

INDIAN SPRINGS METROPARK MASTER PLAN



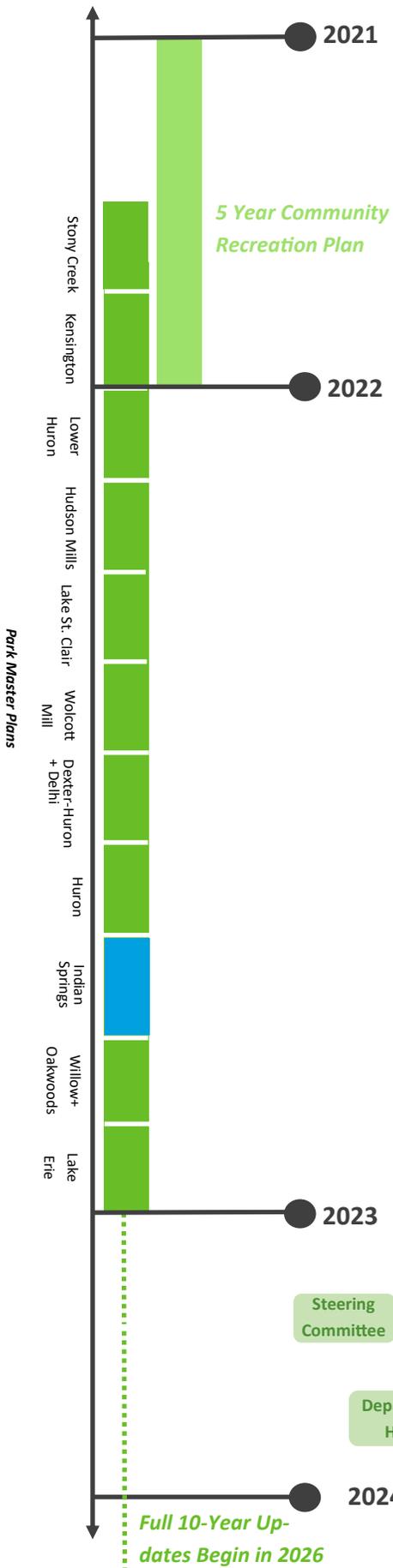
5 Year Update to 2017 - 2027

DRAFT



Introduction

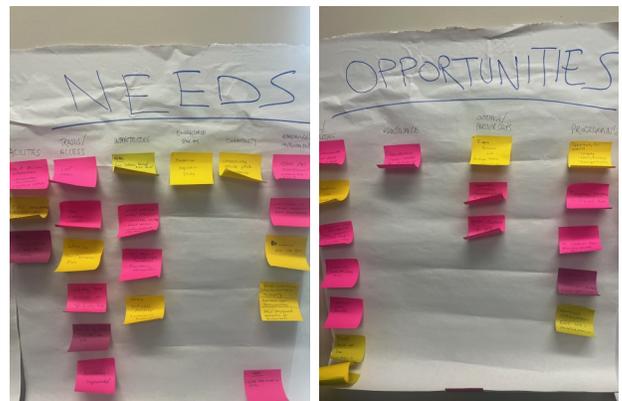
Planning Process



The five-year update is an opportunity for each of the 13 Metro Parks to review their master plan and make sure it is still relevant. This review includes 1) major changes to facilities, infrastructure and programming in the park; 2) updated needs and opportunities; 3) completed action items; and 4) any new actions necessary to implement the goals and policies for the park. One of the most important components is the public input collected through meetings, questionnaires, and online comments, all of which influence plan recommendations. A master plan steering committee was formed to include park employees with exceptional knowledge of Indian Springs and surrounding community who, along with the experienced Metro Parks administrative department heads provided their professional opinions.

The Planning and Development Department also included updates to the demographic and spatial data to inform recommendations. Demographic data looks at the density, age, income, language, and other factors of the regional population. Spatial data, usually analyzed through Geographic Information System (GIS) 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 staff conducted 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 with this review every five years. However, they focus on park developments over ten years, and will be updated through a more comprehensive planning process at the end of the planning horizon.



