



PORT HURON TOWNSHIP

Parks and Recreation Plan

2027 - 2031



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Introduction

Port Huron Township recognizes that an ongoing commitment to its parks and recreation facilities and programs is a vital investment in its future. These programs and facilities have a unique potential to increase an overall quality of life for both current and future generations of Township residents. Promoting personal health and education, fostering economic activity, creating intricate social networks, and protecting environmental landscapes, are some of the most compelling benefits gained through well-maintained parks and recreation facilities. Ultimately these benefits are contingent upon a well planned and executed system of parks, trails, open space, water access, and recreational programming.

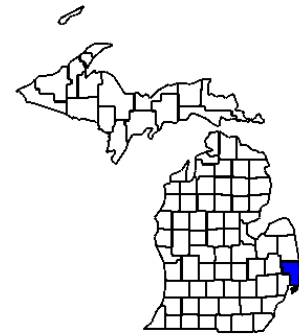
This Parks & Recreation Plan provides the community with a five-year work plan and a long-range vision to guide future recreational investments. The Township of Port Huron intends to use this plan to: guide decisions on capital improvement projects, guide the acquisition of open space and available public buildings, explore the implementation of future recreational programming, and pursue both state and federal grant opportunities.

The Plan follows the guidelines set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, and includes the following:

- Community Description
- Administrative Structure
- Parks & Recreation Inventory
- Resource Inventory
- Recreational Needs & Opportunity Analysis
- Planning & Public Input Process
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Strategies

Community Description

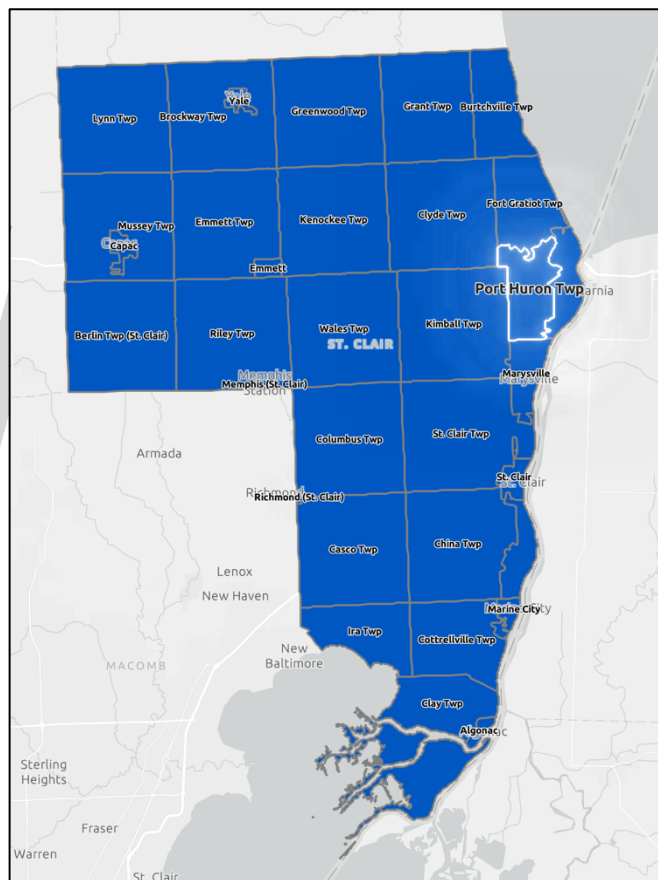
The following is a description of the various physical features of Port Huron Township. This description is important to the recreation planning process because it establishes the physical context in which future decisions regarding recreation facility and program development will take place.



Community Profile

Port Huron Township is a 13-square-mile charter township in St. Clair County bordered by the City of Port Huron to the north, Fort Gratiot Township to the northwest, Kimball Township to the west and southwest, the City of Marysville directly to the south, and the St. Clair River corridor and City of Port Huron's eastern limits forming its broader eastern regional context.

Established in 1827, the township transitioned from early agricultural and transportation-based settlement into a mixed suburban-industrial community shaped by its proximity to Port Huron's commercial, industrial, and waterfront activity. It includes the historic unincorporated communities of South Park and Tappan, and today features a blend of residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, industrial employers, and natural areas. With a 2020 population of 10,792, Port Huron Township is closely connected to its surrounding municipalities through shared transportation routes, regional recreation systems such as the Bridge-to-Bay Trail, and cross-jurisdictional economic and community activity, making it an integral part of the Blue Water region's urban-suburban fabric.



Population

The estimated 2020 population for Port Huron Township was 10,792 persons. As of 2025, the Census estimated are 10,665. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) projects the Township population will be 11,497 persons by 2050.

Population Trends for Port Huron Township & Surrounding Communities

	2020	2030	2040	2050
Port Huron Township	10,792	10,624	11,382	11,497
City of Port Huron	28,983	28,754	29,479	29,270
Port Gratiot Township	11,242	11,981	12,460	12,600
Marysville	9,997	10,064	10,548	10,334
Kimball Township	9,609	9,670	10,010	10,194
Clyde Township	5,523	5,143	5,251	5,173

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Households

Average household sizes have dropped across the country, from 2.62 in 2000, to 2.53 in 2019. Michigan overalls has experienced a large drop (2.75 to 2.52) during the same period. Port Huron Township has followed this trend, with the average household size sitting at 2.45 in 2020, dropping from 2.51 in 2010.

Population and Household Data ACS 2020-2024

	Population	Households	Average Household Size
Southeast Michigan	4,813,318	1,947,559	2.47
St. Clair County	160,221	67,816	2.34
Port Huron Township	10,722	4,433	2.45

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Age Characteristics

An important demographic factor influencing recreation planning is the age composition of the community and the extent to which this composition has changed over time. This can assist in matching recreational services to community characteristics, and in determining the special needs of certain age groups.

While the Township's population has decreased, there have been notable increases in two segments of the population: adults aged 55 to 64, and adults aged 65 to 84. SEMCOG projects that this trend will continue in the Township through 20250. While planning must account for people of all ages, growth among these groups should be carefully considered in the planning of recreation needs now and in the future.

Port Huron Township Population by Age Brackets

	2010	2024	2010 - 2024 Change
Under 5	644	278	-366
5 - 19	2,110	2,121	+11
20 - 34	2,075	1,887	-188
35 - 54	3,124	2,759	-365
55 - 64	1,317	1,851	+534
65 - 84	1,256	1,696	+440
85 +	128	130	+2
Median Age	38.4	40.8	+2.3 years

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Diversity

One important social characteristic of a community is its racial make-up. Understanding the racial composition of a community helps to identify the diverse needs of its population.

The following chart indicates the racial make-up of the Township in both 2010 and 2024.

Port Huron Township Racial Composition

	2010	% of 2010 Population	2024	% of 2024 Population
White	9,412	88.3%	9,314	86.9%
Black	468	4.4%	594	5.5%
Asian	39	0.4%	39	0.4%
Hispanic	403	3.8%	404	3.8%
Multi-racial	255	2.4%	345	3.2%
Other	77	0.7%	0	0.0%

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Income and Poverty Levels

Studying income and poverty levels is a good way to measure the relative economic health of the community. Port Huron Township has experienced a drop in median income from 2010 to 2024 as county overall and the metropolitan area has seen an increase. The township also has a higher percentage of households living in poverty in comparison to the rest of the region.

