

CITY OF MONROE

PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN



DRAFT FOR
PUBLIC REVIEW
2019-2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Adopted by the Monroe City Council on _____

Assisted by The Mannik & Smith Group, Inc.



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INTRODUCTION

Residents living in the City of Monroe are fortunate to have access not only to many City parks but also to a state park, a national battlefield park, and an international wildlife refuge, all within City limits and in close proximity to one another. These parks provide a wide range of benefits. People value the time they spend in them, whether walking, bicycling, playing basketball, or having a picnic. Parks provide measurable health benefits from providing direct contact with nature to opportunities for physical activity and social interaction. Public parks are often the “engine” that drives tourism in communities and this is particularly true for Monroe where great strides have been made in capitalizing on the location of the new River Raisin National Battlefield Park, Sterling State Park, and the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

The quality of life in the City of Monroe is directly linked to the recreational and leisure time opportunities which parks and recreation provide – and in turn this quality of life can serve as a stimulus in attracting economic development to the community.

Monroe’s last Parks and Recreation Master Plan was adopted in 2014. The plan was a thorough and well-articulated document describing the current conditions of the community and identifying key community goals. Progress was made on all the Plan’s goals with many of the objectives achieved, such as the River Raisin Heritage Trail which connects the City to Sterling State Park.

The mission of the City of Monroe Parks and Recreation is to enhance the lives of its citizens and visitors by encouraging a healthy lifestyle and offering safe and quality parks and recreation experiences that highlight our area’s natural and cultural resources.

The purpose of the current Parks and Recreation Master Plan is to update and guide recreation planning and development efforts of the City over the next five-year period, through 2023. The Plan identifies existing recreational opportunities, assess the need for future recreational needs, provide direction for the future development of parks and recreational programs, and develop strategies to meet the growing recreational needs of a changing population.

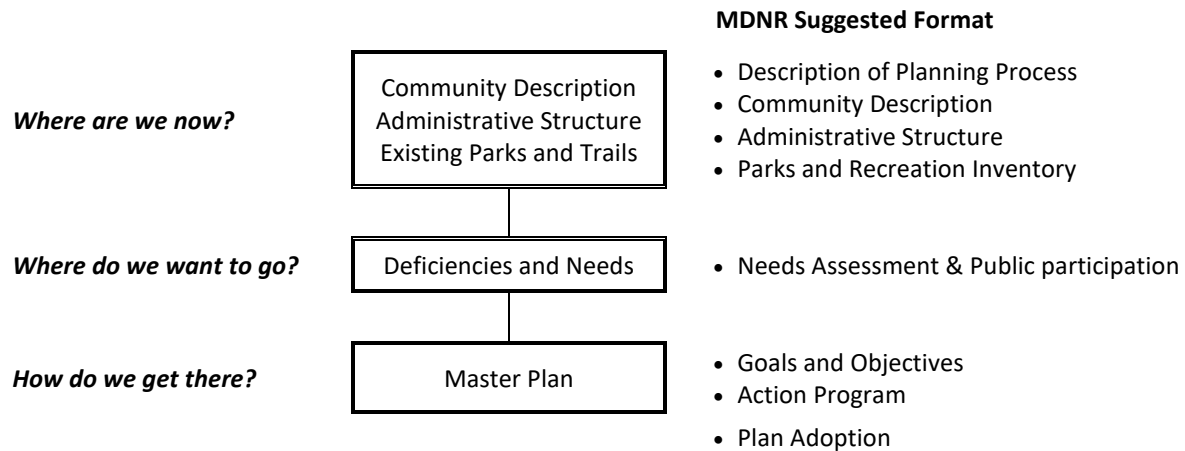
PLANNING PROCESS

The process used to generate the Plan consisted of three major phases which are described below.

1. **Where are we now?** This phase involved a review of the planning context to provide a basis for this plan update. In this phase, the inventory of parks was updated to document the existing recreation resources. The background information is organized into three main categories: community description, administrative structure, and park and recreation inventory.
2. **Where do we want to be?** The second phase in the process consisted of a public engagement effort to solicit ideas and suggestions from the community about recreation preferences through an online questionnaire and at public meetings. Input was also solicited at an Open House and at meetings from City officials, community stakeholders, residents, and staff.
3. **How do we get there?** Once needs were identified, the final phase involved the development of goals and objectives as well as an action plan to support the community's vision for the park system and provide for park planning and development projects. Recommended projects were summarized in a capital improvement schedule, accompanied by strategies for implementation. This phase also included preparation of a full draft of the Plan, which was presented to the Park and Recreation Advisory Commission as well as the public for review and comment prior to adoption.

The following diagram illustrates the planning process and how it corresponds to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) suggested format in the Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans (2018).

Figure 1. Planning Process



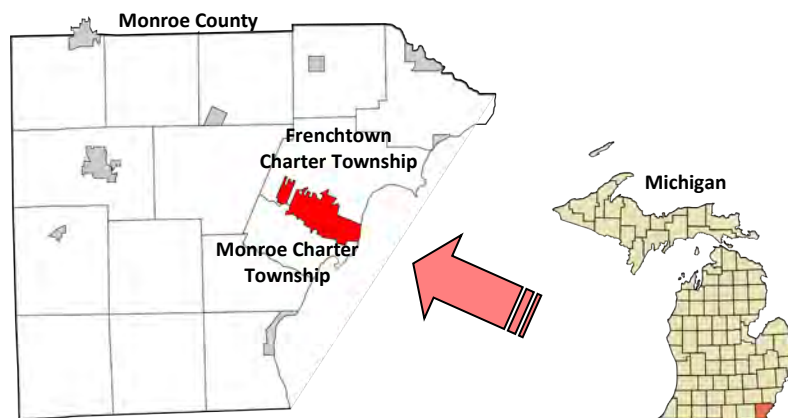
PLAN CONTENT

The City of Monroe Parks and Recreation Master Plan follows the format suggested by the MDNR. The first chapter, **Community Description**, includes an overview of the City existing characteristics and conditions. The **Administrative Structure** chapter includes a description of how parks and recreation services are administered in the City of Monroe including budget and funding information. The next chapter, **Park and Recreation Inventory**, describes the existing City parks as well as those of the federal, state, and county governments, and the other nearby regional parks and recreation facilities. This chapter also includes an accessibility assessment of the parks and the status of previously awarded grant park projects. The **Needs Assessment** portion of the Plan presents the input received from local officials, staff, and residents, which helped in formulating the **Goals and Objectives** chapter. The **Action Program** chapter outlines an action plan with strategies for implementation. The final chapter, **Supporting Documents**, includes the information gathered through the planning process as well as the official resolutions and notices documenting the Plan's adoption by City Council.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

The City of Monroe is located in the southeast corner of Michigan on Lake Erie, about 17 miles north of Toledo, Ohio, and about 35 miles south of Detroit. It is the county seat of Monroe County. The City of Monroe is the jurisdiction of this Plan. It is bordered by Frenchtown Charter Township to the north and Monroe Charter Township to the south.