The Steering Committee met on 8/25/2022

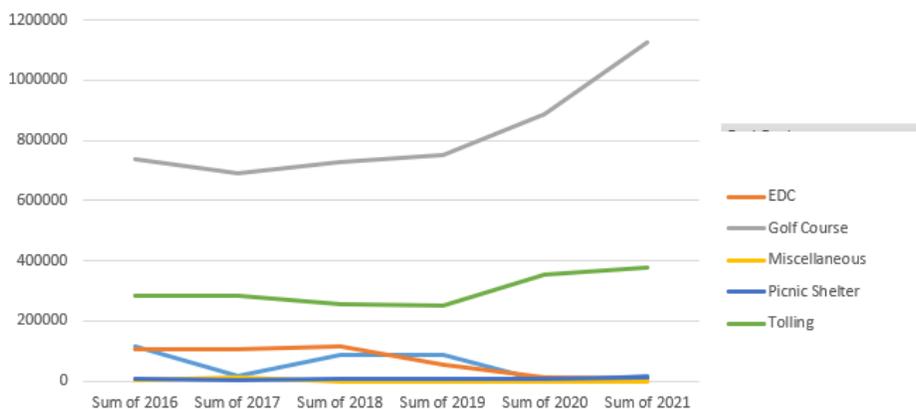
REVENUE

Revenue Sources

2021 Operations Revenue

Revenue Source	2021 Total
Golf Course	1,123,290.67
Tolling	375,792.33
Activity Center Rental	16,350.00
EDC	6,633.26
Picnic Shelter	11,430.69
Miscellaneous	288.20
Total	1,533,593

***2021 Operations Revenue was irregular due to the COVID pandemic.**



REVENUE TRENDS 2016-2021— INDIAN SPRINGS

NEEDS

Diversify sources of revenue

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

OPPORTUNITIES

The Metroparks 2021 General Fund revenue equaled \$59,729,968. Indian Springs 2021 operations revenue was approximately \$1,533,593 comprising 2.56% of all Metroparks revenue.

Indian Springs budgeted 2022 operations revenues are \$1,406,014 , while estimated 2022 operations expenses are \$2,274,404. Property tax and other revenue is estimated to subsidize 38.2% of the Indian Springs operating budget.

Revenue

Visitors

Indian Springs Metropark is a regional park and can draw from the approximately 3,600,538 Michigan residents that live within a 30 mile radius (approximately a 45-minute drive) of the park. Certain events and activities may draw visitors from greater distances.

Vehicle entries to Indian Springs Metropark have hovered between 85,000 and 113,000 since 2014, fluctuating through the years but experiencing an increase overall. Weather often plays a role in attendance to the park; activity areas greatly affected by weather are the trails, nature center and golf course.

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.

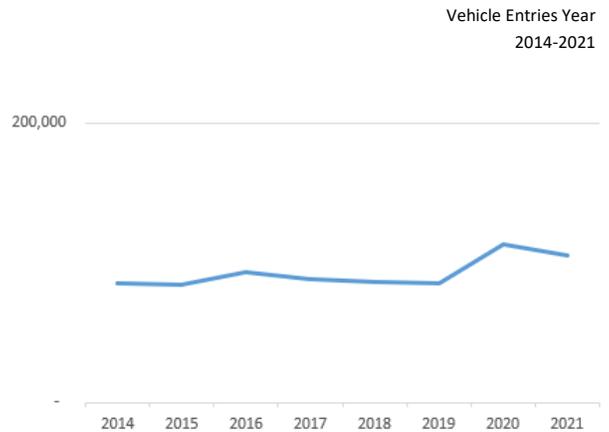


NEEDS

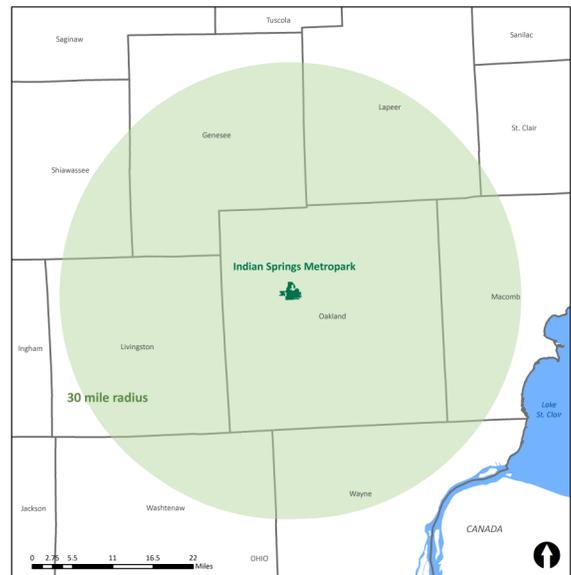
Target market strategy

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

OPPORTUNITIES



Indian Springs Metropark 30-Mile radius



Programs & Events



Great Pumpkin Hunt



Easter Egg Scramble



Learning Kits

NEEDS

Increase revenue and visitation

Build on enthusiasm of Indian Springs visitors with exciting, engaging programs and events

OPPORTUNITIES

2022 Integrated Marketing Plan

Educational and public programs looked much different than “average” in 2020. Staff adjusted to ever-changing situations of the pandemic to continue serving visitors on multiple platforms using virtual and hybrid programs, as well as small-group, in person, outdoor programs. These new practices will carry over into 2022 and staff will continue working collaboratively to provide exciting new experiences for the Lower Huron communities in ways that are safe and engaging.

