expand opportunities and improve connectivity.



## Community Influences

### Relevant Planning Documents

MDOT University  
Region  
Nonmotorized  
Plan, 2015

Parks and Recreation  
Master Plan 2016  
Green Oak Charter  
Township, Michigan

City of Brighton  
Comprehensive  
Plan, 2017-2037  
DRAFT

Hamburg Township  
Parks and  
Recreation Master  
Plan 2018-2022

SEMCOG Green  
Infrastructure  
Vision, 2014

*"A new canoe/kayak launch and livery on the Huron River was the highest voted specific element at the community input meeting. Participants were clearly intrigued by the concept of a water trail from Green Oak to Milford through the Metroparks and State Recreation Areas." pg. 45*

*"A need for a community center with classroom and meeting space, gymnasiums, teen center and additional facilities for residents of all ages has been identified by a number of residents." pg. 66*

*"Public accessibility to the green infrastructure network is paramount, including access to parks, trails, water and ensuring public spaces are designed for all residents." pg. 1*

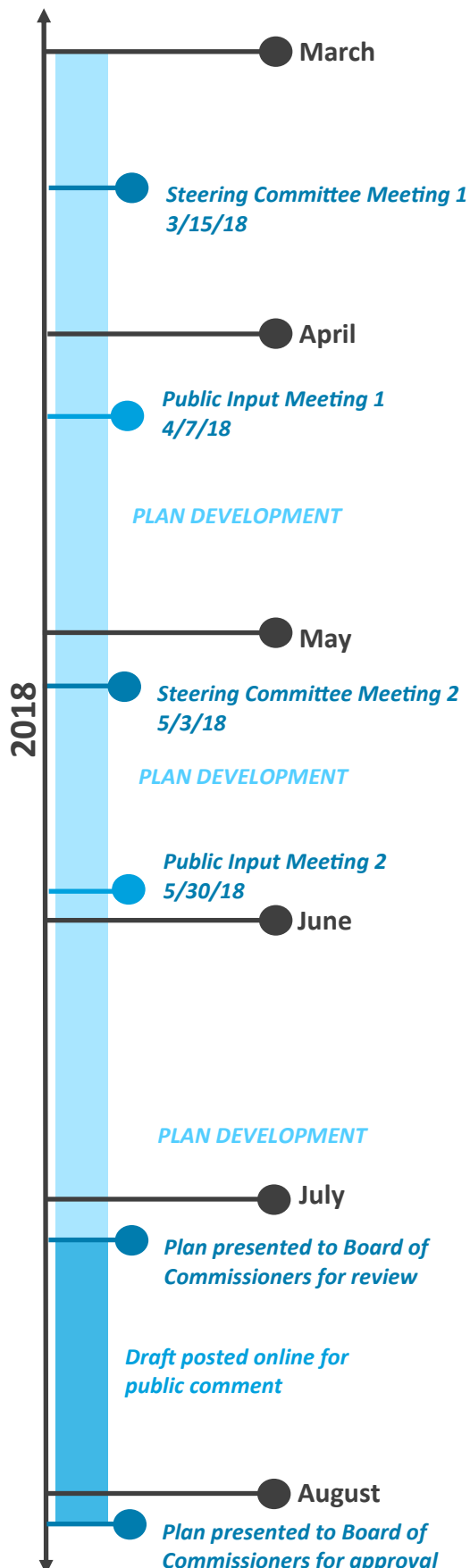
Since the development and land use decisions of bordering communities and other governmental agencies directly impact the park, these neighbor master plans were reviewed and taken into account when creating this document. The opinions and ideas expressed by residents and leaders in these municipalities give Huron Meadows a wider context and in many cases underscore the importance of the park's resources to citizens.

Huron Meadows Metropark is part of a broader system of recreation and green space that includes other Metroparks as well as local, county and state parks and greenways. Due to this, recreation and green infrastructure plans were also considered in creating the Huron Meadows Master Plan. Many communities are currently advancing their non-motorized networks, seeking grant funding to create greenways and paths and cooperating to provide linked green and recreation spaces to their constituents.



# PUBLIC INPUT

## ← Outreach Process



Since this park belongs to the people of southeast Michigan, the Planning Department aimed to include the public in multiple stages of the planning process.

The planning process began with a meeting of the steering committee, which identified organizations and individuals with significant investment in the park for targeted invitations to the public meeting. A strategy for soliciting general participation in the public meeting was also discussed.