Figure 2. Regional Setting



Source: Adapted from Wikipedia

Founded in 1785, Monroe is a community that has a shared vision that seeks to balance the opportunities of economic development with historic preservation. Monroe is Michigan's third oldest community. Its location on the west shore of Lake Erie and the River Raisin made it a natural crossroads for the Native Americans and later the French missionaries and fur traders who settled here.

Although the region is influenced by the large urban areas of Detroit and Toledo, the community has remained, for the most part, a medium-sized town. The first three chapters of the Plan provide information on the social and physical characteristics of the City, the administration of parks and recreation services, and the existing park facilities to gain an understanding of the opportunities the City has to offer.

Originally called French Town, the settlement which is now within the City of Monroe, found itself caught between the British Army and the U.S. forces during the War of 1812. The U.S. forces including the Kentucky militia pushed the British Army back into Canada. Four days later the British counterattacked and 300 Americans were killed - making the Battle of the River Raisin the single most deadly battle for the U.S. in the war. "Remember the Raisin" became the American rally cry of the war after Indian allies of the British killed another 100 injured soldiers who were unable to retreat after the counterattack. The River Raisin Battlefield was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. In 2009, the federal government incorporated the River Raisin National Battlefield Park into the National Park System.

Source: downtownmonroemi.com/about/history



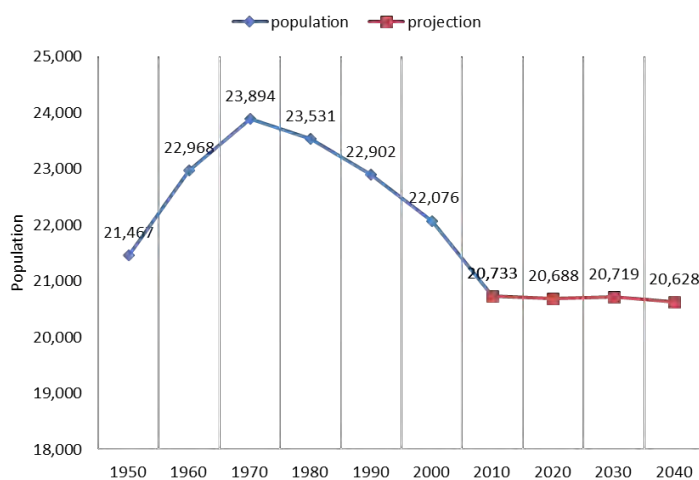
POPULATION TRENDS

Monroe residents consist of a diverse population base with diverse recreational needs. Anticipated changes in the size and age composition of the population will affect the need for future recreational facilities.

According to the most recent census information, the City of Monroe is home to 20,733 people, a decrease of 6.1% from the previous decennial figure of 22,076. The most recent population estimate for the City is 20,006 (SEMCOG, 2017), indicating a continued decrease in the population.

Population projections developed by the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) predict a stable number of people for the City of Monroe, with population numbers barely increasing 0.5% to 20,834 between 2010 and 2045 and the number of households decreasing by 4.1% from 8,594 to 8,238. The City's population age 60 and over, however, will see a substantial change in the future with increases over 50 and 75% for adults over 60 and 65 years of age. At the same time, a decline of the youth population is also predicted with decreases of about 25% for people under 18 years of age.

Figure 3. City of Monroe Population, 2010-2045



Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 and SEMCOG 2045 Regional Development Forecast, July 2017

Table 1. Monroe and Adjoining Township Population and Households, 2000 and 2010

Community	Population			Households		
	2000	2010	% change	2000	2010	% change
City of Monroe	22,076	20,733	-6.1%	8,594	8,238	-4.1%
Frenchtown Township	20,777	20,428	-1.7%	7,733	7,958	2.9%
Monroe Township	13,491	14,568	8.0%	5,312	5,719	7.7%
Monroe County	145,945	152,021	4.2%	53,772	58,230	8.3%

Source: US Census Bureau (2000 and 2010)

Table 2. Monroe Youth and Older Adults Trends, 2010 and 2045

	2010	2015	2045	% Change 2010-2045		2010	2015	2045	% Change 2010-2045
60 +	3,802	3,980	5,888	54.9%	Under 18	5,435	4,927	4,079	-24.9%
65 +	2,761	2,666	4,846	75.5%	5 to 17	3,874	3,576	2,886	-25.5%
65 to 84	2,208	2,257	3,307	49.9%	Under 5	1,561	1,351	1,193	-23.6%
85+	553	409	1,539	178.3%					

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015; and SEMCOG 2045 Regional Development Forecast, July 2017

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to examining some of most notable demographic trends in Monroe, it is important to understand the population characteristics of the community. Table 3 presents the most recent information on race, age, education, employment, income, and housing characteristics of Monroe residents based on SEMCOG's Community Profile (July 2017).

Table 3. Community Profile

	number	%		number	%
AGE (2010)					
Under 5 years	1,561	7.5%	45 to 49 years	1,479	7.1%
5 to 9 years	1,461	7.0%	50 to 54 years	1,487	7.2%
10 to 14 years	1,490	7.2%	55 to 59 years	1,271	6.1%
15 to 19 years	1,481	7.1%	60 to 64 years	1,041	5.0%
20 to 24 years	1,326	6.4%	65 to 69 years	732	3.5%
25 to 29 years	1,348	6.5%	70 to 74 years	525	2.5%
30 to 34 years	1,383	6.7%	75 to 79 years	443	2.1%
35 to 39 years	1,294	6.2%	80 to 84 years	508	2.5%
40 to 44 years	1,350	6.5%	85+ years	553	2.7%
MEDIAN AGE (years) (2010)					
	36.3				
OLDER ADULTS AND YOUTH (2010)					
60 and over	3,802		Under 18	5,435	
65 and over	2,761		5 to 17	3,874	
65 to 84	2,208		Under 5	1,351	
85 and Over	553				
POPULATION & HOUSEHOLDS (2010)					
Group Quarters Population	609		Households (Occupied Units)	8,238	
Household Population	20,124		Residential Vacancy Rate	10.0%	
Housing Units	9,158		Average Household Size	2.44	
HOUSEHOLD TYPES (2010)					
With Seniors 65+	1,893		Live Alone, <65	1,623	
Without Seniors	6,345		2+ Persons, With children	2,861	
Live Alone, 65+	898		2+ Persons, Without children	2,856	
RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN (2010)					
Non-Hispanic	19,873	95.9%	Hispanic	860	4.1%
White	17,855	86.1%			
Black	1,251	6.0%			
Asian	140	0.7%			
Multi-Racial	524	2.5%			
Other	103	0.5%			
HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL (2015)					
Graduate / Professional Degree		7.8%	Some College, No Degree		25.4%
Bachelor's Degree		10.5%	High School Graduate		35.8%
Associate Degree		10.1%	Not High School Graduate		10.3%