2020-2022 Recreation Programming Plan

In 2022, the Metroparks amended the 2020-2022 Community Recreation Plan to include a Recreation Programming Plan.

An important element of programming is accessibility and ensuring all programs, events, and services are compliant with the American Disability Act (ADA) requirements.

To achieve this, the Metroparks has begun self-evaluation of all programming and services offered by each department. Each program was categorized into groups of similar activities (e.g. programs, events, activities) and will then be analyzed each activity in terms of vision, hearing, and mobility barriers that may exist.



COMMUNITY INFLUENCES

Population

The population of the communities surrounding Indian Springs is aging rapidly and changing in mobility. The percentage of households without access to an automobile is gradually rising in the region, Oakland County, and the municipalities directly surrounding Indian Springs. 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.

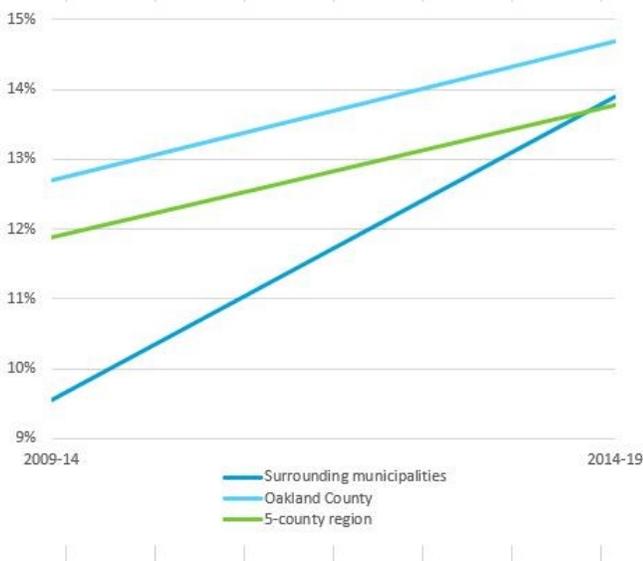
The percentage of individuals over 65 years of age is rising quickly in the region, in Oakland County, and most dramatically in communities surrounding the park. Older adults have distinct needs, often requiring accommodations for mobility and accessibility of park features such as trails and buildings.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

NEEDS

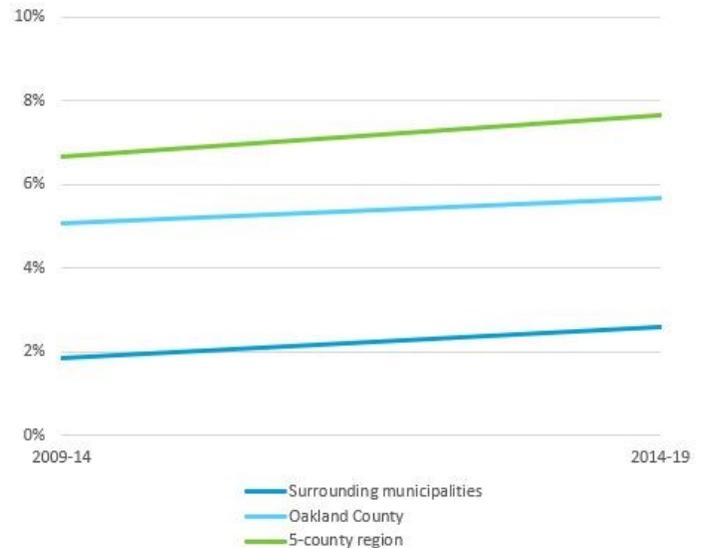
Address changing needs of new population demographics

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

OPPORTUNITIES



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF POPULATION OVER 65 YEARS, FROM 2009-14 through 2014-19 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)



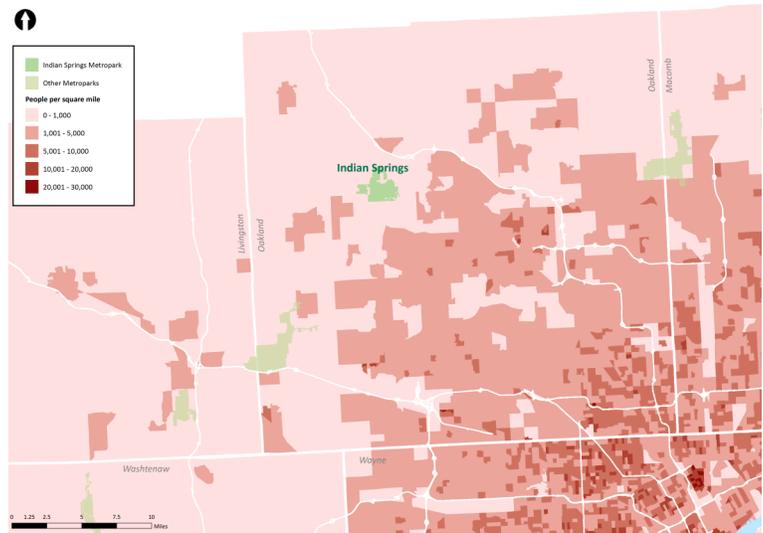
CHANGE IN PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CARS AVAILABLE, 2009-14 through 2014-19 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)

