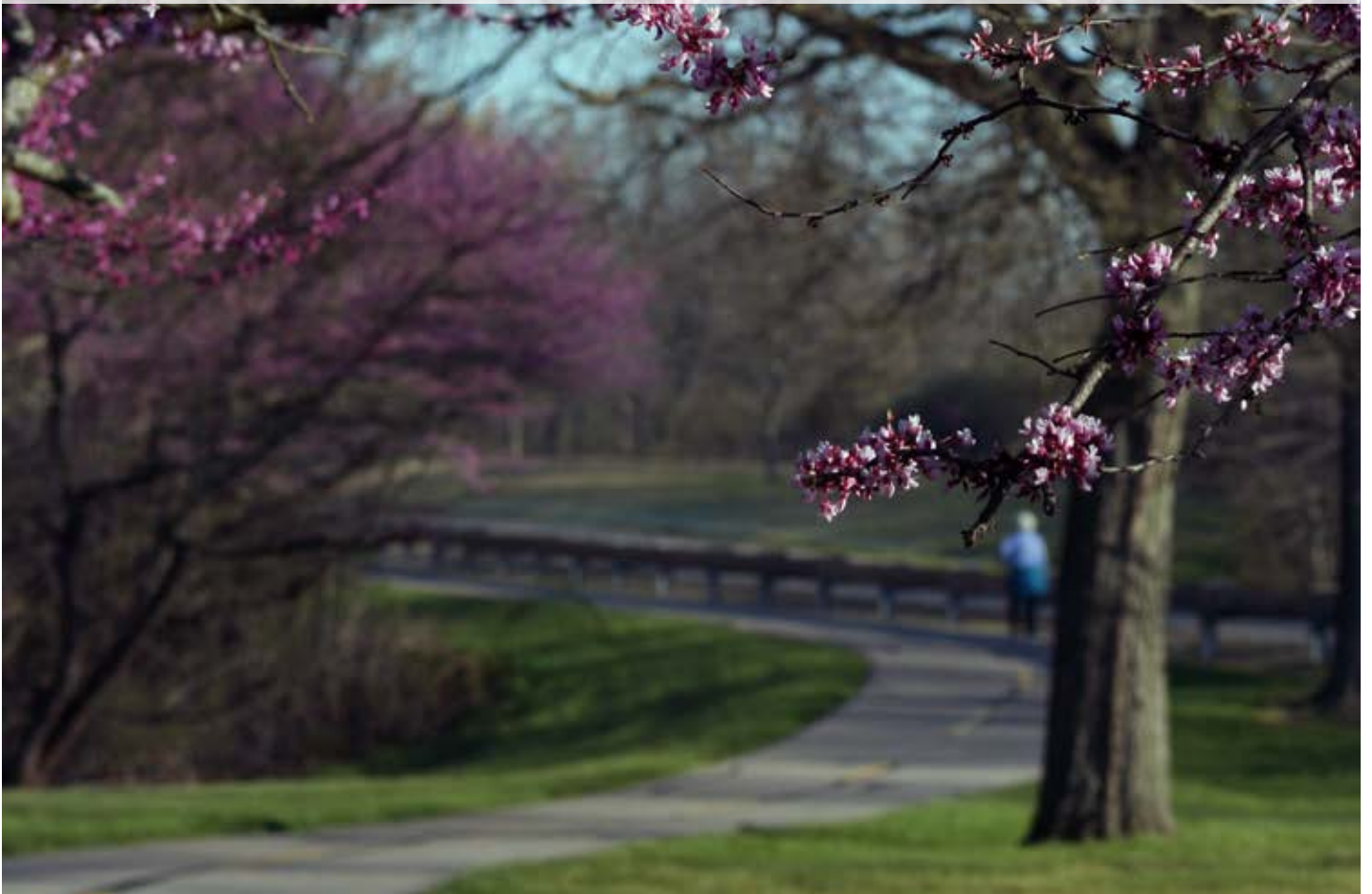




2 | INTRODUCTION



THE METROPARKS SYSTEM

History

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

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

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

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



Land

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

Trails

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

Infrastructure

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

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



¹ Grants received are listed for each park in Chapter 7 | Recreation Inventory



Facilities and Centers

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

Seasonal Activities

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

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

Water Features

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



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

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

Aquatic Facilities	
Pools	4
Beaches	5
Spray pads	4
Boat launches	50
Canoe/Kayak launches	27
Boat rental facilities	6
Fishing platforms	12