	number	%		number	%
JOBS BY INDUSTRY (2015)					
Natural Resources, Mining & Construction	534	4.4%	Education Services	611	5.1%
Manufacturing	1,297	10.8%	Healthcare services	2,605	21.6%
Wholesale Trade,	351	2.9%	Leisure & Hospitality	1,032	8.6%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	471	3.9%	Other Services	769	6.4%
Information & Financial Activities	786	6.5%	Public Administration	673	5.6%
Professional & Technical Services	1,460	12.1%	Total	12,050	100.0%
Administrative, Support & Waste Services	487	4.0%			
POVERTY (2015)					
Persons in Poverty	3,923	19.6%	Households in Poverty	1,696	20.7%
INCOME (2015)					
Median Household Income (in 2015 \$)	\$44,452		Per Capita Income (in 2015 \$)	\$22,744	
ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2015)					
\$200,000 or more	124	1.5%	\$35,000 to \$39,999	530	6.5%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	242	3.0%	\$30,000 to \$34,999	433	5.3%
\$125,000 to \$149,999	196	2.4%	\$25,000 to \$29,999	284	3.5%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	601	7.4%	\$20,000 to \$24,999	478	5.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1,002	12.3%	\$15,000 to \$19,999	374	4.6%
\$60,000 to \$74,999	730	8.9%	\$10,000 to \$14,999	531	6.5%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	717	8.8%	Less than \$10,000	1,031	12.6%
\$45,000 to \$49,999	424	5.2%	Total	8,175	100.0%
\$40,000 to \$44,999	478	5.8%			
HOUSING TYPE (2015)					
Single Family Detached	6,418	67.9%	Mobile Home	40	0.4%
Duplex	499	5.3%	Other	0	0.0%
Townhouse / Attached Condo	313	3.3%	Total	9,453	100.0%
Multi-Unit Apartment	1,757	18.6%			
HOUSING TENURE (2015)					
Owner occupied	5,137	57.0%	Vacant	831	9.2%
Renter occupied	3,098	34.4%	Total Housing Units	9,006	100.0%
HOUSING VALUE					
Median housing value	\$105,800		Median gross rent	\$716	
HOUSING VALUE					
\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.0%	\$80,000 to \$99,999	873	17.0%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	13	0.3%	\$60,000 to \$79,999	675	13.1%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	68	1.3%	\$40,000 to \$59,999	510	9.9%
\$250,000 to \$299,999	167	3.3%	\$30,000 to \$39,999	108	2.1%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	187	3.6%	\$20,000 to \$29,999	60	1.2%
\$175,000 to \$199,999	175	3.4%	\$10,000 to \$19,999	59	1.1%
\$150,000 to \$174,999	587	11.4%	Less than \$10,000	43	0.8%
\$100,000 to \$124,999	583	11.3%	Total	5,137	100.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 and American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

The City of Monroe has a rich history, which is reflected in its many significant archeological and historical sites. The City's historic patterns of growth and development has resulted not only in important sites and artifacts, but in a landscape that gives the City a unique sense of place.

Early Settlements

The earliest known inhabitants were native Americans, primarily from the Ottawa and Pottawatomi tribes. While French explorers and missionaries from Montreal visited the area beginning in the late 1600s, the first European settlers in the area were French Canadians who settled in the 1780s. Having acquired land from the Pottawatomi natives, the first settlements were established on the River Raisin in what is now the City of Monroe.

The Ottawa and Pottawatomi Indians occupied villages in the area during the period prior to 1600. A variety of archeological sites representing encampments, burial grounds, and villages have been found throughout the area. Many trails were cut through the Michigan wilderness as a result of the migratory lifestyle of these Native Americans. These early trails are still visible today in the form of highways, which were developed along their routes.

French Canadians arrived in the 1780s and established the first permanent settlement along the River Raisin in the area now known as the City of Monroe. A trading post was established here in 1778. Francois Navarre was the first European settler in 1780. The first settlement was called French Town when about 100 French families came here from Detroit and Canada. Additional small settlements were founded along some of the nearby smaller rivers, including Stony Creek, Sandy Creek, Otter Creek, and La Plaisance Creek.

The original French and French-Canadian settlers divided land using a traditional system of parceling property into long, narrow pieces, each of which had frontage on the river, which was the main source of water, transportation, commerce, and communication. These French Claims, also known as long-lots or ribbon farms, persist today and give the City's landscape a unique quality. It was not until the early 1800s that the American rectangular survey, with its system of towns, ranges, and sections began to split up the land into the more familiar checkerboard pattern which covers the remainder of Monroe County and most of Michigan and the western United States.

After the War of 1812, settlers began to arrive in large numbers to southeast Michigan. American settlers arrived in the area, established a small community and changed French Town to Monroe Town in honor of the president. Rural homesteads were established throughout the area, with land being cleared, farms established, industries developed, and communities built.

Historic Assets

Visitors interested in history are drawn to Monroe to visit the River Raisin 1813 battlefield site, which has become the River Raisin National Battlefield Park under the management of the National Park Service, and many of the other historic structures, sites, museums, and festivals throughout the area. Monroe's historic assets are recognized by historic site designations, historical markers, and memorials.

