



WOLCOTT MILL METROPARK FARM & HISTORIC CENTER

Interpretive Master Plan
August 2021



METROPARKS.COM



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MANAGEMENT¹

MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

What do we do and who do we do it for?

Interpretation is defined by the National Association of Interpretation as “a mission-based communication process that forges intellectual and emotional connections between the interest of the visitor and the meaning inherent in the resource.”² Interpretation embodies that based purpose of education at the Huron Clinton Metroparks and at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Centers. This Master Plan will help direct the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center as we seek to provide beneficial, meaningful, and informative experiences to all who visit.

MISSION

The Mission for the Interpretive Department reflects that of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks.

“To bring the benefits of parks and recreation to the people of Southeast Michigan. All the people. All their lives.”

Programming offered at the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center should strive to educate our patrons while leading them along the Interpretive Continuum, as defined by the National Association for Interpretation. This “Continuum” describes the Interpreters role in leading patrons from casual visitors to stewards of the Park and its’ resources. This epitomizes the mission of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks (HCMA) and the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

What do we expect interpretation to do for our organization and how will it support our mission? How will our objective challenge our interpretation to perform?

The interpretive plan has four main goals, with corresponding objectives that relate to Animal Health and Welfare, Visitor Experience, Education and Stewardship, and Networking and Outreach. These goals were established by HCMA staff from multiple departments after evaluation of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center facilities and presented to the public for input. The following five-year goals and objectives are offered as a starting point for measuring the effectiveness of the interpretive program at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Centers. Some of these goals depend on and work in tandem with other areas of the organization (planning, fundraising, infrastructure improvements and sustainability) which may be outside of the scope of this plan. The Community Recreation Plan as well as the Wolcott Mill Metropark Master Plans were consulted when establishing these goals.

Animal Health and Welfare

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Showcase our ability to provide a safe, healthy, enriching environment for our livestock using science-based protocols for animal health and well-being

¹ The format of this plan follow the 5-M model as described in Brochu, L. & Merriman, T. (2014). Interpretive Planning: The 5-M model for successful planning projects. Fort Collins, CO: InterPress.

² www.interpnet.com/NAI/interp/About_NAI/What_We_Believe

Visitor Experience

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Provide a safe, professional, and inclusive experience for visitors to make connections with the role that agriculture plays in their lives, and the lives of their families and communities.

Education and Stewardship

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Provide science-based learning opportunities for all ages while acting as stewards of our natural environment.

Networking and Outreach

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Form partnerships with other organizations to promote agricultural learning through on-site and off-site educational experiences.

Based on these four main goals, measurable objectives have been developed as a means of evaluating the effectiveness of the interpretive program. These objectives are described in detail in the action plan and are based on the information contained in the remaining sections.

VISION AND PHILOSOPHY

What and where do we want to be in three to five years?

The vision of the Metroparks is “To be a unifying force – and indispensable resource – in Southeast Michigan: One Region. One Metroparks. Endless Experiences.”

In addition, the vision of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center is to be a place where adults, children, and families can learn about the origins of the food and fiber that impact their daily lives, while serving as stewards of our land and waterways. We also aim to be equitable and inclusive in all aspects of our operations.

In conjunction with an Interpretive Master Plan, a Park Master Plan was developed by the Planning Department in 2016, which detailed some future benchmarks for the Interpretive Center, and the park as a whole. Some of these benchmarks include:

- Farm Center Selective Redevelopment plan (Including rebuilding original sheep barn, as well as development of a Farm Center Site Plan)
- Historic Center Redevelopment Plan (Including renovation of exhibits at the Historic Center)
- Trail Development for facility connectivity
- Wayfinding and Interpretive signage upgrades throughout the park
- Accessibility Improvements throughout the park, including interiors and walkways.



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Improve baseline data and systems for tracking metrics: Numbers and similar hard data are the stuff of wise decision-making. They are also essential as measurements of trends and benchmarks of an organization's achievement of its goals and objectives. The addition of the RecTrac system should help in this area.
- Find earned income potential: The Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center rely on four main factors for generating income. These areas include interpretive programming, farm crop and livestock sales, liquid milk sales, and donations. By improving the visitor experience and educational opportunities, as well as focusing on sound animal rearing and crop production practices, Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will look to increase facility revenue through improved attendance and agricultural production levels. In addition, grant opportunities exist for the preservation of historic structures and Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will look to network with other organizations to secure grant dollars for facility improvements.
- Investing resources into the site: Deteriorating facilities don't impart a positive experience on guests, and thus don't create a sense of commitment after they leave our facilities. By addressing the issues with some of the aging facilities and trails, guests will be more apt to return and participate in future programs and events.
- Improve advertisement and promotion of Farm and Historic Center events: Many people, even in the local community, are unaware that Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center exist. Through increased marketing of events and educational opportunities, improved signage and park connectivity, and partnerships with other agriculture organizations, Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will look to reach new audiences to grow our regular user base.

RESOURCES

Staff

In 2021, The Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center Employs 3 full time staff members and 12 part time staff members used to operate both the Farm Center and Historic Center. The Farm Center is open daily from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. and closed only on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. The Historic Center is closed to the public, but the grounds and trails are open daily from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

- Full time staff
 - Supervising Interpreter – Farm Center and Historic Center
 - Animal Health Care Specialist/Interpreter
 - Farm Maintenance Specialist
- Provisional Staff
 - 4 Interpreters
 - 3 Interpreter/Teamsters
 - 4 Farm Maintenance/Milkers
 - 1 Operations/Secretary
- Many Volunteers

Financial Resources

The 2021 budget is reflected below. A detailed annual budget can be found at www.metroparks.com/about-us/financials



Budget Performance Report

Fiscal Year to Date 01/01/21

Include Rollup Account and Rollup to Account

Account	Account Description	Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Prior Year Total * *2020
Fund 10 - General Fund				
REVENUE				
Function 8 - Operations				
Location 113 - Wolcott				
Activity 880 - Interpretive Center/Mill				
Category 10 - Site Operations				
4300	Revenue-Self Operated	7,400.00	7,400.00	436.00
4450	Donations	200.00	200.00	.00
	Category 10 - Site Operations Totals	\$7,600.00	\$7,600.00	\$436.00
	Activity 880 - Interpretive Center/Mill Totals	\$7,600.00	\$7,600.00	\$436.00
Activity 881 - Farm Learning Center				
Category 10 - Site Operations				
4300	Revenue-Self Operated	59,500.00	59,500.00	62,147.85
4450	Donations	500.00	500.00	5,380.00
	Category 10 - Site Operations Totals	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$67,527.85
	Activity 881 - Farm Learning Center Totals	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00	\$67,527.85
Location 113 - Wolcott Totals		\$67,600.00	\$67,600.00	\$67,963.85
Function 8 - Operations Totals		\$67,600.00	\$67,600.00	\$67,963.85
REVENUE TOTALS		\$67,600.00	\$67,600.00	\$67,963.85



EXPENSE

Function 8 - Operations

Location 113 - Wolcott

Activity 880 - Interpretive Center/Mill				
Category 10 - Site Operations				
9020	Part Time Wages	38,375.00	38,375.00	6,414.15
9024	PT Benefits Pd for Emps	3,550.00	3,550.00	633.51
9110	Operating Supplies	4,400.00	4,400.00	1,319.72
9130	Tools/Equipment	4,700.00	4,700.00	4,354.88
9150	Equipment Fuel	300.00	300.00	.00
9160	Uniforms	400.00	400.00	.00
9420	Outside Services	16,500.00	16,500.00	3,533.00
9430	Insurances	6,011.00	6,011.00	5,808.00
9440	Utilities	24,188.00	24,188.00	17,538.87
9450	Rents/Leases	6,000.00	6,000.00	.00
9510	Memberships	120.00	120.00	.00
9520	Employee Development	150.00	150.00	97.20
Category 10 - Site Operations Totals		\$104,694.00	\$104,694.00	\$39,699.33
Activity 880 - Interpretive Center/Mill Totals		\$104,694.00	\$104,694.00	\$39,699.33
Activity 881 - Farm Learning Center				
Category 10 - Site Operations				
9010	Full Time Wages	229,383.00	229,383.00	255,924.73
9011	Full Time Overtime	4,000.00	4,000.00	3,645.80
9013	FT Benefits Pd to Emps	19,220.00	19,220.00	22,760.28
9014	FT Benefits Pd for Emps	137,655.00	137,655.00	170,325.87
9020	Part Time Wages	163,260.00	163,260.00	134,675.49
9021	Part Time Overtime	400.00	400.00	.00
9024	PT Benefits Pd for Emps	14,768.00	14,768.00	12,849.75
9110	Operating Supplies	74,600.00	74,600.00	59,424.93
9130	Tools/Equipment	8,900.00	8,900.00	15,717.78
9140	Chemicals	10,000.00	10,000.00	15,116.48
9150	Equipment Fuel	700.00	700.00	.00
9160	Uniforms	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,344.09
9420	Outside Services	70,250.00	70,250.00	72,642.30
9430	Insurances	3,022.00	3,022.00	2,919.71
9440	Utilities	34,188.00	34,188.00	33,218.50
9450	Rents/Leases	1,250.00	1,250.00	175.00
9510	Memberships	1,000.00	1,000.00	334.00
9520	Employee Development	2,500.00	2,500.00	586.50
Category 10 - Site Operations Totals		\$777,096.00	\$777,096.00	\$802,661.21
Activity 881 - Farm Learning Center Totals		\$777,096.00	\$777,096.00	\$802,661.21
Location 113 - Wolcott Totals		\$881,790.00	\$881,790.00	\$842,360.54
Function 8 - Operations Totals		\$881,790.00	\$881,790.00	\$842,360.54
EXPENSE TOTALS		\$881,790.00	\$881,790.00	\$842,360.54

LAND AND FACILITIES

The Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center are both located within the 2850-acre Wolcott Mill Metropark. Wolcott Mill Metropark is in Macomb County, in southeast Michigan. It is approximately halfway between M-59 and the Lapeer County border. This is the largest Metropark in the system to be located solely within one municipality, in this case Ray Township. At its northernmost extent Wolcott Mill Metropark reaches 31 Mile, its eastern boundary is Ray Center Road, to the west it nearly reaches Romeo Plank, and to the south it extends to 26 Mile. The park is situated on the North Branch of the Clinton River. Wolcott Mill Metropark consists of 4 main points of interest. The Farm Center and Historic Center are used for educational programming and are the focus of this plan. Camp Rotary is used for group camping, and equestrian shows and riding events, and the North Branch Trails (formerly the golf course) are a paved walking trail system that crosses back and forth over the Clinton River. The main office for Wolcott Mill Metropark is located at the Farm Center, and the operational duties are covered out of that office, as well as the park office of Stony Creek Metropark. The Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center facilities will be laid out in detail in the Mechanics section of this document.



MARKETS

PRODUCT, AUDIENCE AND VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Who is our audience and how do we generate and respond to demand?

Demographics of Macomb County

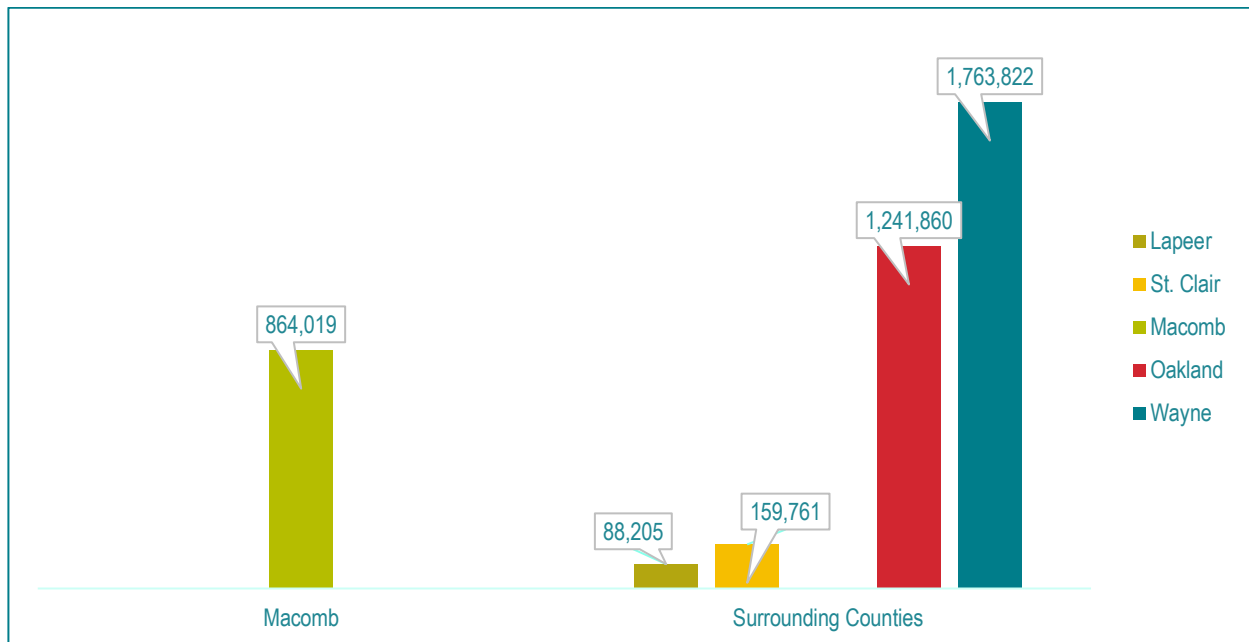
- Demographics of Macomb County
- Population of county – 864,019 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- Persons per square mile – 1755 (2010 Census), 1803 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- % ethnicity/race – 2010 Census and 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

	2010 Census	2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates
White	% 85.4	%82.1
Black	% 8.6	%11
Native American	% .3	%.33
Asian	% 3	%3.7
Other	% 2.7	%2.85