Income and Poverty Levels 2010 - 2024

Community	2010 Median Household Income	2024 Median Household Income	Percentage of households living in poverty ACS 2024
Port Huron Township	\$63,310	\$61,983	15.2%
St. Clair County	\$68,638	\$71,270	11.7%
Southeast Michigan	\$74,205	\$77,671	13.5%

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Education Levels

A community’s educational attainment metrics are a vital statistic to track. The correlation between education attainment and economic prosperity is remarkably high. As residents continue to gain degrees and credentials, there is more opportunity for job growth. Port Huron Township continues to host a solid base of residents who have graduated from high school, with an increasing number of adult pursuing and completed post-secondary education. The township’s education attainment follows county trends.

Highest Level of Education Completed – ACS 2024 (Percentage of Residents)

Highest level of education	Port Huron Township	St. Clair County	Southeast Michigan
Graduate/Professional	7.3%	7.5%	16%
Bachelor’s	6.8%	13.2%	22%
Associate	13.6%	12.7%	9%
Some college, no degree	28.3%	25.8%	21%
High school graduate	35.6%	32.8%	25%
Did not graduate from high school	8.4%	7.9%	8%

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Housing & Building Trends

Port Huron Township's housing trends, based on SEMCOG's regional forecasts and monitoring of St. Clair County communities, show steady but moderate residential growth, a gradual shift toward newer single-family housing, and continued reinvestment in existing homes rather than large-scale new development. SEMCOG's long-range projections indicate that the township's housing stock has been slowly increasing in unit count, with most growth occurring through incremental infill, small subdivisions, and replacement housing, rather than major greenfield expansion.

Regionally, SEMCOG notes rising demand for smaller, more affordable single-family homes, which aligns with Port Huron Township's existing suburban-industrial character and its predominance of mid-century housing. The township also reflects broader Blue Water Area trends: stable owner-occupancy, aging housing stock, and modest increases in rental units, driven by regional workforce needs.

Overall, SEMCOG's data suggests Port Huron Township will continue experiencing slow, steady housing growth, with reinvestment and incremental development shaping its residential landscape rather than rapid expansion.=

Median Housing Value 2010 – 2018 (ACS 2010 & 2024)

Community	2010	20	Change
Port Huron Township	\$202,388	\$196,000	-\$6,388
St. Clair County	\$222,523	\$224,600	+\$2,077

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Port Huron Township Housing Tenure (ACS 2010 & 2024)

	2010	2024
Owner-Occupied Units	2,785	2,952
Renter Occupied Units	1,259	1,481
Vacant Units	308	115
Total Units	4,352	4,548

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Existing Land Use

Port Huron Township primarily remains an open space suburban community, with undeveloped parcels and residential uses making up most of the land use in the township.

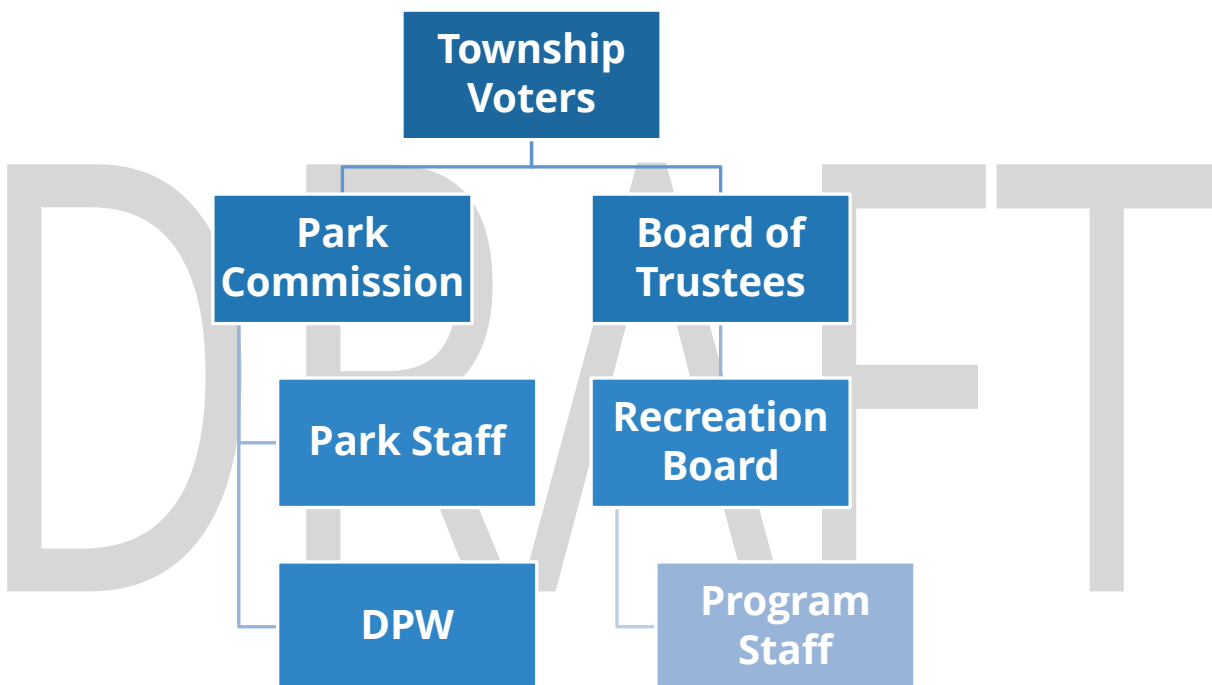
2020 Existing Land Use

Land Use	% of 2020 Acres
Vacant	26.22%
Single Family Residential	24.96%
Agricultural/Rural Residential	15.77%
TCU	6.81%
Recreational/Open Space	4.94%
Institutional	4.19%
Retail	3.74%
Industrial	3.17%
Manufactured Home Park	2.87%
Golf Course	2.47%
Water	2.04%
Office	1.15%
Multi-family housing	0.79%
Hospitality	0.40%
Mixed Use	0.38%
Medical	0.10%

Source: Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

Administrative Structure

Port Huron Township oversees parks and recreation through two primary groups. The five-member Parks Commission is elected by township voters to four-year terms and is responsible for recreation planning, goal setting, park maintenance, policy development, and budgeting. The Recreation Board manages most public parks and recreation activities, supported by an annual budget allocation from the Township Board.



Park Commission

The Park Commission oversees Township parks and recreation facilities, with except to Baker's Field which is overseen by the Township Board. While individual commissioners do not have formal duties, each is expected to evaluate assigned parks, monitor conditions and activities, identify concerns, and recommend improvements. Park needs, expenses, and issues are discussed collectively at the Commission's monthly meetings.

The Commission's operating budget is provided by the Township Board through the Township Clerk's Office. On the Township's behalf, the Park Commission may accept gifts, grants, and donations of land or funds for park development or recreation. However,

according to the Township attorney, only the Township Board may legally purchase, own, sell, or acquire property through condemnation under State law.

The Park Commission contributes about \$15,000 each year to the Department of Public Works (DPW) for landscaping, maintenance, and repairs. It also works with the DPW on equipment upkeep and grounds-maintenance supplies.