Monroe has three National Register of Historic Places historic districts: St. Mary's Church Complex Historic District, built between 1835 and 1839; the East Elm-North Macomb Street Historic District, with houses dating from the 1820s to the 1920s; and the Old Village Historic District, which was platted



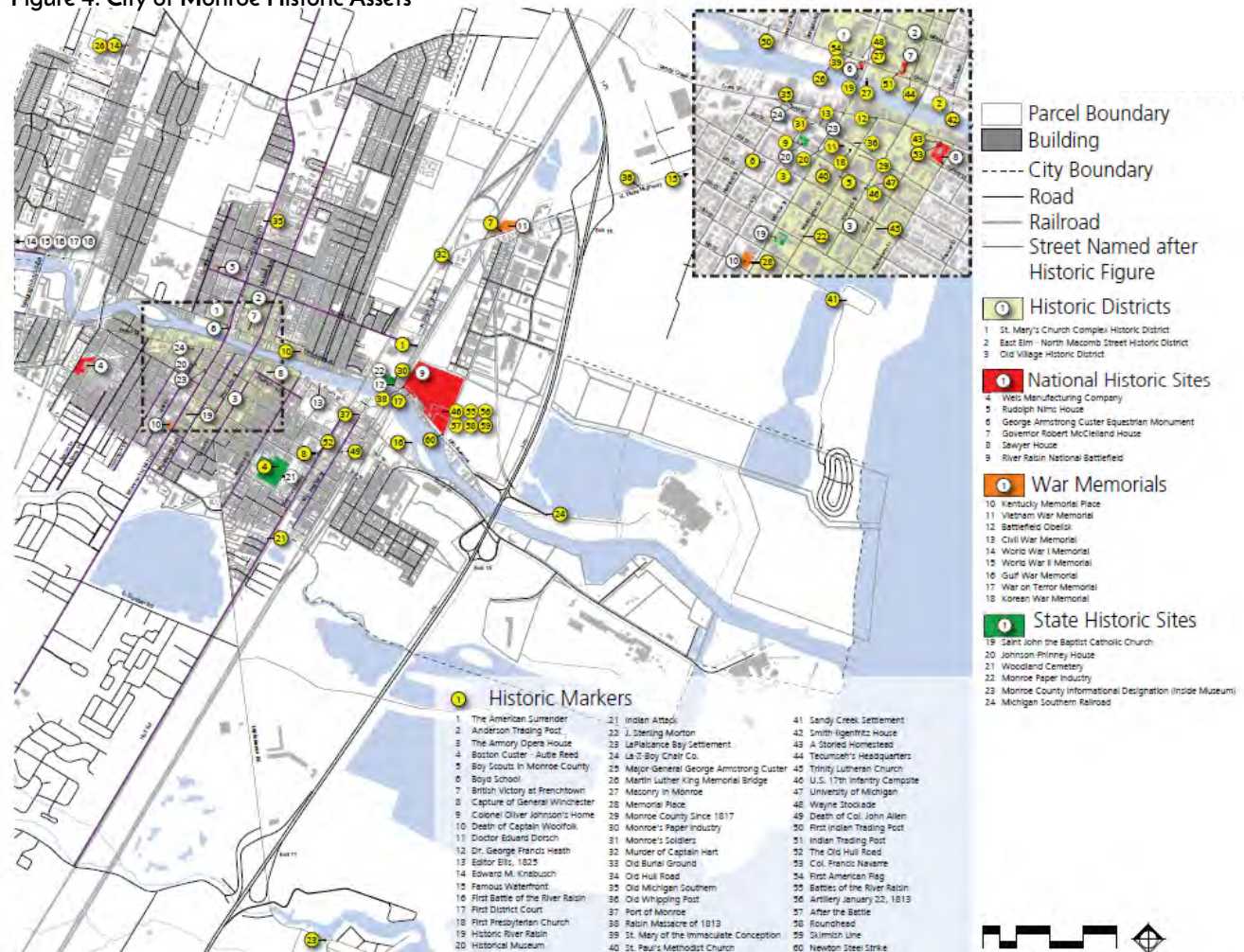
in 1817. The Old Village Historic District contains many street names with historical significance, from early settlers in Monroe to figures of the War of 1812 to U.S. Presidents.

Monroe also boasts six National Historic Sites: Weis Manufacturing Company, Rudolph Nims House, the George Armstrong Custer Equestrian Monument, the Governor Robert McClelland House, the Sawyer House, and the River Raisin National Battlefield.

War memorials in Monroe include the Kentucky Memorial Place, Vietnam War Memorial, the Battlefield Obelisk (War of 1812), the Civil War Memorial, WWI and WWII Memorials, the Gulf War Memorial, the War on Terror Memorial, and the Korean War Memorial. All of these war memorials, except for the Vietnam War Memorial and the Kentucky Memorial Place, are accessible via the River Raisin Heritage Trail. Monroe has six sites on the Michigan's State Register of Historic Places: Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church, the Johnson-Phiney House, Woodland Cemetery, the Monroe Paper Industry, the Monroe County Informational Designation, and the Michigan Southern Railroad.

In addition to the historic sites and war memorials, there are 60 historic markers located in the Monroe area. Each historic marker contains a description of the historical significance of the site. The Battles of the River Raisin, Tecumseh's Headquarters, the Capture of General Winchester, and more can all be found on these markers. As depicted in Figure 4, the bulk of the markers are located within downtown Monroe, but they can be found as far out as LaPlaisance Bay and Sterling State Park.

Figure 4. City of Monroe Historic Assets



Source: River Raisin Heritage Corridor - East Master Plan, 2013

Today's Land Use

While the foundation of Monroe's built environment can be traced back to the late 1700s, today, Monroe is known for its tree-lined streets, well-established neighborhoods, and a distinct, centrally located, historic downtown. The River Raisin meanders through the community and provides locations for some of its scenic parks as well as the Downtown Riverwalk and the Elm Avenue pathway.

The oldest neighborhoods were generally built in the late 1800s with relatively small lots and shallow setbacks placed on a grid street pattern along French Claim lot lines, perpendicular to both sides of the River Raisin and immediately adjacent to the downtown. The second phase of development occurred in the 1940s, also set on the French Claim street pattern and is primarily located on the north side of the River Raisin.

Development took place during the 1960s and 1970s on the western edge of the City on land that was once farmland. These newer homes possess a different character than either of the previous developments with their attached garages, larger lots, no alleys, curvilinear, and cul-de-sac streets. The neighborhood street network is still largely oriented northeast and southwest perpendicular and parallel to the River Raisin. Most of the neighborhoods are not linked with one another east and west due to large parcels, barriers such as rail lines, or missed opportunities for connection.

The City's newest neighborhood, known as Mason Run, is located on the east side of the City and represents a return to traditional neighborhood elements. While the homes include the latest amenities, the neighborhood features of interconnected grid streets, shallow setbacks, alleys, and open spaces. This has been a positive step forward for the City in maintaining the integrity of its traditional character and image.