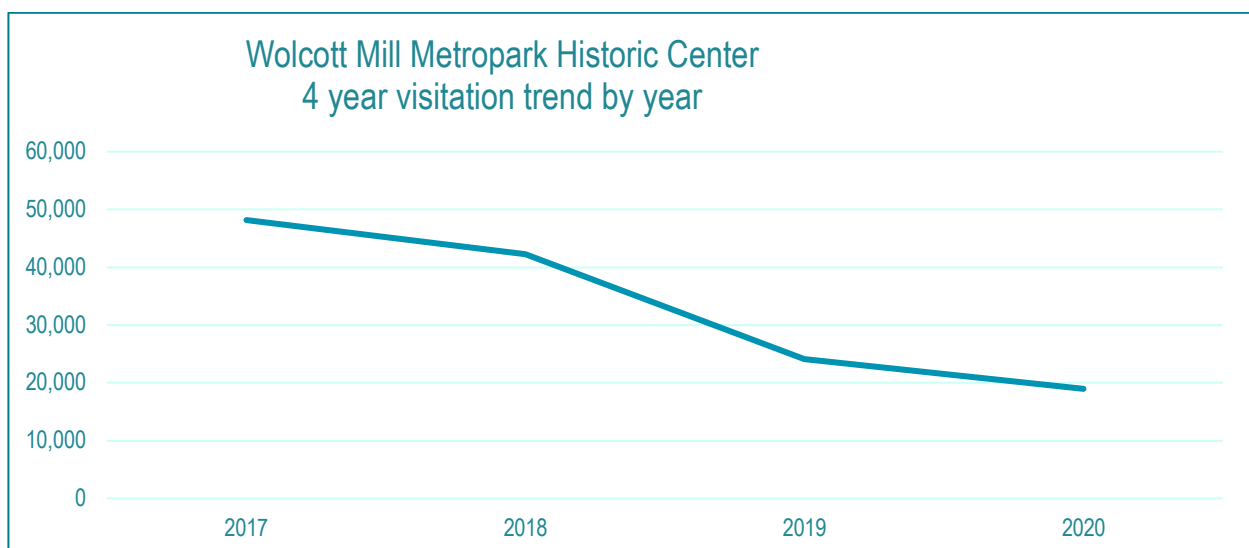
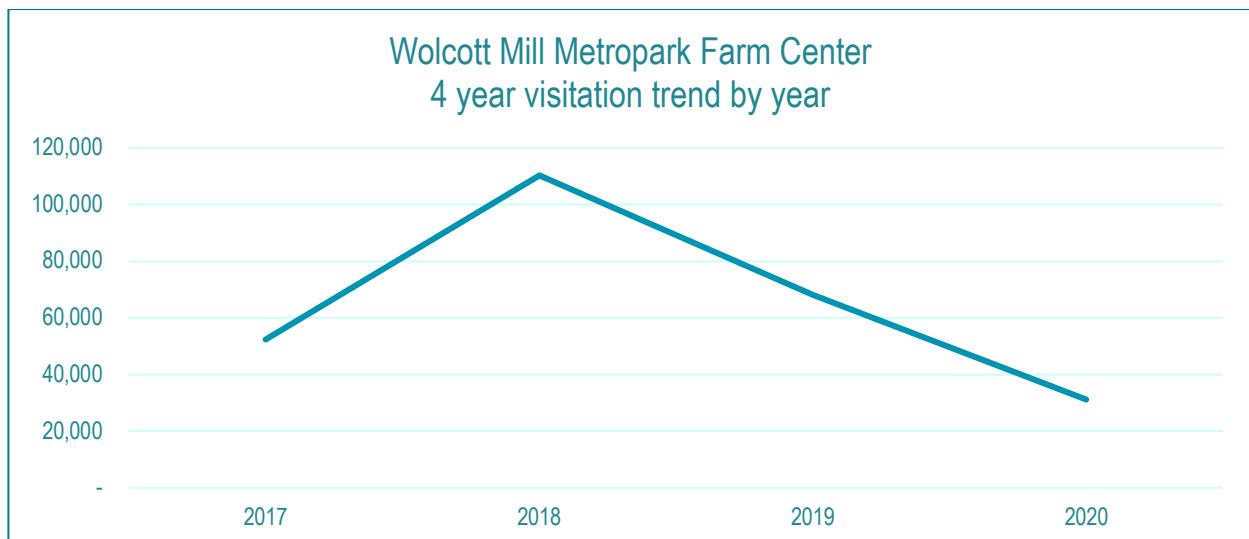
- % age 65 and older – 137,311, % 15.89 (2017 American Community Survey)
- # of school aged children – 158,057 (2017 American Community Survey)
- % High school graduate or higher - % 89.3 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- % Bachelor's degree of higher - %24.2 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- Median household income - \$53, 175 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)
- % Persons below poverty level - % 11.8 (2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates)



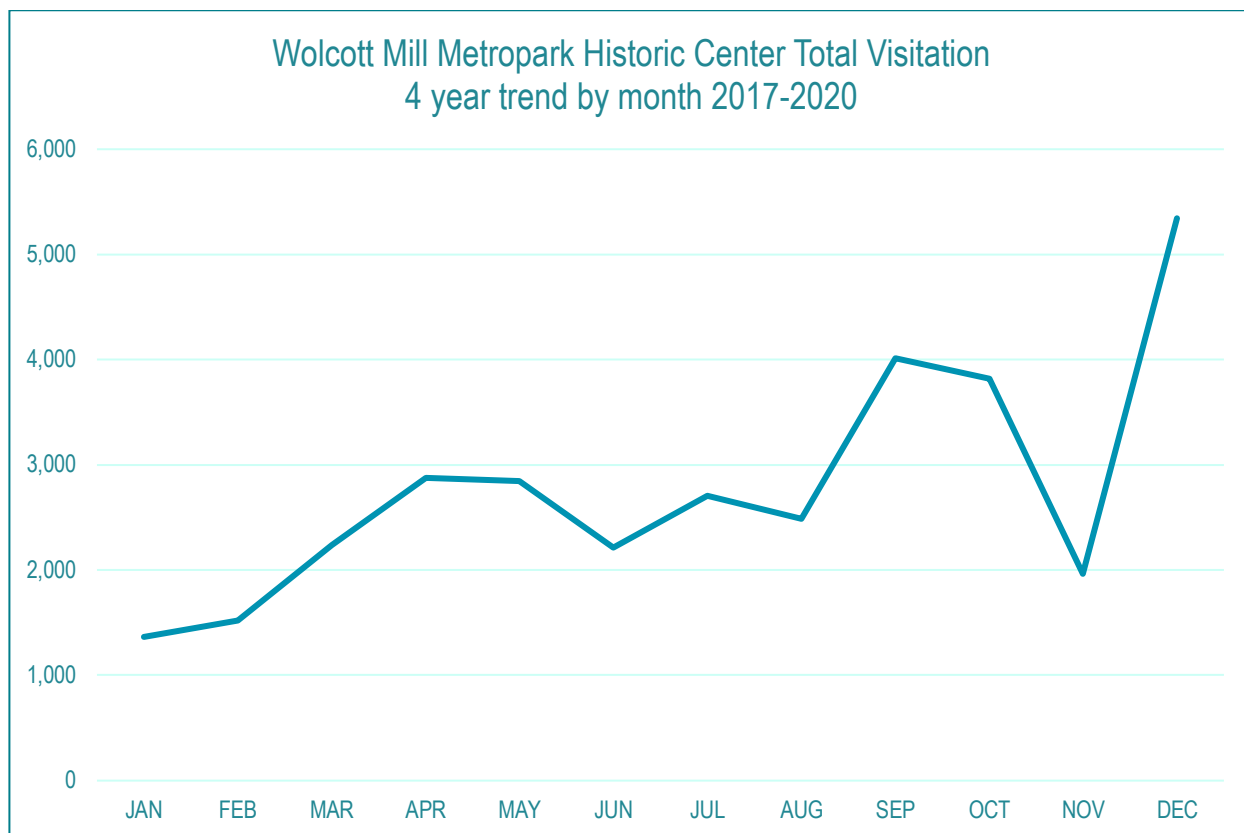
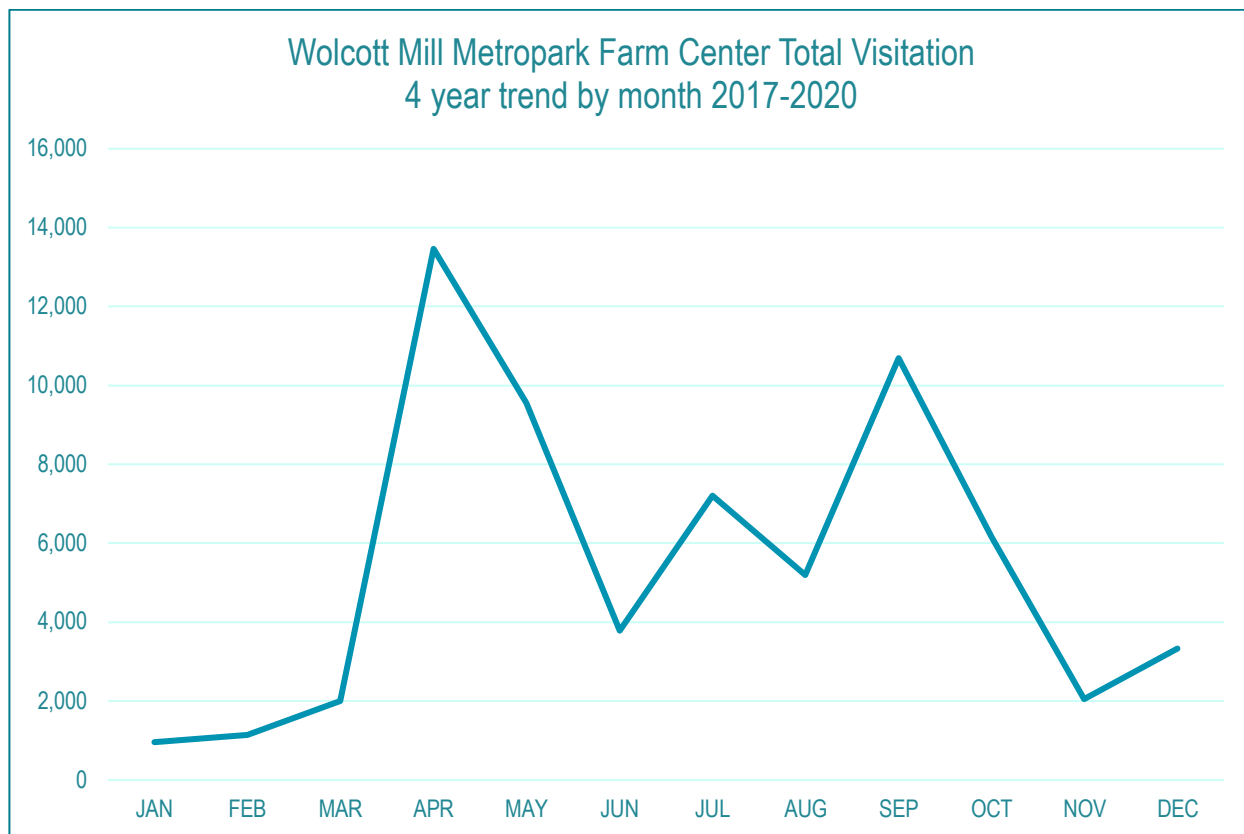
Regional Population



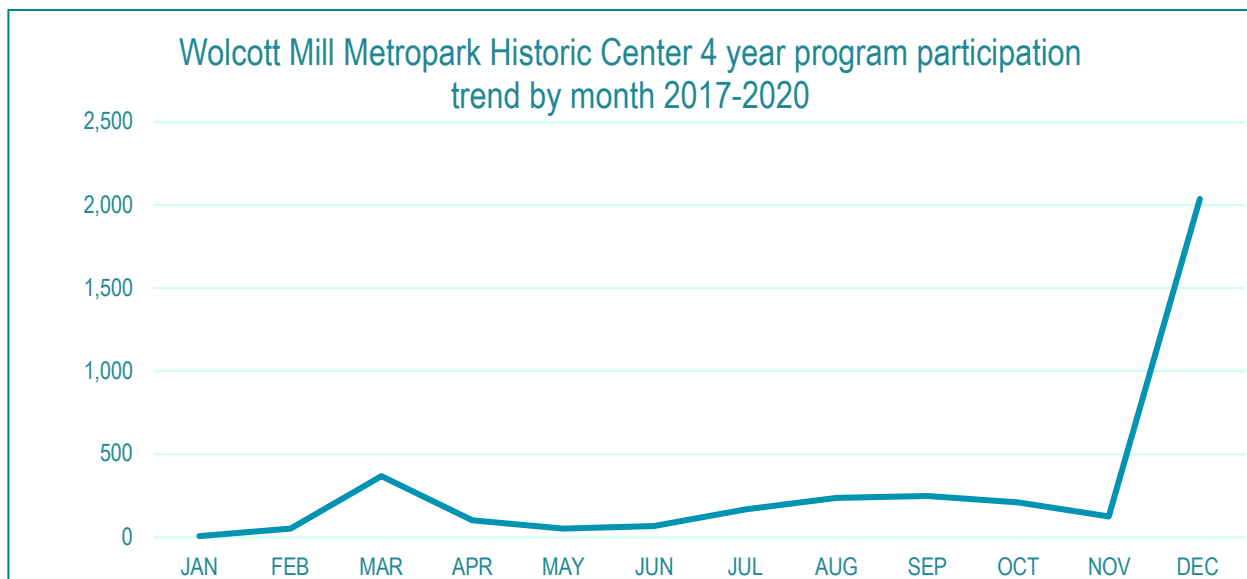
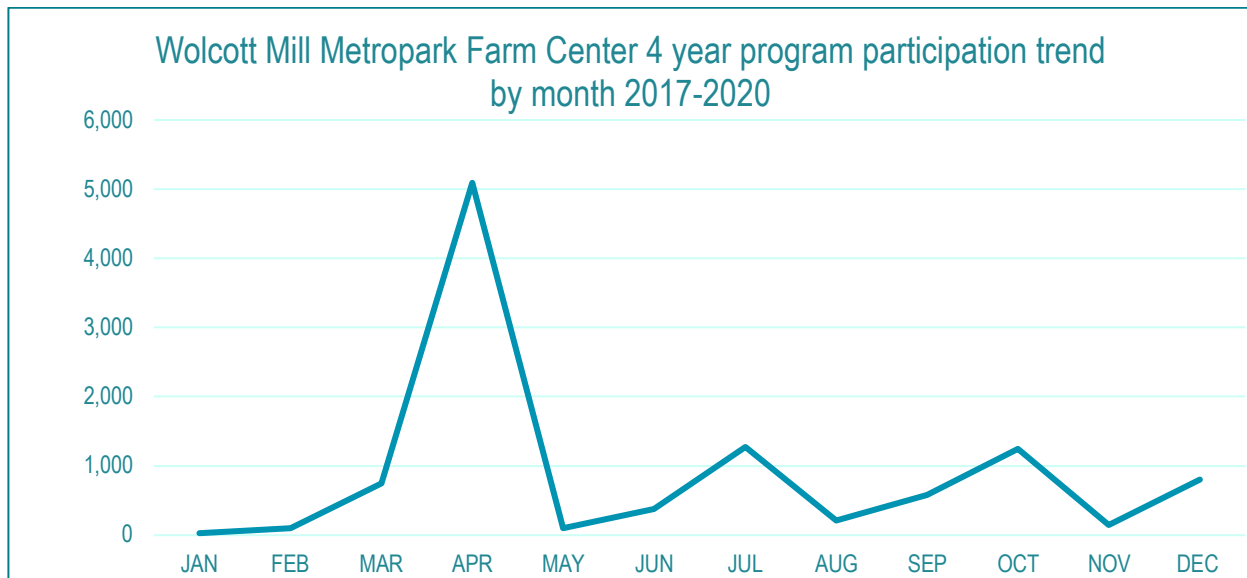
Visitation (4-year average)



