



DEXTER-HURON & DELHI

MASTER PLAN





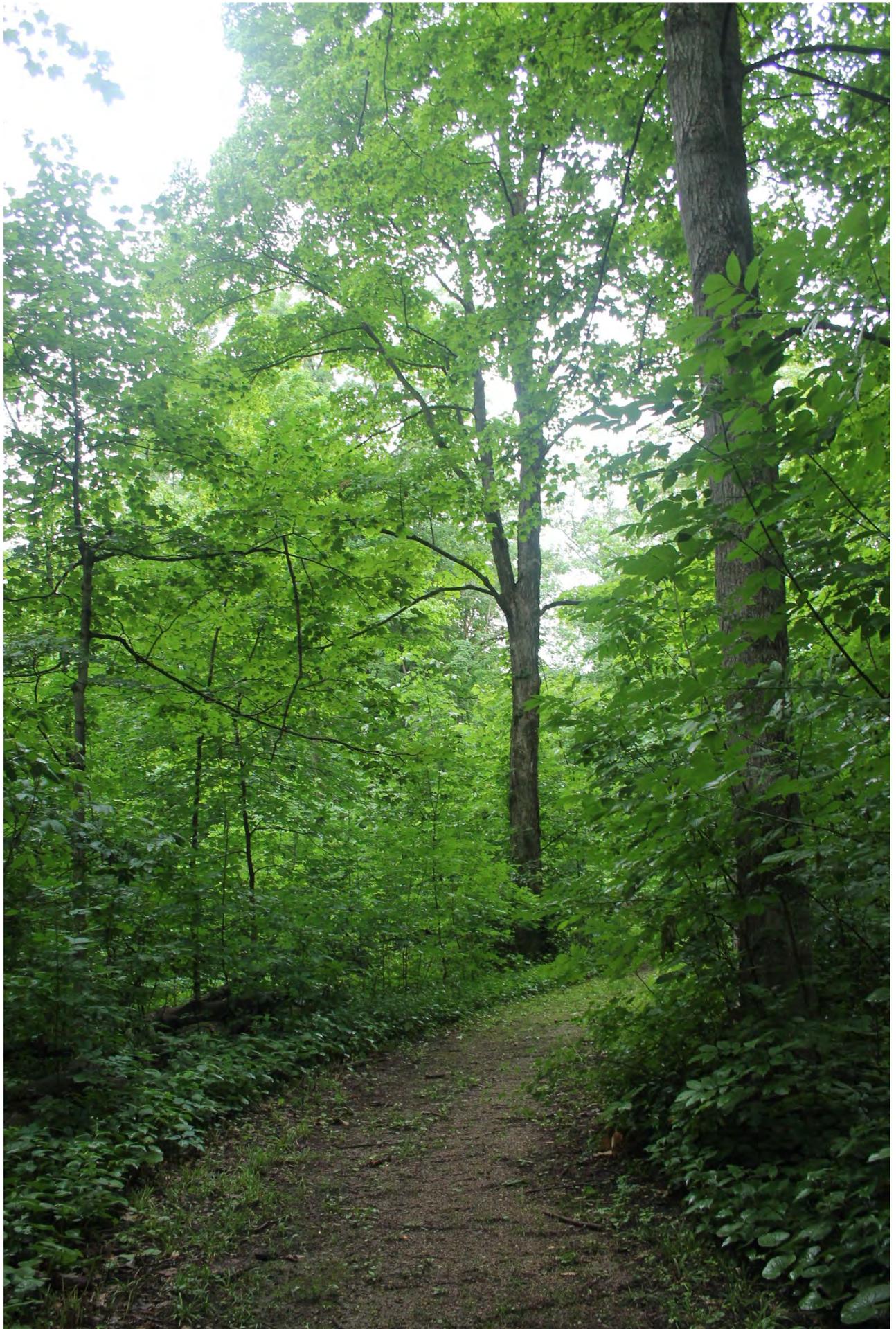
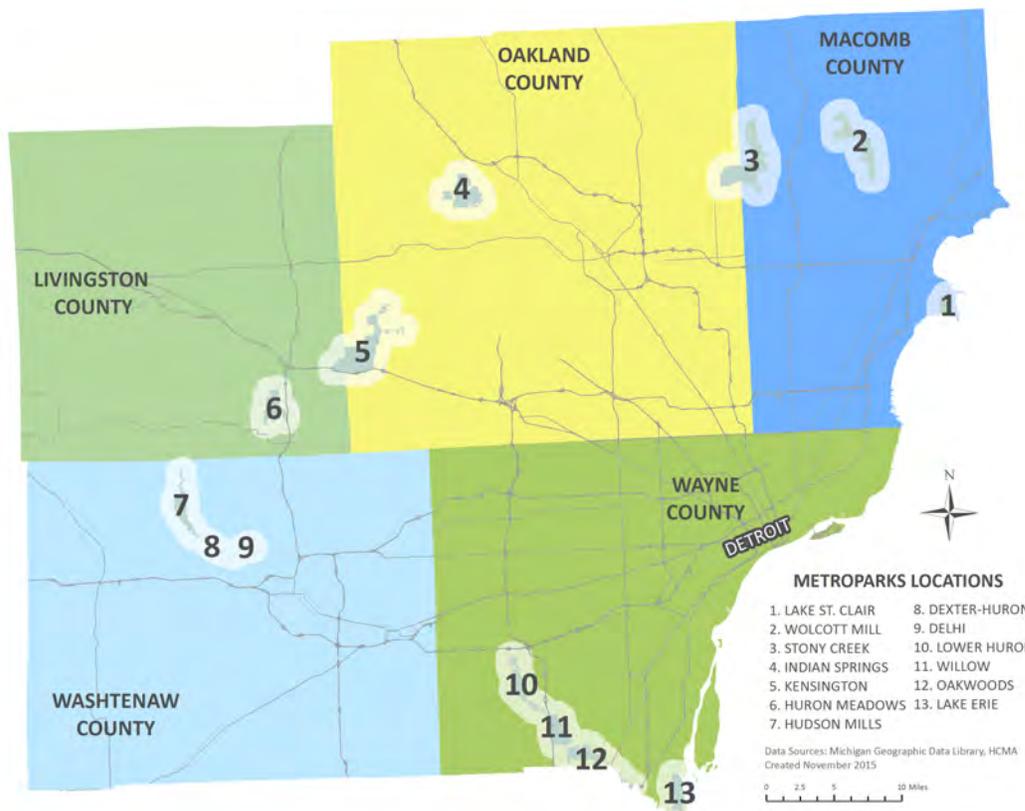


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INTRODUCTION

About the Metroparks

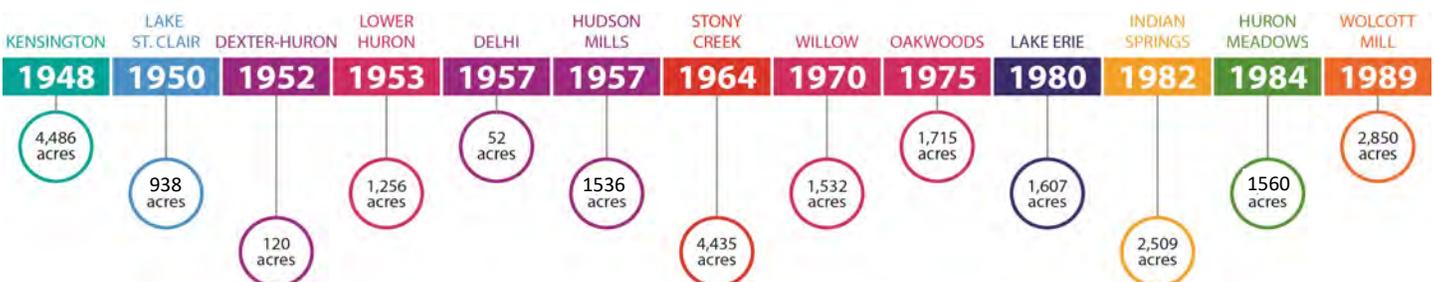


The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority was sanctioned by the Michigan State Legislature in Act No. 147 of the Public Acts of 1939. Named after the two longest rivers within its boundaries, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority is a regional park agency consisting of 13 Metroparks encompassing approximately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

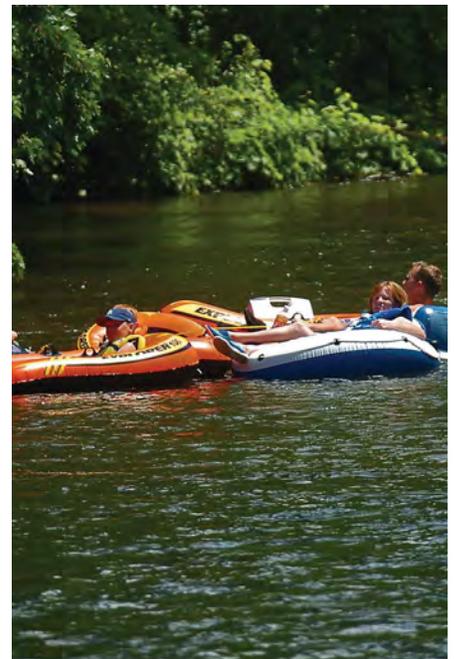
Two commissioners, appointed by the Governor of Michigan for a term of four years, serve as representatives at large. Five commissioners, one each to represent the counties of Wayne, Macomb, Oakland, Livingston and Washtenaw, are appointed for a term of six years by the board of commissioners of the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

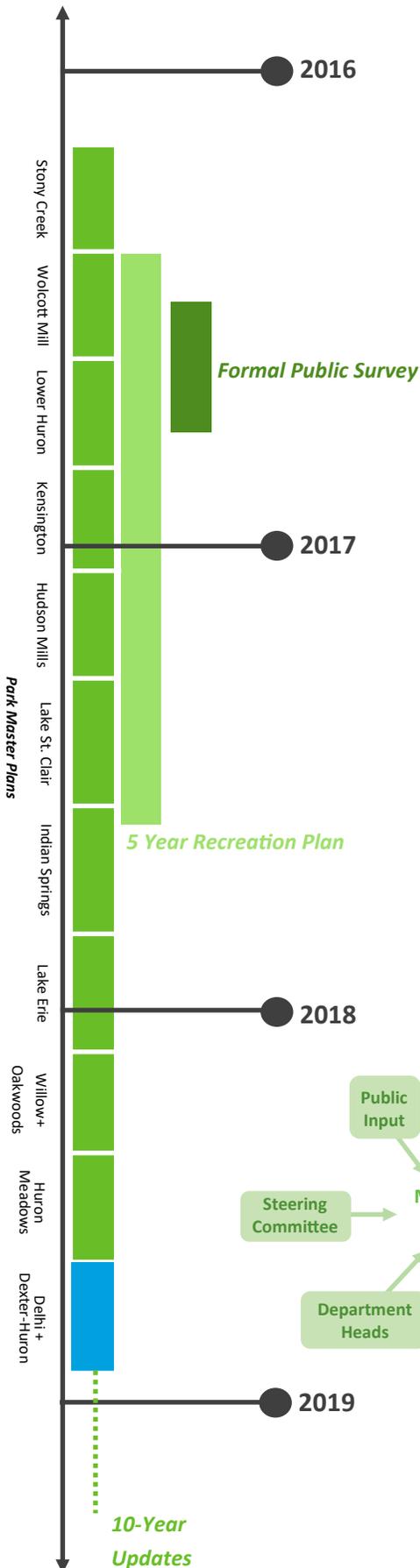
Operational Departments facilitate the day-to-day operations of the parks, making sure patrons have enjoyable and educational visits. They include Maintenance and Interpretive Services.

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 Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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 parks and significantly influences plan recommendations. A master plan steering committee was formed to include park employees with exceptional knowledge of both Dexter-Huron and Delhi along with 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 was given a planning window of six months, with overlap between parks. Master plan timelines could 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 Dexter-Huron and Delhi Master Plan Open House on 7/7/2018



DEXTER-HURON AND DELHI TODAY

Character



The following responses to our questionnaire highlight the many facets of Dexter-Huron and Delhi that form a unique experience. Visitors appreciate the wide range of recreational activities available at the parks, especially those related to the trails, natural resources, and kayaking. They see them 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

The **pathway connection** to Dexter is excellent. The **future connection to Delhi Park and easterly to Ann Arbor** will be a wonderful addition

it is all lovely and a **true gem** the way it is

truly enjoy the **river access**- keep it as it is

One of my favorite parks. We often land **canoes or kayaks** there and have a snack. We also really **enjoy walking along the water or biking the path** to Dexter.

Walk my dogs in the park. Keep up the good work!