Community Influences

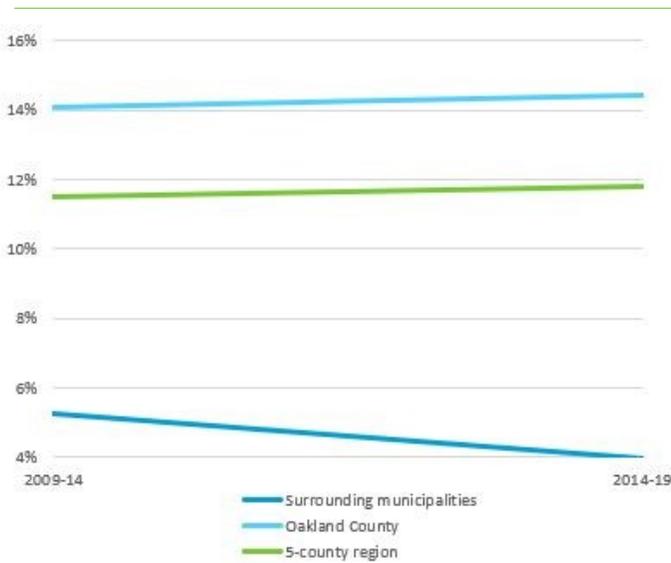
As shown below, Indian Springs is located in a lower residential density area than many other Metroparks, with the majority of land use characterized as single family residential. The areas directly bordering the park have an average population between 0 and 1,000 people per square mile. Residential development in the area is limited by factors including the recreational and conservation lands which also include sensitive natural features surrounding Indian Springs.

While on average the 5-county region is falling in population density, the population density in both Oakland County and the surrounding municipalities has risen slightly, creating increased demand for recreation in the area.

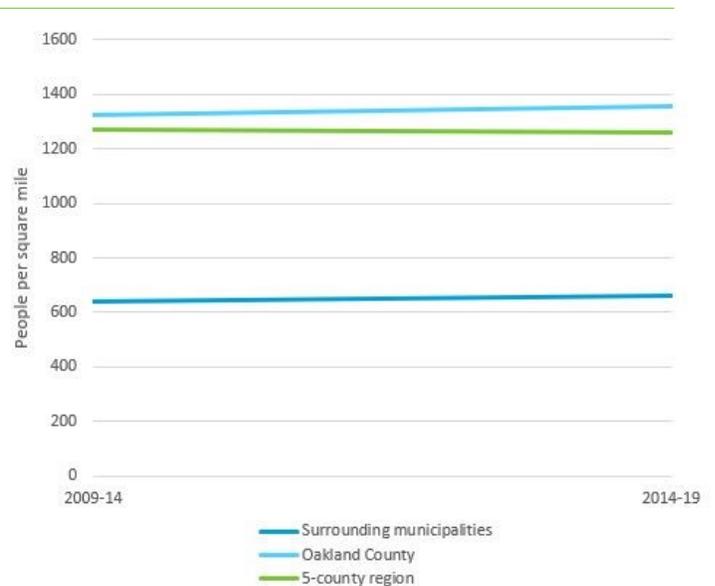
Although most households in the area still speak English as their first language, Oakland County and the region at large are seeing a slight increase in households speaking languages other than English at home. Because of this growing linguistic diversity the Metroparks are working towards more universal signage design, with a focus on easily understandable symbols. Both White Lake and Springfield Townships do not follow this trend, having decreased numbers of speakers of other languages.



POPULATION DENSITY BY CENSUS TRACT, 2014-19



CHANGE IN PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS SPEAKING LANGAGE BESIDES ENGLISH AT HOME, 2009-14 through 2014-19 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)



CHANGE IN AVERAGE POPULATION DENSITY, 2009-14 through 2014-19 (Source: US Census American Community Survey)

NEEDS

Improve connectivity within the park and with the community

Create good working relationship with surrounding municipalities

OPPORTUNITIES

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

Springfield Township

- Planned low density residential land use
- Maintain the traditional small cottage lot lakefront medium density for the nearby area surrounding Big Lake, extending to Andersonville Road, and in the area abutting the Huron Swamp.