Trends by Month



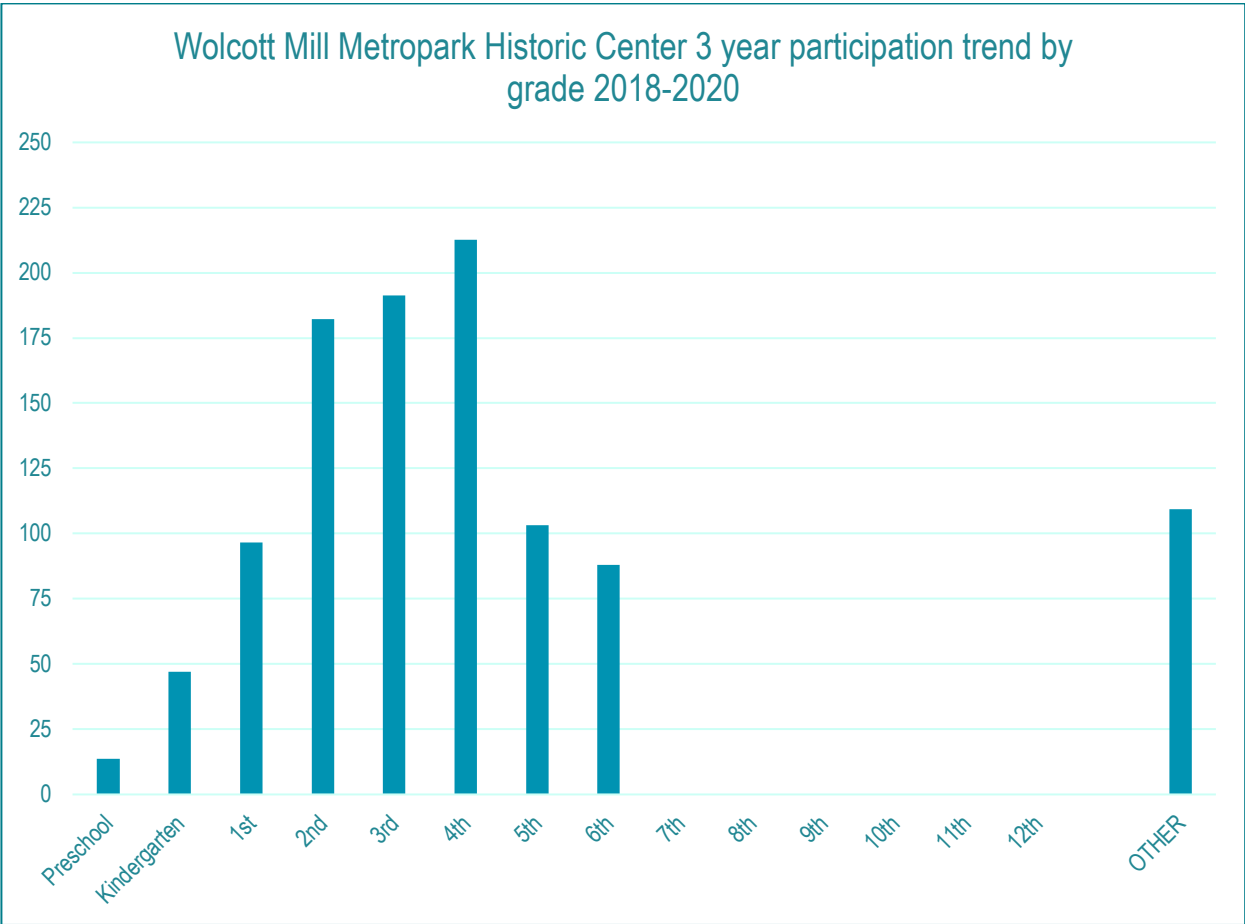
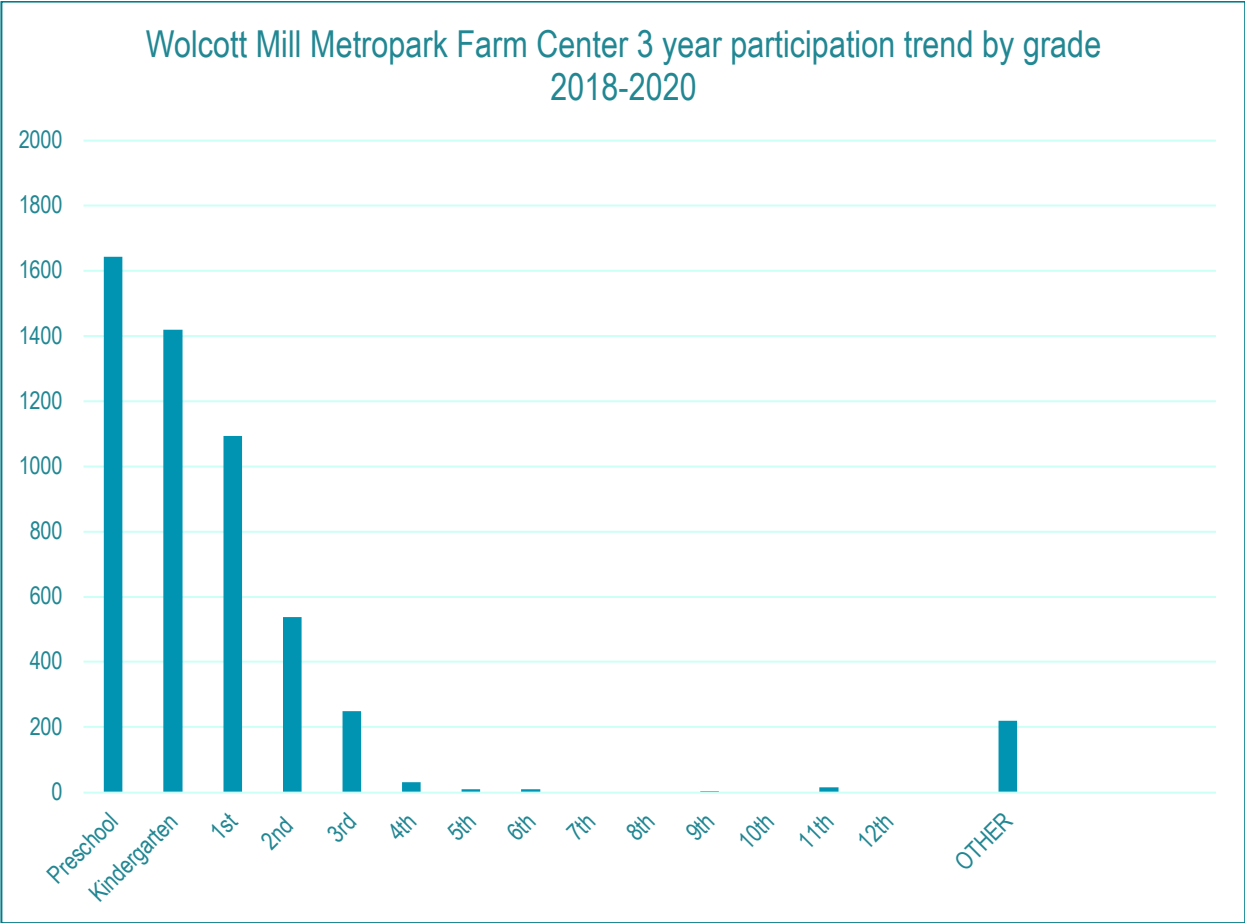
Program Attendance Trends by Month



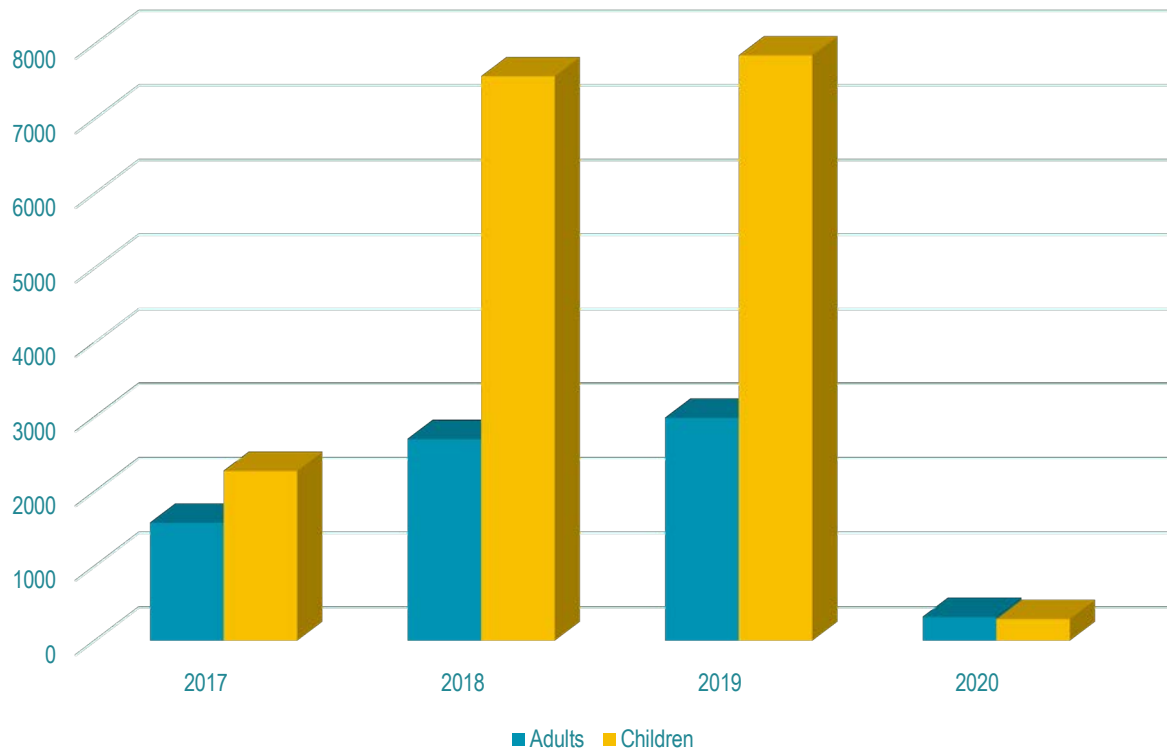
Who uses Wolcott Mill Farm and Historic Centers?

A 3-year analysis of Program Participants from 2018, 2019, and 2020

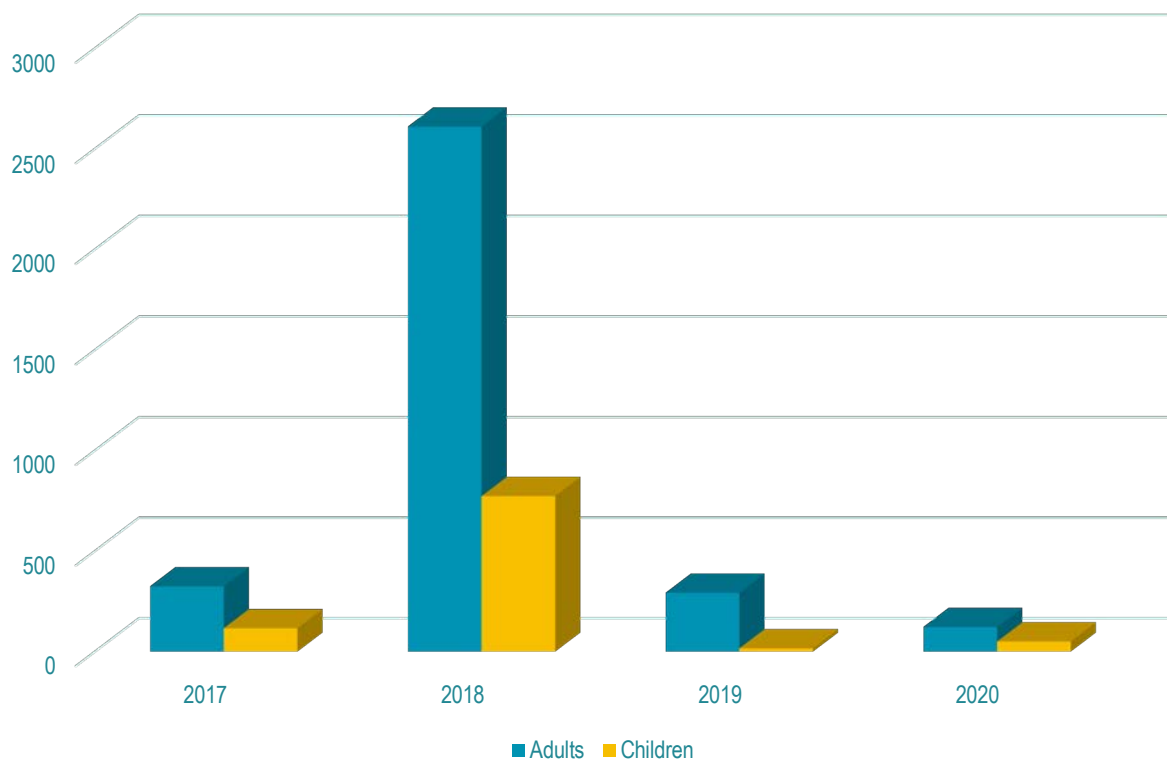
According to point of sale records, and Interpretive Services monthly report data, the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center sees an average yearly attendance of 77,000 patrons while the Historic Center is visited by 38,000 patrons each year. Visitation is made up of 3 main characteristics: General Public Use, School Field Trips, and Public Programming. On average, 72% of the visitation to the Farm Center is general public use, with 28% of attendance being for field trips or public programs. The Historic Center sees 81% of its visitors due to general public use, with 19% of attendees visiting for school field trips or public programming. The primary age range for school field trips to the Farm Center is preschool through second grade, while most field trips to the Historic center are for 2nd through 4th grade.