The next step was a public meeting with community members to gather initial ideas about the direction of the park. A general park feedback survey was posted online and advertised by Metroparks social media.

These ideas were taken into account, along with staff feedback and other data, in developing initial recommendations. These were then presented to the public at a second meeting and feedback was collected, analyzed and incorporated into a draft Master Plan document.

This document was posted online in July 2018 for final public comment, which influenced the final Master Plan sent to the Board of Commissioners for approval in August 2018.

### Public Meeting 1 - 4/7/18

- Explanation of and timeline for the planning process
- General park information and map
- Regional map on which participants placed stars to indicate their place of residence in relation to the park
- Exercise in which participants placed pom-poms representing resources in jars representing activities, expressing their opinion on where investments should be made
- Opportunity to fill out survey in person

### Public Meeting 2 - 5/30/18

- Short presentation on survey results, community influences and intended projects
- Opportunity for participants to write down feedback on intended projects



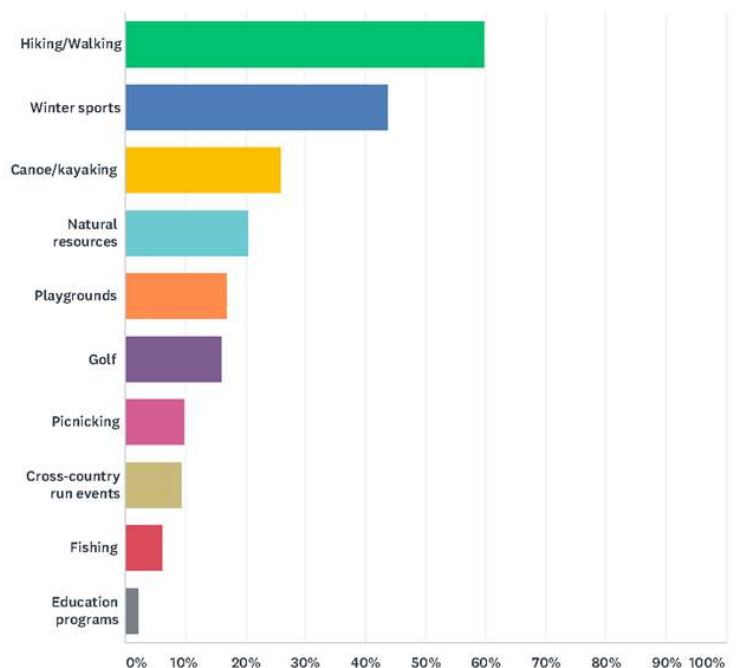
# Results

Huron Meadows is primarily used for hiking, fishing, paddling, skiing, picnic outings and golf. Cross-country skiing has become an extremely popular activity at this park due to the extensive, well-maintained trails. This requires trail maintenance and grooming, as well as snow-making in dry periods. In the pom-pom investment activity at the first public meeting, hiking and walking trails were the favorite part of the park based on input received followed by winter sports.

At the second public meeting, planning staff presented the action plan items for participant input. Suggestions by the public for a comprehensive trails system to be accessible both north and south of the Huron River were taken into consideration by the steering committee. In addition, natural resource advocates were active throughout the public input process commenting on the need for continued invasive species management and protection of biodiversity areas identified in the park with a focus on the undeveloped portions of the park south of the Huron River.



**Q6: What is your favorite part of the park or activity within Huron Meadows Metropark? (Choose up to 3.)**



## Public Input

An online questionnaire developed to gather general information about park visitors and their use of the park as well as recommendations for improving features and amenities offered at the park. The survey was made available for the duration of the planning process online as well as hard copies available at the golf starter building for distribution.

The Planning Department also provided hard copy versions of the questionnaire at the Green Oak Township office, City of Brighton office, Hamburg Township Parks and Recreation office, an Hamburg Township library. In total there were 332 people who participated in the survey. The great majority of the responses favored mountain bike trails or multi-use trails that allow bicycles. Generally, respondents offered suggestions for amenities along the trails used by bikers and hikers, connectivity within the park and overall preservation of the natural systems.