Partnership with B2B is great and should be priority

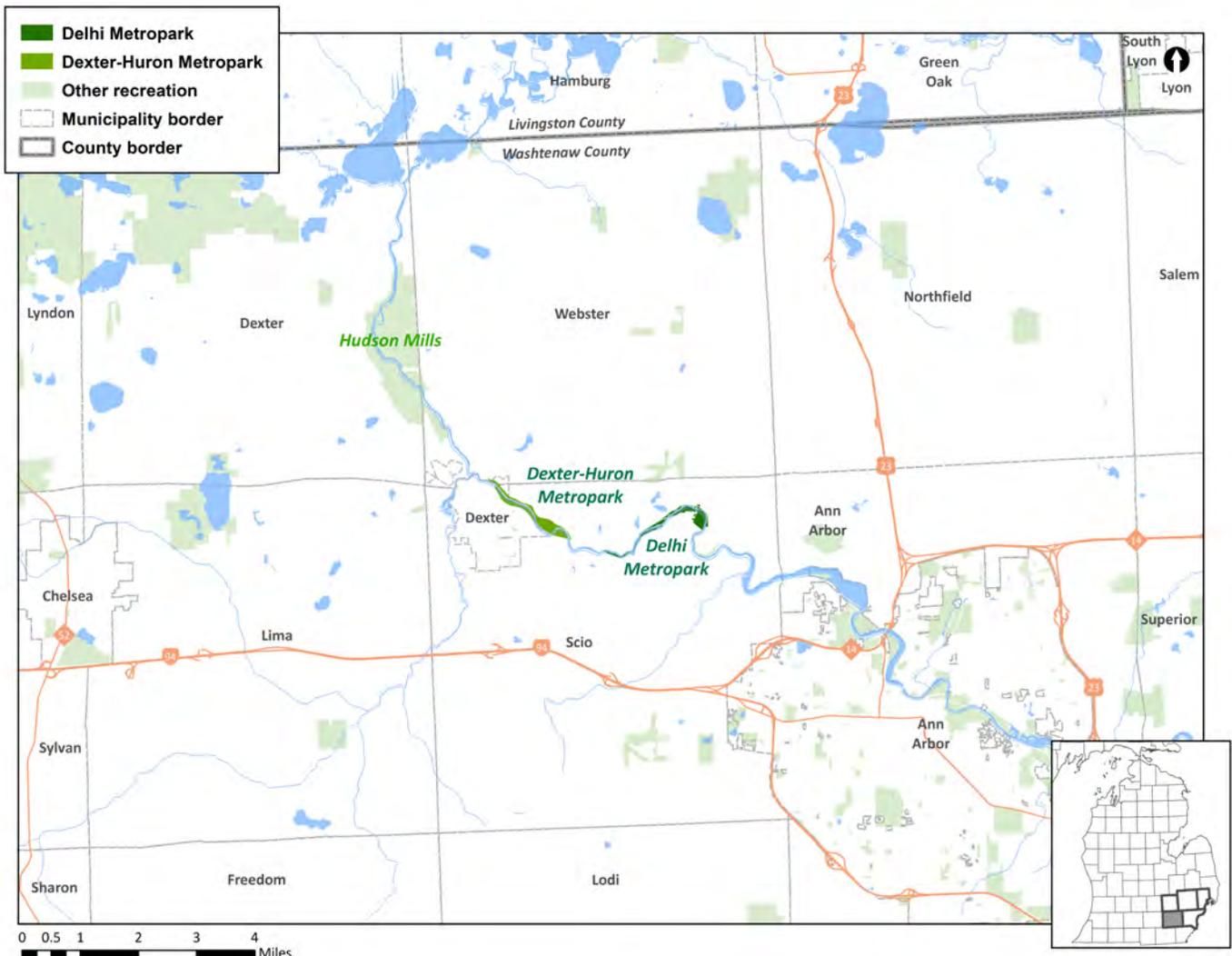


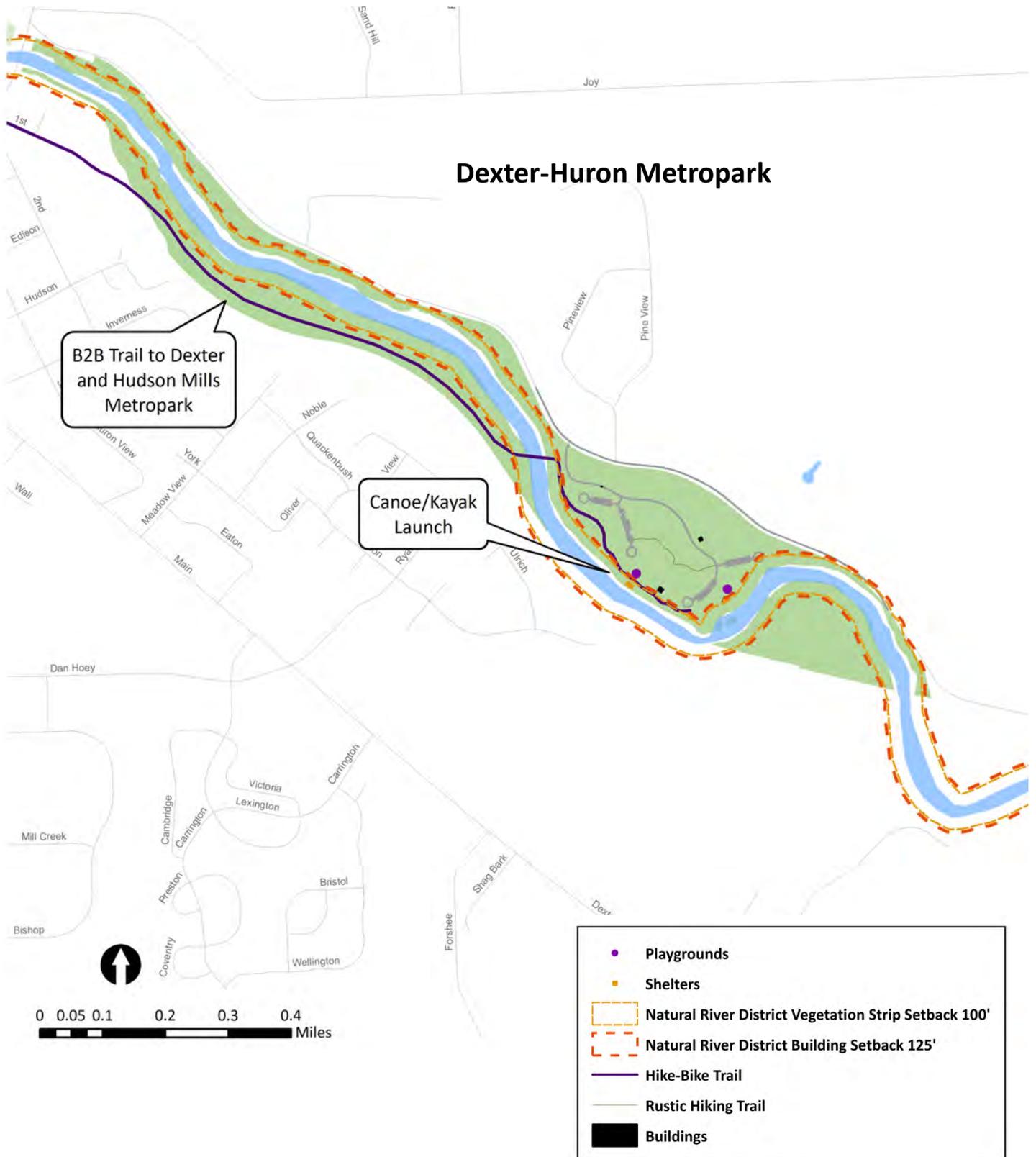


Location

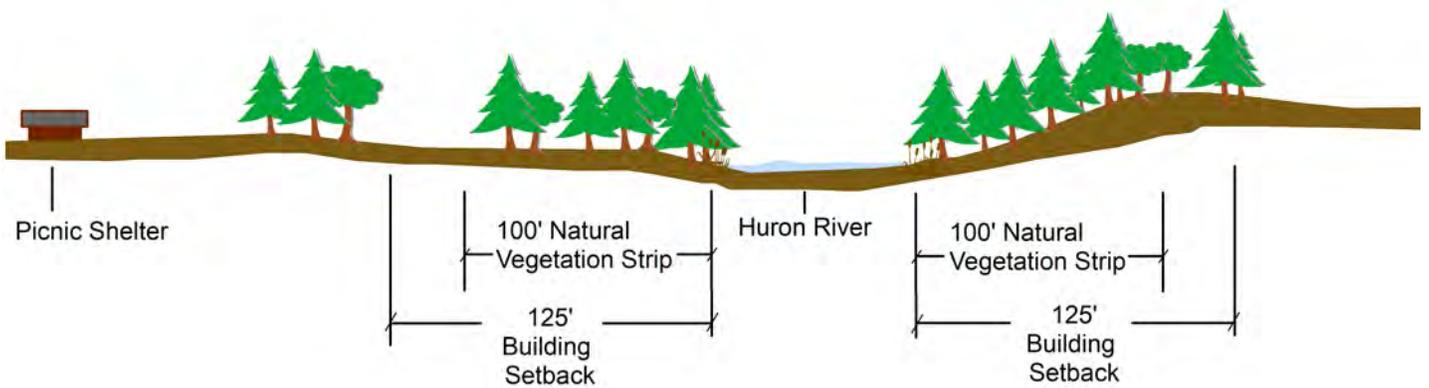
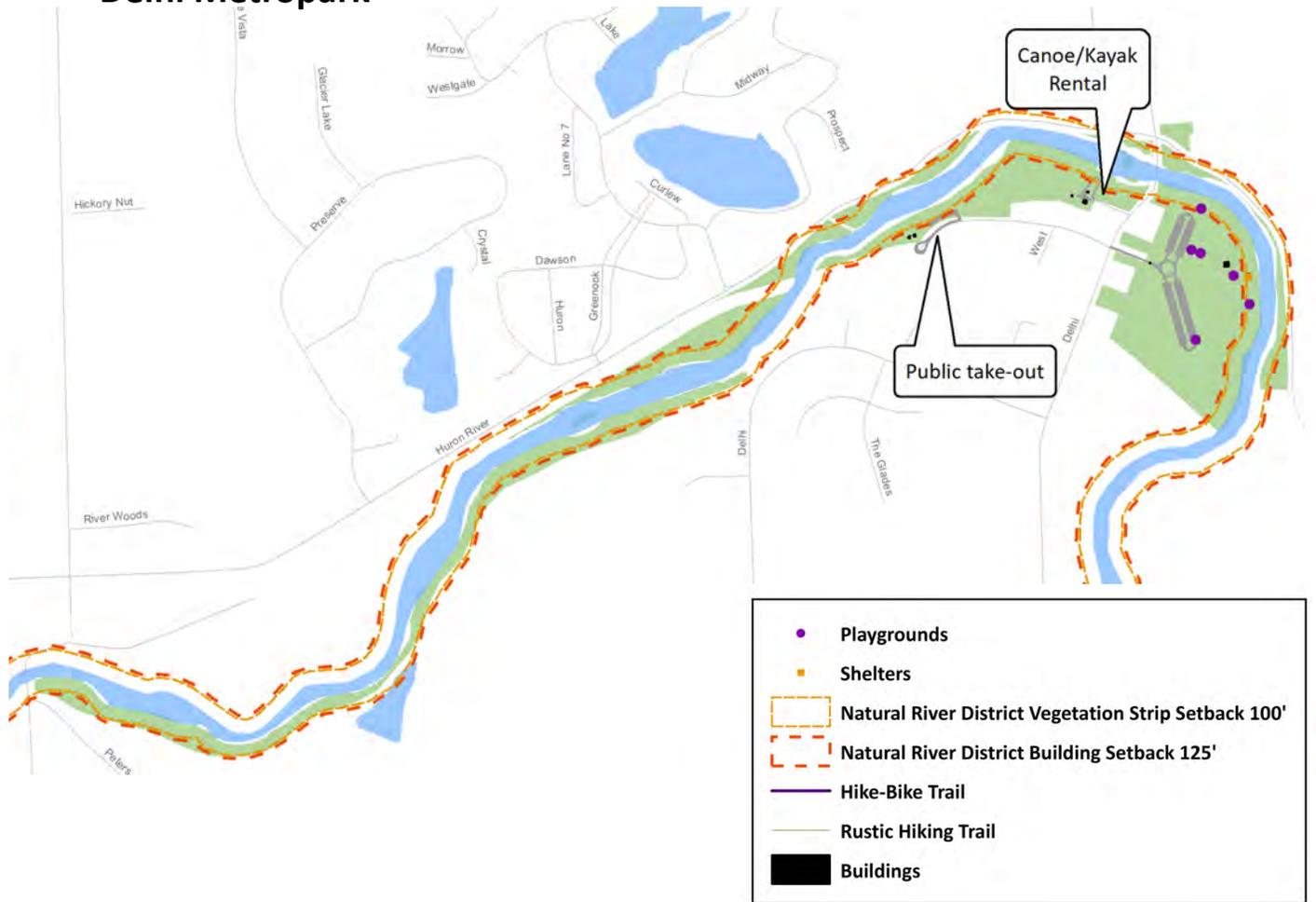
Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks are located in north central Washtenaw County. Both parks are within the boundaries of Scio Township. Dexter-Huron is partially within the City of Dexter.

At their northernmost extent, Dexter-Huron reaches Mast Road and to the east Delhi runs to Huron River Drive. Their western boundary is Central Street and to the south they extend to the railroad tracks. The parks are situated on the Upper Middle Huron River and in a designated Natural River District (NRD). The 1970 Natural Rivers Act authorized the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to require a Natural Rivers permit for use and development of lands within the NRD. Natural river development standards include a building setback of 125 feet and a natural vegetation strip setback of 100 feet from the waters edge. The following two pages show both park maps with the NRD setback boundary. Delhi and Dexter-Huron are, respectively, the smallest and second-smallest parks in the Metroparks system. Distinct from the large regional parks, they are valued for quick escapes into nature and for the land and water trails running through them. They contain far fewer facilities than other parks and are administered out of Hudson Mills Metropark. These two parks are primarily used for biking and hiking, paddling, picnicking and passive recreation. A portion of the Border-to-Border trail runs through Dexter-Huron and is planned to later connect through Delhi to the City of Ann Arbor.





Delhi Metropark



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.

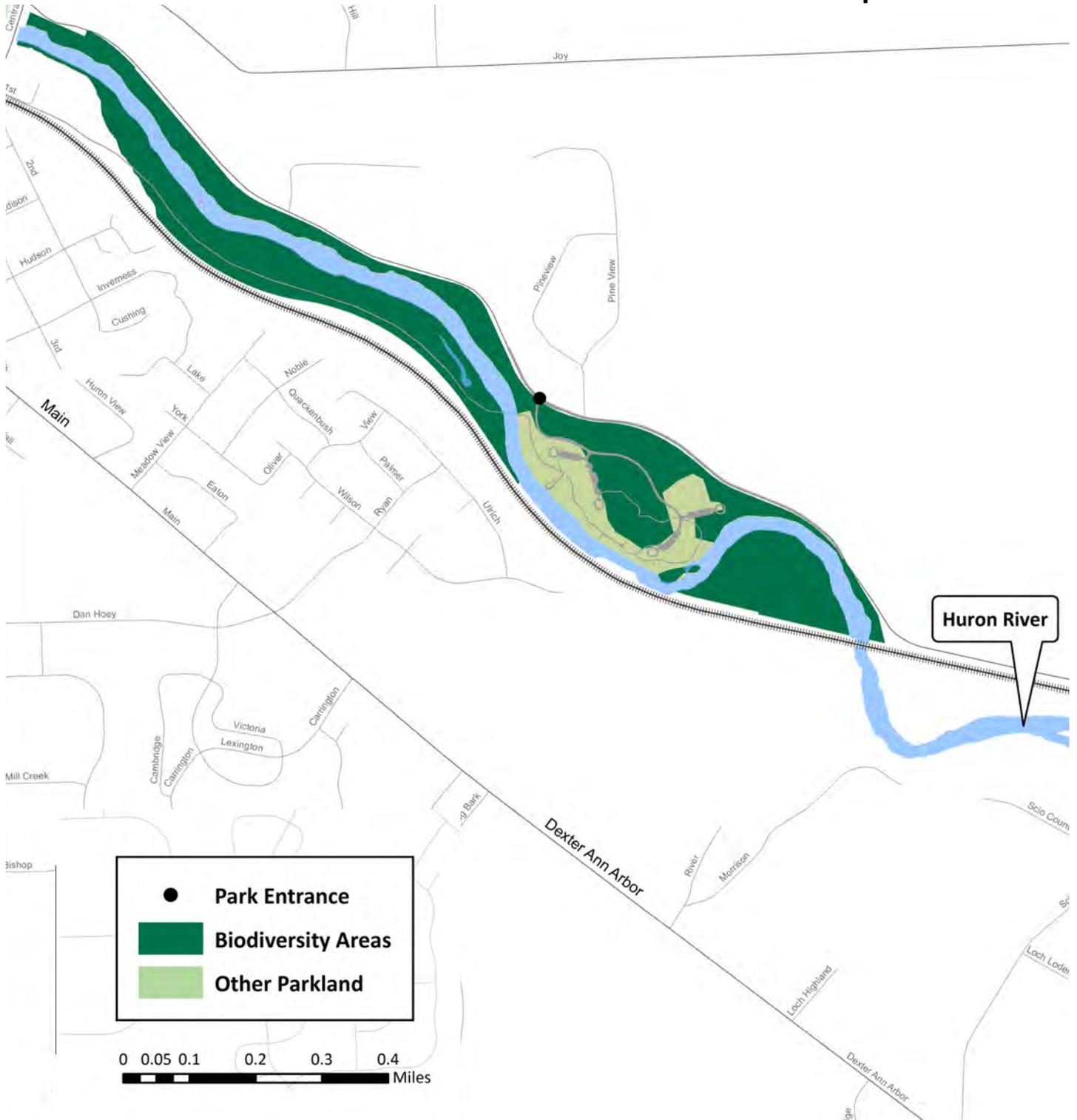
Biodiversity Areas

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.