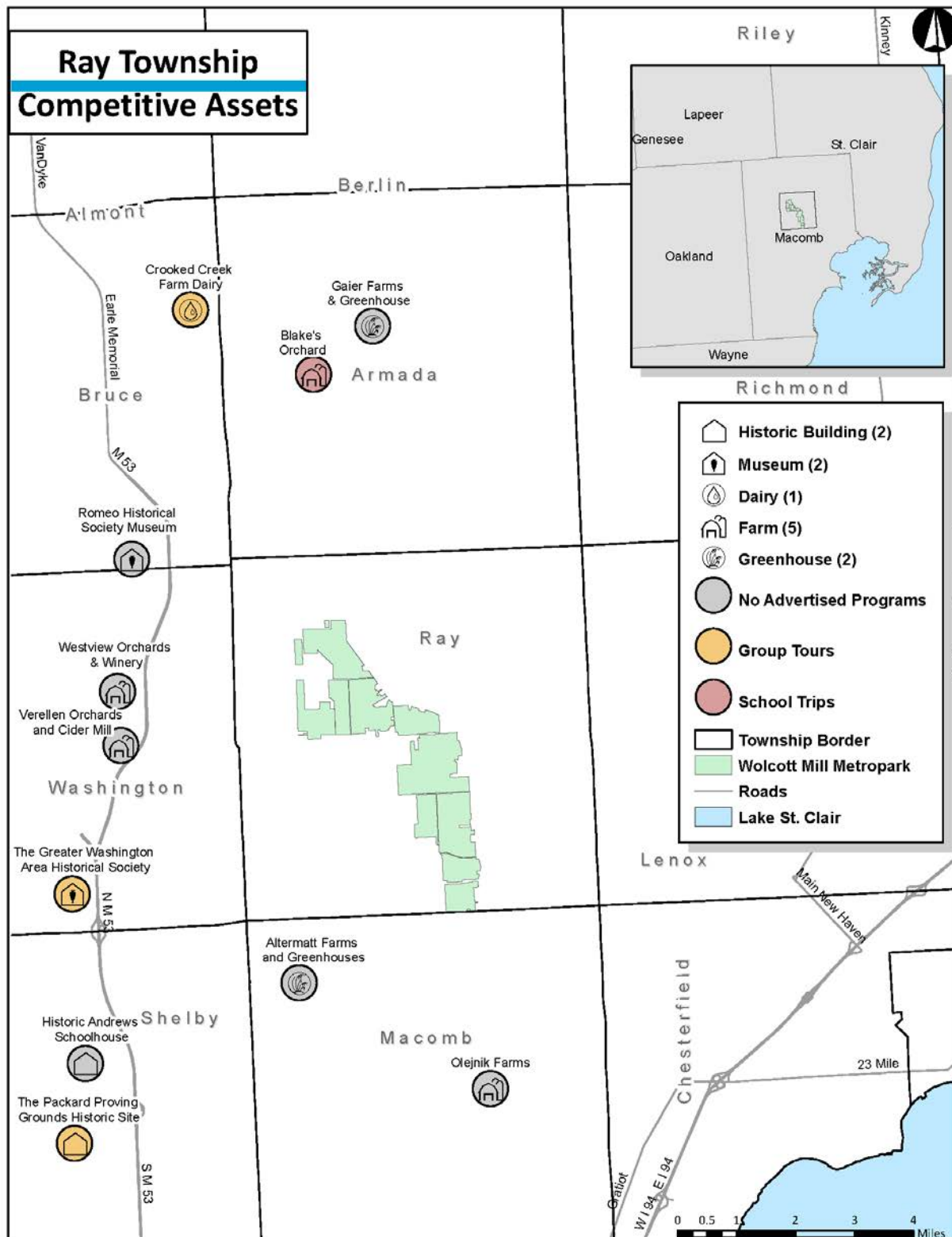
Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center 4 year program participation trend
Adults vs Children 2017-2020

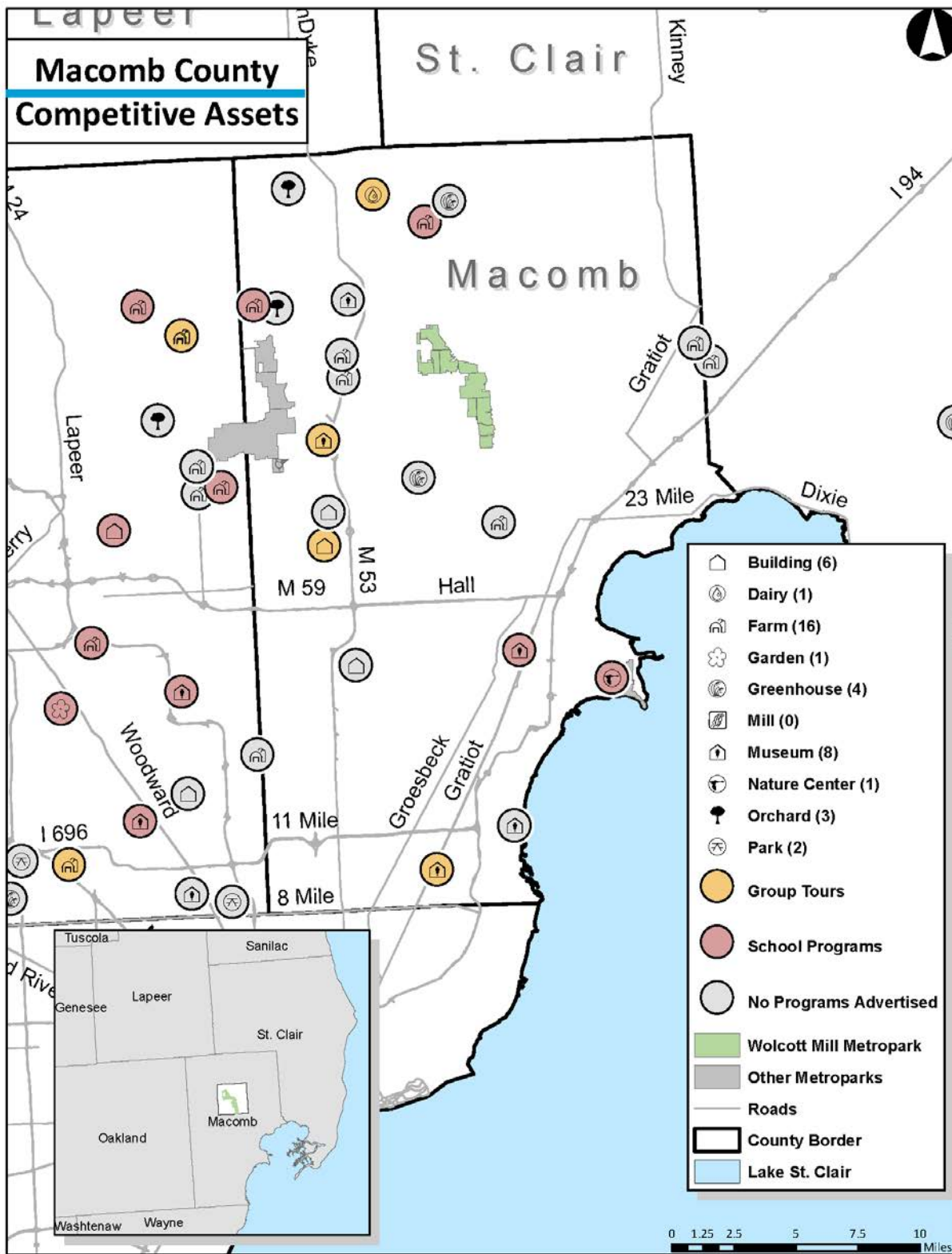


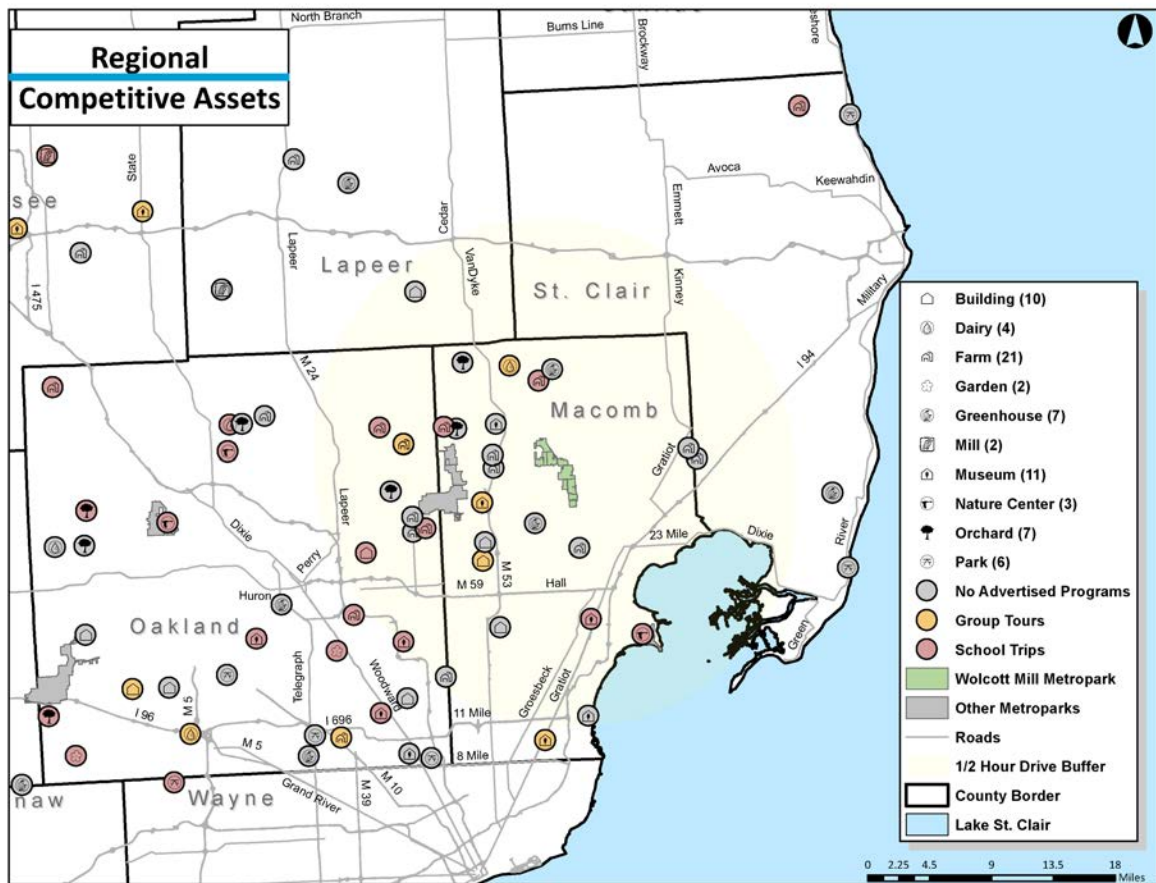
Wolcott Mill Metropark Historic Center 4 year program participation trend Adults vs Children 2017-2020