## Questionnaire Response Topics

### Access

- Later winter hours
- Bridge over river(6)
- Accessible canoe/kayak(4)
- Regional connectivity(4)
- Road surfacing
- Trails south side of river(4)
- Accessible trails(2)
- Fishing platforms

### Environment

- Invasive species removal(3)
- South of river naturalized(3)

### Maintenance

- Less mowing(6)
- Clean water(2)
- Dog/geese waste clean up(2)
- More grooming ski trails(3)
- More snow making
- Maintain maps

### Facilities

- Nature center
- Splash pad(3)
- More family friendly areas
- Older children playground(2)
- Toddler play area(2)
- Disc golf
- Sand volleyball
- Mini golf
- Sports fields(4)

### Programming

- Add childrens programs
- More programmed walks(2)
- Family camping program
- Historical interpretive program
- Kids mountain biking try outs

### Safety/Signage

- Dog enforcement
- Better signage/wayfinding(3)
- More policing
- Better marked hiking trails(2)

### Trails

- Leash free trails/areas for dogs(2)
- Mountain bike trail(86)
- Fat tire biking(2)
- More ski trails(3)
- Hike-bike(6)
- Multi-use trails(3)

### Amenities

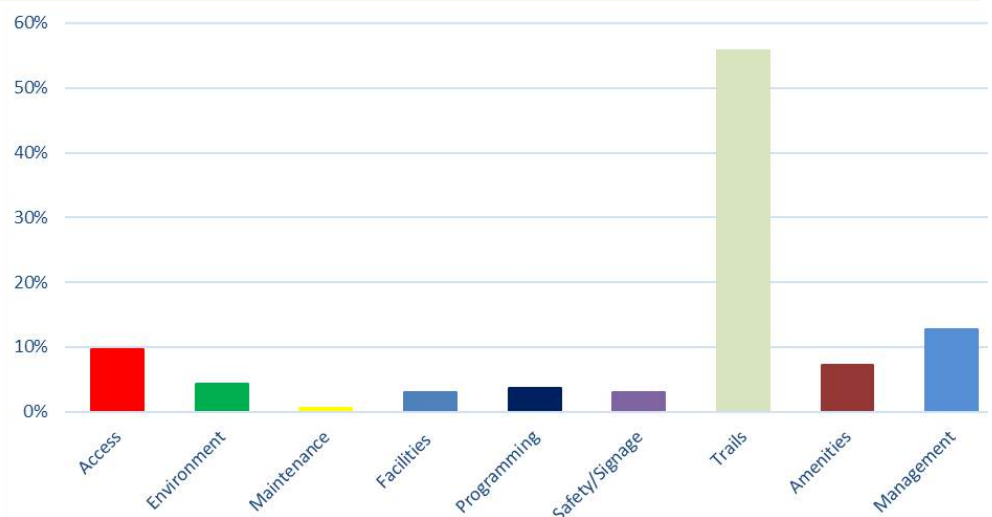
- Bathrooms(3)
- Water refill stations(2)
- Vending options outside(2)
- Bike rental
- Kayaks and sailing opportunities(2)
- Changing rooms(2)
- Golf improvements

### Other

- Parking for sled hill
- Free days(2)
- Road bike lanes
- Waive golf entrance if booked online

This chart shows the distribution of questionnaire response topics, as categorized by planning staff. Some responses fell into more than one category, so they add up to more than 100%.

\*Uncategorized responses lacked specific suggestions or consisted of only positive remarks.