The Park Manager supports daily operations by handling minor repairs, securing park gates, mowing grounds, preparing and lining softball fields, and completing other routine maintenance as needed.

Recreation Board

The nine-member Recreation Board is appointed by the Township Board and operates without formal by-laws; however, to maintain consistency between the Recreation Board and the Park Commission, the Recreation Board Chair also serves as Chair of the Park Commission. Recreation Board members receive compensation through an annual budget allocation approved by the Township Board. The Board does not employ any full-time staff, as current funding levels do not support dedicated personnel.

Parks And Recreation Budget And Funding

Below are a summary of revenues generated by Parks and Recreation Port Huron Township.

Year	General Fund Recreation Revenue	Park Fund Revenue	Total Parks & Recreation Revenue
2025	\$16,040.90	\$139,635.96	\$155,676.86
2026 (YTD as of 8/18/26)	\$18,896	\$58,433.61	\$77,329.61

The Township Board and Park Commission maintain a strong working relationship. The Park Commission is responsible for the management and maintenance of Township parks, while the Township Board reviews and approves the Commission's budgets.

Recreation-related expenditures in 2025 included:

- \$63,004.11 for Recreation Department operations
- \$109,195.02 from the Park Fund

As of August 2026, expenditures for the year were \$131,003.79.

ST. CLAIR COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION MILLAGE

The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) manages a countywide parks and recreation millage. Under this program, PARC directs 75% of millage revenue to facilities and projects serving countywide needs, while the remaining 25% is distributed to local governments for improvements to community parks, recreation programs, and related facilities.

Since 1995, local communities have received more than \$17 million through the millage, substantially supporting local parks and recreation services. Allocations are based on municipal population. From 1995 through 2021, Port Huron Township received \$989,711 for parks and recreation activities.

To qualify for continued funding, communities must file an annual report and meet maintenance-of-effort requirements. These requirements ensure that millage funds add to, rather than replace, existing local support for parks and recreation. Local governments must demonstrate that their funding remains at least equal to the level provided before the 1994 millage election.

PARC has also supported capital improvements directly, including the donation of ADA-accessible kayak launches at Bakers Field Park and the 40th Street Pond.

STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS

Since 1972, Port Huron Township has received four MDNR grant awards, though two were later withdrawn. The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) has served as an important source of support for the Township's recreation investments.

Other grant programs have also helped fund recreation improvements, including an MDNR Clean Michigan Initiative grant for Hoover School Park and Land and Water Conservation Fund assistance for improvements at Wm. P. Thompson Pond.

PROJECT	YEAR	GRANT AMOUNT	PROJECT TYPE	PUBLIC ACT
Purchase of Bakers Field	2001	\$375,000	Acquisition	PA 81 of 2001
Bakers Field Park Development	2009	\$282,000	Development	PA 23 of 2009

Source: Michigan Department of Natural Resources, 2022

RECREATION PROGRAMS, COLLABORATION, AND VOLUNTEERS

The Township partners with the County Parks and Recreation Commission, Blueways of St. Clair, community members, and various organizations to provide recreational programs and amenities.

The Township operates a six-week, drop-in Summer Recreation Program for children from kindergarten through age 14. The program features themed days, contests, parties, tournaments, and field trips. Two supervisors and multiple volunteers staff the program.

Each October, the Township hosts a family-friendly Fall Festival in one of its parks. Activities typically include hayrides, children's carnival games, a magic show, fire truck tours, inflatables, and refreshments. A local orchard often participates by offering seasonal items for sale. The Township also organizes a holiday decorating contest open to all residents and outdoor movie '

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP'S PARKS AND RECREATION 2021-2022 BUDGET		
Category	2025 Total	2026 YTD Total
Personnel	\$87,985.58	\$70,005.48
Contracted Services	\$15,015	\$10,428.25
Supplies & Operating	\$3,681.50	\$2,201.31
Programs	\$18,378.31	\$19,596.97
Transportation	\$4,281.22	\$4,853.89
Maintenance & Utilities	\$34,487.52	\$35,417.89
Capital Outlay	\$202,450	\$105,000
Total Expenditures	\$172,199.13	\$131,003.79

PORT HURON TOWNSHIP'S PARKS AND RECREATION PROJECTED REVENUES		
Revenue Source	2025 Actual	2026 YTD
Interest (Savings + Investments)	\$85,725.60	\$43,839.76
Pavilion Rental	\$2,115	\$1,875
Park Use / Donations	\$500	\$250
Ball Diamond Rent	\$4,860	\$4,430
Sign Leasing	\$11,496.68	\$8,031.67
Tower Lease	\$34,938.68	\$19,900
Misc Revenue	\$500	\$7.18
Total Park Fund Revenue	\$139,635.96	\$58,433.61

Parks & Recreation Inventory

When a community seeks to develop a comprehensive parks and recreation master plan, it is imperative to catalog existing parks and recreation facilities. An extensive inventory of parks and recreation will allow a community to highlight its assets, develop linkages, build off of innovative trends, and determine any gaps in services.

Existing Facility Inventory

Various methods were employed to assess these recreational facilities, including a review of aerial photographs and existing maps, windshield surveys, site visits, and discussions with recreational providers. The inventory that follows provides a detailed look at the amenities available at private and regional recreational facilities/parks.

State and Regional Parks

Port Huron Township is part of a region that has a wealth of parks and recreation destinations. As a region, southeast Michigan has illustrated a longstanding commitment to parks and recreation. From major park systems to wildlife preservation areas, the State of Michigan and the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Authority have established a network of facilities that provide users of all abilities and interests with plentiful parks and recreation destinations.

Sixteen (16) state parks and recreation areas are located in the five-county area surrounding Port Huron. In total, these recreation facilities encompass over 50,000 acres of land, and offer a wide range of services including trails, swimming, fishing, boating picnicking, camping, nature preserves, cross-country skiing, and many others. St. Clair County is home to Lakeport State Park, Algonac State Park, St. John's Marsh Wildlife Area, Port Huron State Game Area, and St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area.

St. Clair County Recreational Facilities

Columbus County Park

This county park, located in Columbus Township along the Belle River, provides natural area for outdoor enjoyment, a sledding hill, lodging, and a variety of trails.

Goodells County Park

This park occupies 327 acres and includes the County Farm Museum and 4-H Fair Grounds, as well as a butterfly garden, natural areas, a sledding hill, and a splash pad.

Fort Gratiot County Park

This park in north St. Clair County offers scenic views of Lake Huron, and provides a public beach, picnic areas, playscapes, trails, and the 1971 Tunnel Explosion Memorial, which honors 22 workers killed in an accident during construction of a water intake tunnel in the area.

Fort Gratiot Light Station

This former Coast Guard station is home to Michigan's oldest lighthouse, which has been renovated and restored, and is St. Clair County's newest county park.

Woodsong County Park

This park was purchased from the Girl Scouts – Michigan Waterways Council Inc. This site contains trails and runs along a half mile of the Black River, and offers opportunities for nature study, hiking, biking, and paddling.

Blueways of St. Clair

St. Clair County's Blueways Trail is a water trail system implemented throughout the county's many waterways and lakeshore. Implemented in 2009, this 17-route system, including some ADA accessible launches, includes the Island Loop Route, which runs up the Black River and along the Lake Huron shoreline, and has been recognized as a National Water Trail by the US Department of the Interior, the first such trail in Michigan.