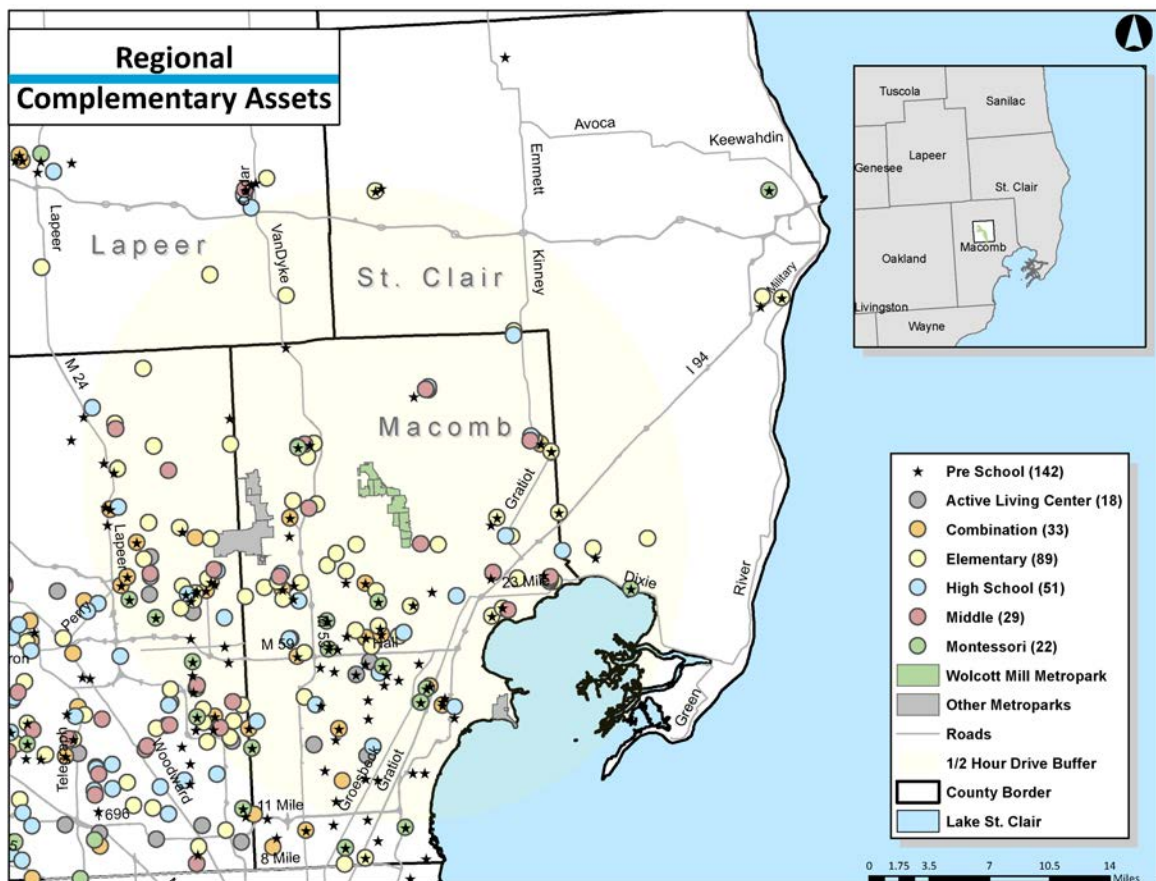
Other Attractions in Region

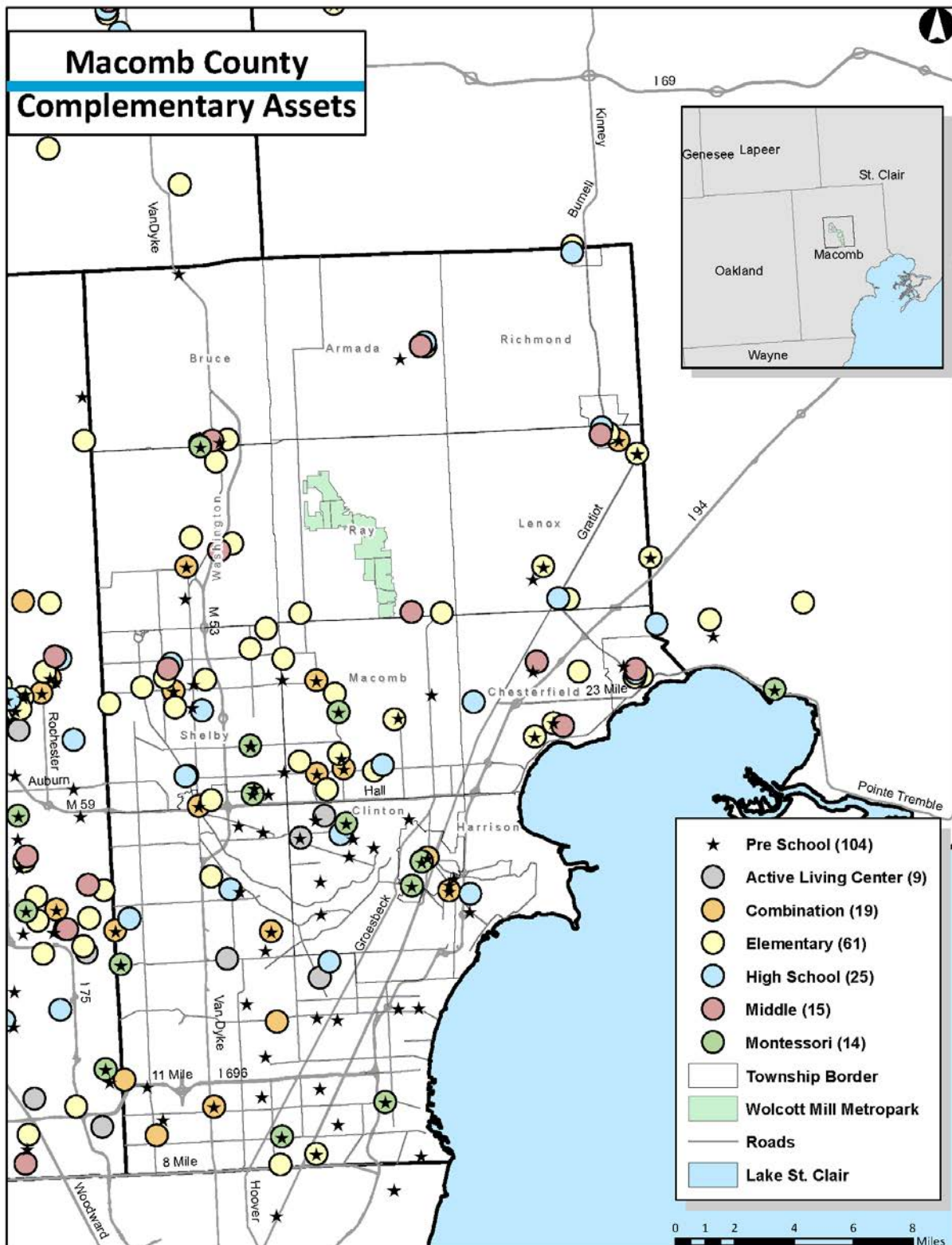






Interpretive/Educational Organizations





MAP CATEGORY KEY

No Advertised Programs:

The facility's web site did not overtly advertise or list options for scheduling group tours or school trips.

Group Tours:

The facility's web page offered information and/or a contact for scheduling group tours but did not specifically mention arrangements for youth field trips.

School Trips:

The facility's web page specifically noted availability of scheduling trips for school and/or scouting groups.

Active Living Center:

Offers independent living for active older adults.

Elementary:

School for grades Kindergarten through 5th, generally.

Middle:

School for grades 6th through 8th, generally.

Combination:

School offering a combination of elementary and middle school grades ranging from Kindergarten to 10th grade, generally K or PreK to 8th grade.

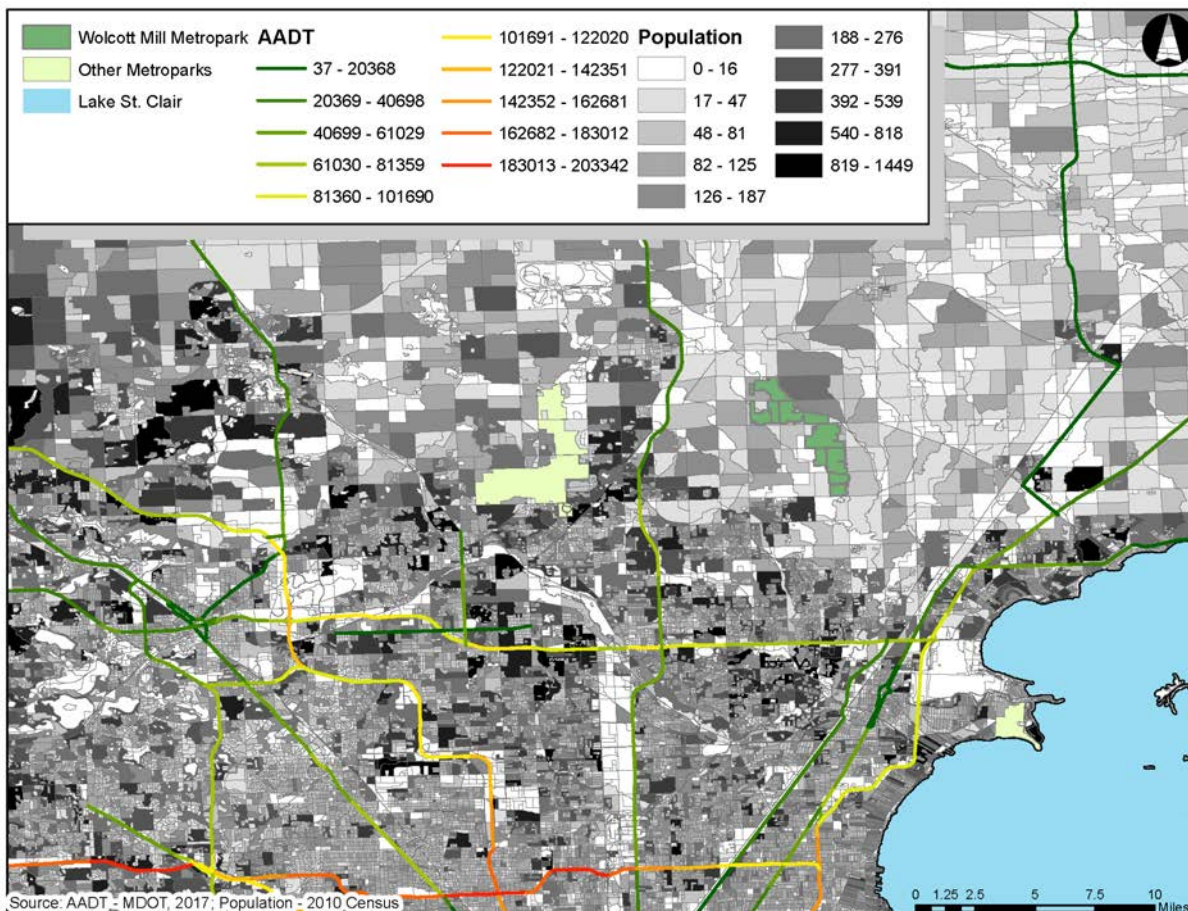
Montessori:

School offering the Montessori style of learning for various ages starting at PreK.

Pre School:

Since preschools are often, but not always co-located with older grades, a star over any of the above school categories indicates that they offer a preschool program at that school location.

Travel Patterns and Location



Suggestions to Reach Current Markets More Effectively

- Continuously update our Park Website to reflect current details of the facilities and what to expect.
- Work with the marketing department to boost our features on social media to keep our visitors up to date on what is going on at the Farm and Historic Center.
- Update exterior interpretive signage to allow visitors the ability to learn as they tour the farm instead of only during a program.
- Create visitor surveys to gauge what our current visitors would be interested in learning about or seeing on subsequent visits.
- Create separate email lists for general public and school groups to target programming and educational opportunities to our different user groups.
- Increase virtual content to keep visitors engaged in what happens on the farm when they can't visit in person.
- Increase on site advertisement of upcoming programs and events.

Suggestions to Reach New Markets

- Collaborate with the community outreach interpreter to develop programming to reach audiences that have not been to our facility before.
- Reach out to local school districts who have not visited us in the past to share our current programming options and tours.
- Work with the marketing department to get more social media and website coverage for events taking place on the farm.
- Establish relationships with other agriculture groups to help build working relationships and increase our reach in southeast Michigan.
- Establish a list of local publications where we can advertise programs and special events.
- Improve roadway signage to direct more people, who would normally pass by, to the facilities
- Work with other Farm learning Centers to create unique agricultural experiences that can be shared with new audiences
- Leverage visitor ship from other facilities to share experiences across Interpretive Centers



MESSAGE

APPROACH AND SCOPE OF INTERPRETATION

What message does every visitor take home?

Significant Features of Resource

Wolcott Mill Metropark is 2850 acres of natural areas that follow the path of the Clinton River in Macomb county. The entirety of the park is located within Ray Township, making it the only Metropark in the system to be located solely within one municipality. The following lists consist of some of the most prominent natural and human made features of Wolcott Mill Metropark

Natural Features

At its northernmost extent Wolcott Mill reaches 31 Mile, its eastern boundary is Ray Center Road, to the west it nearly reaches Romeo Plank, and to the south it extends to 26 Mile. The park is situated on the North Branch of the Clinton River. Comprised of forest and farm land, much of Wolcott Mill Metropark remains undeveloped. This history of this community as an agricultural hub means that the land which makes up the areas of Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center are uniquely adapted to tell the story of agriculture due to its heritage.

Human-made Features

The Horse Barn and Dairy Barn located at the Farm Center were built in 1918 and serve as reminders of the long, important history of agriculture in southeast Michigan. Not originally part of the Frederick Beech Wolcott Property, the land and buildings were acquired from various other families when Wolcott Mill Metropark was founded. This fully functioning dairy farm allows visitors, including many children, to learn about agricultural practices and the process of bringing food from the farm to the table. With baby goats, sheep, and pigs born every spring, it also allows visitors to experience up-close the farm animals they may only see from a distance.

Farm Center Area

- 100 Acres for livestock and pasture
- 150 acres in field crops (Corn, Wheat, Soybeans, Alfalfa, Pumpkins)
- Farm House/Restrooms/Office
- Dairy Barn
- Sheep Barn
- Horse Barn
- Chicken Barn
- Greenhouse
- Playground
- 2 picnic shelters

The Historic Center is the location for the grist mill that gives this park its name and dates to the mid-1800s, when milling was an essential industry in Michigan and Macomb County. This grist mill, built in 1845 and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was originally owned by one of the important early families in the county, the Freemans, and passed through several other hands before being sold to Frederick Beech Wolcott in 1878. Wolcott modernized the mill and created a successful business selling Old Times flour sacks. During his ownership, Wolcott restored the appearance of the mill, upgraded to a turbine, and later electricity, for power, and added an improved roller system in 1890. The surrounding buildings were built in the following years, consisting of barns, storehouses, an equipment repair shop, a large structure that served as a waiting room, and a two-story white frame family house, where the Wolcott family lived until 1969. After his death in 1921, the Wolcott children continued operation of the mill, converting to electrical power and selling flour to bakeries in Detroit. The mill closed in 1968, was briefly planned as an agricultural campus for Macomb Community College, suffered vandalism and the removal of the house structure, and was transferred to HCMA ownership in 1979.