### Participation



#### NEEDS

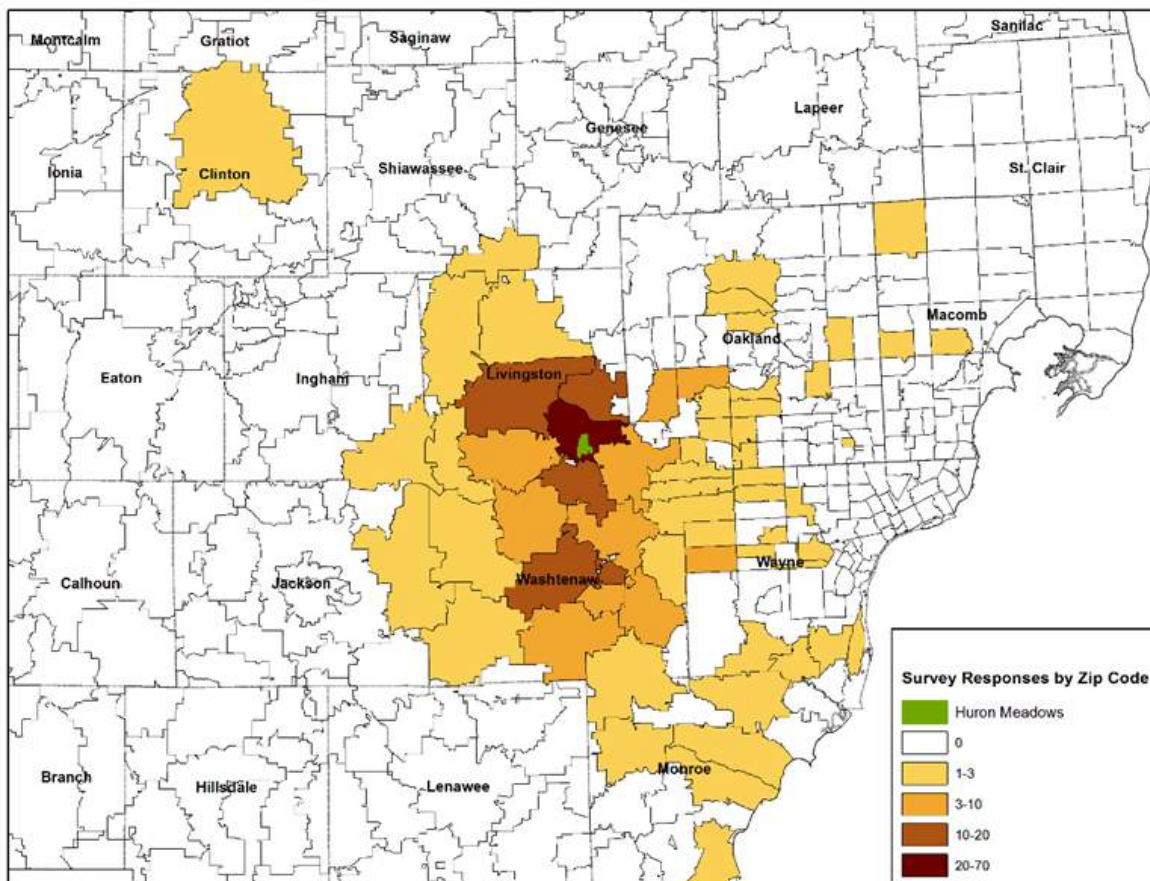
Incorporate a variety of opinions and user groups into the master plan

Create a vibrant park through robust, transparent public outreach

#### OPPORTUNITIES

The Huron Meadows Master Plan had a total of 39 individuals attend the two public meetings. Many of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated they were frequent visitors to Huron Meadows. As shown below, the questionnaire drew responses from the entire southeastern metropolitan Detroit region and beyond, but were mostly concentrated around the park itself.

#### Survey Response Zip Code Map





# Action Plan

## Needs & Opportunities

Based on the assessment of park conditions, demographic research and spatial analysis, public input and staff input, the needs and opportunities listed throughout this document were developed.

### Needs

- Continue to draw diverse range of visitors to the park
- Define and protect areas with important biodiversity features
- Better educate the importance of preserving important cultural features
- Address aging and overbuilt infrastructure
- Identify areas of facility duplication for repurposing and consolidation
- Work with county and local communities to address any park boundary issues
- Replace outdated, confusing, inconsistent signs
- Pursue improvements to park accessibility
- Diversify sources of revenue
- Target market strategies
- Increase revenue and visitation
- Address changing needs of new population demographics
- Improve connectivity within the park and with the community
- Incorporate variety of opinions and user groups into master plan



### Opportunities

- Build on park character to attract new visitors
- Create a resilient network of biodiverse areas in the park
- Draw new visitors with programming/education based on history of park
- Redevelop park areas to better serve visitors and environment
- Provide unique recreational facilities to draw visitors from across the region
- Create good working relationship with neighbors and partner organizations
- Create consistent, convenient wayfinding system to give visitors confidence
- Ensure that users of all abilities feel empowered to take full advantage of the park
- Offer new and exciting activities/programs to visitors of the park to both boost tolling and gather user fees
- Take advantage of proximity to urban population to grow revenue and system awareness
- Build on enthusiasm of Huron Meadows visitors with exciting, engaging programs and events
- Draw new users with a connected, accessible, welcoming and safe park environment
- Create good working relationship with surrounding municipalities
- Create vibrant park through robust, transparent public outreach



With these in mind, the following list of projects, plans and studies was developed. Major and minor projects have been identified as priorities and assigned a timeline and the accompanying studies have been listed. These pages should serve as a blueprint for the future of the park over the next ten years.