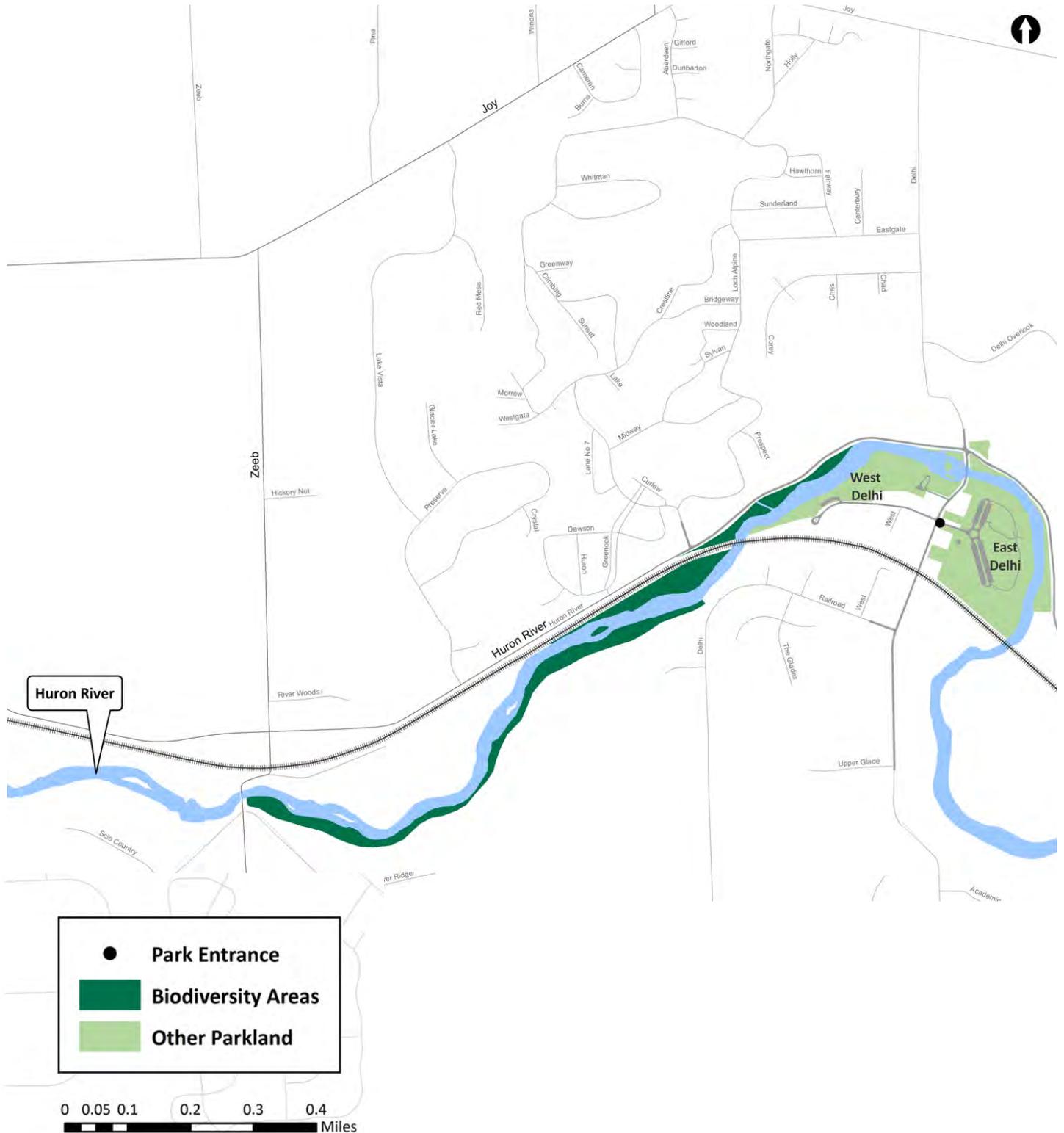
The following criteria for determining biodiversity areas were adapted from a matrix that the Natural Resources Department uses to determine work priorities throughout the park system. The following two pages show maps of proposed biodiversity areas in Dexter-Huron and Delhi, respectively.

Metric	What	Why	Metric	What	Why
Elemental Occurrence	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	Percent Invasive Species Cover	percentage of total acreage with invasive plant coverage	areas with few invasive species require less work, have greater return on investment
FQA (Floristic Quality Assessment)	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	Community Ranking	rank assigned by the state due to natural community rarity or rate of decline	assesses the vulnerability of each natural community within the state
FQI (Floristic Quality Index) Connectivity	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	Wetlands	the presence of wetlands	wetlands tend to have greatest diversity, and are also critical to promote healthy water resources
Size	acreage of the habitat in question	large habitats provide more diverse resources and facilitate migration, increase species fitness, resilience	Habitat Connectivity	the presence of a complementary habitat within 100 feet of another	connected wetlands promote genetic diversity conservation and water quality

Dexter-Huron Metropark



Delhi Metropark



NEEDS

Better educate the importance of preserving cultural features

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

OPPORTUNITIES

Dexter-Huron

With an intention to harvest the water power of the Huron, railroads and other companies bought land along the river in the late 1800s. Soon after the purchases, steam power made water power obsolete, and no confirmed mills or dams were built at this location. Risk of flooding prevented other types of development.

Dexter-Huron Metropark was previously owned by Ford Motor Company and operated by the Washtenaw County Road Commission as a roadside area. The Metroparks assumed control of the 180 acres in 1952.

The park also contains some inaccessible property on the south side of the river that was used by Native Americans for agriculture. As late as the 1960s, the mounds created by growing corn, beans and squash together (the Three Sisters Garden) were still visible in this area.

Delhi

In 1831 Jacob Doremus came from New York and set up a sawmill on the banks of the Huron River. He later founded the Michigan Village, which residents renamed Delhi (pronounced Del-hi, not Deli), likely after a New York town.

At its peak, Delhi was host to four different mills, two on each side of the river. The town met its demise in 1917 when a tornado struck and Delhi was leveled, with the exception of a few houses. In 1957 the former village of Delhi became Delhi Metropark. The only remains are a few houses outside the park, and the park name itself.

Delhi Bridge

The 1917 tornado severely damaged the Delhi Bridge

Cultural History

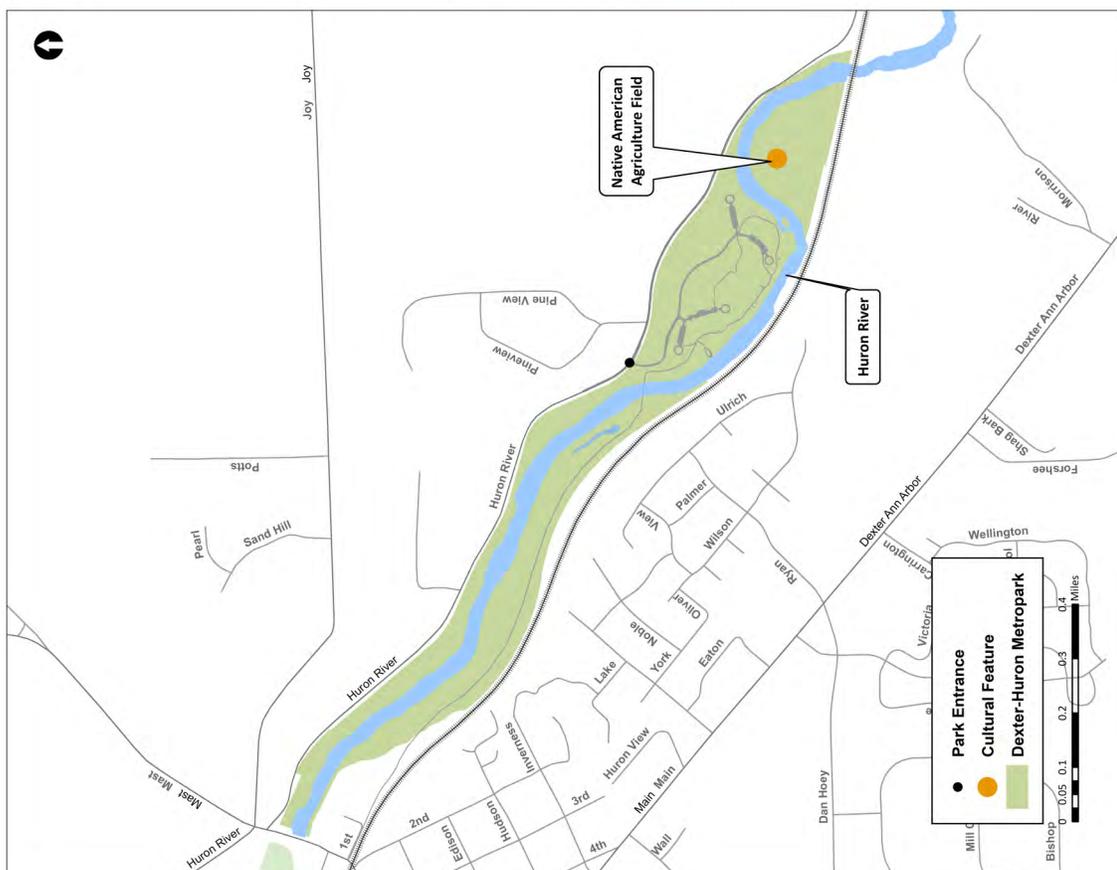


Delhi Bridge

which crossed the Huron River at Delhi Metropark. The Washtenaw County Red Cross was created that summer to aid the victims of the tornado. Torn from its abutments the bridge was tossed into the river below. A team of horses were used to salvage the bridge and reopened the following year. The bridge was closed between 2005 and 2009 and then rehabilitated in response to the efforts of the East Delhi Bridge Conservancy (Conservancy). This eight panel pin-connected Pratt through truss is a historically significant example of a once-common structure type and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2008. The Conservancy installed a historic marker with support by the Metroparks near an existing bridge interpretive display.



The historic marker and bridge interpretive display located at the southwest corner of the bridge at Delhi Metropark.



Infrastructure

In order to serve the varied needs of park visitors, Dexter-Huron and Delhi contain 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 Dexter-Huron and Delhi includes roads, parking lots, bridges, trails, utilities, and much more. Since maintaining infrastructure is costly, it is important going forward to avoid overbuilding. Collocating facilities will help to minimize paving, utilities and reduce maintenance. Although Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks are relatively isolated from other large recreation areas, a goal in the planning process is to ensure that the facilities in the park complement others nearby rather than create duplication.



NEEDS

Address aging and overbuilt infrastructure

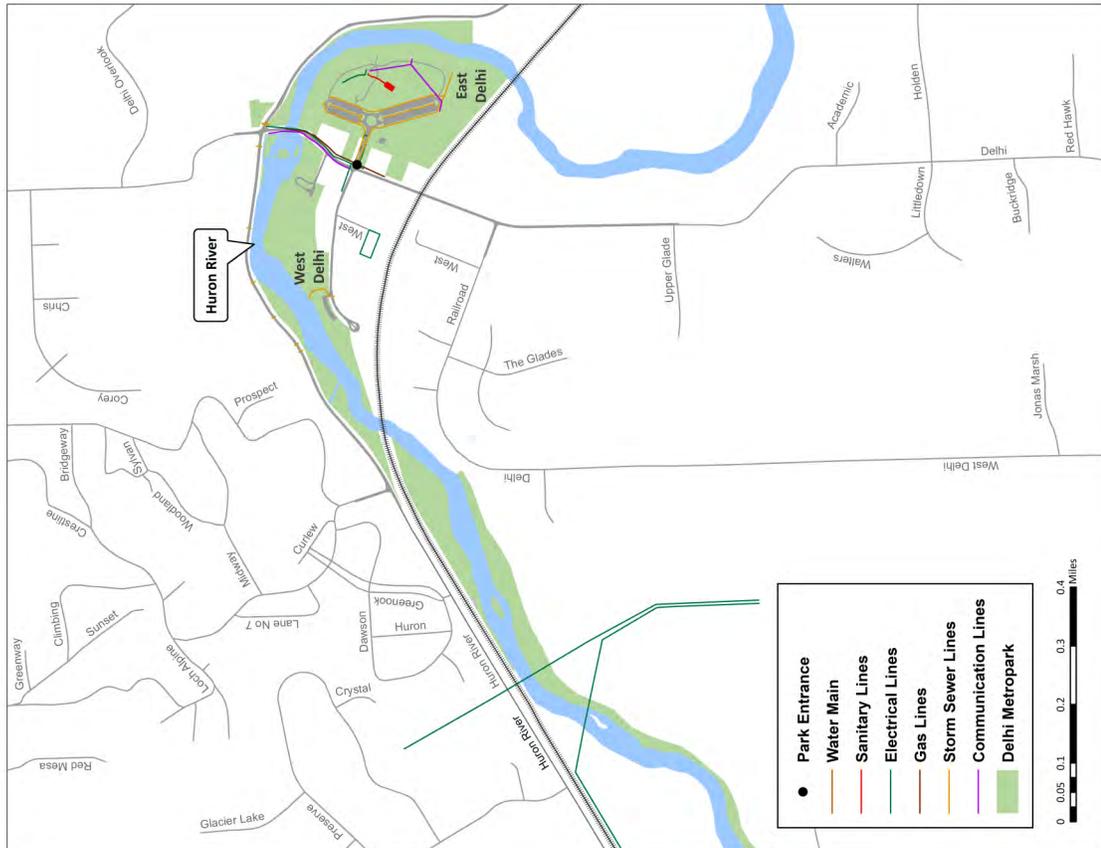
Redevelop park areas to better serve visitors and the environment

OPPORTUNITIES

Infrastructure		
	Dexter-Huron	Delhi
Public bldgs / avg age	0	0
Service bldgs / avg age	0	0
Comfort stations / avg age	1/ 26	1/16
Road miles	0.41	0.22
Parking lot acreage	1.6	0.13
Playgrounds	2	3
Percent of park mowed	9.9	58.4
Picnic shelters	3	1
Sand volleyball courts	0	0
Baseball fields	0	2
Fishing platforms	0	0
Tennis courts	0	0
Ice skating rinks	0	0
Basketball courts	0	0
Public canoe/kayak launches	1	2







Facilities & Centers

Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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.