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

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



MISSION

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

VISION

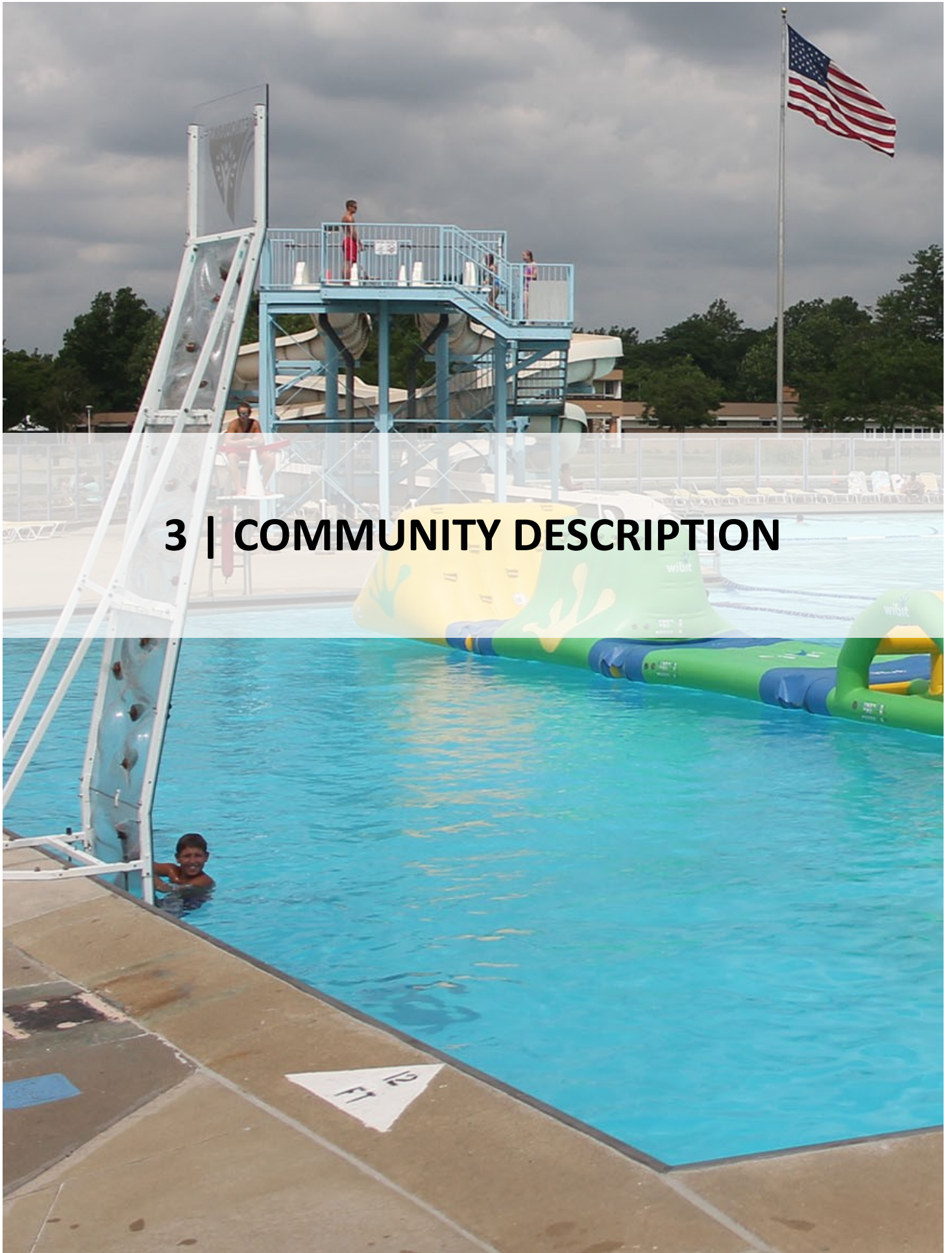
The Metroparks offer 365-day access to open space, outdoor experiences, and abundant resources for the communities of Southeast Michigan now and into the future.

CORE VALUES

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

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





REGIONAL SERVICE AREA

The Metroparks are geared towards visitors from across the region enjoying a day trip, usually arriving in a vehicle. For this reason, the service area of the parks is considered to be a 30-mile radius (approximately 45-minute drive). As shown in the figure below, this encompasses all five HCMA counties as well as segments of several others.

This plan focuses on all aspects of recreation provided by the 13 Metroparks to the citizens of this five-county area, as well as current and future recreational needs that have not been met and that the Metroparks may consider addressing.

For some local residents, the Metroparks act as an everyday source of recreation, especially if few community parks exist nearby. A quarter-mile is the distance residents are likely to walk to each park, however, pedestrian access is generally limited to designated points on the park boundaries.

As trail connections in Southeast Michigan grow, an increasing number of visitors will arrive at the parks by bicycle. The service area of the parks for attracting different types of cyclists may be studied in the future.