Bridge-To-Bay Trail

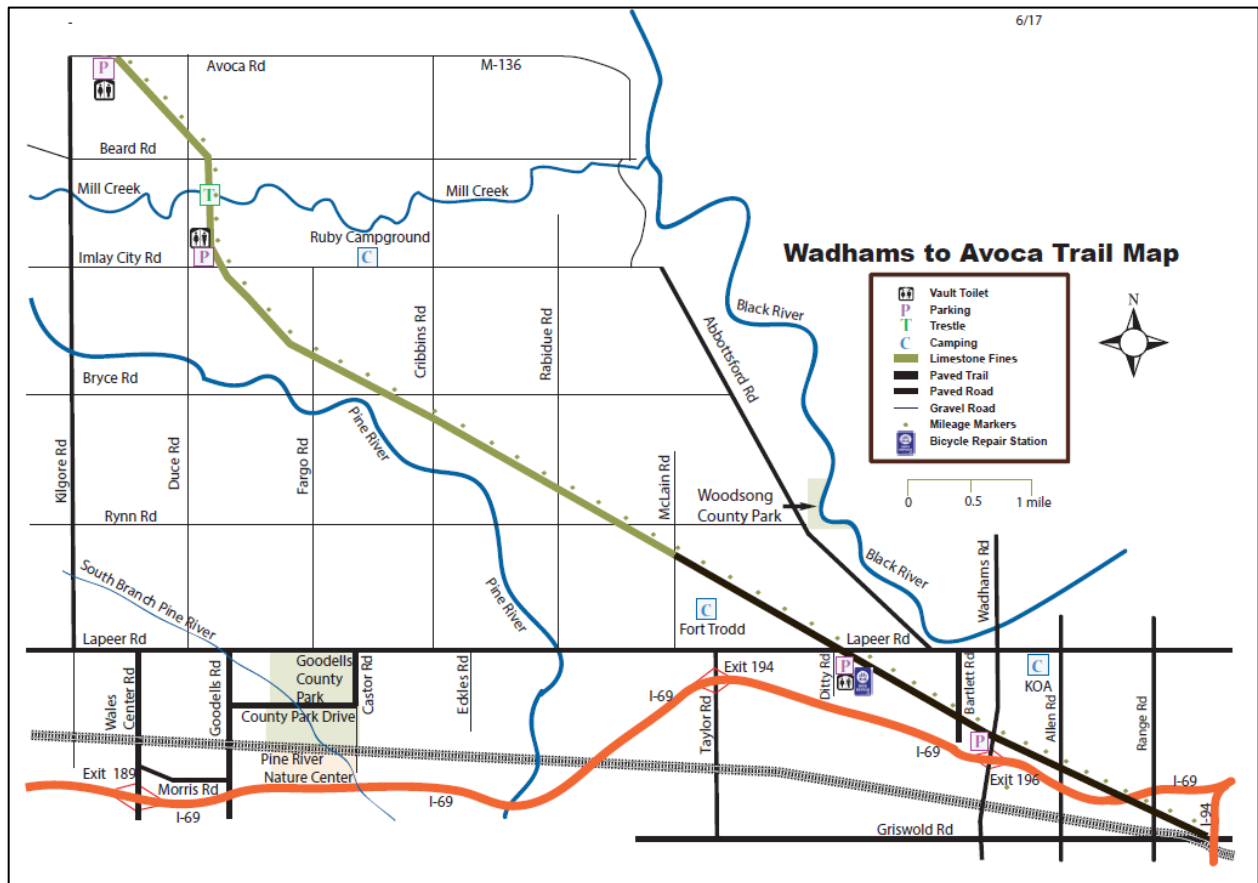
The Bridge-To-Bay Trail is a biking and walking path that follows the lakeshore the County from New Baltimore to Burtchville.



Most of the trail is a shared-access route, and the segment in Port Huron Township is along Dixie Highway.

Wadhams to Avoca Trail

The Wadhams to Avoca Trail is a rails-to-trails pathway located on the former CSX rail line. The trail is open to hikers, bikers, and equestrians, and its scenic rural character also supports birding. The trail also contains the 60-foot Mill Creek Trestle, which provides four overlook areas into the Mill Creek Valley.



Local Parks And Recreation Facilities

- Port Huron Township Parks and Facilities
- The Township owns and operates just over 216 acres of parkland, including:
- Lions Club Park
- Memorial Park
- Wm. P. Thompson Pond
- Michigan Road Little league Park
- Hoover School Park
- Bakers Field Park.

Additionally, the Township owns 70 acres of undeveloped land immediately south of the Little League Park at Michigan Road and Moak Street, as well as subsidizing the funding for the Port Huron Township Museum. The following pages include a profile of each park in Port Huron Township.

Accessibility Evaluation

Recreation planning must strive provide barrier-free access for visitors of all abilities. For new or renovated facilities, this includes accessible parking, sidewalks, trails, picnic tables, playground equipment, and other features. Compliance is evaluated using standards in The Accessibility Checklist, which is based on the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

In accordance with the MDNR's recreation plan guidelines booklet, an accessibility evaluation was completed for each park within the township. The evaluation was conducted by the planning consultant. On September 15, 2026, each facility was compared to the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design and given a ranking from 1-5, where:

1 = none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

2 = some site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

3 = most site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

4 = all site elements meet 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design

5 = the facility meets the Principles of Universal Design

Park / Facility	ADA Rating (1-5)	Notes
Lions Club Park	2	Some accessible elements present; several routes and surfaces not fully compliant.
Memorial Park	3	Most elements meet ADA standards; accessible routes present but some amenities need upgrades.
Wm. P. Thompson Pond	3	Accessible fishing piers and kayak launch; remaining amenities mostly compliant.
Michigan Road Little League Park	2	Some accessible elements present; several routes and surfaces not fully compliant.
Hoover School Park	2	Some accessible elements present; several routes and surfaces not fully compliant.
Bakers Field Park	3	Most elements meet ADA standards; accessible routes present but some amenities need upgrades.

Evaluations used the following criteria to determine each park's ranking:

PARKING

- Accessible parking spaces are provided and marked with international symbol of accessibility.
- Accessible parking is as near to the parking entrance as possible.
- Signs designating accessible parking spaces are 60 inches high.

PLAY AREAS

- There is an accessible route (60 inches wide) to the entrance of the play area with a slope no steeper than 1:16. N/A
- For playground equipment, at least one turning spaces provided on the same level as components.
- Play area, surface is firm and stable (mulch, wood chips, sand and gravel are not accessible surfaces).
- Where multiple swings and a swing bay are provided, one swing is located on an accessible route.
- For court sports, at least one accessible route both sides of the court.

PARK AMENITIES

- Picnic table provide at least one wheelchair space for each 24 linear feet of usable table service perimeter. The isles between chairs and table are 3 feet wide.