Historic Center Area

- 10 Acres
- 3.75 miles of nature trails
- Gate House
- Historic Grist Mill
- Cob Building
- Lumber Barn
- Long Barn
- Car Barn
- Sugar Shack
- Restrooms
- Blacksmith Shop
- Maintenance Building
- Gazebo

Central Theme

Guiding principle for all interpretation

The Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center has the unique ability to tell the story of agriculture in the Ray community from the 1840's until present day. From historic agricultural impacts of the grist mill, to the modern agriculture practices at the Farm Center, Wolcott Mill Metropark can showcase southeast Michigan agriculture like very few facilities in the state can.

The following central theme is suggested to guide all interpretation at the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center.

Agriculture sustains families and communities by providing fundamental resources essential to the well-being of all generations.

Subthemes and Storylines

Development of central theme

The central theme of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center can further be expanded into four subtheme categories, which utilize both facilities unique characteristics to paint a full picture of agriculture in Southeast Michigan.

1. **Food Science:** Agriculture is the science of cultivating the soil for the growing of crops and the rearing of animals, to provide food, wool, and other products essential to the survival of many species.
 - a. From Animal products, to fruits, vegetables, and grains, agriculture is responsible for an enormous variety of food items that impact both people and animals.
 - b. People are increasingly curious about where the food they consume come from.
 - c. Farms not only grow food for human consumption, but also grow crops to feed the livestock that reside on the farm.
 - d. The journey from farm to table is different for every item grown on the farm and the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center are uniquely equipped to showcase that journey.
2. **Environmental Stewardship:** The Agriculture Industry relies on a strong relationship with the land and works diligently to help protect this vital resource.
 - a. The Historic Grist Mill utilized the Clinton River to power the machines that turned grains into flour, meal, and feed.
 - b. Farmers rely on the land to grow crops and raise animals and must take precautions to protect the land from erosion, pollution, and overuse.
 - c. The Farm Center is MAEAP Certified
 - d. Nutrient management is critical to protect the land and water near agriculture sites.
3. **Technology and Innovation:** As populations increase, the agriculture industry has had to adapt to growing demands by embracing technological advancements and innovative processes.
 - a. Farmers can produce more products using less inputs by embracing technological advances.
 - b. As technology changed, the Wolcott Family adapted their business to embrace technology, allowing them to remain competitive in the milling industry.
4. **Agricultural Recreation:** Agriculture provides opportunities for families and communities to come together to celebrate and build strong social connections.
 - a. Many of our social gatherings have roots tied to farming and special events like harvest time.
 - b. Despite its location in Southeast Michigan, Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center can offer a less busy space for families to gather in a rural setting.

MECHANICS

BLENDING OF SITE, FACILITIES, AND INTERPRETATION

How can we create the best visitor experience?

Existing Site Resources

The Wolcott Mill Metropark Interpretive Department, Maintenance Department, and Operations Department conducted an evaluation of the various buildings and structures at the Farm Center and Historic Center to identify and prioritize issues needing to be addressed. Each facility was rated on a scale of Excellent to Poor based on the current condition of each area, as well as projected need for maintenance, repair, or replacement. In addition, anticipated needs for upgrades were identified as they related to the goals and objectives outlined in later portions of this plan.

The scale grades are as follows:

Excellent: Structure has been recently constructed or remodeled. No obvious signs of wear. Utilities are functioning properly. There are no leaks, broken fixtures, or out of date parts. No repairs are anticipated within 10 years and the only inputs needed would be for general wear and tear.

Good: Overall structure is in good shape. Yearly maintenance keeps up with wear and tear. Structure should be monitored for changing conditions. Plans should be in place to have funds available in 5-10 years for repairs or replacement.

Fair: Structure is sound, but aging. In general, these items are repaired yearly and should be considered for replacement as budget will allow. These items should be repaired or replaced in 3-5 years to avoid failure which could pose a safety hazard to the public, staff, or animals.

Poor: In need of repair in the next 1-3 years. Outdated, broken, in dis-repair, or otherwise not functioning properly. These projects should be outlined in yearly budget and addressed accordingly.

Buildings

Farm Center

The Farm Center area encompasses not only the interpretive center but the Park Office for Wolcott Mill Metropark. It features several large buildings that were once part of an original farmstead, as well as new Farm Office constructed in 2005 that serves as the operational headquarters for Wolcott Mill Metropark, as well as houses the interpretive department offices for the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center. Several of the buildings at the Farm Center were constructed in the early to mid-1900's and have been repurposed when the Huron Clinton Metroparks created this interpretive center in the 1990's.

- Farm House
 - Overall Structure – Excellent
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - HVAC – Excellent
 - Needs
 - Upstairs finished for work space, employee space, and office space

- Drywall Repairs and Paint
 - Electrical and Lighting maintenance and upgrades (LED and Display Reconfiguration)
 - Duct work maintenance
 - Flooring replaced
 - Doors Replaced
 - Front Office Reconfiguration and Reception work space, desk addition, and storage.
- Milk Barn – Upper Dairy Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good/Fair
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair
 - HVAC – Fair/poor
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting Upgrades
 - Two Steel interior doors replaced
 - Two Exterior Doors replaced
 - Two New Furnace Units
 - Hot Water Tank Replacement
 - Floor Gutter Repaired
 - Building Gutters Replaced
 - Shingles Repaired/roof replaced
 - Silos repaired
- Old Milk House
 - Overall Structure – Fair
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair
 - Needs
 - New Front Door
 - Stone wall repairs
 - Electrical and Lighting Upgrades
- Loafing Shed behind Dairy Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting Upgrades
- Free Stall Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting upgrades
 - Roll Up Curtains Replaced
- Sheep Barn
 - Overall Structure – Poor
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair/Poor
 - Needs
 - Full Replacement – The foundation is leaning out and the whole structure leans to one side. Roof Ridge is not straight
 - Shingles are missing from the roof
- Chicken Coop
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Needs
 - Two Steel Doors
 - Replace rotten boards and netting on chicken runs
 - Interior Roof remodel, and cleaning (To help remove mice infestation and reduce mite problems)

- Greenhouse
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - HVAC – Excellent
 - Needs
 - Two New Service Doors
- Maintenance Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Excellent
 - Needs
 - Shelving
 - Repair roof leaks
 - Upgraded air compressor for equipment maintenance
 - Wash pad for vehicle cleaning and maintenance
- Horse barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Heating Tube – Poor
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting
 - Heating Tube Removed
 - Additional shade options for horses.
- Tack Shed
 - Overall Structure – Excellent
 - Electrical and Lighting – Excellent
 - Needs
 - None currently
- Horse Run in shed
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Needs
 - New Metal Siding
 - Waterer upgrades
 - Additional sheds required for the number of horses
- Heifer Run in Shed
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Needs
 - Nothing Currently – General maintenance
- Cow Run in Shed
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Needs
 - Nothing Currently – General Maintenance
- Upper Pavilion
 - Overall Structure – Excellent
 - Needs
 - Electrical Upgrades
 - Cracks and Joints filled on concrete
- Lower Pavilion
 - Overall Structure – Excellent
 - Needs
 - Cracks and Joints filled on the concrete
 - Picnic tables replaced

Farm Center Anticipated Facility Repair Needs Timeline

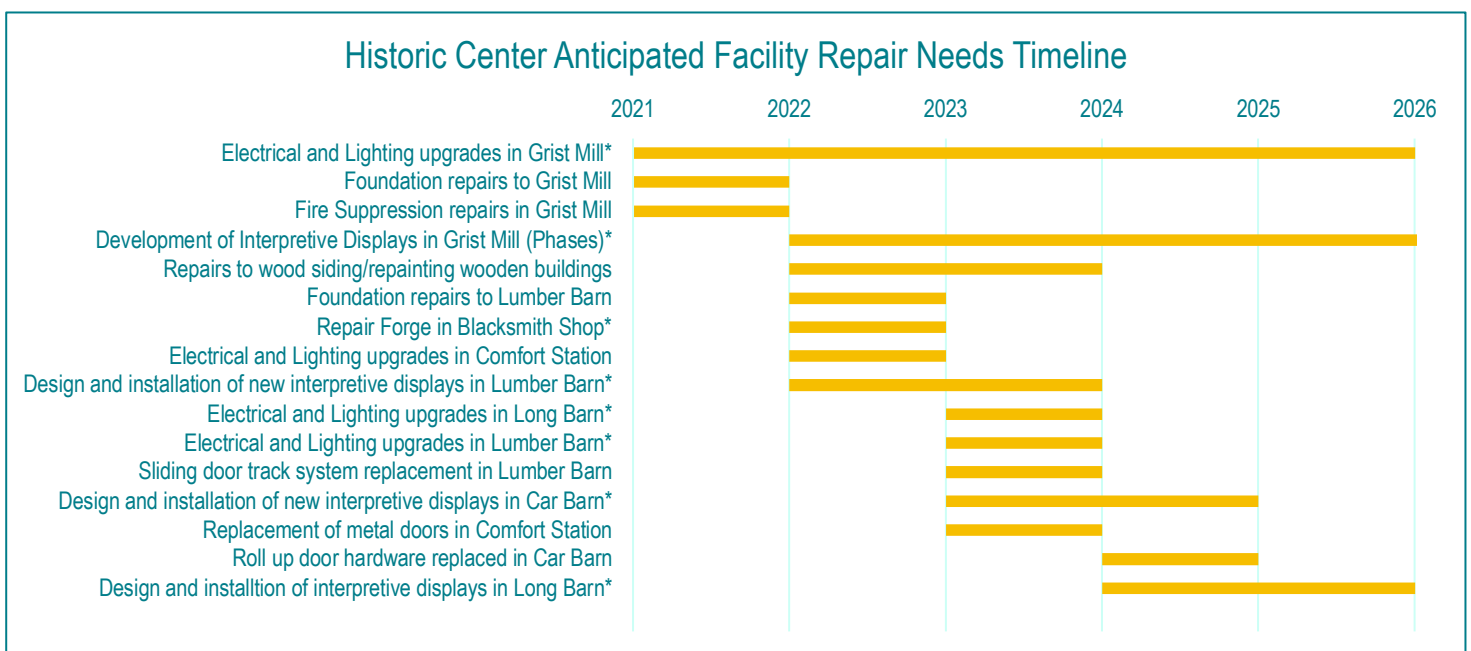


Historic Center

The Historic Center area consists of an 1847 Grist Mill and the 10 surrounding buildings. The buildings were constructed in the 1800's and early 1900's except for the restroom building which was constructed when Wolcott Mill Metropark opened in the early 1990's. Most of the buildings are constructed of wood with stone foundations and have been adapted over time to fulfil the changing needs of the milling business, as well as for use as an educational facility.

- Grist Mill – built in 1847
 - Overall Structure – Fair
 - Electrical and Lighting –Fair
 - HVAC – Good
 - Needs
 - Electrical and lighting upgrades
 - Foundation issues, and voids under basement floor
 - Fire Suppression needs to be upgraded
 - Installation of professional educational exhibits
- Lumber Barn
 - Overall structure – Fair
 - Electrical and lighting – Poor
 - Needs –
 - Electrical and Lighting upgrades
 - Repairs to crumbling stone foundation
 - Sliding door track system
 - Installation of professional educational exhibits
- Long Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting upgrades
 - Installation of professional educational exhibits
- Car Barn
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Needs
 - Roll up doors adjusted, and new hardware installed
 - Re-design of the interior to allow for better showcasing of historic cars and the installation of educational exhibits.
- Small Shack
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Poor
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting upgrades: Install outlets and light fixtures
- Comfort Station
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - HVAC – Good
 - Needs
 - Lighting upgrades: LED
 - One Interior Metal Door: Due to Rotting
 - One Exterior Metal Door: Due to Rotting

- Gazebo
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Needs
 - New Roof
- Blacksmith Shop
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Needs
 - New Windows
 - Repairs to Vent Hood
 - Repairs to Forge
- Gator Garage
 - Overall Structure – Fair
 - Electrical and Lighting – Fair
 - Needs
 - Electrical and Lighting upgrades
 - Roll Up door adjusted, and new hardware installed
 - Rotten Boards replaced on exterior
- Gate House
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Electrical and Lighting – Good
 - Needs
 - Nothing Currently
- Cob Building
 - Overall Structure – Good
 - Lighting and Electrical – Good
 - Needs
 - New Steel Entrance Door
- Historic Mill Trails
- Excellent Shape. Mowed with Brush cutter in 2018 and widened. Need upgraded signage.



*Timelines for interpretive upgrades are subject to change based on the need for necessary repairs to the facility and the availability of funds. Maintenance and upkeep of the facilities will be prioritized while long term plans are developed for improvements to educational displays.

Landscaping

Farm Center

- Most of the landscaping at the farm center is in the area surrounding the farm house. The flower beds in front of the house and along the sidewalk approach to the house have been recently updated to include plantings of perennial flowers, that will bring a variety of color to the front of the facility. The size of the beds was shrunk to allow for easier maintenance, and sod was installed to fill in voids left by the flower bed removal.
- Flower pots or barrels can be used near barns and planted with annuals. Annual flowers are sourced from the Beyond the Seed Greenhouse.
- The gardens adjacent to the Green House are maintained by the Beyond the Seed 4-H Program and reflect the variety of programming that the group is doing.
- Needs:
 - Design a statement landscape bed in the green space in front of the dairy barn with a center piece (Either an antique tractor, Windmill, or Flag Pole) to provide a welcoming presence on approach to the farm. This will also help direct traffic towards the farm entrance and now up the service road
 - Install a gate at the service road entrance to keep pedestrians and cars from driving up walkways
 - Install a raised bed garden for field crops to use in demonstrations or for education to the general public upon visiting.
 - Trim the apple trees on site to encourage apple production and to showcase proper form and care.