White Lake Township

- Develop a centrally-located community recreation center, perhaps in conjunction with a town center
- Develop a system of pathways in the Township that can connect residential neighborhoods to each other and with shopping areas.

Oakland County Parks and Recreation

- Land acquisition strategies that focus on opportunities to protect and restore natural areas, protect water quality, and increase or establish trail and green infrastructure continue to be a priority.

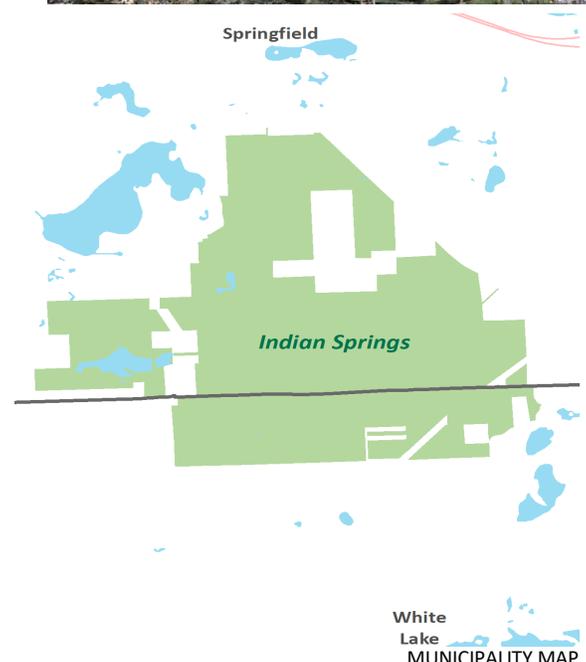
Multi-Jurisdictional “The Headwaters Project”

- The Shiawassee and Huron Headwaters Resource Preservation Project (referred to as “The Headwaters

Projects/Initiatives

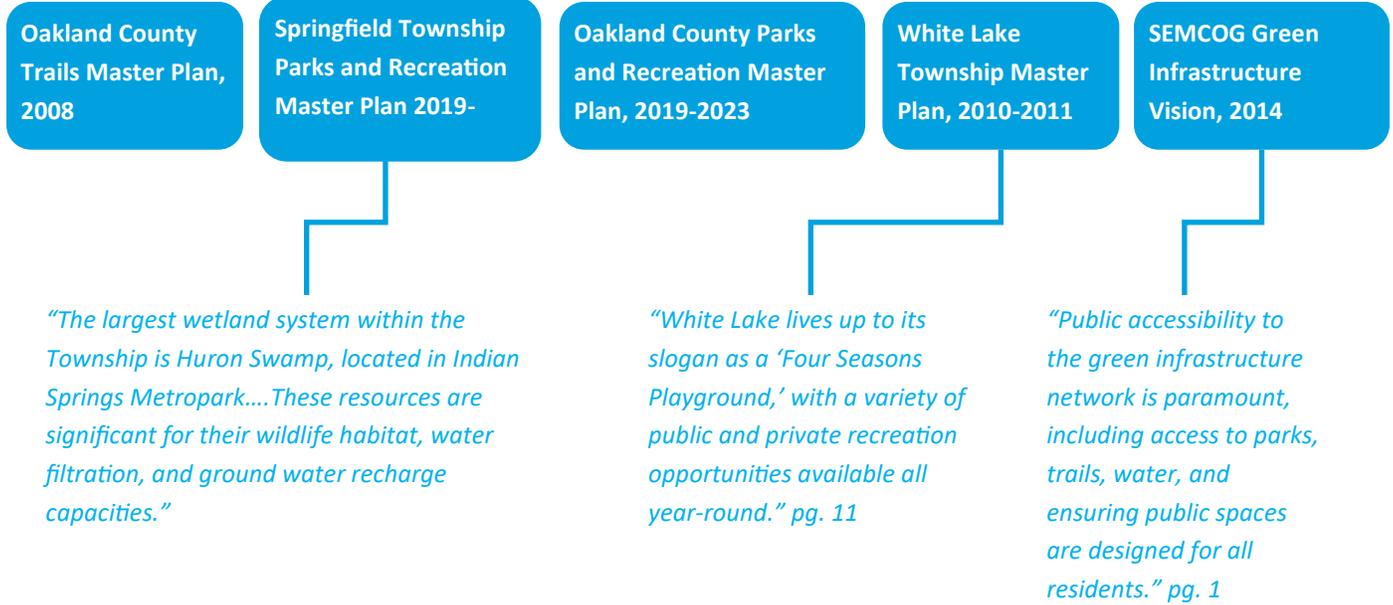
Project”) completed in 2000 identified and ranked important natural resources within the park and surrounding communities. The project contracted with the Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) and established opportunities and protective mechanisms for threats to the significant natural areas including:

- Maintain closed canopy of southern mesic forest and swamp.
- Conduct annual monitoring for exotic invasive plants.
- Maintain old fields as grasslands to provide habitat for grassland nesting birds.
- Private lands surrounding the Huron Swamp Complex should be encouraged to provide a native plant buffer between high use areas and the swamp.