Skip's Huron River Canoe Livery (Delhi)

Canoe, kayak and tubing trips, starting at either Hudson Mills or Dexter-Huron Metropark and finishing at Delhi can be arranged from Skip's Huron River Canoe Livery in Delhi Metropark. The canoe livery is open daily the first weekend in May through Labor Day, weather and river conditions permitting.

Dexter-Huron Canoe/Kayak Launch

The natural shoreline launch is located nearby the West Picnic Shelter and restrooms. Paddlers beginning upstream can conveniently take a rest break at the park. Skip's Livery also offers rental trips that start at Dexter-Huron to Delhi Metropark.

West Delhi (Delhi)

West Delhi is known for having good spots for shoreline fishing along the Huron River. The mature oak trees and grassy lawn space is also popular with dog owners. West Delhi includes an unpaved surface parking lot, restrooms, and a public canoe and kayak take-out.

East Delhi (Delhi)

Nestled against a bend in the Huron River, East Delhi



includes a picnic shelter near the water, two surface parking lots, playground structure, restrooms and two softball diamonds. East Delhi also includes a canoe and kayak launch for water trail paddlers dropping in or portaging the rapids located just west by the Delhi bridge.

B2B Trail (Dexter-Huron and Delhi)

The B2B trail facility, which is also part of Michigan's showcase Iron Belle Trail, is a non-motorized pathway that connects cities, parks and many destinations throughout Washtenaw County. Dexter-Huron can be accessed on the west end of the park by traversing the pedestrian bridge which follows the river terrace 1.4 miles into downtown Dexter and Hudson Mills Metropark. Future expansion will include continued development of the B2B between Dexter and Ann Arbor including a segment connecting with Delhi Metropark.



Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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 Dexter-Huron and Delhi. Relatively few of these facilities and programs available in the five-mile radius can be built upon the park’s unique and significant features. This may present opportunities for these two parks to meet the recreational needs of the area in new ways distinct from other recreational opportunities moving forward.

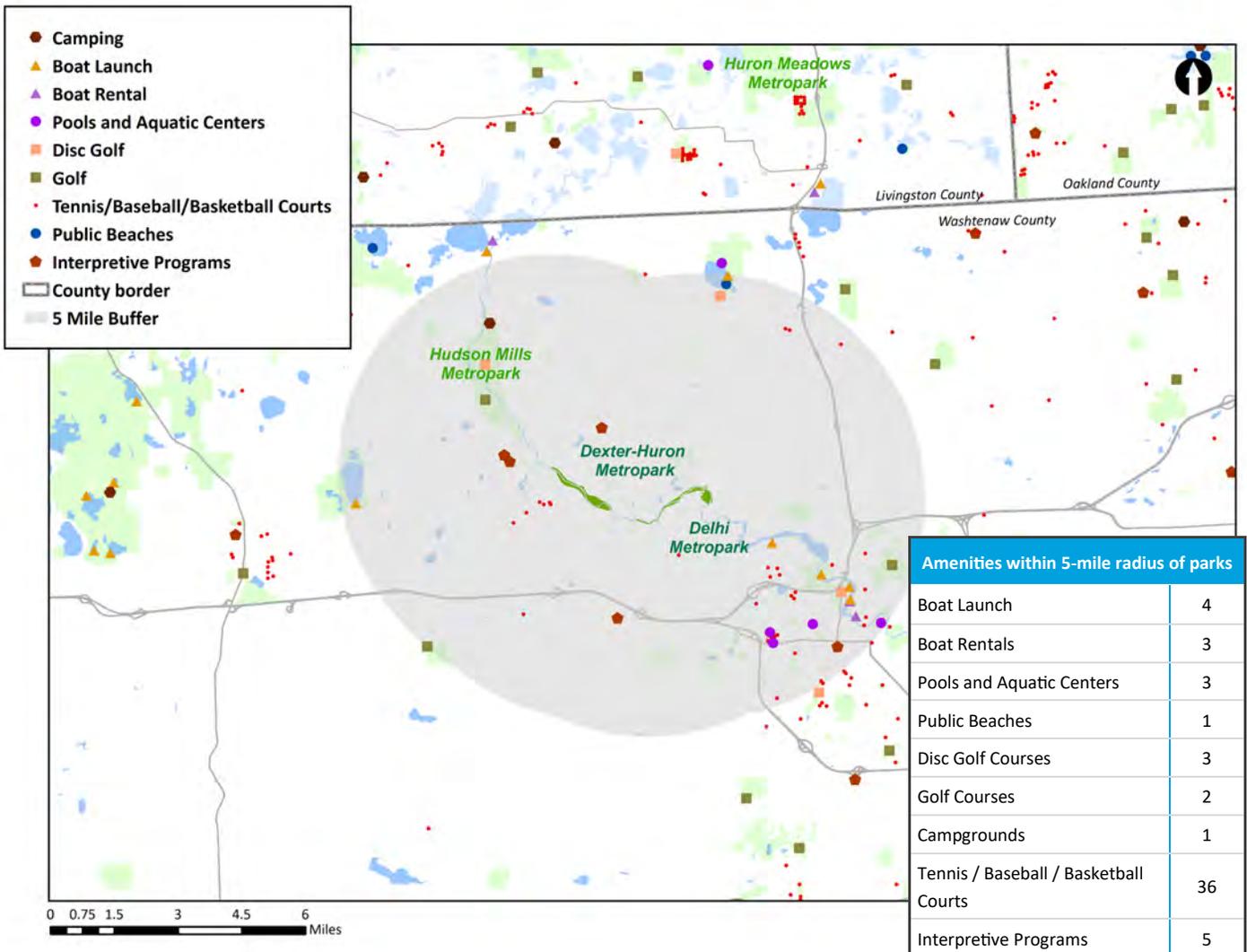
NEEDS

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 relationship with neighbors and partner organizations

OPPORTUNITIES

Grants

Over its history, Delhi has received one grant from the DNR (Department of Natural Resources) for 0.5 acres for support of what is referred to as Helen’s playground. The land specified as the project area of this grant was encumbered in perpetuity—meaning it may never be converted into a private or non-recreational use. Delhi overall is 81 acres in size with only 0.6% of the park encumbered, as shown on the following page.

Dexter-Huron Metropark is one of the least-developed parks in the system. Subsequently, no land is encumbered in this park.

Encroachments

The Planning Department has worked with Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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 both parks are located in 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. A portion of Dexter-Huron’s property boundary when purchased by the Ford Motor Company is uniquely set along an elevation contour which may make determining any encroachments difficult to determine.

Informal Access Points

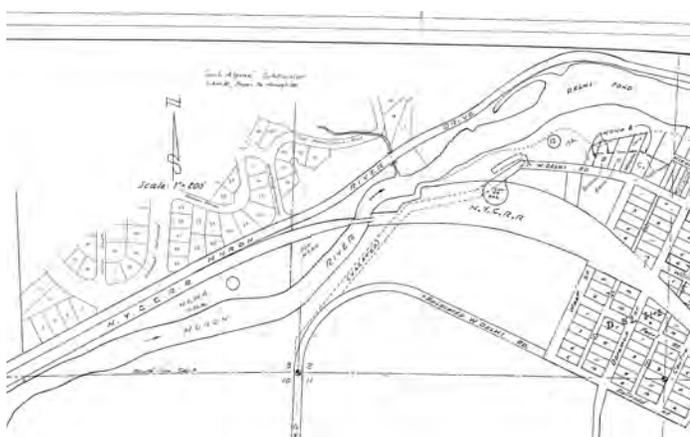
Certain spots on the parks border are open to pedestrian access but not formally designated as an entrance. These must be monitored and considered in the planning process. Individuals may park on adjacent streets and enter the park on foot, affecting the tolling revenue of the park and potentially causing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

Easements

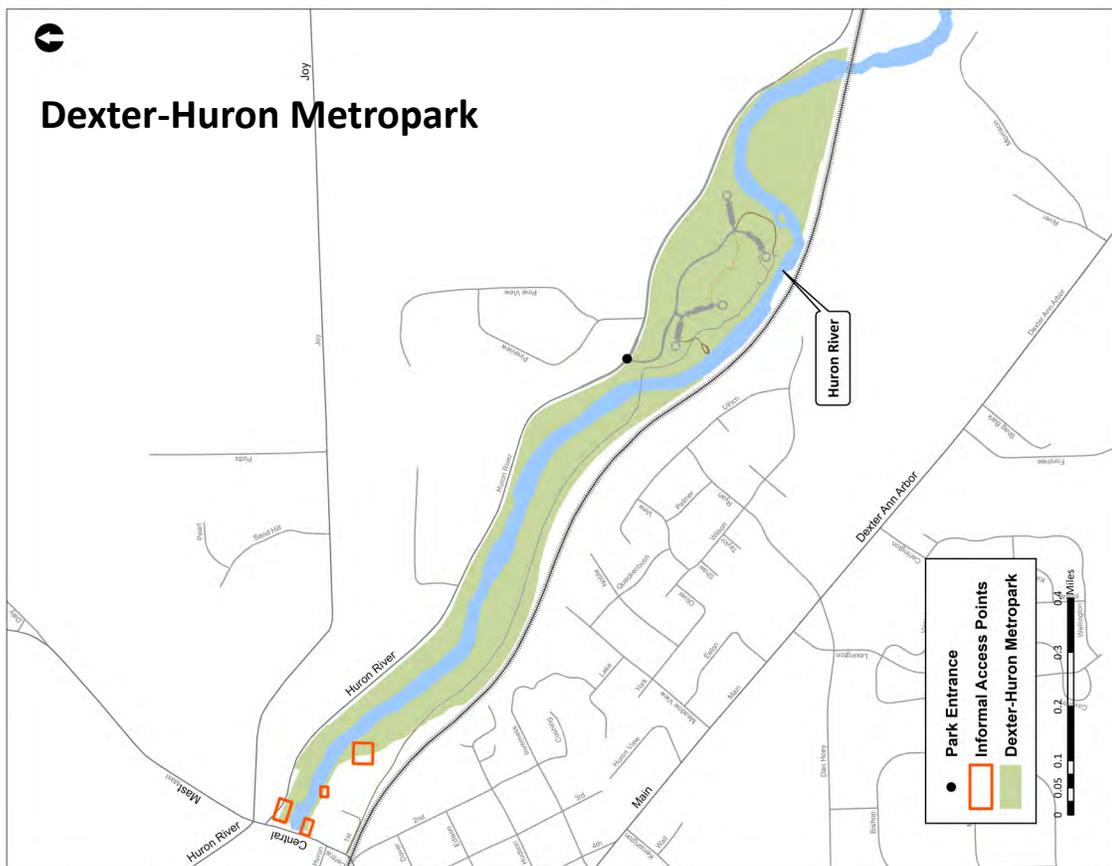
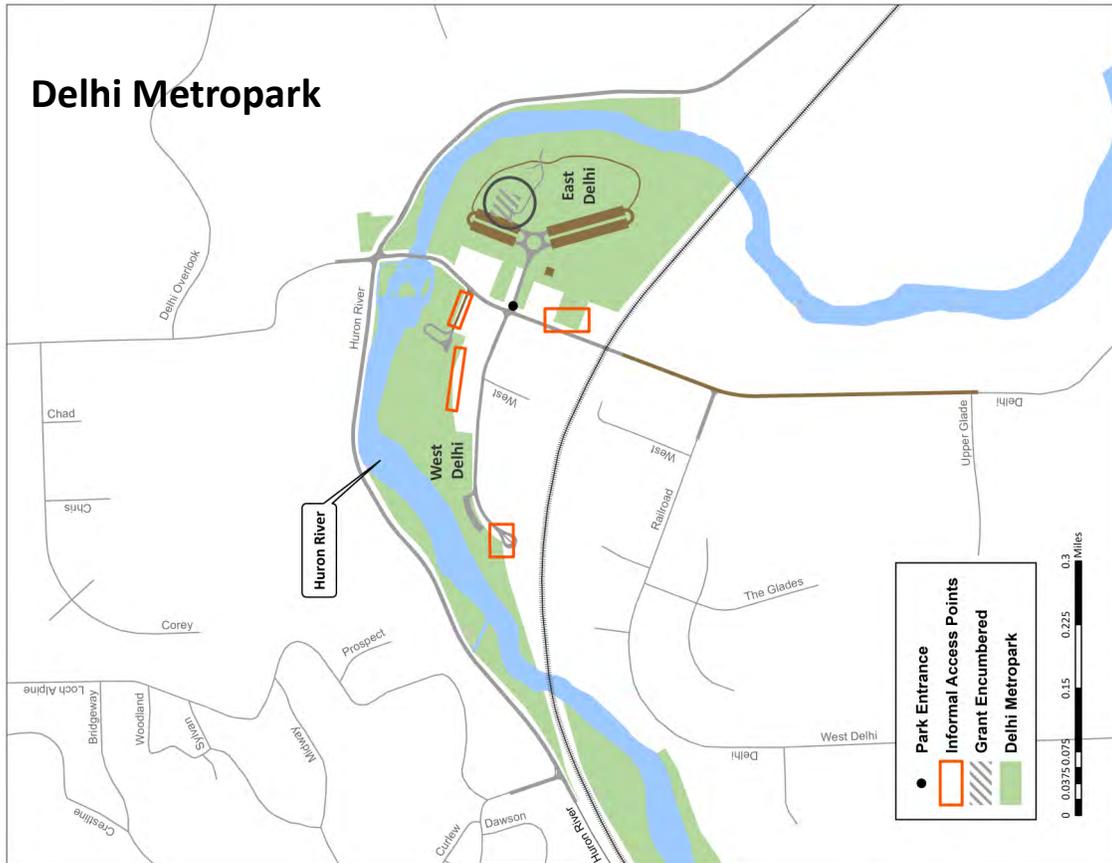
Dexter-Huron and Delhi contain various utility easements, meaning that utility providers are allowed to use certain sections of land to run power lines or other equipment, in order to provide service to the surrounding area. In the future, the Metroparks will collaborate with surrounding municipalities 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 parks is predominantly single family residential. The Huron River meanders through both parks along with portions of park boundaries abutting MDOT/Amtrak’s Wolverine rail corridor. Other land use include woodlands and wetland, and small portions of industrial and commercial/office properties.