Historic Center

- The Landscaping at the Historic Center consists primarily of hosta and daylilies. The Flower beds are random and in need of upgrading. Some of the flower beds next to buildings can be removed with no impact on aesthetics, and the beds that remain can be replanted with Historic or more period specific flower varieties. The flower bed around the gazebo is especially important due to its use as a wedding venue. Window boxes for the mill building have been used in the past, but instead of plastic boxes, they should be constructed of materials that better represent the time period of the buildings. The area near the gate house could be redeveloped with a more welcoming landscape bed that draws the attention of the guests upon first approach.
- Additional trees can be planted on the grounds where appropriate.
- Needs
 - Remove some of the overgrown flower beds around the Sugar Shack and the Gate House
 - Redesign remaining flower beds to increase perennials and add more heritage flowers and plants
 - Add flower boxes made of appropriate materials to the windows of the mill near the entrance.
 - Plant additional Sugar Maple trees where appropriate.
 - Redesign landscape bed near the gazebo

Exhibits

Farm Center – Needs

The farm center has many informational signs throughout the facility. They are mostly hand painted signs, with a few printed signs scattered throughout. Many of the signs are outdated, or don't reflect current "Modern Agriculture" practices. The Farm House itself has a small educational area that does not have any

real direction or theme. There are agriculture items on display, however most are in the “Do Not Touch” category.

Overall the signage at the farm is in the same condition as the signage at the mill. The farm does have more signs present, as signs can be found in the Dairy Barn, Sheep Barn, and Chicken Coop, however most of the buildings would need updated signage to reflect a modern Farm Learning Facility. Updates to the Lobby area should be a priority to present a more welcoming impression and provide patrons clear direction on what they are going to experience on the farm.

Needs:

- Repair/replace outdated interior signage where needed
- Redesign draft horse barn storage room to increase interpretive space related to horses and horse power
- Redesign of lobby to display brochures and information for the patrons to easily access.
- Re-design office space to be more functional. Remove or repurpose educational signage where necessary.
- Add interactive displays in the Farm Office for children so that they can learn agriculture facts. (Can also serve as a quiet space for sensory friendly)
- Move appropriate historical agriculture items to the Historic Center for display
- Construct a new sugar shack to be used for Maple Syrup production and education using modern methods. Evaporator from Historic Center can be relocated or replaced with a larger unit.

Historic Center – Needs

All facilities have outdated signage. Most of the informative signage is printed on paper, laminated, and stapled to the wall or to display boards. The only area showing some type of professional sign development is the display boards in the Warehouse section of the Mill itself. The Lumber Barn is in serious need of updated educational signage. Currently the pictures displayed are in mis-matched frames, and the signs associated with them are printed, laminated, and stapled to the wall.

The interior of the mill suffers from outdated display cases, in addition to no apparent theme for education. Even the Point of Sale area should be updated to display information and products in a more appropriate manner.

Needs:

- Replace the equipment labeling signs in the Grist Mill.
- Update the Point of Sale/reception area to provide a more user-friendly area for check in, information, and sale of sundry items.
- Develop professional museum type displays for the Historic Center warehouse area, focusing on Agriculture, how the mill was used, and the contributions of the Wolcott Family to the Ray community and beyond.
- Redesign Lumber Barn displays based on the chosen theme of the barn or turn into storage/programming space
- Redesign Long Barn displays based on the chosen theme of that barn or turn into classroom space.
- Redesign Car barn space to display the antique trucks more appropriately. Update educational signage related to the cars to focus on technology in agriculture.
- Update Blacksmith shop to showcase blacksmithing tools and provide educational displays about how that technology was used on the site.
- Relocate Evaporator to the Farm Center in a new Sugar Shack. Maple sugaring at the historic center will be demonstrated with methods used during the era of the Grist Mill Operation

Outdoor Signage

Farm Center

Updated signage for the Farm Center is in progress. New identity signs for the barns, as well as entrance and exit signage were installed in 2019. Rules and regulations signs for entrance points, as well as hours of operation and time of programming was also a part of the sign upgrade package. Facility signs showing locations for check in, as well as location of restrooms were installed in front of the Farm Office. Old and outdated signage has been removed. A farm center map would also prove beneficial, and many patrons have asked for it.

Needs:

- Install interpretive signage for all the animal pens around the farm. (7 signs installed in 2021)
- Create a site map to be posted at the entrance to the farm showing where the buildings are located and listing rules and regulations
- Re-design other existing exterior signage not covered in the 2021 interpretive sign installation to make them consistent with the rest of the farm signage
- Create signage for field crops to be placed near the fields where various crops are growing. These can be rotated yearly based on crops in production.
- Develop walking path around the farm as well as to the crops for self-guided tours of the farm fields

Historic Center

In the spring of 2020, seven new Interpretive signs were added to the walk ways around the Historic Center and on the Mill Race Trail. These signs were paid for by a grant from the Four County Community Foundation. Signage topics include the History of the Grist Mill, the products produced at the mill, the history of the various outbuildings in the area, the location of the old Forest Home, and information about the significance of the Dam and the Mill Race to the grist mill's operation.

All buildings should have informational signs that depict their historic use and relation to the mill. In addition, outdoor displays such as the original Grist Stones need to be updated to allow the visitor to better see the display. Currently, the stones are sunk into the ground in an overgrown flower bed.

Needs:

- Update gate house area with a site map showcasing prominent features of the facility, hours of operation, and upcoming programming.
- Redesign the display for the grist mill stones
- Relocate Evaporator to the Farm Center in a new Sugar Shack. Maple sugaring at the historic center will be demonstrated with methods used during the era of the Grist Mill Operation

Visitor Experience Assessment and Recommendations

The Visitor Experience Model is comprised of 5 stages: Decision, Entry, Connection, Exit, Commitment. The following is a summary and evaluation of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center based on how visitors currently interact with each facility.

Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center has often been referred to as "The best kept secret in Macomb County". Many people are not familiar with our site, and even if they have visited one of our facilities, many patrons are not familiar with other parts of Wolcott Mill Metropark. Working with our marketing department to increase our advertisement will be key to increasing our attendance and getting the word out about our facilities. In addition, by working with our Community Outreach staff, we hope to reach a larger audience and to showcase all that Wolcott Mill Metropark has to offer. Wolcott is in a rural

area without much drive by traffic, so getting the word out through a variety of platforms will be key to garnering visitation.

Needs:

- Updated signage on the roads leading to the Farm or Historic Center to help guide people to the site.
- A site map so that visitors can see exactly what they will experience when they visit one of our sites
- Work with the Natural Resources Department to clear out overgrowth blocking the view of the Historic Center from its own parking lot. Many people are not aware of the buildings located on the other side of the river and will often mistake them for storage or off-limits sites.
- Work with marketing and IT to update our website to make it match current conditions
- Construction of a connector path between the Farm and Historic Center to make visitation of each facility easier to accommodate.

Entry

The entrance to the Farm Center is out in the open along Wolcott Rd, but the Farm Center Facility sign is set off the road behind a fence. The Farm Center is the only part of Wolcott Mill Metropark that has a permanent toll booth installed, and tolling is currently done on weekends and for special events. There are 2 areas to walk up to the Farm Center from the parking lot. A gravel path that is used as access for staff vehicles and service vehicles, and a concrete sidewalk. Frequently, visitors are confused as to which way to access the Farm Center, so improved signage, as well as gating off the service entrance, could help in the flow of pedestrians. New signs were installed in 2019 to identify the Farm Office, Dairy Barn, and Horse Barn, as well as to name the smaller barns like Chicken Coop and Sheep Barn. A Farm map sign would benefit visitors wanting to learn the lay of the land. The approach to the Dairy Barn is not very visible but is included in the upgraded sign package.

The entrance to the Historic Center is frequently missed by visitors not familiar with the area. The Historic Center sits on Wolcott Rd and is very visible to passersby, however the official parking lot is over 2 miles away. This causes confusion for people who pass by the building but don't know how to access it. There is a small employee parking lot off Wolcott Rd, but the public is discouraged from using that lot. Upon arrival to the main parking lot for the Historic Center, guests are greeted with beautiful views of the Clinton River, with a large bridge spanning the water, on the walk up to the Historic Center and surrounding buildings. There is little signage to direct visitors to the entry door of the Historic Center, and many people do not realize when the building is open. Improved signage at the gate house, as well as proper signage at the Historic Center, can better direct visitor traffic as they approach the building.

Needs:

- Update road signage to better direct patrons to the Historic Center
- Create "You are here" maps at each facility parking lot with directions to the other sites.
- Develop a connector trail to allow visitors to park in one facility and walk/bike/jog/take a wagon ride to another facility.
- Update Historic Center site maps
- Install brochure holders at each facility with promotional materials for the different centers
- Create a statement landscape bed with center focus piece near the walkway to the farm center to help guide patrons to the main entrance to the farm and not down the service road.
- Create a site plan of the farm center and a corresponding site map in both sign form and paper form. This will help guests navigate the farm grounds.

- Install muffler system on dairy barn vacuum pump to cut down on load noise at entrance to dairy barn.

Connections

The Farm Center demonstrates modern production agriculture, and although improved signage, displays, and programming are needed, visitors can take away an appreciation of the animals that live on the farm and their role within the food chain. Increasing awareness of the variety of animals, crops, and plants that are produced on the farm, and how they impact the everyday life of the visitors will lead to increased connections with agriculture through positive experiences.

The Historic Center is designed to evoke a sense of past when it comes to agriculture, and the history of the Grist Mill's impact on the agriculture industry. Improved displays, signs, and programming will allow visitors to make the connection to agriculture's past, and to help them understand how the industry changed through time.

Needs:

- Creation of new Theme based programming for each individual center to focus on Historical Agriculture and Modern Agriculture at their respective facilities
- Improve educational displays at the Historic Center to showcase historic agriculture, the role of the Grist Mill, and the role of Fred Wolcott to the Ray community
- Renovate the Farm Office to provide more patron friendly exhibit space as well as creating more appropriate office and class room space for school groups and public programming
- Continue to update interpretive signage to convey a consistent message based on the theme of the facility.
- Continue to work on creating accessible programming opportunities and facility layouts to increase ADA compliance.
- Increased interaction between guests and content. Creating linkable videos that can be viewed on site or at home will help connect guests to the things they witnessed during their visit.

Exit

There is no stated theme to the Farm or Historic Center experience, so as visitors prepare to leave, they are left with whatever connection they made while on site. Overall updates to signage, displays, welcome desk, and office facilities will help to answer the "So what?" question that visitors have, and will tie the entire experience together in a package that evokes thought and action. Creation of a standard display for promotional materials, and program guides will allow visitors to gain information about upcoming events and opportunities.

Needs:

- Updated display centers for promotional materials and ways to be involved will help people maintain long term connections to the facility.
- Update Point of Sale location at the Historic Center to better display the sundries or sale at that facility
- Update the General Store at the farm center to include theme-based products as well as gift items to remember the visit to the farm.
- Create interpretive signage that drives home thematic points so that as guests leave, they are encouraged to look at their own lives to discover the impact of agriculture.

Commitment

Expanded programming series to encourage repeat visitation will be developed in order to provide more opportunities for learning at the Farm and Historic Center. Increasing program complexity will allow visitors to become engaged in visiting the Farm and Historic Center repeatedly for more advanced learning opportunities. Promotion of our volunteer opportunities will allow visitors to get involved in activities, and to give back to the park.

Needs:

- Install new donation stations throughout the facilities to provide options for future
- Work with the Volunteer Services Coordinator to improve Farm and Historic Center volunteer jobs and advertisement.
- Create a Farm and Historic Center Volunteer training manual so that volunteers know their roles and how their help impacts the success of the Farm and Historic Center
- Create promotional materials for kids to take home that will show them things in their own lives that are impacted by agriculture. These items may include puzzles, games, reading materials, crafts, and activities.



MEDIA

COMMUNICATION OF MESSAGE

Through what mediums do we communicate our message to audience?

(Exhibits, signs, publications, personal programs, self-guided trails, landscaping, gift shop, art)

Market/Message/Media Matrix

The matrix below outlines which methods will be utilized to reach the intended audience. Each subtheme listed has specific methods of communication to distinct groups, however not every group will need to receive the information for each subtheme.

Message	School Children	Local Families	Local Adults/Senior Groups	Casual Visitors
Subtheme #1 <i>Food Science</i>	Field Trips. Animal meet and greets	Interpretive signs Public programming Story Time program	Cooking/preserving demonstrations and classes	Interpretive signage Exhibits
Subtheme #2 <i>Environmental Stewardship</i>	Field Trips			Interpretive signage Exhibits
Subtheme #3 <i>Technology and Innovation</i>	Field Trips	Festivals and Events		Interpretive Signage Guided Tours Exhibits
Subtheme #4 <i>Agricultural Recreation</i>		Festivals and Events Holiday Programs	Festivals and Events Holiday programs	

Adult Messaging

Wolcott Mill Metropark is really three parks in one. Visit a late-20th century working farm, then drive a few miles and 100-years into the past to see historic Wolcott Mill, built in the 1840s and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. And if you're looking for solitude along the North Branch of the Clinton River, visit Camp Rotary.

Meet the animals on the 250-acre working farm. Wolcott Mill Farm Center is the only known public farm in the state of Michigan where all six heritage breeds of dairy cow, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Jersey, Milking Short Horn and Holstein, reside year-round. In addition, the farm features a wide variety of other animals, including miniature and draft horses, multiple species of sheep and goats as well as a wide variety of farm fowl. Visit the greenhouse and gardens or, when available, take a horse-drawn wagon ride through the crop fields.

At the Historic Center, visit one of the few historic grist and feed mills remaining today, and a barn museum to discover the importance of old mills and the history of American barns, complete with antique farming equipment and a restored Model T dump truck. The mill, pond and two adjacent barns located on the property are listed on the National Register of Historic Places through the National Park Service, Department of Interior.

School Messaging

Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm Center is one of the few working dairy farms in Macomb County that is open for schools to come and explore. Students who visit the Farm Center will be able to experience agriculture up close and personal and will encounter all the sights, sounds, and smells of farm life. Through a variety of interactive adventures, students will learn how agriculture impacts their lives, and will explore the journey that many of their favorite foods take from the farm to their home. The Farm Center is home to many different farm animal species, each with their own unique contributions to the food and fiber chain, and students will gain an appreciation for how agriculture impacts themselves, their families, and their communities.

The Historic Center, located on the banks of the Clinton River, is one of the few fully intact Grist Mills in the State of Michigan. Built in 1847, the Grist Mill stands as a pillar of the local community, and a representation of the adaptations of agriculture through time. Come experience agriculture's past, while gaining an appreciation for the hard work and dedication the Wolcott Family put in to operating this facility for nearly 90 years.