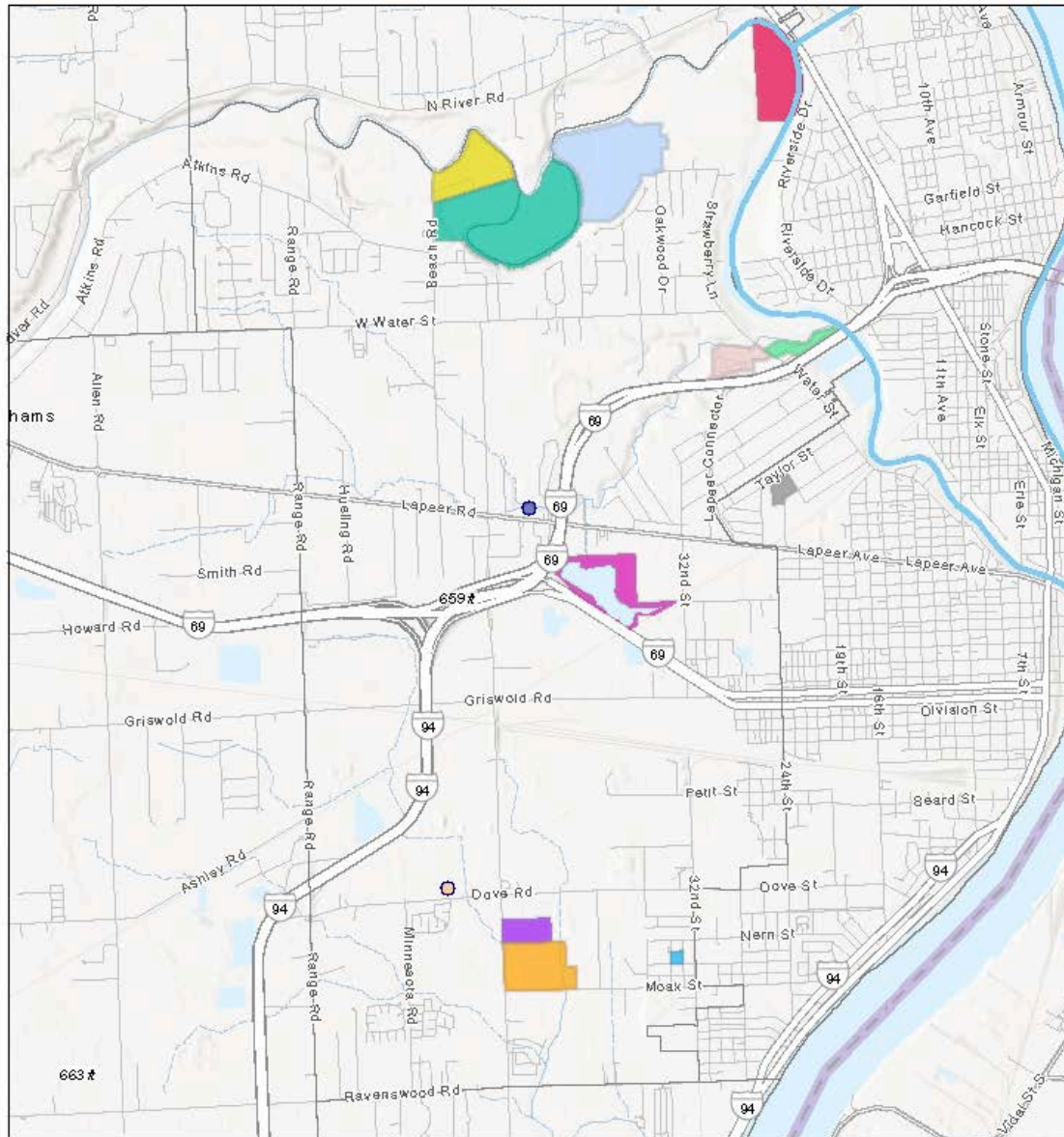
- Drinking fountain spouts outlets are a maximum of 36 inches of the finish floor or ground.
- Safety is promoted by good street lighting.
- Ramps are non-slip.
- If public restroom facilities are present, there is at least one fully accessible restroom.

TRAILS AND SIDEWALKS

- There is a path of travel that does not require the use of stairs.
- Bike paths are separate from pedestrian walkways.
- Sidewalks are free of obstruction, wide enough for wheelchairs, solid (not made of dirt) and have curb cuts. All stairways feature railing and stair treads that are painted to distinguish each step.
- Handrails are provided on both sides of a ramp.
- Accessible routes, connect all park amenities and coincide with general circulation.

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Port Huron Township Parks and Rec Map



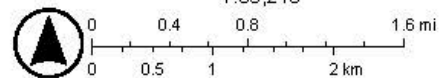
Michigan DNR State-designated Water Trails

Port Huron Township Public Parks & Facilities

- Baker's Field Park
- Hoover School Park
- Lions Club Park
- Memorial Park
- Michigan Road Little League Park
- Undeveloped Park
- W.P. Thompson Pond (40th Street Pond)
- Port Huron Township Museum

Private Recreation Facilities

- Black River Golf Course
- Port Huron Elks Golf Club
- Port Huron Township RV Park
- Glacier Pointe Ice Complex



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), State of Michigan, Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community, Esri, NASA,

Created August 29, 2026

Lions Club Park



Amenities:

- 10 Acres
- Black River Access
- Stocks Creek Access
- Public Service Building
- Playground
- Picnic/Shelter Facilities
- Sledding Hill
- Fishing Platforms
- In-Ground Stoves
- Picnic Tables
- Portable Restrooms

Accessibility Rating: 2



Memorial Park



Amenities

- 58 Acres
- Black River Access/Frontage
- Picnic Tables
- Outdoor Pavilions
- Playground Equipment
- Walking Paths
- AYSO Soccer Fields
- Basketball Court
- Softball Diamonds
- Volleyball Court
- Bleachers
- Fishing
- Birding

Accessibility Rating: 3



William. P. Thompson Pond



Amenities:

- 65 Acres •
- Spring-Fed Lake
- Six Gazebos
- Outdoor Pavilion
- Picnic Tables
- Two 124-foot Accessible Fishing Piers
- ADA-Accessible Kayak Launch
- Public Restrooms

Accessibility Rating: 3



Michigan Road Little League Park



The Port Huron Township Little League owns 10.6 acres of property along Michigan Road, north of Moak Street with three baseball diamonds. The Township owns the adjacent 9.4-acre parcel that has two additional diamonds.

Together, the 20-acre park offers bleachers, a concession stand, and several outbuildings.

Accessibility Rating: 1



The Hoover School Park



Amenities:

- 1.5-Acre Neighborhood Park
- Multi-Use Basketball Courts
- Outdoor Pavilions
- Playground
- Restrooms

Accessibility Rating: 2



Bakers Field



Amenities:

- 61.5 Acres
- Boat Ramp
- ADA-Accessible Kayak Launch
- ADA-Accessible Fishing Pier
- Trails
- Pickleball/Tennis Courts
- Picnic Area

Accessibility Rating: 3

Port Huron Township Museum

The Port Huron Township Board also subsidizes funding for the operation of a museum highlighting the Francis Malane Schoolhouse and restored train caboose located behind the Port Huron Township Hall.

Accessibility Rating: 2

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Undeveloped Property



The current parcel is 56 acres and remains undeveloped. It contains natural woods and vegetations and is currently inaccessible.