Historic parcel maps (undated)



Wayfinding

Vehicular Wayfinding

Standardization

Recently Metroparks updated signage installed at various times in the past with various standards and designs. This did not reinforce the parks working together as a system and could be confusing for visitors. As older signs reached the end of their lives, they were replaced with new, standardized signs.

Simplicity

In many parks, including Dexter-Huron and Delhi, 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 at Dexter-Huron and Delhi include shared use (hike-bike) and rustic hiking. 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, new trail wayfinding signs will be completed which 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



Examples of standardized trailhead signs in Metroparks

Trails

As part of the master planning process, staff have categorized and defined the various types of trails in Dexter-Huron and Delhi, 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 other trail types within the parks. It will also lead to more standardized maintenance and rule enforcement processes.



Park	Trail Type	Miles	Allowed Uses	Prohibited Uses	Surface
Both	Shared-Use Trail (Hike-Bike Trail)	1.55	Non-motorized traffic and pets.	Horses and motorized vehicles such as golf carts, scooters, and hover-boards.	10' wide, typically asphalt, some small sections may be concrete or boardwalk.
Dex	Rustic Hiking Trails	0.16	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.
Both	Huron River Water Trail	4.5	Canoeing and kayaking	Other uses are present in river but are not considered part of water trail.	Water

Dexter-Huron and Delhi include approximately 1.71 miles of trails. The shared use hike-bike trail at Dexter-Huron connects to the B2B Trail which is also part of the Iron Belle Trail, the longest state trail in the nation with two paths to hike or bike between Belle Isle Park in Detroit and Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula. Both parks also abut the Huron River and include a 4.5 river mile segment of the Huron River Water Trail. The Huron has been designated as the 18th trail of the National Water Trail System, joining a network of nation exemplary water trails from Puget Sound to the Hudson River.



Accessibility

To remain compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), 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 identifying areas where improved access is needed so that all guests can enjoy the park. A survey of several areas has resulted in a list of accessibility issues present at Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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
Restrooms	1	Restrooms need to be updated for accessibility at West Delhi, Skips Livery and East Delhi.
Canoe/Kayak Launch	2	Accessible kayak launch system and accessible route from parking lot
Parking Lots	3	Parking lot signs and accessible ramps
Playfields	4	Accessible route to play 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 facility 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

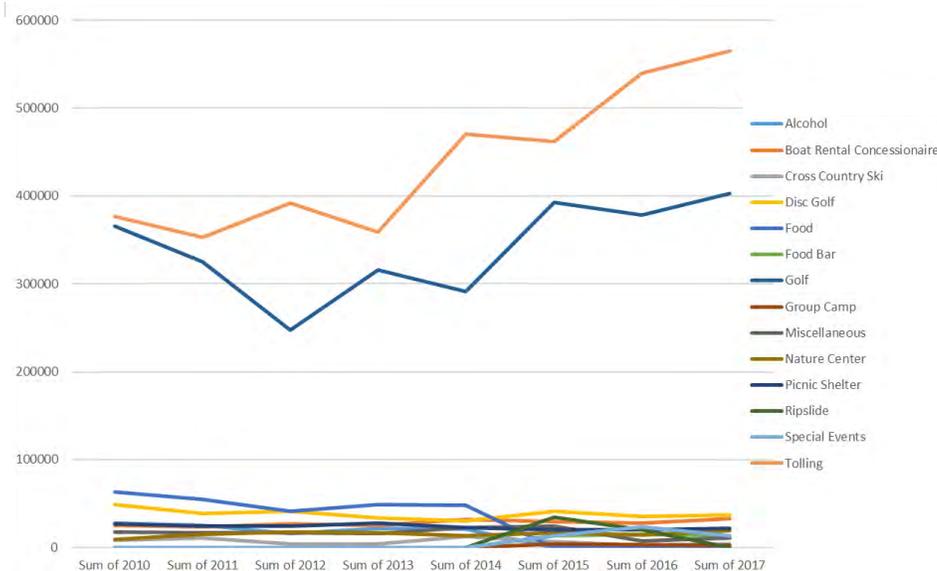
NEEDS

Diversify sources of revenue

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

OPPORTUNITIES

2010-2017 Revenue Trends



2017 Operations Revenue

Revenue Source	2017 Total	% of Revenue
Tolling (Hudson Mills)	441,752	40
Tolling (Dexter-Huron)	52,943	5
Tolling (Delhi)	51,520	5
Tolling (Skip's Canoe/Kayak Rental)	18,570	2
Skip's Canoe Kayak Rental (Delhi)	32,746	3
Cross Country Ski (Hudson Mills)	3,635	0.3
Group Camp (Hudson Mills)	2,490	0.2
Picnic Shelter (Dexter-Huron/Delhi)	9,200	0.8
Golf (Hudson Mills)	402,558	36
Disc Golf (Hudson Mills)	37,269	3
Special Events	13,476	1
Nature Center (Hudson Mills)	19,635	2
Food Bar (Hudson Mills)	13,388	1
Miscellaneous	10,963	1

TOTAL: 1,110,145

The Metroparks 2017 General Fund revenue equaled \$51,974,301 for the overall park system. Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron and Delhi 2017 operations revenue was approximately \$1,110,145, comprising 2.1% of all Metroparks revenue.

Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron, and Delhi combined budgeted 2018 operations revenues are \$1,125,242, while estimated 2018 operations expenses are \$2,832,175. Property tax and other revenue is estimated to subsidize 60% (\$1,706,933) of the Hudson Mills/Dexter-Huron/Delhi operating budget.

As the chart illustrates, the majority of revenue for Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron and Delhi (approximately 50%) comes from combined tolling. Skip's canoe and kayak rental revenue totals \$32,746 with an additional \$18,570 in toll revenue in 2017.



Revenue

Visitors

Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metropark are regional parks and can draw from the approximately 1,900,000 Michigan residents that live within a 30 mile radius (approximately a 45-minute drive) of them. Certain events and activities may draw visitors from greater distances.

Vehicle entries are combined for Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks, and have hovered between 352,842 and 564,785 since 2010, fluctuating through the years but overall moderately growing. Planning staff facilitated a data collection initiative in July and August 2018 to record visitors entering the park using a motor vehicle. Over three days, each visitor was asked to provide the number of persons per vehicle (PPV), whether the car used an annual pass and whether the visitor/s had a dog with them.

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.

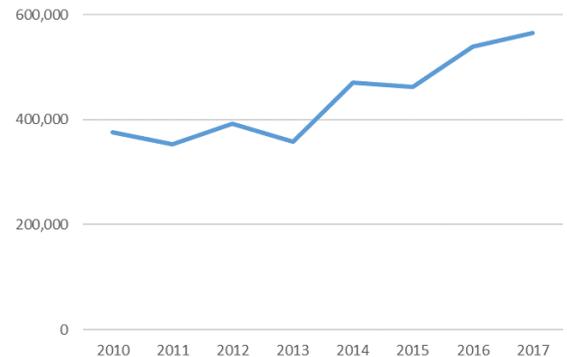
NEEDS

Target market strategy

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

OPPORTUNITIES

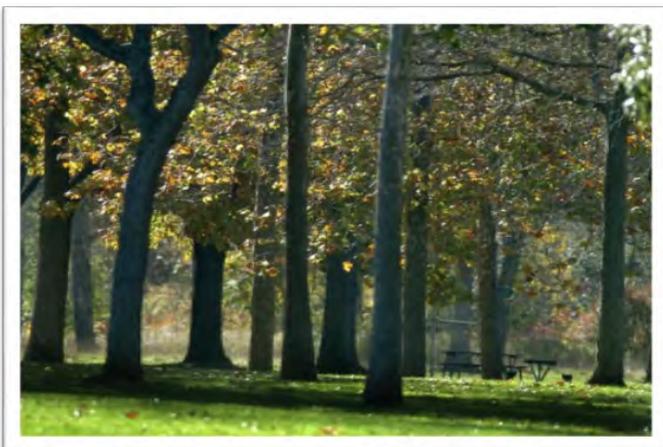
Vehicle Entries Year
2010-2017



Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks 30-Mile radius



2018 Visitor Data Collection Date	Dexter-Huron	Delhi
Monday July 16th	30 vehicles	35 vehicles
Sunday July 22nd	100 vehicles	102 vehicles
Sunday August 19th	151 vehicles	204 vehicles
Overall PPV Rate	1.80	1.95



Programs & Events

Dexter-Huron and Delhi combined with Hudson Mills 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. The significance of the Huron River with Michigan's first residents -both Native and European is an important component in the parks for providing context to many of the interpretive programs for visitors.

Recent events specifically hosted at Dexter-Huron and Delhi include:

- Wildflower hike
- Huron River Clean-Up
- Natural Resources Volunteer Day
- Invasive Shrub Removal

In addition to these events, the Huron River's Natural Rivers designation plays an important role in providing interpretative and educational opportunities on the river corridor protection, stewardship and management.



NEEDS

Increase revenue and visitation

Build on enthusiasm of Dexter-Huron and Delhi visitors with exciting, engaging programs and events

OPPORTUNITIES



COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

Population

The percentage of households without access to an automobile is gradually rising in the region and in the municipalities directly surrounding Dexter-Huron and Delhi. However, Washtenaw County shows a modest trend downward in households without access to an automobile. 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 parks for all.

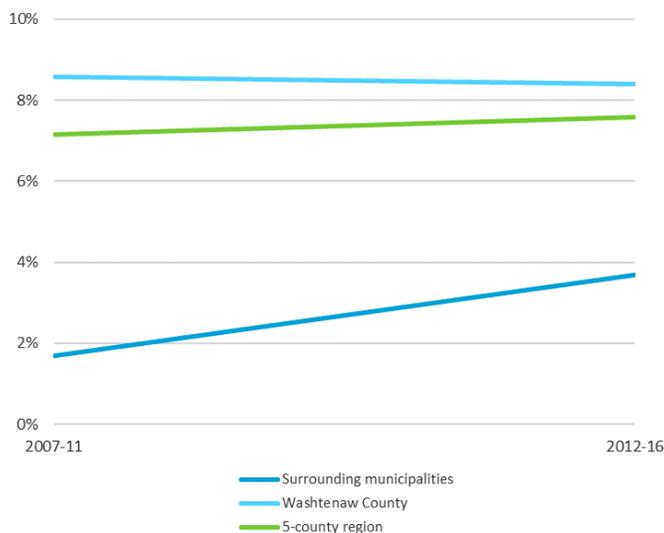
The percentage of individuals over 65 years of age is rising quickly in the region, in Washtenaw County, and most dramatically in communities surrounding the parks. Older adults have distinct needs, often requiring accommodations for mobility and accessibility of park features such as trails and buildings.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

NEEDS

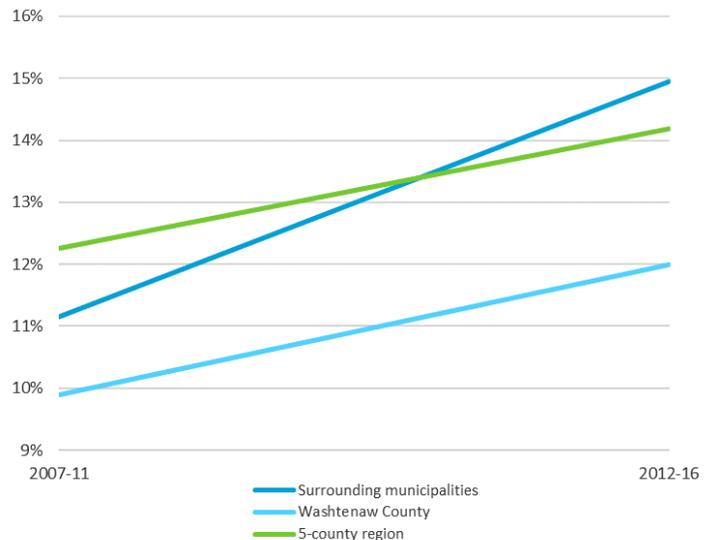
Address changing needs of new population demographics

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

OPPORTUNITIES



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CARS AVAILABLE, 2007-11 through 2011-16 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)



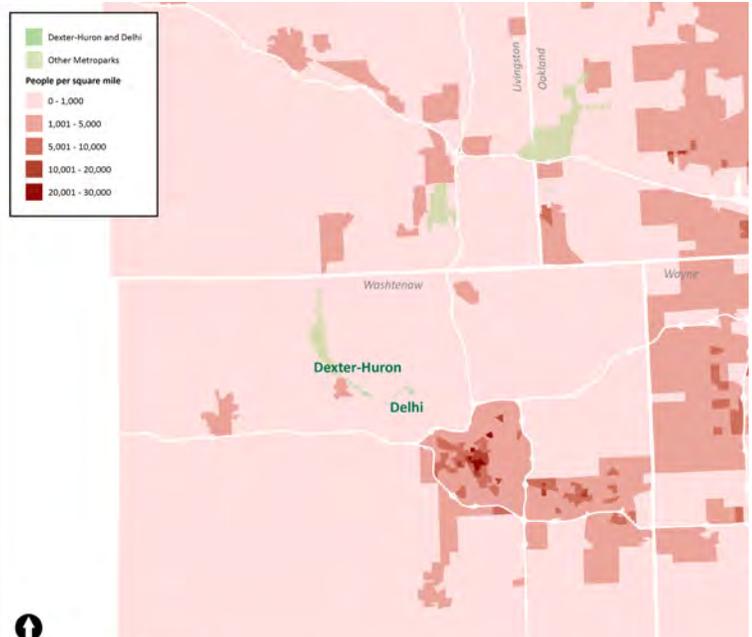
CHANGE IN PERCENT OF POPULATION OVER 65 YEARS, FROM 2007-11 through 2012-16 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)

Community Influences

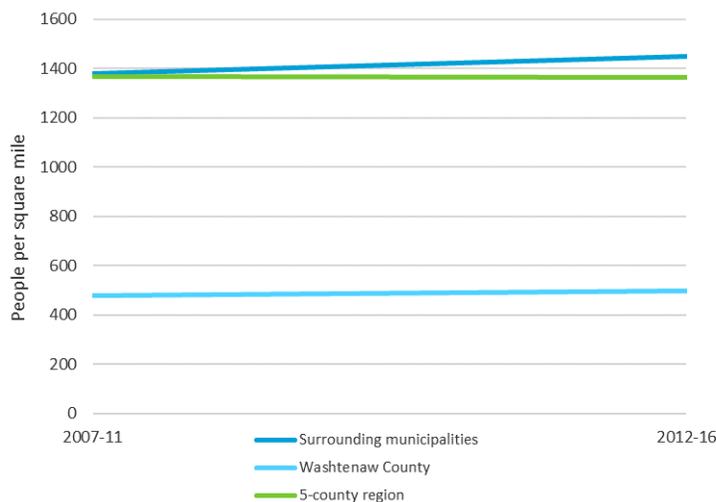
As shown below, Dexter-Huron and Delhi are located in a lower residential density area than many other Metroparks, with the majority of land use characterized as residential. The majority of the area directly bordering the park have an average population between 0 and 1,000 people per square mile. The City of Dexter attributes to the higher residential density area of 1,001-5,000 people per square mile adjacent to Dexter Huron. Associated with the noted demographic change will be the impact on housing trends. The aging baby boomers will seek different housing options than past generations of seniors. The desire will be for mixed use walkable environments with more compact smaller housing units, along with more time for passive recreational opportunities that will continue to increase in the surrounding communities.