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 Indian Springs a wider context and in many cases underscore the importance of the park’s resources to citizens.

Indian Springs Metropark is part of a broader system of recreation and green space that includes other Metroparks as well as local, county, and state parks and greenways. Due to this, recreation and green infrastructure plans were also considered in creating the Indian Springs 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

2022 Community Needs and Assessment

ETC Institute administered a needs assessment survey for Huron-Clinton Metroparks (HCMA) during the Spring of 2022. The survey was administered as part of Metroparks' efforts to establish and priorities improvements to the parks system, which included 13 parks covering more than 25,000 acres in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Livingston and Washtenaw counties. The survey and its results will guide HCMA in taking a resident-driven approach to making decisions that will enrich the future of the community and positively affect the lives of all residents in southeast Michigan.

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in Livingston County, Macomb County, Oakland County, Washtenaw County, Wayne County (outside the City of Detroit), and the City of Detroit.

Location	Completed Surveys	% Precision
<i>Livingston County</i>	479	±4.5%
<i>Macomb County</i>	511	±4.3%
<i>Oakland County</i>	583	±4.1%
<i>Washtenaw County</i>	514	±4.3%
<i>Wayne County (Outside Detroit)</i>	407	±4.9%
<i>City of Detroit</i>	405	±4.9%
Total	2,899	±1.8%

The table above shows the number of completed surveys collected in each of the six sampling areas. The table also shows the margin of error at the 95% level of confidence for each area.

The results presented in this report have been weighted to represent each sampling area's share of the population of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks service area. The weighted results give more weight to the responses from the larger sampling areas, including Macomb County, Oakland County, Wayne County (outside Detroit), and the City of Detroit, and similarly gives less weight to the responses of the smaller sampling areas, including Livingston County and Washtenaw County

Priorities for Parks & Recreation Facility Investments in the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Service Area

The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs:

- the importance that households place on each facility/amenity/ activity/program
- how many households have unmet needs for the facility/

Facility	Priority Investment Rating (PIR)
<i>Trails-paved, multi-use (walking, biking)</i>	189.2
<i>Beaches</i>	174.7
<i>Natural areas</i>	145.7
<i>Trails-unpaved, nature trails</i>	139.7
<i>Trails-unpaved, hiking</i>	137.2
<i>Nature centers</i>	114.2
<i>Canoe/kayak launch sites</i>	110.2
<i>Outdoor swimming pools</i>	107.9

Results

Oakland County (Outside of Detroit)

The table below shows the Priority Investment Ratings (PIR) for parks and recreation facilities, based on the PIR analysis conducted using the data from Oakland County households. The following six facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Paved multi-use trails for walking and biking
- Unpaved trails for hiking
- Beaches
- Natural areas
- Unpaved trails, nature trails
- Canoe/kayak launch sites 
- Nature centers

Facility	PIR	
Trails-paved, multi-use (walking, biking)	200.0	High Priority (PIR=100-200)
Trails-unpaved, hiking	152.9	
Beaches	143.9	
Natural areas	142.0	
Trails-unpaved, nature trails	139.0	
Canoe/kayak launch sites	109.1	
Nature centers	102.5	Medium Priority (PIR=50-99)
Outdoor swimming pools	96.6	
Canoe/kayak rentals	89.0	
Trails-mountain biking	83.2	
Picnic shelters	70.0	
Picnic tables	69.9	
Fishing banks or docks	68.2	
Playgrounds	62.8	
Waterslides	58.7	
Splash pad (water play area)	49.5	
Camping areas-primitive sites	48.4	
Golf courses	45.4	
Camping areas-RVs	43.4	
Golf driving ranges	42.7	
Camping areas-group sites	39.2	
Boat docks	30.8	
Boat ramps	29.2	
Disc golf	28.1	
Marinas	20.0	

The table below shows the Priority Investment Ratings (PIR) for parks and recreation programs, based on the PIR analysis conducted using the data from Oakland County households. The following 11 programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Concerts
- Bird/wildlife watching programs
- Walking clubs/programs
- Pet-friendly programs
- Environmental education programs
- Astronomy programs
- Art/photography
- Guided nature hikes
- Camping
- Movies in the park
- Natural/cultural history programs