Accessibility Rating: 1

Private Recreational Facilities In Port Huron Township

There are several private recreation facilities within the township including:

- Black River Boat Club: Private modern club and boat slips.
- Black River Country Club: Privately-owned 18-hole golf course with a modern clubhouse. Public is welcome.
- Bridge Harbor Yacht Club: Privately-owned modern clubhouse with a swimming pool, tennis courts, and individually-owned boat slips.
- Elks Lodge Golf Club: Private 18-hole golf course with a modern clubhouse. Open to members and guests.
- Glacier Point Ice Skating Arena: Two ice skating rinks.
- The Port Huron and Detroit Historical Society Museum
- Soccer Association in Park #3: Multi-use courts and soccer fields.
- Riverside Sports Academy: Gym on Michigan Road south of Dove Road.
- Dancing Fire Glamping and RV Resort, former the Port Huron Township RV Park, offers camping options with up to 134 sites.

Parks And Recreation Facilities In Neighboring Communities

The neighboring communities of Clyde Township, Kimball Township, Marysville, and Port Huron provide a broad range of parks and recreational facilities. The following tables present an inventory of these facilities.

Community	Park	Acres	Amenities
Clyde	Bills Bearss Park	20	Playground, ballfields, soccer fields, tennis courts, picnic areas, pavilion, basketball court, concessions, restrooms
Clyde	Firefighters Park	1	Playground, ball diamond, basketball court, picnic facilities, ice skating
Clyde	Clyde Township Hall Park	1	Playground, tennis courts, picnic areas, pavilion, restrooms
Clyde	Jake Simpson Wilderness Park	17	Basketball courts, inline skating, playground, pickleball court
Clyde	Riverfront Park	1.8	Undeveloped
Kimball	Sutherland	46	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, pond access, fishing access, bathing

			beach, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, restrooms
Kimball	Smiths Creek Park	3	Playground, basketball courts, ice skating, trails, picnic areas
Port Huron	Lakeside Park	17.7	Playgrounds, volleyball courts, lake access, concessions, bathing beach, restrooms, splash pad, freighter watching
Port Huron	Lighthouse Park	7.9	Playgrounds, lake access, bathing beach, restrooms, freighter watching
Port Huron	Blue Water Bridge Park	3.7	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Thomas Edison Park	9.0	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Pine Grove Park	13.7	Playground, ballfields, river access, fishing access, trails, picnic areas, restrooms, concessions, pavilion, freighter watching
Port Huron	Lincoln Avenue Turnout	0.5	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Port Huron	Keifer Park	0.9	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Municipal Office Grounds	1.8	River access, fishing access; trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Wastewater Treatment Plant	1.1	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Lincoln Park Turnout	0.6	River access, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Port Huron	Fort Street Dock	0.8	River access, marina, fishing access, trail, restrooms
Port Huron	Quay Street Dock	1.0	River access, marina, fishing access, ADA-accessible kayak launch, restrooms
Port Huron	Southside Dock & Park	1.25	River access, fishing access
Port Huron	River Street Dock	9.1	River access, marina, fishing access, restrooms
Port Huron	12 th Street Dock	1.8	River access, boat ramps, fishing access, restrooms

Port Huron	Riverside Boat Ramp	5.7	River access, boat ramps, fishing access, restrooms
Port Huron	Sanborn Park	41.7	Playground, ballfield, basketball court, swimming pool, trails, tennis courts, restrooms
Port Huron	Palmer Park	7.8	Playground, ice skating, trails, community center, restrooms
Port Huron	Gratiot Park	1.8	Playground, basketball courts
Port Huron	Mansfield Park	0.8	Playground
Port Huron	Optimist Park	3.2	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating, picnic areas
Port Huron	White Park	3.4	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating
Port Huron	20 th & Court Street Park	2.5	Swimming pool, restrooms
Port Huron	11 th & Division Tot Park	1.0	Playground
Port Huron	19 th & Division Tot Park	0.5	Playground
Port Huron	Knox Field	6.5	Ballfields, basketball courts, restrooms
Port Huron	Lincoln Park	9.8	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, ice skating, picnic areas, freighter watching
Port Huron	16 th & Dove Park	14.5	Playground, ballfields, basketball courts, restrooms
Port Huron	Haynes Park	1.17	Playground, ice skating
Port Huron	12 th & Jenks Tot Park	0.44	Playground
Port Huron	Heritage Park on the Quay	0.21	River access, marina, fishing access
Port Huron	Flag Plaza Park	1.20	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Port Huron	McMorran Place		Special events, performances, concessions, restrooms
Port Huron	Renaissance Tot Park	0.47	Playground

Marysville	Marysville City Park	58	Playgrounds, soccer fields, basketball courts, trails, tennis courts, picnic areas, restrooms, amphitheater; picnic shelters, ballfields, sledding hill, freighter watching
Marysville	Marysville Boardwalk	1.4	River access, boat ramp, bathing beach, fishing access, trail, freighter watching
Marysville	Morton Park	10	Playground, soccer field, ice skating, inline skating, picnic table/areas, restrooms, picnic shelters, skate park, parking area, trails/walking track
Marysville	Mermaid Park	0.7	River access, fishing access, freighter watching
Marysville	4th Street Park	35	Trails
Marysville	Chrysler Beach	2	Playground, bathing beach, river access, fish cleaning station, concessions, restrooms, charging stations, fishing pier, gazebo, trail, picnic areas, ADA accessible, boat launch, kayak launch
Marysville	Ravenswood Road Park	39	Ice skating, trails
Marysville	Washington Road Park	5.4	Native trees
Marysville	Huron Road Park	1.4	Ice skating
Marysville	New Hampshire/6th Street Park	1	Ice skating
Marysville	Delaware Road Park	0.3	Ice skating
Marysville	Connecticut Road Park	0.3	Ice skating
Marysville	Municipal Golf Course	152.7	Golf course, restrooms, freighter watching

Natural Resource Inventory

In a community such as Port Huron Township, where recreational opportunities are heavily intertwined with the natural environment, an inventory of natural resources clarifies where potential opportunities may be available.

The following maps depict Natural Features, Sub-Watersheds/Elevations, and Soil types within the Township.

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Recreation Needs & Opportunities Analysis

Understanding the recreation needs of Port Huron Township begins with looking at who lives here, what facilities currently exist, and how well those facilities serve the community. This analysis helps identify gaps in recreation opportunities and highlights areas where future investment can make the greatest impact.

A common way to evaluate recreation needs is to compare a community's existing parks and facilities with widely accepted planning standards. These standards are not strict requirements; instead, they offer a benchmark that communities can use to understand how their recreation system aligns with typical expectations. Every community is unique, so these standards must be considered alongside local conditions, available resources, and the types of recreation opportunities already offered in the surrounding area.

Recreation Planning Standards

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provide guidelines to help communities plan for parkland and recreation facilities. Michigan's "Recreation Opportunity Standards," based on NRPA guidance, outline how much parkland and how many recreation facilities a community should ideally have per 1,000 residents.

These standards cover a wide range of recreation opportunities—from playgrounds and picnic areas to specialized facilities like archery ranges, ice rinks, ORV trails, and cross-country ski routes. While some facilities require a larger population base than Port Huron Township currently has, they may still be appropriate if the Township's natural features, location, or funding capacity support them. In some cases, adding specialized facilities can attract visitors, support local businesses, and strengthen the Township's overall quality of life.

Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards	
Type of Recreation Opportunity	Plan Standard
Developed Local Park Land	10 acres / 1,000 population
Archery Ranges (including private & commercial)	1 / 50,000 population
Ballfields (not including school facilities)	1 / 3,000 population
Outdoor Basketball Courts (not including school facilities)	1 / 5,000 population
Bicycle Trails (miles)	1 / 40,000 population

Golf Courses (including private & commercial)	1 / 25,000 population
Indoor Ice Rinks	1 / 50,000 population
Outdoor Ice Rinks	1 / 20,000 population
Picnic Areas (tables)	1 / 200 population
Playgrounds (not including school facilities)	1 / 3,000 population
Rifle Ranges (including private & commercial)	1 / 50,000 population
Shotgun Ranges (including private & commercial)	1 / 50,000 population
Sledding Hills (not including school facilities)	1 / 40,000 population
Soccer Fields (not including school facilities)	1 / 20,000 population
Outdoor Swimming Pools	1 / 40,000 population
Outdoor Tennis Courts (not including school facilities)	1 / 4,000 population
Campground Sites (including commercial)	1 / 150 population
Cross-Country Ski Trails (miles)	1 / 10,000 population
Fishing Access (feet)	1,000 / 1,000 population
Fishing Piers	1 / 100,000 population
Hiking Trails (miles)	1 / 5,000 population
Horseback Trails (miles)	1 / 20,000 population
Nature Areas (each)	1 / 50,000 population
Nature Trails (miles)	1 / 20,000 population
ORV Areas	1 acre / 7,500 population
ORV Trails (miles)	1 / 10,000 population
Snowmobiling Land	10 acres / 1,000 population
Snowmobiling Trails (miles)	1 / 3,000 population
Swimming Beaches	1 / 25,000 population

Current Recreation Needs

Using the Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards and Port Huron Township's 2025 estimated population of 10,665 residents, several recreation needs emerge. These standards serve as guidelines rather than strict requirements, and they should be considered alongside regional recreation opportunities and the Township's ability to maintain new facilities.

Based on the standards, the Township currently has potential needs in several areas:

Port Huron Township's Current Recreation Needs

(Based upon an estimated)

Recreation Facility	Existing Amount	Suggested Amount (based upon Recreation Standard)	Need
Cross-Country Ski Trails (miles)	0	1 / 10,000 population	1 mile
ORV Areas	0	1 acre / 7,500 population	1 acre
ORV Trails (miles)	0	1 / 10,000 population	1 trail
Snowmobiling Land	0	10 acres / 1,000 population	100 acres
Snowmobiling Trails (miles)	0	1 / 3,000 population	3 miles

It is important to note that ORV and snowmobiling access is generally limited in Southeast Michigan. For this reason, the Township may find that developing a cross-country ski route within an existing park is a more practical and achievable option.

Future Recreation Needs

Looking ahead, Port Huron Township's projected populations for 2040 (11,382 residents) and 2050 (11,497 residents) show only modest growth. As a result, future recreation needs remain similar to current needs. Using the same Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards, the Township can anticipate slightly increased demand for developed parkland and certain recreation facilities.

The future needs table (for 2040 and 2050) assume that current deficiencies remain unaddressed. Even with population growth, the recommended facilities change very little, reinforcing the importance of focusing on the few key areas where the Township has the greatest opportunity to expand recreation offerings.

Port Huron Township's Future Recreation Needs

(Based upon an estimated 2040 population of 11,382 persons and the 2050 population estimate of 11,497 persons)

Recreation Facility	Existing Amount	Suggested Amount (based upon Recreation Standard)	Need
Cross-Country Ski Trails (miles)	0	1 / 10,000 population	1 mile
ORV Areas	0	1 acre / 7,500 population	1 acre
ORV Trails (miles)	0	1 / 10,000 population	1 trail
Snowmobiling Land	0	10 acres / 1,000 population	100 acres
Snowmobiling Trails (miles)	0	1 / 3,000 population	3 miles

Recreation Needs & Opportunities Conclusion

Port Huron Township's recreation needs were evaluated using demographic trends, public input, and the Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards. The Township's aging population indicates growing demand for accessible, low-impact recreational amenities such as paved walking paths, benches, shade structures, and ADA-compliant facilities. At the same time, the stable number of school-aged children supports continued investment in youth sports fields, playgrounds, and structured programming.

The Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards identify several facility gaps based on the Township's 2025 population of 10,665. These include needs for cross-country ski trails, ORV areas, ORV trails, snowmobiling land, and snowmobiling trails. While some of these facilities require larger regional populations, they represent potential opportunities for partnership or regional collaboration. The Township may more realistically pursue development of a cross-country ski route within an existing park, as noted in the current needs table.

Public input reinforces the need for improved accessibility, expanded water access, enhanced maintenance, and additional family-friendly amenities. Residents consistently express interest in walking paths, fishing access, restrooms, and improved lighting. These needs align with demographic trends and the Township's existing park strengths, particularly at Memorial Park and Wm. P. Thompson Pond.

Overall, Port Huron Township's recreation needs emphasize accessibility upgrades, multi-age amenities, water-based recreation, and continued support for youth sports. These priorities form the foundation for the Township's five-year action program.

The Planning & Public Input Process

The recreation planning process in Port Huron Township involves individuals who represent a broad cross-section of the community's population. The Township Board is responsible for implementing the Recreation Plan, but the Park Board, Recreation Commission, and staff provides input, analysis, and recommendations.

The Township developed an online public survey (with hard copies available at the Township Hall), to collect public input on community priorities for future parks and recreation. Using the inventory and survey findings, this Recreation Plan identifies goals, opportunities, and implementation measures.

Public Input

Understanding the important role of public involvement in developing this plan, the Township developed an online survey to gather general input from the community regarding their thoughts on parks and recreation facilities and programming in the Township. The survey was available from (5) months beginning July 7, 2026 through August 24, 2026. It was advertised on the Township's website and promoted through Township documents/materials.

The survey received 83 responses from a broad cross section of Port Huron Township residents. Respondents were primarily adults ages 30–49, with strong participation from households with children under 18, suggesting that parks and recreation amenities are heavily used by families. Older adults also provided meaningful input, emphasizing walking, water access, and quiet natural areas. Most respondents visit parks weekly or several times per month, indicating regular use of township facilities.

Residents most often reported using Bakers Field, Beach Road Park, 40th Street Pond, and Thompson Pond, along with regional destinations such as the Wadhams to Avoca Trail, Pine Grove Park, Marysville Park, and Lakeside Beach. The results show that township parks are well used, but residents also rely on regional parks for amenities the township lacks, particularly walking and biking trails.

Respondents value township parks for their cleanliness, convenience, accessibility, water views, natural scenery, and quiet rural character. Bakers Field improvements and the Summer Rec Program were frequently praised. Chart responses also showed strong satisfaction with maintenance and overall safety.

The strongest improvement theme was the need for safer walking and biking connections, including sidewalks, expanded trails, and better access to the Wadhams to Avoca Trail and West Water Street. Other priorities included updated and accessible playgrounds, a splash pad, better water and kayak access, permanent restrooms, improved lighting and security, more pickleball and tennis courts, expanded pavilions and picnic areas, and upgrades at 40th Street Pond, Hoover Park, and Water Street Park.