Commercial development occurs in four main areas of concentration: Telegraph Road, Monroe Street, Dixie Highway, and a small node along Winchester Street in the southeast neighborhood of the City. These uses include shopping areas, retail and service uses, and auto-oriented facilities such as gas stations and drive-through restaurants. Office areas are located along Monroe Street, Macomb Street, and Telegraph Road. Telegraph Road and Monroe Street are the two important road corridors that function as the entrance to the City when coming from the north or south. North Dixie Highway contains a center of commercial businesses that cater to freeway travelers and is also considered a gateway to the City.

Industrial concentrations are located on the east side of the City along both sides of Interstate 75. A strip of industrial uses exists north of the River Raisin east of Telegraph Road and a few small pockets are still scattered throughout the City on the south side of the River Raisin. The largest and most intense operations is the DTE Energy-Monroe Power Plant located on the eastern edge of the City. The current pattern of industrial uses along the expressway and extending east has created a barrier between the City and Lake Erie.

Government and institutional land uses include public buildings, schools, and places of worship. In keeping with the traditional development pattern of the City, these uses have become integrated into the neighborhoods. This has contributed to a comfortable, walkable environment for residents. According to SEMCOG, parks, recreation, and open spaces represent almost 10% of the City's land area (see Table 4 on next page).



Table 4. 2008 Land Use Acreage

	Acres	%
Agricultural	117	1.8%
Single-Family Residential	1,375	21.6%
Multi-Family Residential	126	2.0%
Commercial	451	7.1%
Industrial	888	13.9%
Government/Institutional	905	14.2%
Park, Recreation & Open Space	596	9.4%
Airport	199	3.1%
Transportation, Communication & Utility	1,087	17.1%
Water	621	9.8%
Total	6,366	100.0%

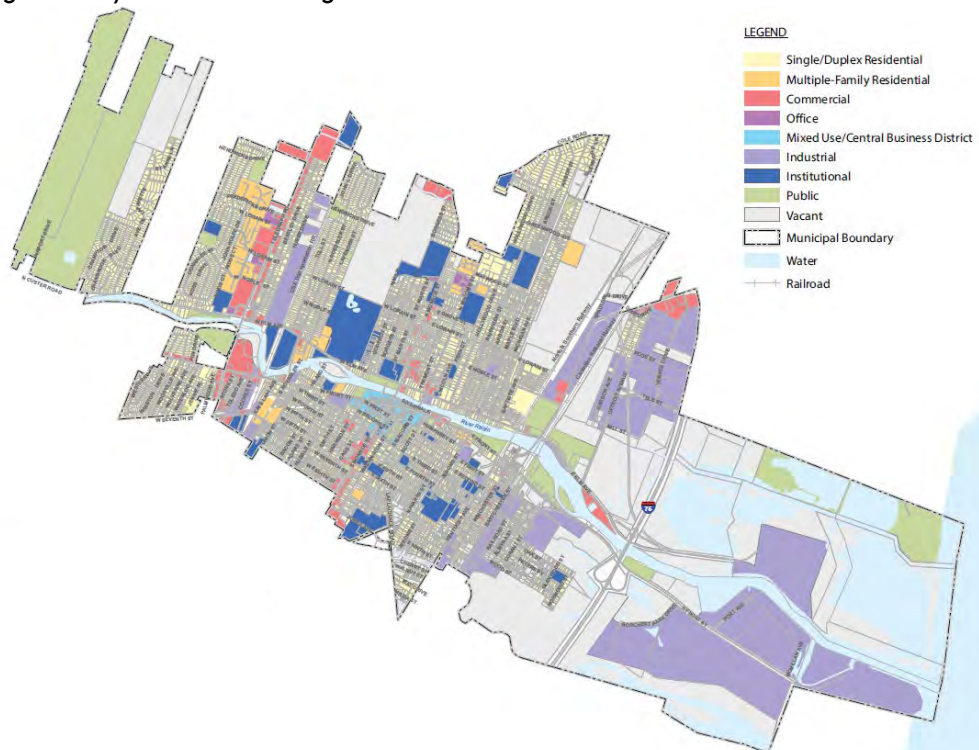
Source: SEMCOG Community Profile

Table 5. 2010 Land Cover

	Acres	%
Impervious (buildings, roads, driveways, parking lots)	1,833	28.0%
Trees (woody vegetation, trees)	1,282	19.6%
Open Space (agricultural fields, grasslands, turf grass)	2,446	37.3%
Bare (soil, aggregate piles, unplanted fields)	216	3.3%
Water (Rivers, lakes, drains, ponds)	774	11.8%
Total	6,550	100.0%

Source: SEMCOG Community Profile (SEMCOG Land Cover data was derived from SEMCOG's 2010 imagery. Acreages are approximate.)

Figure 5. City of Monroe Existing Land Use



Source: Resilient Monroe 2017 Master Plan

NATURAL FEATURES

The natural features of the City of Monroe have played a major role in influencing and attracting growth and development to the area. The City is in an area of little topographic relief with landforms and soils a result of glaciation and its position as a coastal area on Lake Erie. The soils of Monroe are generally silt loams and clay loams. The City's natural features offer opportunities for a wide range of recreational activities.