Program	PIR	
Concerts	200.0	High Priority (PIR=100-200)
Bird/wildlife watching programs	178.2	
Walking clubs/programs	153.5	
Pet-friendly programs	142.7	
Environmental education programs	136.4	
Astronomy programs	131.1	
Art/photography	129.1	
Guided nature hikes	124.8	
Camping	122.8	
Movies in the park	110.8	
Natural/cultural history programs	103.8	
Guided canoe/kayak tours	96.5	Medium Priority (PIR=50-99)
Farm educational programs	81.2	
Water fitness programs	74.5	
Fishing programs	74.1	
Programs for people with disabilities	65.6	
Golf lessons	59.4	
Swim lessons	46.1	
Boating classes	42.4	
Running clubs/programs	39.2	
Guided motorized boat tours	31.0	
Golf tournaments	28.1	
Scouting	22.9	
Homeschool programs	22.3	
Virtual programs	13.2	

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. [5-year updates are in blue text](#)

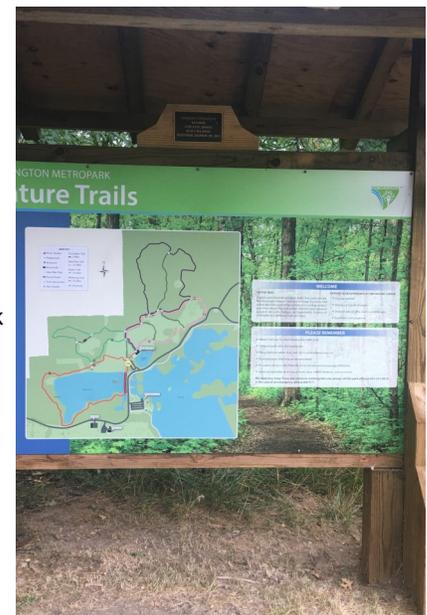
Needs

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



Opportunities

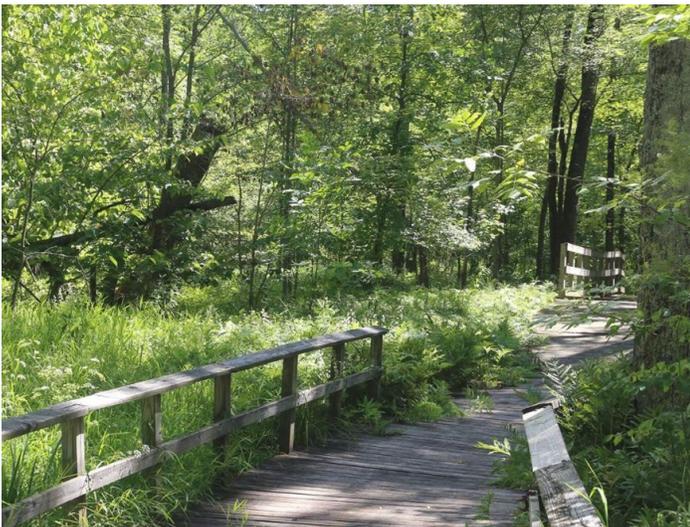
- Build on park character to attract new visitors
- Create a resilient network of biodiverse areas in the park
- Draw new visitors with programming/education based on history of park
- Redevelop park areas to better serve visitors and environment
- Provide unique recreational facilities to draw visitors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



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

Large Facilities

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
Implement Park Office building use strategy	Operations	Engineering, Planning	Contractors	TBD		x	x	Not started
Implement new maintenance building development strategy	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Contractors	TBD		x	x	Not started
Implement EDC selective redevelopment strategy	Engineering	Planning, Interpretive, Operations	Contractors	TBD		x		Not started
Update mechanical equipment at Golf Course	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Consultants, Contractors	TBD		x		Not started



Infrastructure / Small Facilities

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
Pavement projects (list developed annually, as needed)	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Contractors	various	x	x	x	Ongoing
Accessibility improvements, including interiors and walkways- parkwide	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Contractors	various	x	x	x	Ongoing
Accessibility improvements, picnic shelters	Engineering	Planning, Operations	Contractors	various				Complete
Replace underground with above-ground fuel storage at Golf Course	Engineering	Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	\$120,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Hike-bike trail connectivity improvements: create loop system, develop spur to Timberland Lake	Engineering	Plan, Op, Maint, Int, NR	Contractors	TBD		x	x	Not started
Implement Meadowlark playground removal plan	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD	x			Budgeted
Golf course infrastructure upgrades; irrigation, parking lot	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD			x	Not started
Implement Adventure playground selective redevelopment plan	Engineering	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Contractors	TBD	x	x		Budgeted
Implement Schmitt Lake concept plan	Engineering	Planning, NR, Operations, Maintenance		TBD	x	x	x	Study Underway
Implement outdoor art initiative	Interpretive	Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Foundation	TBD	x	x	x	Ongoing