Additional comments raised concerns about Lions Park and sports field access, particularly rental arrangements and limited resident use during tournaments. Residents also requested more community events, including concerts, and suggested a veterans memorial, stronger trail links to county systems, and better walkability along West Water. Overall, the survey shows strong support for parks, interest in modern amenities, and clear priorities for connectivity, safety, affordability, and family-friendly features.

Goals & Objectives

Goals and Objectives formulated by Port Huron Township are the basis of the recreation planning process. They form the framework for public and private decision-making regarding recreational facilities and programs in the Township. This Recreation Plan seeks to pursue long-range recreational goals and objectives through specific short-range actions on the part of the Township, County, and State as well as private entities.

The following goals and objectives were developed by the Township after review of the Township's natural features, population, housing, existing land uses, existing recreational facilities and programs, and the results of the community recreation survey.

The recreation goals and objectives are not prioritized. The Action Program in the Chapter that follows, will detail the specific program strategies to achieve the goals and objectives.

GOAL 1: Enhance Placemaking, Livability, and Community Identity Through Parks and Recreation

Objectives

- Highlight the Black River as a signature natural asset by improving river access, views, and amenities.
- Integrate public art into parks, trails, and public facilities to strengthen community identity.
- Improve wayfinding and signage for parks, trails, water access points, and community destinations.
- Provide recreation amenities that support multigenerational use, including families, youth, and seniors.
- Promote parks as community gathering spaces through events, programming, and accessible design.

GOAL 2: Expand Nonmotorized Connectivity and Safe Access to Recreation

Objectives

- Develop safe pedestrian and bicycle connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and Township facilities.
- Improve pedestrian safety along West Water Street, Dove Road, Michigan Road, and other high-use corridors.

- Connect Township parks to regional trail systems, including the Wadhams-to-Avoca Trail and Bridge-to-Bay Trail.
- Incorporate bike lanes into Township streets where feasible to support regional trail connectivity.
- Provide linear recreation opportunities such as walking, jogging, biking, and nature trails.
- Add benches, rest areas, and ADA-accessible features along walking routes and trails.
- Improve communication and signage for trail access points.

GOAL 3: Provide High-Quality, Inclusive Recreation Opportunities for All Ages and Abilities

Objectives

- Modernize playgrounds with inclusive, ADA-accessible, and nature-based equipment.
- Evaluate feasibility of a Township splash pad based on public input and demographic needs.
- Expand permanent restroom facilities at high-use parks to improve accessibility and year-round use.
- Provide recreation programming for youth, families, adults, and seniors, including fitness, outdoor recreation, and cultural events.
- Continue partnerships with the City of Port Huron Recreation Department to maintain equal access for Township residents.
- Develop a dog park at an existing or new Township park.
- Promote activities and events that strengthen community connections and social engagement.
- Ensure adequate parkland and recreation space is included in new residential developments.

GOAL 4: Protect and Enhance Natural Resources and Water-Based Recreation

Objectives

- Acquire and preserve land along the Black River when opportunities arise to ensure perpetual public access.
- Utilize natural topography and ecological features when designing new recreation areas.
- Develop nature trails and conservation-focused recreation areas throughout the Township.
- Improve water-based recreation amenities, including kayak launches, fishing docks, and shoreline access.
- Use parks as tools for conserving natural features and supporting environmental education.

GOAL 5: Maintain Township Parks to a High Standard and Implement Improvements Proactively

Objectives

- Continuously improve ADA accessibility at all Township-owned recreation facilities.
- Modernize Hoover Park with updated playgrounds, lighting, pavilion improvements, and grills.
- Complete the accessible loop trail around Thompson Pond and improve shoreline access.
- Improve water access, signage, and shoreline stabilization at Beach Road Park.
- Review partnership agreements (Lions Park, AYSO) to ensure equitable resident access and appropriate use.
- Improve lighting, drainage, parking, and safety features at Memorial Park and Michigan Road Park.
- Maintain high standards of cleanliness, safety, and maintenance across all parks.
- Expand pavilions, picnic areas, and seating where needed to support community gatherings.
- Implement a proactive capital improvement schedule for park facilities and equipment.

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Action Strategies

Action Strategies outline Port Huron Township's approach to implementing the goals and objectives identified in the previous chapter. These strategies provide guidance for planning and budgeting purposes for the next five years. They suggest priorities generally but are not intended to be set in stone or limit additional creative approaches. Generally, parks and recreation action strategies should consider the following when outlining a strategy to implement goals and objectives:

- Based upon the Public Survey, as part of this Recreation Plan, what projects or activities were considered most important by the respondents?
- Is there immediate health and safety concerns that need to be addressed?
- What opportunities exist to partner with other groups towards a common goal?
- Is there a person or group who can champion specific goals/objectives?
- Are there multiple goals that can be achieved by implementing a project?
- What projects affect the greatest number of people in the community and/or address the greatest need?
- How can projects be broken down into phases for a multi-year approach?
- What funding opportunities exist for implementation of certain goals?

Below is a drafted set of Action Strategies based on the goals and objectives. This is based on what was in the previous plan, plus emphasis from what our latest public input provided. I ask the commission to review, update, and edit as needed, or provide feedback on what they believe would work better. All action items need to be either termed (short/mid/long) or prioritized (high/medium/low). If the township has investigated the pricing on these goals, as they were apart of the previous plan, then update what the projected cost is. Also, if the township can identify the funding source of these projects, that should be provided as well (MNRTF = Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund; LCF = Local community foundations)

Local = Local Funds/General Funds; County = St. Clair County; TBD = To be determined)

Please identify any items that have been completed, and please share any items that should be included!

Port Huron Township Parks and Recreation 5 Year Action Plan

Action	Priority/Term	Projected Cost(s)	Funding Source
All Parks			
Improve ADA accessibility across all Township recreation facilities.			
Memorial Park			
Add drainage between pavilions and ball diamonds for cornhole games.			
Install cement cornhole boards.			
Expand, pave, and mark parking area.			
Add lighting to parking area.			
Construct a walking path within the park.			
Hoover Park			
Add new lighting			
Add new playground equipment.			
Update pavilions.			
Add cooking grills.			
Wm. P. Thompson Pond			
Replace guardrails.			
Install a new shed.			
Replace the boat dock.			
Move the kayak launch to the west end of the pond.			
Refurbish the dock			

Action	Priority/Term	Projected Cost(s)	Funding Source
Pave the parking lot.			
Remove the bridge.			
Add sandy beach behind Blue Water Community Action and pavilions.			
Add playground equipment.			
Construct an accessible walking path around the pond with benches.			
Add parking off 32nd Street.			
Update pavilions.			
Michigan Road Little League Park			
Pour concrete around the concession stand.			
Construct new restrooms.			
Add new storage.			
Install a new scoreboard and updated PA system.			
Improve batting cages.			
Resurface parking area and driveway.			
Add parking lot lighting.			
Improve electrical system in garage.			
Make drainage improvements as needed.			

Action	Priority/Term	Projected Cost(s)	Funding Source

Appendix

- Approving Resolution
- Public Notices
- Transmittal Letters
- Public Survey Results

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