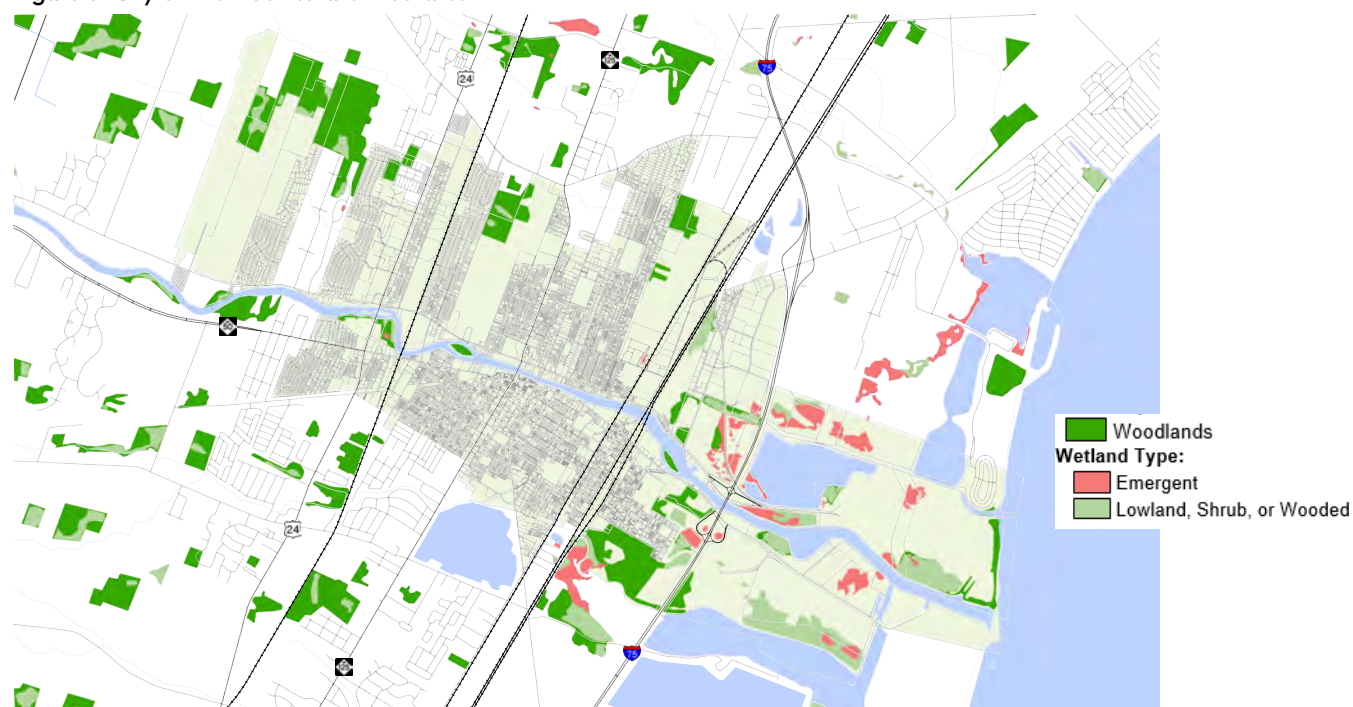
Lake Erie and the River Raisin are the primary water resources for Monroe. Sterling State Park provides access to the lake. Fishing and boating opportunities are extensive on the River Raisin from Hellenberg Park to its outlet, and on Lake Erie. The Monroe harbor provides excellent access to the Great Lakes system. Perch and walleye fishing attract sportsmen throughout the region.

Through the River Raisin Legacy project, four low-head dams in Monroe were modified or removed to create fish passage by installing rock arch rapids and opening 3.5 miles of river channel for passage. A small channel adjacent to the Waterloo Dam was installed in Veteran's Park. When water levels are high in the Spring, this allows the passage of small boats as well.

Historically, the area was characterized as a marshy riverine wetland environment. Vegetation included various reed grasses and trees such as poplar, red oak, and willow trees along with shrubs and low brush such as dogwood and mulberry. Most of the area adjacent to the river was cleared with settlement. Vegetation in the urban environment of Monroe now includes maple, box elder, oak, and elm trees. Much of the Lake Erie marsh has been stripped of vegetation; however, remaining marshland continues to support indigenous plant and animal species as well as new varieties such as the American Lotus, introduced in the 19th century.

The riverine marsh environment continues to support such species as the blue heron, white crane, and the American Bald Eagle. Deer, rabbit, squirrel, raccoon, and forest birds inhabit the wooded areas in the City, particularly in and near Sterling State Park. Small ground animals common in this part of Michigan, especially in the wetlands, include opossum, muskrat, groundhogs, amphibians such as frogs and toads, a variety of species of snakes, and skunks.

Figure 6. City of Monroe Natural Features



Source: 2014 City of Monroe Parks and Recreation Master Plan

ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Parks and recreation services in the City is the responsibility of the Mayor and City Council. Monroe, organized under a council-manager form of government, has a long history of support for parks and recreation programming, park land acquisition, and development.

Formed in 1983 as a joint effort of the City of Monroe and the Monroe Board of Education, a seven-member Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission plays an advisory role to the City Council and Mayor in the areas of parks and recreation services. The Commission works with City staff to create recommendations for review by the City Manager and to the Mayor and Council regarding the provision of parks and recreation services. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission plays an important role in updating the 5-year Parks and Recreation Master Plans.

The mission statement of the Monroe's Parks and Recreation:

To enhance the lives of its citizens and visitors by encouraging a healthy lifestyle and offering safe and quality parks and recreation experiences that highlight our area's natural and cultural resources.

ADMINISTRATION

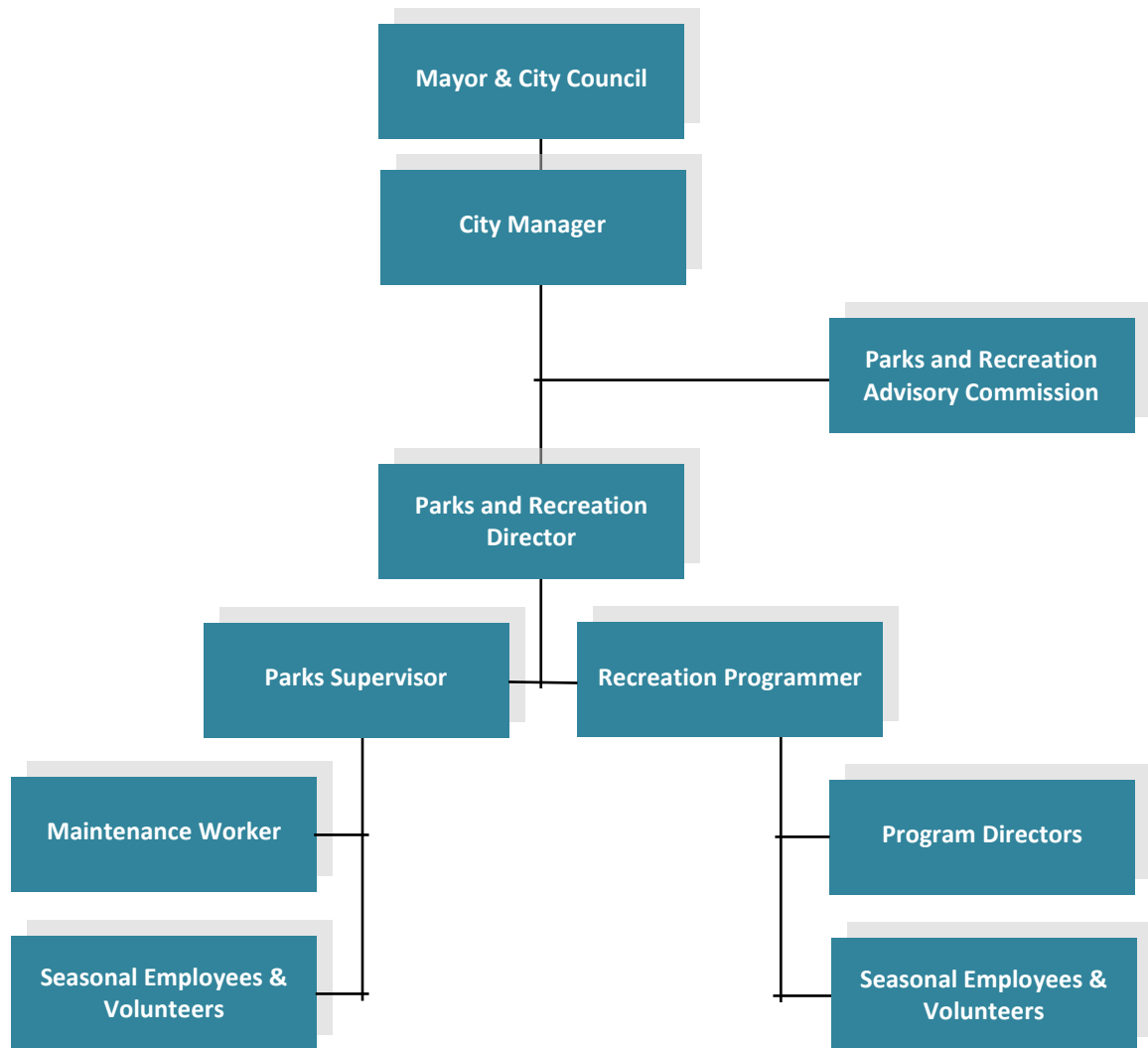
The City of Monroe is the only municipality in Monroe County that provides a Parks and Recreation Department that is staffed year-round with both full-time and seasonal employees to carry out the parks and recreation services.