# Large Facilities

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Implement Huron River south connectivity plan	Engineering	Planning, Operation, Maintenance	Foundation, Contractors, Consultants	TBD		x	x
Implement Engineering fieldhouse plan	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD		x	x
Implement Whitmore Lake-Rickett Road conceptual site plan	Planning, Engineering	Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD	x	x	x
Implement canoe/kayak access improvements strategy	Planning, Engineering	Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD		x	x
Implement Maltby & Rickett Road conceptual site plan for future use	Planning, Engineering, NR	Operations, Planning	Foundation, Contractors	TBD		x	x



## Infrastructure / Small Facilities

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Accessibility improvements, including interiors and walkways - parkwide	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Contractors	TBD	x	x	x
Pursue Whitmore Lake Road easement with Green Oak Township per property sale commitment	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD	x		
Replace Cedar Ridge playground	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	\$100,000		x	
Install tollbooth + associated staff support space on park entrance road north of Hammel Road	Engineering	Operations, Planning, Maintenance	Contractors	\$120,000	x		
Implement Maltby Lake trail improvement plan	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance, NR	Contractors	TBD		x	
Implement parking overflow conceptual plan (resulting from parking study)	Engineering	Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD	x		
Rustic trail connectivity improvements: Sunset Ridge trailhead, golf course trailhead, Cedar Ridge pedestrian crossing	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD		x	x



# Natural Resources

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Vegetation management (annual)	NR	Planning, Operations	Contractors	\$30,000.00	x	x	x
Hazardous waste removal (annual)	NR			\$2,000.00	x	x	x
Early detection rapid response. Invasive species surveys and control in high quality natural areas (annual)	NR	Interpretive	MDNR	\$12,000.00	x	x	x
Wildlife management (annual)	NR	Operations, Maintenance, Police		staff time	x	x	x
Conduct prescribed fire in fire adapted communities	NR		Contractors	\$4,000.00	x	x	x
Oak wilt control and prevention	NR	Operations, Interpretive	MDNR	\$4,500.00	x	x	x
Grasslands restoration	NR		Contractors	\$40,000.00		x	x
Maltby Lake Fen/Swamp Restoration	NR			\$10,000	x	x	x
Oak Barren restoration south of Hammel Road and elsewhere	NR		Contractors	\$30,000	x	x	x
Wetland complex restoration along the Huron River	NR		MDNR, NGOs	\$40,000.00	x	x	x



# Signage

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Install park entrance sign on Whitmore Lake upon access road development (Green Oak easement)	Maintenance	Planning		\$2,000.00	x		
Develop and install interpretive signage	Interpretive	Operations, Planning, Marketing		\$5,000.00	x		