Natural Resources

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
Vegetation and invasive species management (annual)	NR	Planning, Operations	Contractors	\$30,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Sustainability initiatives	NR	Planning, Engineering, Interpretive	Contractors	\$3,500.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Hazardous waste removal (annual)	NR			\$1,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Early detection rapid response. Invasive species surveys and control in high quality natural areas (annual)	NR	Interpretive	MDNR	\$10,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Deer herd and ecosystem management based on best practice standards	NR	Police, Interpretive, Operations	MDNR	Staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing
Geese and Swan Management	NR	Operations	MDNR, USDA	\$5,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Conduct prescribed fire in fire adapted communities	NR		Contractors	\$4,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Oak wilt control and prevention	NR	Operations, Interpretive	MDNR	\$4,500.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Wetland complex restoration	NR		MDNR, NGOs	\$40,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing



Signage

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
Trail wayfinding signage improvements	Planning	Maintenance, Interpretive, Operations		\$15,000.00	x	x	x	Not started
Interpretive signage improvements - nature trails and EMR managed lands	Interpretive	Planning, Maintenance, Operations		\$15,000.00	x	x	x	Not started
New Branding Initiative	Marketing	Planning, Maintenance, Operations		\$5,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing



Action Plan

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

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
Update trail maps to show opportunities for walking/hiking/trail running/pets	Graphics	Planning		staff time	x			Not started
Establish comprehensive Oak Wilt monitoring and treatment protocol	NR	Operations	MDNR	\$10,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Establish Invasive Species Control Tracking Website	NR	IT	MNFI, MISIN	staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing
Comprehensive wildlife surveys and mapping (birds, insects, freshwater mussels)	NR	Interpretive	NGOs, Consultants, MNFI	\$35,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
New maintenance building strategy: maintenance activities to one site	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing
Park office building strategy: identify opportunities for maximizing use. Determine renovations necessary to incorporate existing and any new uses.	Operations	Planning, Engineering, Maintenance		staff time	x			Not started
Meadowlark picnic area site plan: remove playground equipment, improve access and site amenities	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x			Not started
Adventure playground area selective redevelopment plan: remove maze, install large play structure, <u>develop restroom building to serve playground and Spray 'n' Play</u>, improve accessibility	Planning	Engineering, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x			Not started
Rustic trail expansion study	NR	Operations., Planning, Maintenance		staff time	x			Not started
Investigate equestrian trailhead/access study	Planning	Operations, Maintenance		staff time		x	x	Not started

Area Plans/Studies/Initiatives (cont'd)

Description	Department Lead	Other Departments	Other Partners	Cost Estimate	Short-Term (2022-2023)	Mid-Term (2024-2025)	Long-Term (2026+)	Status
EDC selective redevelopment plan: enhance exhibits, enhance event room lighting and storage, improve surrounding landscaping	Planning	Interpretive, Engineering, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x			Ongoing
Outdoor art initiative: develop environmentally-themed art installation initiative to enhance park character		Planning, Operations, Maintenance	Consultant, Foundation	TBD	x	x	x	Ongoing
Skate skiing feasibility study: investigate the possibility of grooming cross country ski trails for skate skiing	Planning	Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x			Ongoing
Schmitt Lake concept plan: formalize access and connectivity, identified preferred uses	Planning	Operations, NR, Engineering, Maintenance		staff time	x			Ongoing
Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake population assessment and habitat improvements	NR	Int.	Consultants	\$55,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Fisheries feasibility assessment throughout park	NR	Operations, Planning	MDNR	TBD	x	x	x	Ongoing
Grassland Management Plan (biennial review)	NR	Operations, Interpretive		TBD	x	x	x	Ongoing
Deer program evaluation (vegetation study)	NR	Interpretive	Contractors	\$30,000.00	x	x	x	Ongoing
Partnerships for recreation and educational programming	Operations	Interpretive	Community Partners	staff time, TBD	x	x	x	Ongoing
Prison Site Master Plan	Planning	Operations, Maintenance				x	x	Not started
Implement Stormwater Management Plan Initiatives	Operations	Planning, Maintenance		staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing
Integrate Climate Action Plan into park system operations and maintenance	Planning	NR, Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing
Implement regional non-motorized plans for park connectivity	Planning	Operations, Maintenance		staff time	x	x	x	Ongoing