The Parks and Recreation Department functions with one full-time Director, one full-time Parks Supervisor, one full-time maintenance worker, and one full-time Recreation Programmer. Department staff coordinate all parks, leagues, programs, and special events with the support of approximately 65 seasonal employees that include program directors, score keepers, game officials, playground leaders, activity instructors, and seasonal park workers. The Department utilizes over 100 seasonal volunteers annually in youth sport coaches, special events, activity volunteers, and park



volunteers. The Department coordinates the scheduling of all park facilities, including shelters, the band shell, the wedding gazebo, ball diamonds, basketball courts, soccer fields, and sand volleyball courts.

Figure 7. Organizational Chart



FUNDING AND BUDGET

Parks and recreation funding is a line budget item within the overall City budget. It is prepared by the Parks and Recreation Director with input from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission and staff. The proposed budget is submitted to the City Manager and Finance Director for review and presented to the City Council for adoption as part of an overall City budget.

Table 6. Parks and Recreation Current Year and Projected Year Budget

	2018-2019 Final Budget	2019-2020 Final Budget
Revenues	\$96,782	\$96,782
Expenses		
Parks and Recreation General Administration	\$229,508	\$237,436
Parks and Recreation Programs	\$103,402	\$103,429
General Contract Services: Parks and Playgrounds	\$642,549	\$657,069
Total	\$975,459	\$997,934

Approximately 30% of the parks and recreation administration and programming expenditures are funded through parks and recreation fees and other revenues, with the balance funded from the City general fund. The current fiscal year budget for Parks and Recreation programs and facilities can be seen in Table 6 above. The budget is not anticipated to increase significantly in the next fiscal year. Park land acquisition and development are funded through grants, land donation, and the City's general fund. Table 7 outlines the City capital improvement plan for 2018 through 2024 as it relates to the City parks. City Council is currently working on the 2019 Capital Improvement Plan.

VOLUNTEERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Approximately 300 seasonal volunteers are utilized as coaches, team managers, and special events or activity coordinators. As an example, the Monroe Area Soccer Association (MASA) manages a full-scale soccer program for over 1,000 participants annually using volunteers.

Stewardship Monroe, a volunteer program through the Parks and Recreation Department, offers opportunities for volunteers to assist or run various programs, such as the community garden plots, fishing groups, bike maintenance, exercise in the park, and assisting league directors.

The Parks and Recreation Department has partnered with the Michigan DNR in providing "Recreation 101" offerings for residents. This program provides a free opportunity to learn a new sport or skill without cost to the participant.



Partnership with the Monroe Public Schools includes not only some special event programs, but facility use as well. Baseball and softball fields owned by the Monroe Public Schools are shared with the City of Monroe summer youth ball program. Tennis courts owned by the City of Monroe are used by the Monroe Public School tennis program. The Monroe High School cross country team meets are held at Munson Park.

The City continues to share recreational facilities with the Monroe Public Schools, St. Mary's Catholic Central High School, and other local parochial schools. In exchange for use of the School's ball diamonds and track, the City maintains the fields throughout the season. Tennis courts are also utilized by school teams. The City regularly opens up parks for cross country meets, tournaments, and other school sponsored events. Finally, the City partners with the Monroe Public Schools for annual events such as the Daddy-Daughter Dance and Mother-Son Bowling.

PARK AND RECREATION INVENTORY

The residents of Monroe have a variety of available parks and recreational resources. These facilities vary in terms of ownership, size, and type. The purpose of this section of the plan is to describe the full range of parks and recreational facilities available to residents within and around the City of Monroe.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES WITHIN THE CITY OF MONROE

Monroe includes a remarkable amount of park land – around 300 acres for a population of 20,733. Residents have access not only to numerous City parks but also to a State Park, a National Battlefield Park, and an International Wildlife Refuge, all within City limits and in close proximity to one another.