A copy of our school programming guide can be obtained here:

<https://www.metroparks.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Educational-Program-Book.pdf?x91894>



ACTION PLAN

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND TIMELINE

How do we assess or measure our success?

The goal of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center is to embrace the mission of the Huron Clinton Metroparks and provide “excellent recreational and educational opportunities while serving as stewards of its natural resources”. Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center strives to be a place where adults, children, and families can learn about the origins of the food and fiber that impact their daily lives, while serving as stewards of our land and waterways. In order to measure our success in creating meaningful experiences for all who visit, specific actions need to be taken to help bridge the gap between people and agriculture and the dynamic role it plays in everyday life.

Goals and Objectives

The interpretive plan has four main goals, with corresponding objectives that relate to Animal Health and Welfare, Visitor Experience, Education and Stewardship, and Networking and Outreach. The following five-year goals and objectives are offered as a starting point for measuring the effectiveness of the interpretive program at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Centers. Some of these goals depend on and work in tandem with other areas of the organization (planning, fundraising, infrastructure improvements and sustainability) which may be outside of the scope of this plan. The following 5-year plan outlines the strategy for engaging the public in our mission and measures of success in accomplishing our goals.

1 - Animal Health and Welfare

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Showcase our ability to provide an enriching environment for our livestock using science-based protocols for animal health and well-being.

2 - Visitor Experience

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Provide a safe, professional, and inclusive experience for visitors to make connections with the role that agriculture plays in the lives of themselves, their families, and their communities.

3 - Education and Stewardship

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Provide science-based learning opportunities for all ages while acting as stewards of our natural environment.

4 - Networking and Outreach

Interpretation at Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center will:

Form partnerships with other organizations to promote agricultural learning through on-site and off-site educational experiences.

2022

Actions:

- Work with the planning department to develop a Farm Center site plan to address issues with accessibility. 2
- Purchase new hayride wagons that will allow greater access by people with mobility issues. 2,3,4
- Work with Planning and Engineering departments on facility connector trail. 2
- Analysis of Grist Mill to address the concerns that led to closure. 2
- Utilizing recommendations from veterinarians as well as breed specific guidelines from the Animal Care and Use Guide, complete the Standard Operating Procedures Document for all animal species on the farm. 1
- Install enrichment devices for each animal species. 1
- Complete Equine Retirement Plan. 1
- All Milking/Dairy staff will complete the Dairy Care Academy training sessions. 1
- Complete MAEAP Recertification. 3,4
- Evaluate current program options and re-write programs to match current CIG format. 3
- Develop virtual content to share with visitors, engage people from a distance through social media or YouTube, and create virtual content to share with schools to classroom education. 3
- Creation of 5 or more new programs, with at least one program for each subtheme, that will showcase Agriculture's impact on families and communities. 3
- Host 1 new "Signature Event" or festival type program. 2,3
- Create a catalog of program outlines and scripts for use in training new Interpretive Staff. 3
- Develop at least 2 new virtual programs to be shared on social media or YouTube. 3
- Increase marketing of current programming by utilizing the Metroparks Marketing Department. 2,3,4
- Establish a list of "free" publications for advertisement and make sure to reach out to them with approved program advertisements. 2,4
- Partner with Eastern District Community Outreach Interpreters to develop a joint program to reach a new audience. 2,4
- Partner with local community foundation for grant funding for educational opportunities for local schools. 2,3,4
- Work with Metroparks grant writers to seek out funding sources for upgrades to facilities and new sources of revenue to support operations. 4
- Seek out specialists to evaluate antique collection for value and relevance to programming. 4
- Leverage visitor-ship to share experiences between the Farm Centers by creating innovative joint programming opportunities. 2,3,4
- Work with the planning, engineering, natural resources, and operations to develop a plan for newly acquired properties, as well as best uses for current agricultural lands. 4
- Evaluation of exhibits at the Historic Center and creation of a plan for upgrades and redevelopment.* 2,3,4

Outcomes:

- 10% increase in general visitation
- 15% increase in program participation
- Evaluations for programs or events remain positive
- 5% of costs for facility educational component improvements come from grant sources

- Rehome any antiques that will not be needed for agricultural programming at Farm and Historic Center

2023

Actions:

- Work with Engineering and Planning to assess accessibility and lay out a plan for upgrades at both the Farm Center and Historic Center. 2
- Work with planning and engineering on a Farm Center Selective Redevelopment Plan as identified in the 2016 Wolcott Mill Metropark 5 Year Plan. 2
- Upgrade General Store Merchandise to be thematic, relevant, and in demand. 2
- Begin concept design of Lumber Barn interpretive displays at the Historic Center.* 2,3,4
- Evaluate opportunities for growth and expansion utilizing new acquired properties. 2,3
- All teamster/interpreters with at least 2 years driving experience, will be certified by the Carriage Driving Association. 1
- Create concept designs of animal hospital barn. 1,4
- Any staff with animal care responsibilities will attend at least 3 animal health care training sessions. 1
- Evaluate and update animal SOP's based on Veterinarian recommendations. 1
- Evaluate programming list for relevance and attendance. Retire programs that are no longer in demand. 3
- Re-evaluate school tour options for relevance. Create 2 new school program offerings for each center. 3
- Creation of 5 or more new programs, with at least one program for each subtheme, that will showcase Agriculture's impact on families and communities. 3
- Create 2 new "Camp" experiences focused on agriculture, in addition to our current "Farm Camp". 3
- Create 1 new "Signature Event" or festival type program. 2,3
- Evaluate programming to identify areas where sensory friendly options can be offered. 3
- Create new "School Tour Program Guide" in either hard copy, or electronic, showcasing our school tour programming options, as well as current grant opportunities. 3
- All interpretive staff will attend at least 2 interpretive training seminars. All Interpreters with at least 1 year of experience will complete CIG certification. 3
- Work with the Natural Resources department on a management plan for some of the forested acres at the Farm Center to develop a sugar bush. 3
- 50% of crop field acreage will have cover crops over the winter. 3
- Develop catalogue of Scout Programming that can be shared with scouts utilizing the group camp to create a unique learning opportunity from rental facilities. 2,3,4
- Develop a "Farm to You" offsite program where we can take the educational components from the farm, directly to the customer. 2,3,4
- Develop 1 partnership program with an outside Agriculture Organization, where we can offer services to meet the needs of an untapped user group. (4-H, FFA, MSU). 2,3,4
- Engage with community partners to expand our DEI efforts. 2
- Work with Historic Car organizations on maintenance and upkeep of vehicles at Historic Center. 2,4
- Work with Metroparks grant writers to seek out funding sources for upgrades to facilities and new sources of revenue to support operations. 3,4
- Work with local 4-H club to partner on events at the Camp Rotary Horse Riding Arena. 3,4

- Utilize the RecTrac system to advertise upcoming programming for Farm and Historic Center. 2,3,4
- Work with local scout groups to offer opportunities for Farm and Historic Center volunteer projects such as raised garden beds, trail signage upgrades, and animal exhibit renovation projects. 4
- Development of a phased approach to exhibit upgrades at the Historic Center. * 2,3,4

Outcomes:

- 10% increase in general visitation
- 15% increase in program participation
- 10% increase in Senior visitation
- 5% of costs for facility educational component improvements come from grant sources
- Evaluations for programs or events remain positive
- Offer off-site programs for 5 different classrooms
- 5% decrease in farm chemical costs
- Creation of a sugar bush management plan for an area at the Farm Center
- Staffing levels need to be increased to meet demand
- Volunteer hours increase

2024

Actions:

- Begin concept design for Farm House exhibit space redesign. 2,3,4
- Implementation of Farm Center Selective Redevelopment Plan components. 2
- Redevelopment of Farm Center trail system to promote use among visitors. 2
- Install new interpretive displays in the lumber barn at the Historic Center.* 2,3
- Begin concept design of new interpretive displays in the Car Barn at the Historic Center.* 2,3
- All teamster/interpreters with at least 2 years driving experience, will be certified by the Carriage Driving Association. 1
- Any staff with animal care responsibilities will attend at least 3 animal health care training sessions. 1
- Evaluate and update animal SOP's based on Veterinarian recommendations. 1
- Re-Construction of animal hospital barn/quarantine barn. 1
- Evaluate programming list for relevance and attendance. Retire programs that are no longer in demand. 3
- Creation of 5 or more new programs, with at least one program for each subtheme, that will showcase Agriculture's impact on families and communities. 3
- All interpretive staff will attend at least 2 interpretive training seminars. All Interpreters with at least 1 year of experience will complete CIG certification. 3
- Creation of 4 new STEM based classroom programs that focus on grades 5-12. 3
- Creation of 2 or more programs designed for Adults ages 18 and up. 3
- Construction of a new Sugar Shack at the Farm Center in the Sugar Bush area to showcase modern Maple Sugar Harvesting methods and redevelop the sugar shack at the Historic Center for a more historic viewpoint on the process. 2, 3
- Partner with the Community Outreach Interpreter to establish a Food Science program for schools, or senior centers, focused on hydroponic growth of vegetables. 3,4
- Seek out at least one new grant opportunity to bring Agricultural Education to schools that haven't been served before. 3,4
- Seek out grant opportunities to bring agricultural education to area youth with special focus on low income and backgrounds underrepresented in Michigan agriculture. 3,4

- Develop 1 new partnership program with an outside Agriculture Organization, where we can offer services to meet the needs of an untapped user group. (4-H, FFA, MSU). 3,4
- Engage with community partners to expand our DEI efforts. 2
- Evaluation of exhibits at the Historic Center and creation of a plan for upgrades and redevelopment. *2,3,4

Outcomes:

- 10% increase in general visitation
- 15% increase in general program participation
- 20% increase in program participation for Adults
- Offer at least 5 programs to school grades 5 - 12
- Evaluations for programs or events remain positive
- Offer off-site programs for 2 new schools
- Visitation from at least 2 new user groups through DEI efforts
- Staffing levels need to be increased to meet demand
- Volunteer hours increase

2025

Actions:

- Complete Farm House exhibit space renovation. 2,3,4
- Install new interpretive displays in the Car Barn at the Historic Center.* 2,3
- Implementation of Farm Center Selective Redevelopment Plan components. 1,2,3
- All teamster/interpreters with at least 2 years driving experience, will be certified by the Carriage Driving Association. 1
- Any staff with animal care responsibilities will attend at least 3 animal health care training sessions. 1
- Evaluate and update animal SOP's based on Veterinarian recommendations. 1
- Evaluate programming list for relevance and attendance. Retire programs that are no longer in demand. 3
- Creation of 5 or more new programs, with at least one program for each subtheme, that will showcase Agriculture's impact on families and communities. 3
- All interpretive staff will attend at least 2 interpretive training seminars. All Interpreters with at least 1 year of experience will complete CIG certification. 3
- Expand the STEM programs offered to provide at least 1 program for each grade K – 12. 3
- Seek out grant opportunities to bring agricultural education to area youth with special focus on low income and backgrounds underrepresented in Michigan agriculture. 3,4
- Develop 1 new partnership program with an outside Agriculture Organization, where we can offer services to meet the needs of an untapped user group. (4-H, FFA, MSU). 4
- Engage with community partners to expand our DEI efforts. 4
- Evaluation of exhibits at the Historic Center and creation of a plan for upgrades and redevelopment. *2,3,4

Outcomes:

- 10% increase in general visitation
- Conduct school programming for each grade level K – 12
- 15% increase in program participation
- Evaluations for programs or events remain positive

- 20% of costs for facility educational component improvements come from grant sources
- Staffing levels need to be increased to meet demand
- Volunteer hours increase

2026

Actions:

- Implementation of Farm Center Selective Redevelopment Plan components. 2,3
- All teamster/interpreters with at least 2 years driving experience, will be certified by the Carriage Driving Association. 1
- Any staff with animal care responsibilities will attend at least 3 animal health care training sessions. 1
- Evaluate and update animal SOP's based on Veterinarian recommendations. 1
- Evaluate programming list for relevance and attendance. Retire programs that are no longer in demand. 2
- Creation of 5 or more new programs, with at least one program for each subtheme, that will showcase Agriculture's impact on families and communities. 3
- All interpretive staff will attend at least 2 interpretive training seminars. All Interpreters with at least 1 year of experience will complete CIG certification. 3
- Seek out grant opportunities to bring agricultural education to area youth with special focus on low income and backgrounds underrepresented in Michigan agriculture. 3,4
- Engage with community partners to expand our DEI efforts.
- Develop 1 new partnership program with an outside Agriculture Organization, where we can offer services to meet the needs of an untapped user group. (4-H, FFA, MSU). 3,4
- Evaluation of exhibits at the Historic Center and creation of a plan for upgrades and redevelopment. *2,3,4

Outcomes:

- 10% increase in general visitation
- 15% increase in program participation
- Evaluations for programs or events remain positive
- 20% of costs for facility educational component improvements come from grant source
- Staffing levels need to be increased to meet demand
- Volunteer hours increase

**Timelines for interpretive upgrades are subject to change based on the need for necessary repairs to the facility and the availability of funds. Maintenance and upkeep of the facilities will be prioritized while long term plans are developed for improvements to educational displays.*

METHODS

This plan was prepared in 2020-2021 by the staff of the Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center, and involved input from the following individuals:

Jennifer Jaworski – Chief of Interpretive Services

Jason Smith – Supervising Interpreter Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center

Jeff Jenuwine – Wolcott Mill Metropark Maintenance Supervisor

Gary Hopp – Eastern District Park Superintendent

Nina Kelly – Chief of Planning and Development

Wolcott Mill Metropark Farm and Historic Center Interpretive Staff

Wolcott Mill Metropark Master plan, and Huron Clinton Metroparks Marketing Plan, can be found on the website at www.metroparks.com

Sources

1. The format of this plan follows the 5-M model as described in Brochu, L. & Merriman, T. (2014). Interpretive Planning: The 5-M model for successful planning projects. Fort Collins, CO: InterpPress.
2. www.interpnet.com/NAI/interp/About_NAI/What_We_Believe
3. www.metroparks.com