The population density of the 5-county region slightly decreased overall. However, both Washtenaw County and surrounding municipalities slightly increased which will have a more direct impact on the two parks. Staying aware of development changes in the area will be important to gauge recreation needs.

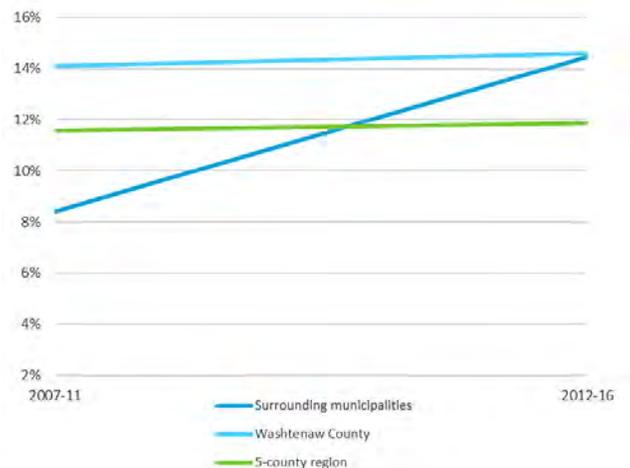
Although most households in the area still speak English as their first language, the communities around Dexter-Huron and Delhi had a dramatic rise in households speaking languages other than English at home, most notably the Asian population. Both Washtenaw County and the region at large are seeing a slight increase in households speaking languages other than English at home. Because of this growing linguistic diversity the Metroparks are working towards more universal signage design, with a focus on easily understandable symbols.



POPULATION DENSITY BY BLOCK GROUP, 2012-16



CHANGE IN AVERAGE POPULATION DENSITY, 2007-11 through 2012-16
(Source: US Census American Community Survey)



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS SPEAKING LANGUAGE BESIDES ENGLISH AT HOME, 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 and other organizations bordering and/or containing Dexter-Huron and Delhi is essential for a collaborative, comprehensive planning process. Planning staff researched previous park plans along with the published master plans and recreation plans of surrounding municipalities, counties, other agencies. These provided a basic idea of the direction planned for each, especially regarding land use, development, and recreation.

Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) Construction Project

- The Dexter-Huron Metropark to Zeeb Road project is 1.2 miles long and includes two pedestrian bridges over the Huron River. The project is anticipated to be under construction starting in the fall of 2018.

Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) Master Plan: Dexter to Ann Arbor

- In 2016, WCPARC completed a Master Plan for the B2B between Dexter and Ann Arbor. The plan serves as a guiding document for detailed design and engineering and will involve a great deal of coordination with many agencies, municipalities and organizations.

Master Land Use Plan Scio Township, Michigan

- Dexter-Huron is located in the Mill Creek Sub Area of the future land use plan. Development strategies include encouraging non-motorized routes to provide interconnected system of trails and support implementation of the B2B Trail. Also, this area is being promoted to establish recreational needs of the residents including passive uses, soccer fields and ball

Projects/Initiatives

fields. Delhi is located in the Huron River Sub Area. Development strategies in this area include coordinating with HCMA for parkland and open space acquisition and development, along with preservation and enhancement of the historic character of Delhi Mills and the Delhi Bridge.

City of Dexter Master Plan, Amended 2016

- A number of existing and anticipated circumstances will affect Dexter's future. These include a growing population, decentralized places of employment with increased commuting distances and conversely, an increase in those working from home. These factors together with the attraction of the Ann Arbor area as a place to live and work will provide development opportunities within Dexter and the surrounding communities for years to come.

Economic Impact of the Huron River Report

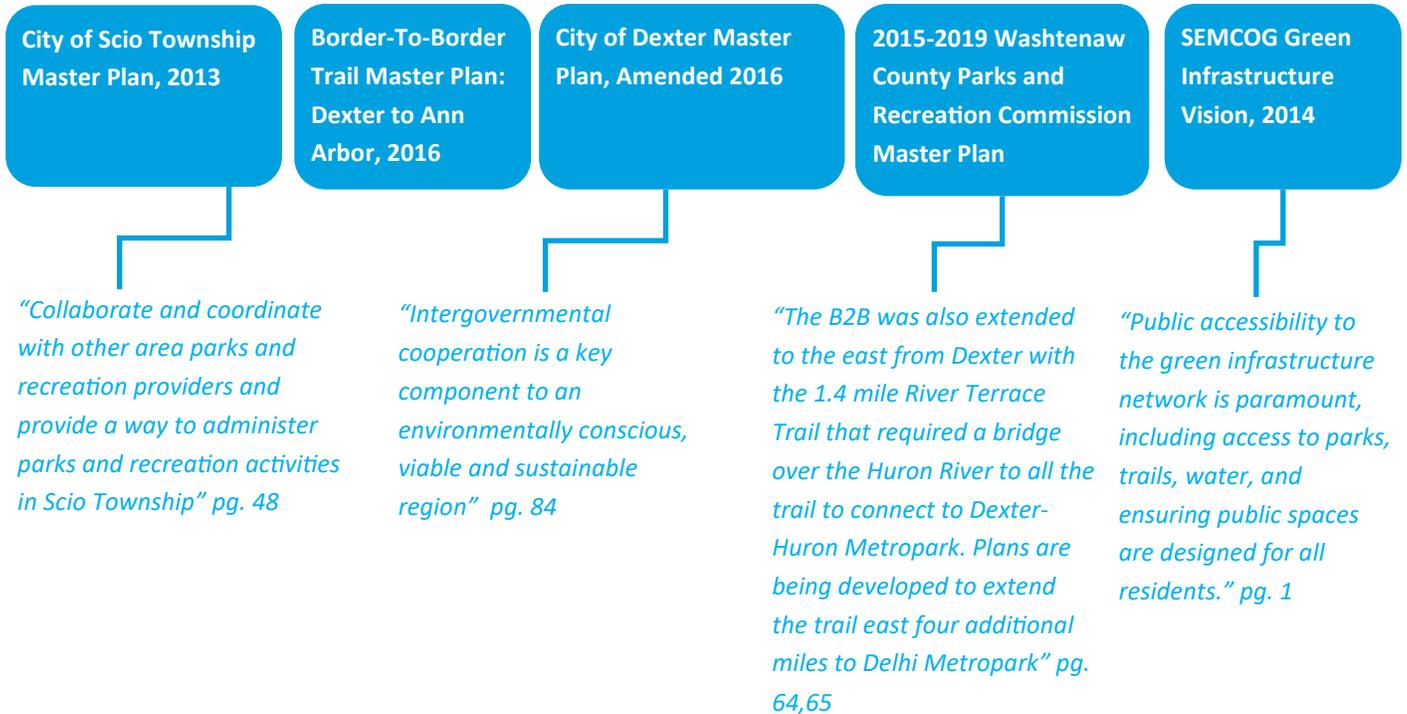
- In 2016, Huron River Watershed Council commissioned a study to measure the economic impact of the Huron River on local communities, focusing on Huron River Water Trail activities and the value of natural systems that maintain a healthy, clean river. The study results show a \$53.5 million dollar benefit to the local economy from direct and indirect spending each year.



MUNICIPALITY MAP

Community Influences

Relevant Planning Documents



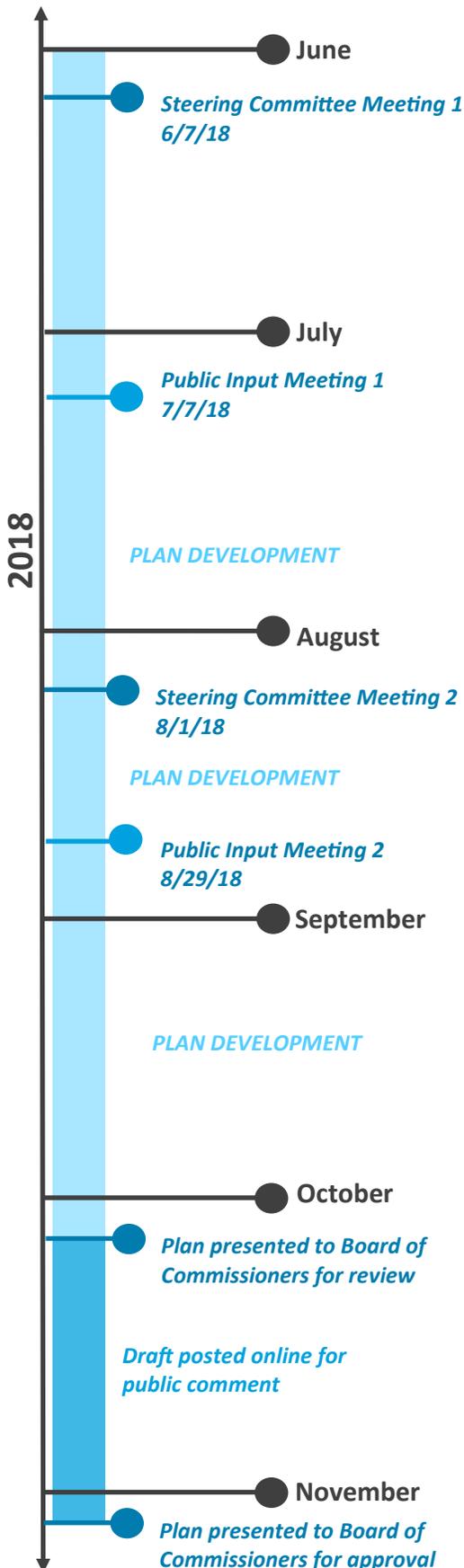
Since the development and land use decisions of bordering communities and other governmental agencies directly impact the park, these neighbor master plans were reviewed and taken into account when creating this document. The opinions and ideas expressed by residents and leaders in these municipalities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

Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks are 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 Dexter-Huron and Delhi 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 these parks belong 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 parks 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 for the parks with community members to gather initial ideas about the direction of the parks for the next 10 years. A general park feedback survey for both parks 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 held for both parks and feedback was collected, analyzed and incorporated into a draft Master Plan document.

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

Public Meeting 1 - 7/7/18

- 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

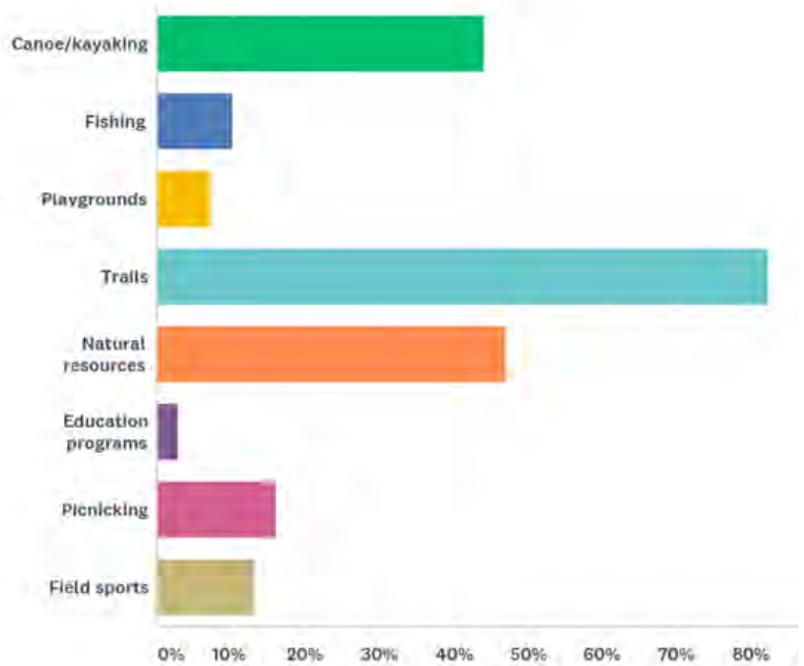
Public Meeting 2 - 8/29/18

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

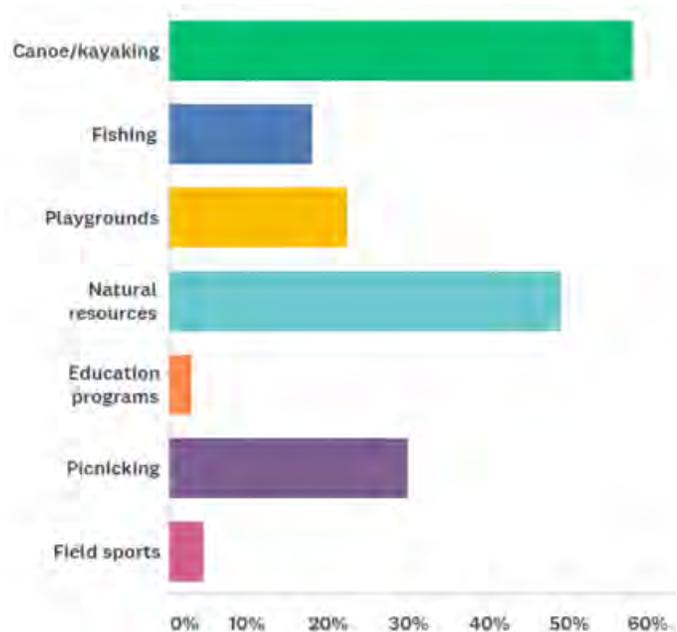
Results

Participants in the survey and in public meetings included a large number of trail users. They expressed the desire for more trails and continued development of the Border-To-Border (B2B) regional trail system for greater use and access. They also desired connectivity with trails within both parks and amenities. Popular feedback suggested improvements in trail access to water, restrooms and picnic areas. Other themes included better access and amenities for kayaking and canoeing the Huron River water trail while respecting the riparian integrity and Natural River District designation. Suggestions included a wide range of improvements including kayak launch improvements, East Delhi portage crosswalk and signage, parking, connectivity to West Delhi, restrooms, concessions and paddle events. Other popular feedback included more safety improvements with speed limits on the trails and crowd control with regards to drinking and loud noise following a day on the river. In addition, many respondents commented on leaving the parks as natural as possible. The preservation of nature and avoiding unnecessary development is a unique draw to these parks for many visitors.