# Area Plans/Studies/Initiatives

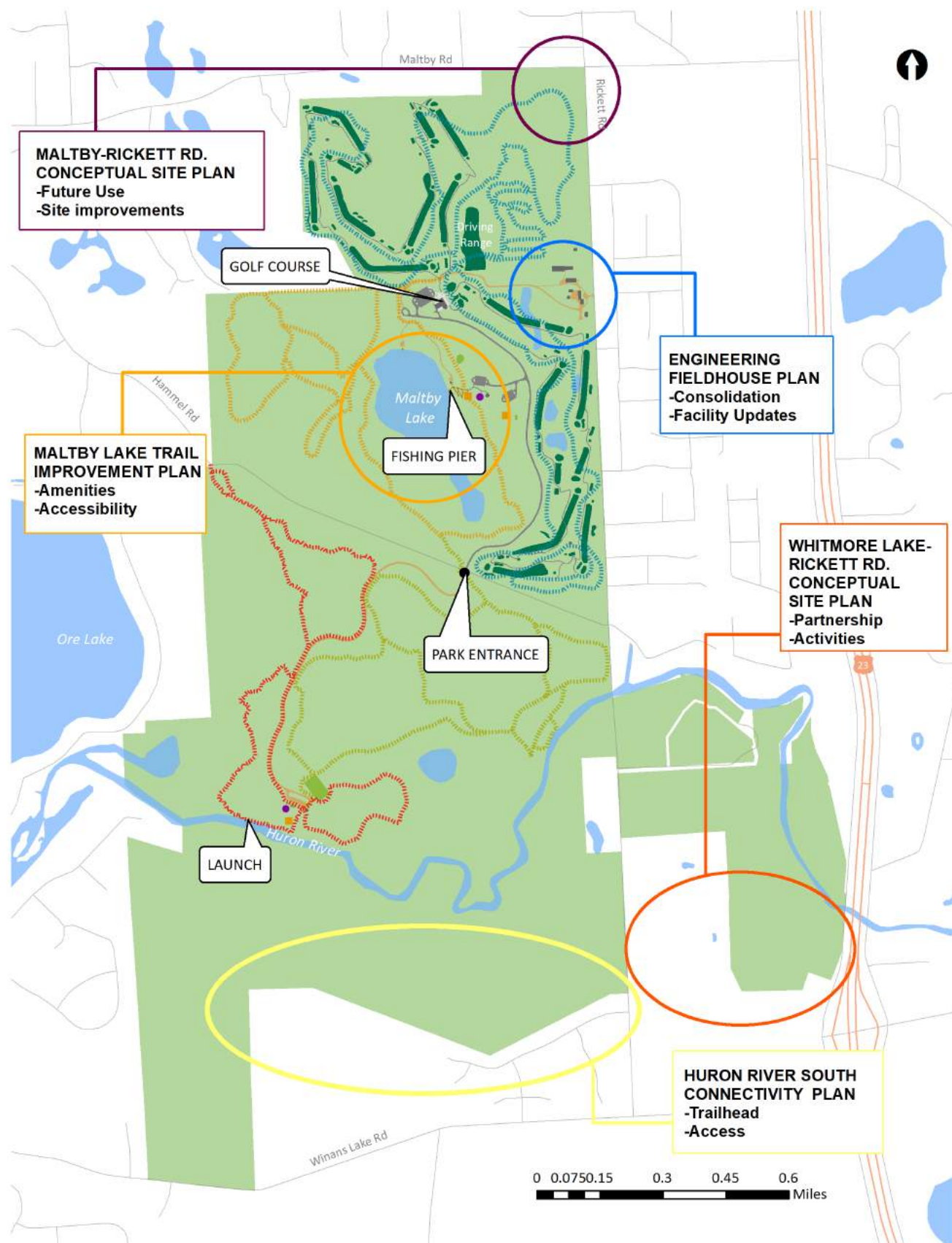
After identifying the need for changes or improvements based on user feedback and staff research, in-depth evaluation and planning must be carried out to gain a detailed understanding of problems and opportunities and determine the best strategies based on existing conditions and resources. Sometimes a process to formally monitor facility usage and gauge popularity is necessary. These studies often result in a scope of work, a work plan and in some cases a site plan that give staff a roadmap for planned changes. Recommended studies are listed below:

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Develop plan for Engineering fieldhouse: strategy for HCMA file digitization/climate-controlled long-term storage; identify permanent location for field engineers; determine timeline for demo	Planning, Engineering	Administrative		staff time	x		
Maltby Lake trail improvement plan: determine potential short-term and long-term impacts to an improved trail surface around Maltby Lake; explore opportunities for ADA accessibility	Planning	Engineering, NR, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x		
Connectivity plan for south of the Huron River: develop strategy for providing access to this property from the rest of the park and community	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance, NR		staff time	x		
Whitmore Lake-Rickett Road conceptual site plan: work with adjacent property owners to develop a site plan for activating and connecting these parcels to the rest of the park	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance	Legacy Center, LLC, Green Oak Township, Livingston County Road Commission	staff time	x		
Maltby & Rickett Road conceptual site plan: determine desired future use of area	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance, NR		staff time		x	



## Area Plans/Studies/Initiatives (cont'd)

Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Parking study: consider access to sledding hill, trails south of Hammel Road, overflow parking for large events	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance, NR		staff time	x		
Winter activities study: evaluate options for enhancing existing winter recreation amenities and incorporating new activities	NR	Maintenance, Engineering, Planning	Contractors	staff time	x	x	x
Sustainability initiatives	NR	Operations, Planning, Engineering		TBD	x	x	x
Establish invasive species control tracking website	NR	Web, IT	MNFI, MISIN	staff time	x		
Stormwater monitoring	NR			\$5,000	x	x	x
Herpetological surveys	NR		NGOs	\$15,000	x	x	x
European Frog Bit control research	NR		Local universities	\$20,000	x		
Canoe/kayak access study throughout park	Planning	Engineering, NR, Operations,	HRWC	TBD		x	



# Key Projects

## Maltby-Rickett Road Conceptual Site Plan

2023-2027

The Maltby & Rickett Road conceptual site plan will be developed with public input and staff to determine desired future use of area.