Figure 3.1 | 30-mile service area | Sources: MIGDL, HCMA

COUNTIES

The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority serves the residents of Macomb, Oakland, Livingston, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties in Southeast Michigan. This five-county region includes the City of Detroit and its suburbs, as well as other cities such as Ann Arbor, Pontiac, and Mt. Clemens. The area hosts a high concentration of the state's businesses and industries and is home to over half the state's population.

Livingston County

Livingston County is located halfway between Detroit and the state's capitol of Lansing, in the western part of Southeast Michigan. It encompasses 574 square miles and contains 20 municipalities. As of 2016, the county population is 188,806, an increase of 4.3% from 2010. A large portion of the population, 57.1%, works outside the county. The current leading job industry is *Knowledge-Based Services*, which is projected to continue to grow through 2030, followed by *Services to Households & Firms*.¹ Livingston County contains Huron Meadows Metropark in Green Oak Township and a portion of Kensington Metropark in Brighton Township.

Macomb County

Macomb County is the ninth-smallest of Michigan's 83 counties at 482 square miles, yet it ranks third in population, with 868,144 residents in 2016. Of the county's 27 municipalities three are among the ten largest communities in Michigan: Warren (3rd), Sterling Heights (6th), and Clinton Township (10th). Manufacturing was at one point the leading industry, employing roughly one-third of the workforce. Currently the leading industry is *Knowledge-Based Services*, which is projected to continue to grow through 2030. Located within Macomb County are three Metroparks: Wolcott Mill Metropark in Ray Township, Lake St. Clair Metropark in Harrison Township, and part of Stony Creek Metropark, most of which is located within Washington Township.

Wayne County

Wayne County is the nation's eighth-largest county and the most populous in the state with 1,754,591 residents. Its 43 local communities include smaller cities like Plymouth and Northville, as well as the City of Detroit. The auto industry was replaced in 2010 by *Knowledge-Based Services* as the leading work industry. After 2020, *Private Education & Healthcare* is projected to transition into the leading industry through 2030. Wayne County contains four Metroparks. Lower Huron, Willow, and Oakwoods Metroparks are all connected via parkland and trails within Van Buren Township and Huron Township. Lake Erie Metropark connected to Oakwoods Metropark by the Iron Belle Trail is located further south in Brownstown Township, near the border with Monroe County.



¹ SEMCOG 2040 Forecast, <http://semcog.org/plans-for-the-region/regional-forecast>

Washtenaw County

Washtenaw County contains 33 municipalities, including Ypsilanti, Chelsea, and Ann Arbor. Covering 706 square miles, Washtenaw County is home to three Metroparks: Hudson Mills Metropark in Webster and Dexter Townships, and Dexter-Huron and Delhi Metroparks in Scio Township. The county's population is projected to increase throughout 2030, from 360,609 in 2016. Growing job industries include *Knowledge-Based Services* and *Private Education & Healthcare*.

Oakland County

Oakland County covers 868 square miles and contains 61 municipalities, making it the largest by size of the five HCMA counties. Nearly 70% of residents work within the county and 13.4% of all people employed in Michigan work in Oakland County. Oakland County had a population of 1,202,362 as of July 2016, which is projected to increase through 2030. During this period, Oakland County will begin to see a decline in *Retail Trade and Manufacturing*, and growth in *Knowledge-Based Services*. The county contains Indian Springs Metropark in Springfield and White Lake townships, part of Stony Creek Metropark in Oakland Township, and a portion of Kensington Metropark in Milford and Lyon townships.

Municipality Type	Wayne	Oakland	Macomb	Washtenaw	Livingston
Cities	34	30	13	6	2
Villages	0	10	3	2	2
Charter Townships	7	15	5	6	3
General law Townships	2	6	6	19	13
Unincorporated Communities	0	45	25	11	28
Total	43	106	52	44	48

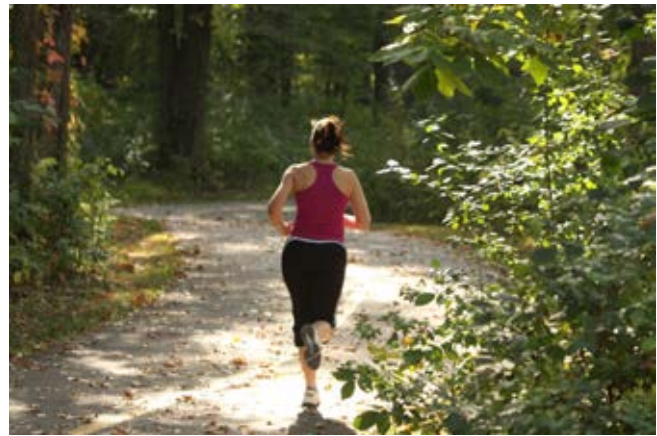


Figure 3.2 | Metroparks System
Sources: MiGDL, HCMA