Favorite part or activity at Dexter-Huron?



Favorite part or activity at Delhi?



Public Input

An online questionnaire for both Dexter-Huron and Delhi was 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 public meetings, and one afternoon performing intercept surveys at the Dexter Public Library.

Dexter-Huron Questionnaire Response

Trails

- Connecting to Delhi(6)
- Trail expansion(5)
- Connecting to Ann Arbor(3)
- Closer to river access(2)
- Mile markers
- Keep it rustic
- B2B partnership(3)
- Benches and trash cans
- Vegetation removal
- Mulch border of trail

Amenities

- Bathrooms on trails(6)
- Modern play structures
- Additional playgrounds
- Better boat access
- Transportation for kayakers
- More picnic areas/seating/grills
- Preserve historic shelter
- Bike racks(4)
- Food trucks
- Table tennis
- Pickleball courts
- Concession stands(3)
- Seating with view of river
- Dog friendly places

- Natural playground
- Dog park
- Water park
- Museum

Programming

- More river based programs
- Incentives for hikers
- Fish programs
- Advertising parks
- More organized events

Environment

- Fish surveys
- Aquatic habitat improvements
- Reduce mowing(2)
- Tree plantings along river
- Enhance native plantings
- Protect natural river(2)
- Invasive species removal

Safety/Signage

- Map for nature trail
- Water trail signage
- Dogs on leashes
- Bike speed limit

Maintenance

- Trail overgrowth(5)
- Dog and geese poop(10)
- Reduce mowing
- Snow removal year round(2)
- Bathrooms(3)
- Control bugs around fields

Access

- Connectivity to B2B
- Viewshed for water access
- West launch to beach access (family water trail within park)
- Upgrades to canoe/kayak launch(4)
- Better boat access(5)
- ADA access from parking lots(3)

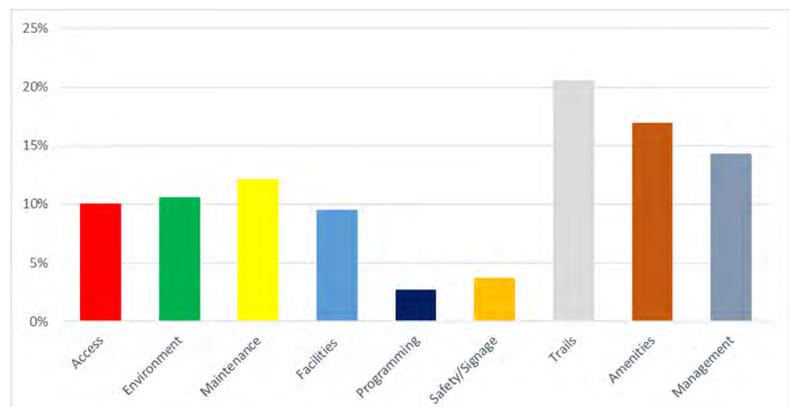
Facilities

- Upgrade baseball field(3)
- Basketball court
- Play wave(3)
- Floating dock platform



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.



Public Input

Delhi Questionnaire Response Topics

Trails

- B2B trail connectivity(19)
- Bathrooms(2)
- Additional trails(15)
- Groomed ski trails(2)
- Advertise trails
- Connect to other parks(3)
- More hiking trails
- Smart phone apps
- Trail maintenance(9)

Environment

- Fish survey/habitat improvements
- Native trees and shrubs(4)
- Reduce mowing(7)
- Keep natural(7)
- Attract diversity of animals and plants(4)
- Remove invasive species

Maintenance

- Dog and geese poop(4)
- Bathrooms at West Delhi
- Eliminate poison ivy
- Repair parking area
- Garbage (3)
- Dust control on unpaved roads

Amenities

- Larger play structure(5)
- Bathrooms(4)
- Water stations
- Older children playground
- Pavillion
- Portage improvements(2)
- Recycling
- Dog waste baggies
- Golf practice baskets

Programming

- Volunteer days for invasive species removal
- Longer trips from Skips
- More river-based programs

Safety/Signage

- Lower speed limits on Delhi Court
- More enforcement of crowds
- Lower bike speeds
- More interpretive signage

Access

- Better boat access after rapids
- Reduce fees for seniors
- Open year-round(3)
- Public access at Skips
- More kayak launch access
- Longer hours

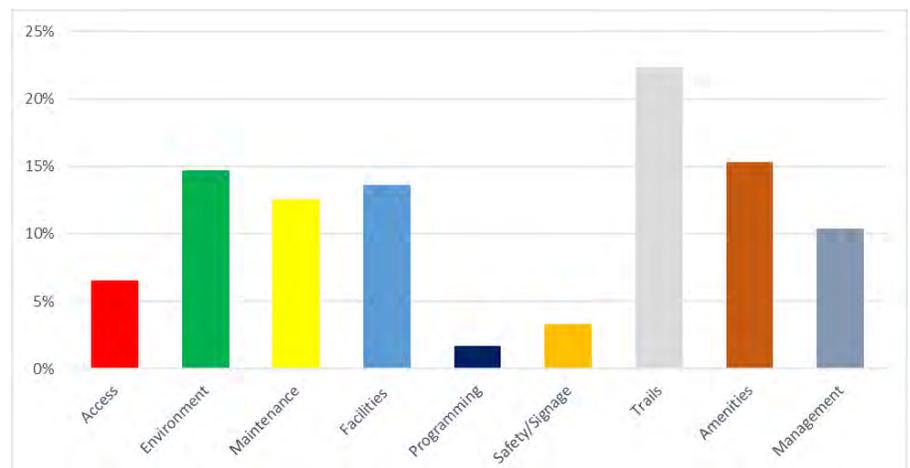
Facilities

- Improved boat/kayak launch(3)
- Basketball courts(3)
- Splash pad
- Lacrosse field
- Restroom upgrade at West Delhi
- Canoe camping facility
- Frisbee golf course
- Boardwalk or viewing platform of rapids



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



The Dexter-Huron and Delhi Master Plan online and hard copy questionnaires received a total of 158 and 117 responses, respectively. In addition, 64 individuals attended the two public meetings. As shown below, the questionnaires drew responses from the entire southeastern metropolitan Detroit region and beyond, but were mostly concentrated around the park itself.

NEEDS

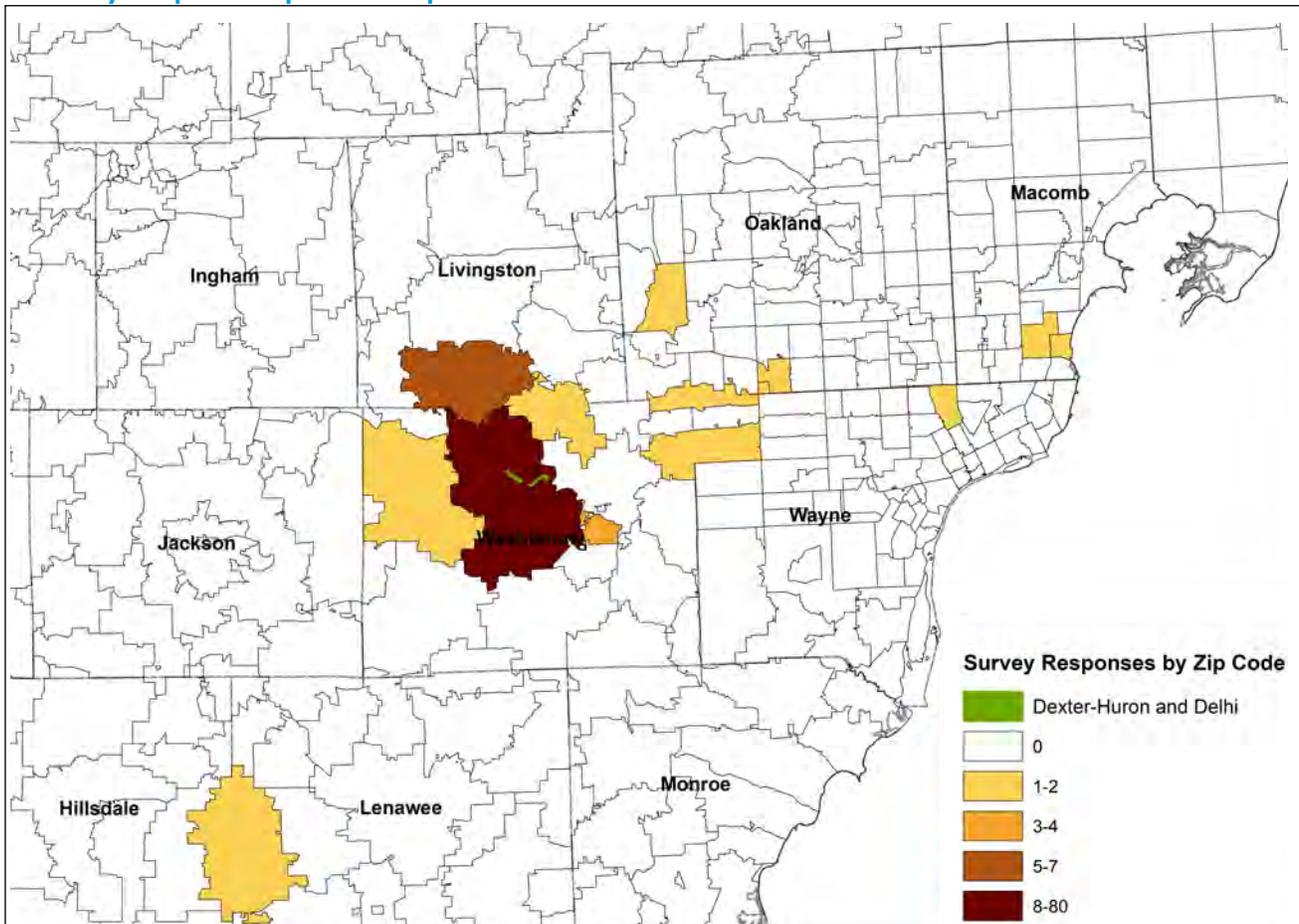
Incorporate variety of opinions and user groups into master plan

Create vibrant park through robust, transparent public outreach

OPPORTUNITIES



Survey Response Zip Code Map



Action Plan

Needs & Opportunities

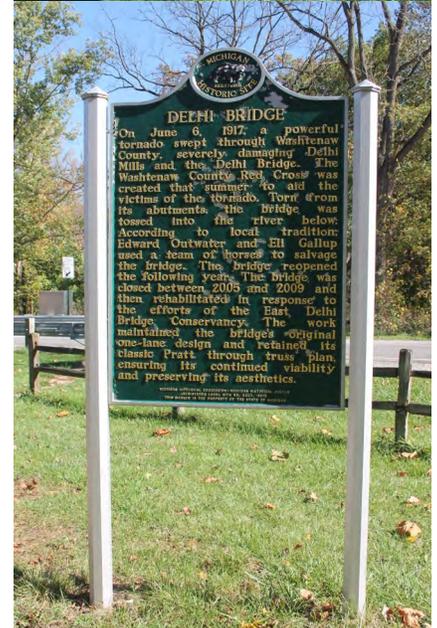
Based on the assessment of park conditions, demographic research and spatial analysis, public input, and staff input, the needs and opportunities listed throughout this document were developed.

Needs

- Continue to draw diverse range of visitors to the parks
- 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 boundary issues for both parks
- Replace outdated, confusing, inconsistent signs
- Pursue improvements to park accessibility
- Diversify sources of revenue
- Target market strategies for facilities (Skips)
- Increase revenue and visitation
- Address changing needs of new population demographics
- Improve connectivity within the parks and with the community
- Incorporate variety of opinions and user groups into master plan
- Maintenance of facilities for successful operations

Opportunities

- Build on both parks character to attract new visitors
- Create a resilient network of biodiverse areas in the parks
- Draw new visitors with programming/education based on history of the parks
- 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 parks
- Offer new and exciting activities/programs to visitors of the parks 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 Dexter-Huron/Delhi's 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
- Maintenance plans and scheduling for facilities (hike-bike trails)
- 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 parks over the next ten years.