### Needs:

- Access
- Enhance user experience
- Sense of place

### Solutions:

- Development Node
- Placemaking
- Activate this area of the park



## Maltby Lake Trail Improvement Plan

2018-2022

The Maltby Lake trail improvement plan will determine potential short-term and long-term impacts to an improved trail surface and alignment around Maltby Lake. The plan will explore opportunities for ADA accessibility along the trail and Maltby Lake. The goal will be to provide trail access to the scenic viewsheds of Maltby Lake and a loop system for a more enjoyable, comprehensive user experience of the park.

### Needs:

- Improve connectivity in park
- Park user demographics

### Solutions:

- Develop for access around lake
- Create loop system





## Action Plan

### Engineering Fieldhouse Plan

2023-+ 10 Years

The engineering fieldhouse will need a plan to study the building alterations and site improvements along with consideration for ADA compliance.

#### Needs:

- Underutilized
- Modernization
- Maintenance

#### Solutions:

- Building and site improvements
- Electronic storage of files
- Additional landscaping/maintenance plan



### Whitmore Lake & Rickett Rd Concept Plan

2018-2022

A conceptual site plan will be developed for Whitmore Lake-Rickett Road. Potential partnership in working with adjacent property owners will be a factor in developing a site plan that activates and connects these parcels to the rest of the park.

#### Needs:

- Enhance user experience
- Trail connectivity
- River access

#### Solutions:

- Partnership with Legacy Center
- Potential kayak access
- Connection across Rickett Rd.



## Action Plan

### Canoe/Kayak Improvements Strategy

2023-10+ years

Improvements at Cedar Ridge promoting river access with additional amenities and consideration for ADA compliance.

#### Needs:

- Parking access
- River access
- Water trail amenities

#### Solutions:

- Add paths to river
- Accessible canoe launch



### Huron River South Connectivity Plan

2018-2022

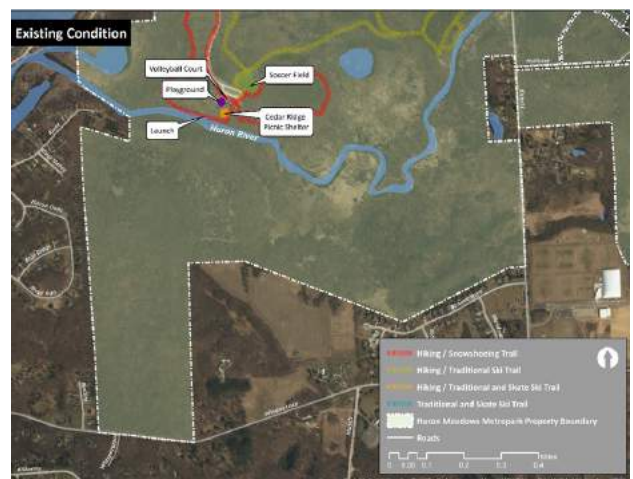
Connectivity plan for south of the Huron River: develop strategy for providing access to this property from the rest of the park and community. In partnership with Green Oak Township and Livingston County Road Commission, identify a desired singular, concentrated access point with a defined road crossing to the park trail system from planned large residential developments south of Winans Lake Road.

#### Needs:

- Improve connectivity in park and community
- Enhance user experience

#### Solutions:

- Vegetation management of invasive species
- Trailhead at Rickett Rd.
- Alternative analysis for preferred route
- Install planned aggregated access points to connect park with neighboring residential developments in coordination with Green Oak Township.



### Other Projects

- Install tollbooth north of Hammel Road
- Pursue Whitmore Lake Road easement per Green Oak Township property sale
- Wetland complex restoration along the Huron River
- Replace Sunset Ridge playground
- Rustic trail connectivity improvements: Cedar Ridge pedestrian crossings















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