Large Facilities

Park*	Description	Dept. Lead**	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Del	Redevelop playground at Delhi	Planning	Eng, Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors,	TBD	x		
Del	Implement improvements to canoe livery site and operations (resulting from assessment)	Eng	Plan, Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	x
Both	Support extension of Border-To-Border (B2B) in both parks	Planning	Eng, Ops, Maint	WCPARC, Contractors	TBD	x	x	
Dex	Construct congregated, multi-age playground at Dexter-Huron	Planning	Eng, Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	



*Abbreviation for both parks (Dex = Dexter-Huron, Del = Delhi) ** Abbreviation for departments (Eng = Engineering, Plan = Planning, Int = Interpretive Services, Ops = Operations, Maint = Maintenance, NR = Natural Resources, Mrkt = Marketing CR = Community Relations)

Infrastructure / Small Facilities

Park	Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Both	Accessibility improvements, including interiors, walkways, and site amenities - parkwide	Eng	Plan, Ops	Contractors	TBD	x	x	x
Del	Implement Delhi connectivity plan	Eng	Plan, Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	x
Del	Implement parking improvement plan (resulting from parking study)	Eng	Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	x
Del	Replace vault latrines at West Delhi	Eng	Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	
Dex	Replace roof on West shelter at Dexter-Huron	Eng	Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	\$4,000	x		
Dex	Construct small shade structures for paddlers at Dexter-Huron	Eng	Plan, Ops, Maint	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	
Dex	Implement shelter amenities conceptual plan	Planning	Ops, Main	MDNR, Contractors	TBD		x	



Natural Resources

Park	Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Both	Vegetation Management (annual)	NR	Plan, Ops	MDNR, Contractors	\$30,000	X	X	X
Both	Early detection, rapid response. Invasive species surveys and control in high quality natural areas (annual)	NR	Int	NGOs	\$10,000	X	X	X
Both	Wildlife management (annual)	NR	Ops, Maint, Police	MDNR	Staff time	X	X	X
Both	Conduct Prescribed fire in adapted native communities	NR			\$4,000	X	X	X
Both	Oak wilt control and prevention (annual)	NR	Ops, Int	MDNR	\$4,500	X	X	X
Both	Shoreline restoration and protection	NR	Ops, Plan	Contractor, NGOs	\$150,000		X	X
Both	Implement in-river restoration initiative (following feasibility study)	NR	Plan, Eng	MDNR, NGOs	\$150,000		X	X



Signage

Park	Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Dex	Construct and install trailhead structures on B2B trail	Maint	Ops, Graphics, Plan	MDNR, WCPARC	\$ 5,000	x		
Dex	Install rustic trail wayfinding signage (Dexter-Huron)	Plan	Main, Ops		\$ 1,000	x		



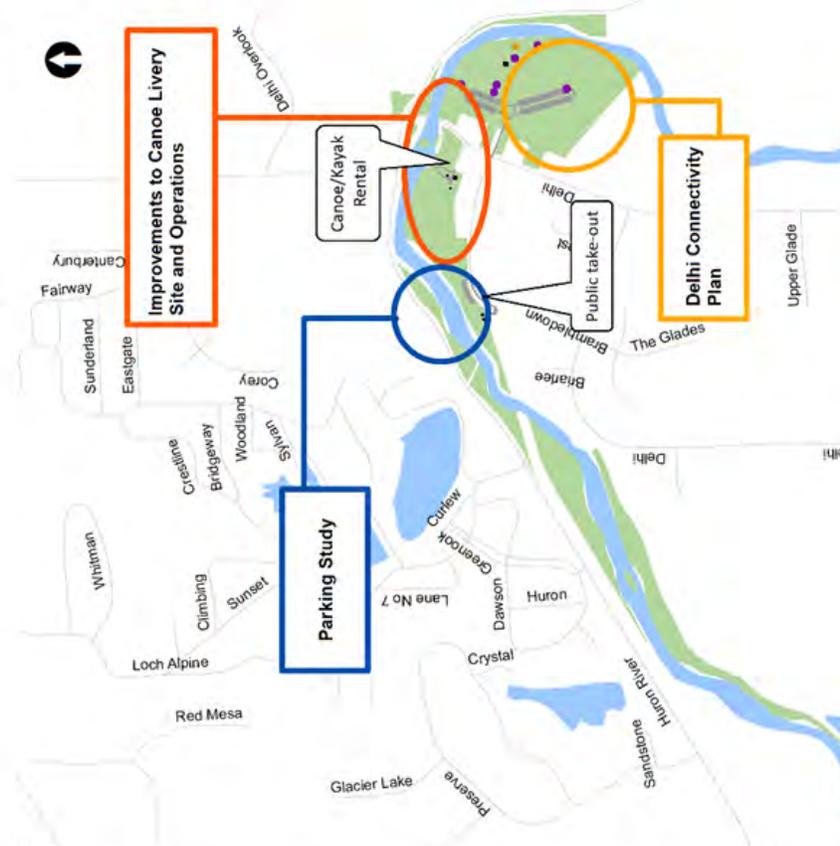
Area Plans/Studies/Initiatives

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:

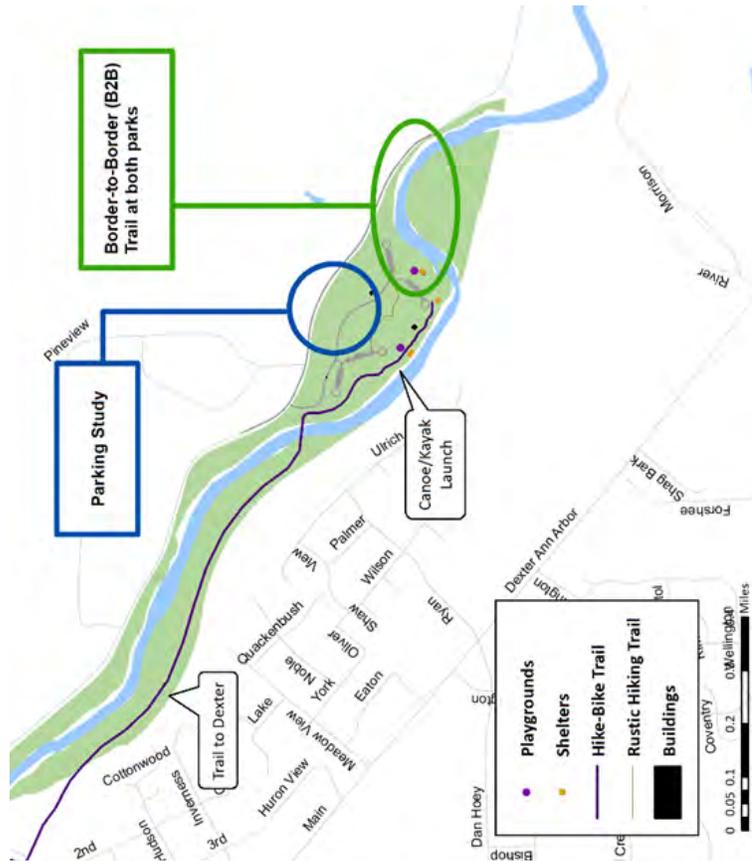
Park	Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Both	In-river and riparian restoration feasibility study: Assess feasibility of conducting in-river or riparian restoration to address identified threats to the Huron River ie. sedimentation, erosion, peak flow, nutrient contamination, etc.	NR	Plan, Eng, Ops	MDNR, HRWC, NGOs	staff time		x	
Del	Delhi connectivity plan: Identify opportunities for linking Delhi parcels via trails to improve paddler access to parking	Plan	Eng, Ops, Maint, NR	MDNR	staff time	x		
Both	Huron River viewshed improvement initiative: open up and maintain views to the river from key locations in West Delhi and Dexter-Huron	Plan	NR, Maint		staff time	x	x	x
Both	Parking study: consider reconfiguration of West Delhi parking lot, evaluation of parking use patterns for canoe livery and East Delhi, potential increased demand at Dexter-Huron with new trail section	Plan	Eng, Ops, Maint, NR	MDNR	staff time	x		
Del	Canoe livery operations assessment: investigate opportunities to improve operations of Skip's Canoe Livery for maximum benefit to the Metroparks while avoiding conflict with other park uses	Plan, Ops	Eng, Maint	MDNR, Skip's	staff time	x		

Area Plans/Studies/Initiatives (cont'd)

Park	Description	Dept. Lead	Other Depts.	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2018-2022)	Mid-Term (2023-2027)	Long-Term (10+ years)
Dex	Historic study/survey: West shelter at Dexter-Huron	Int	Plan, Eng, Ops	Consultant	TBD	x		
Del	Establish regular dust control schedule on Delhi Court	Ops	Eng, Maint	WCRC	\$1,000	x	x	x
Dex	Shelter amenities conceptual plan: additions near Dexter-Huron picnic shelters to enhance visitor experience/increase rentals	Plan	Ops, Maint	TBD			x	
Both	Environmental sustainability initiatives	NR, Purchasing	Ops, Plan, Eng		TBD	x	x	x
Both	Establish Invasive Species Control Tracking Website	NR	IT	MNFI, MISIN	staff time	x		
Both	Stormwater monitoring	NR		NGOs	\$5,000	x	x	x
Both	Herpetological surveys	NR		NGOs	\$15,000	x	x	x



Delhi



Dexter-Huron

Key Projects

Implement Improvements to Canoe Livery Site and Operations

2023-2028+

The new management team at Skip's Huron River Canoe Livery will need to plan for parking needs and other site improvements.

Needs:

- Additional parking
- Updated restrooms
- Connectivity and viewshed of water

Solutions:

- Safe pedestrian crossing to overflow parking
- Building modernization
- Landscape improvements



Extension of Border-To-Border (B2B) Trail at both parks

2018-2027

The B2B trail in partnership with Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) will continue extending through Dexter-Huron Metropark to Zeeb Road planned for completion this Spring 2019.

Needs:

- Access
- Trail amenities
- Improve connectivity with parks and to existing/planned B2B trail projects

Solutions:

- Partnership with WCPARC and other partners for implementation of B2B Master Plan



Action Plan

Delhi Connectivity Plan

2023-2028+

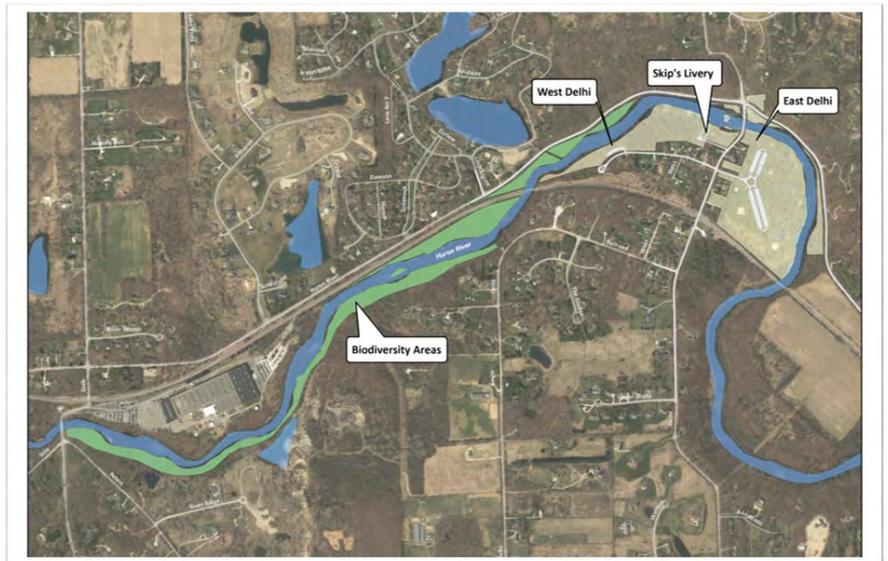
In coordination with the Huron River Watershed Council and Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, both the water trails and B2B trails will continue to develop over the next 10 years..

Needs:

- Access improvements to parking
- Trail improvements
- Improve paddler safety

Solutions:

- New trail connection and potential realignment
- Water trail signage



Parking Study

2023-2028+

The reconfiguration of parking areas for both parks will need to be assessed.

Needs:

- West Delhi parking
- Canoe livery overflow parking
- Dexter-Huron parking

Solutions:

- Consider reconfiguration of West Delhi parking lot
- Evaluation of parking use patterns for canoe livery and East Delhi
- Potential increased demand at Dexter-Huron with new trails section

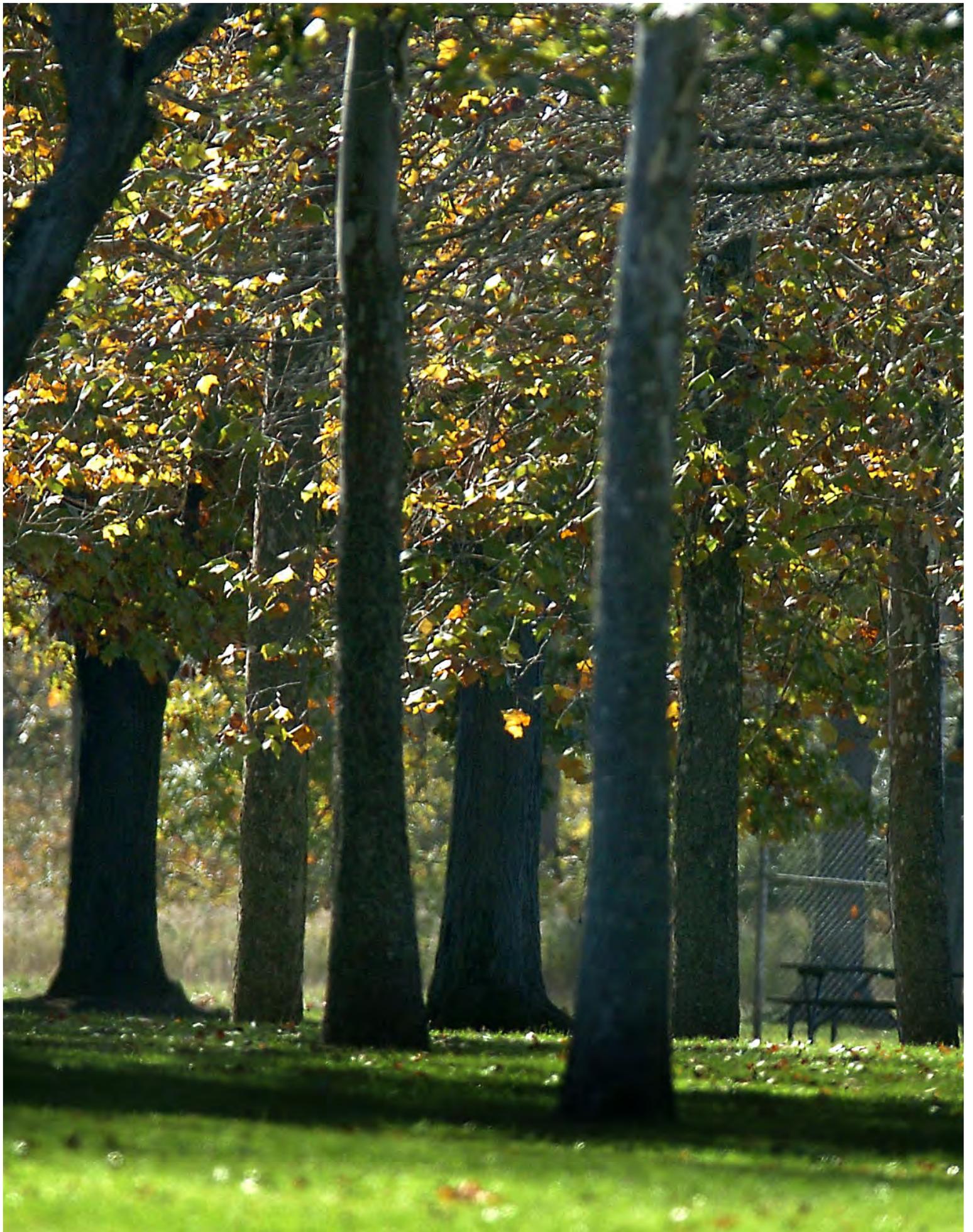


Other Projects

2018-2028+

- Construct congregated, multi-age playground at Dexter-Huron
- Accessibility improvements, including restrooms, walkways and river access at both parks
- Implement in-river restoration initiative (following feasibility study)
- Shoreline restoration and protection







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