City Parks

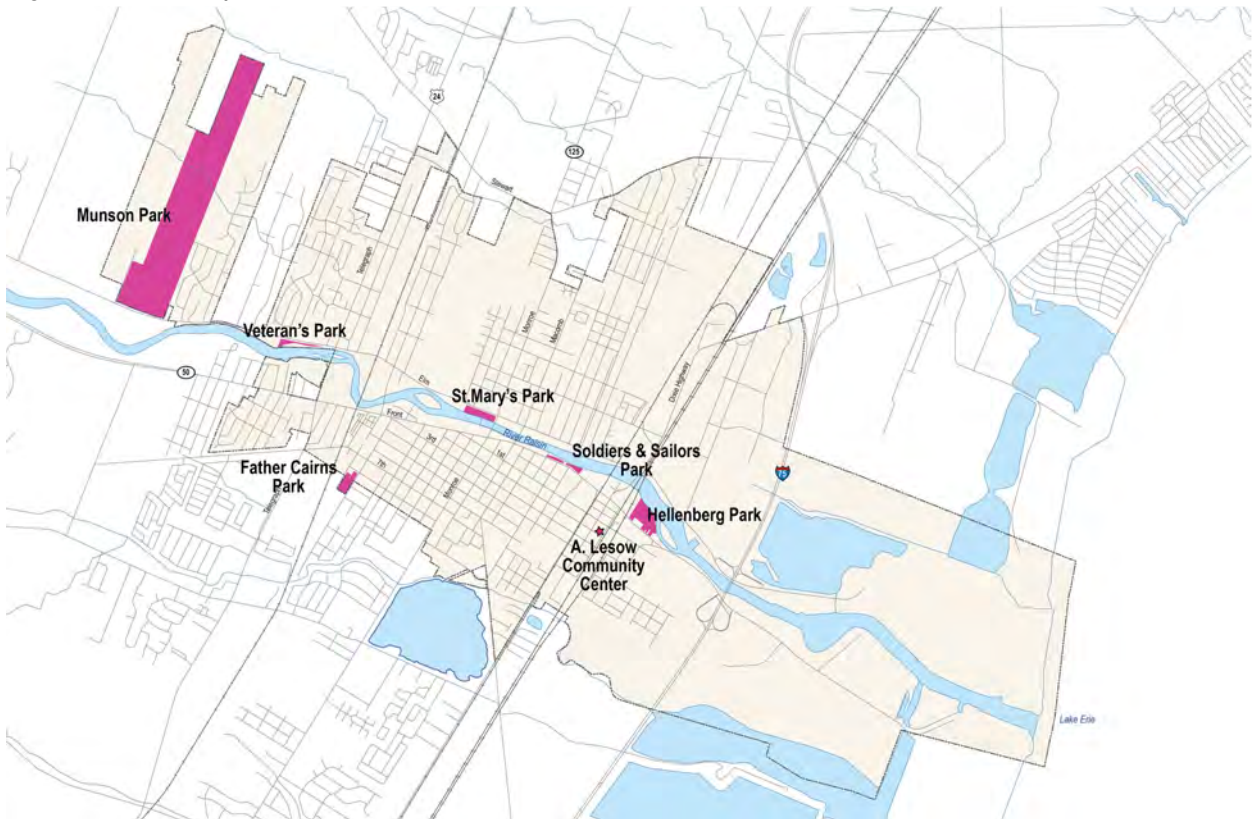
The City of Monroe operates 32 parks consisting of approximately 300 acres of land. They include community parks, neighborhood parks, the River Raisin Heritage Trail and associated parks and open spaces, and small landscape and open space areas. The following is an overview of the parks followed by a detailed inventory of the recreation facilities they include presented in Table 7.



Community Parks within Monroe include Munson, Veteran's, and St. Mary's parks on the north side of the River and Father Cairns, Soldiers and Sailors, and Hellenberg parks on the south side of the River. These parks focus on meeting community-based recreation needs and generally accommodate parking areas, active sport activities, picnic shelters, community-wide event spaces, memorials, and other park amenities such as playgrounds and restrooms.



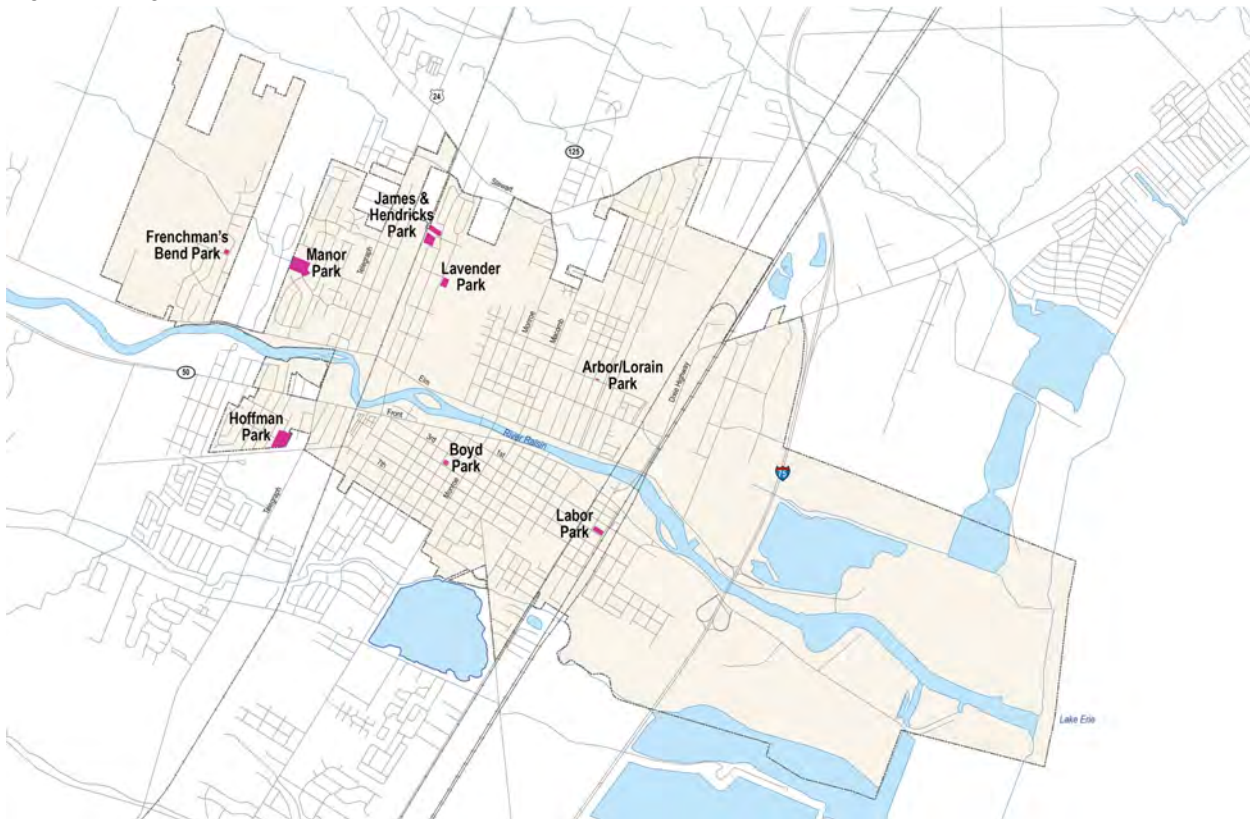
Figure 8. Community Parks



Neighborhood Parks include Frenchman's Bend, Manor, James and Hendricks, Lavender, Arbor Lorain, Hoffman, Boyd, and Labor parks. These parks are the basic unit of the City park system and serve as the recreation and social focus of the neighborhoods in which they are located. They accommodate both informal active and passive recreation including play structures and seating. They are meant to be within walking distance of the neighborhoods they serve.



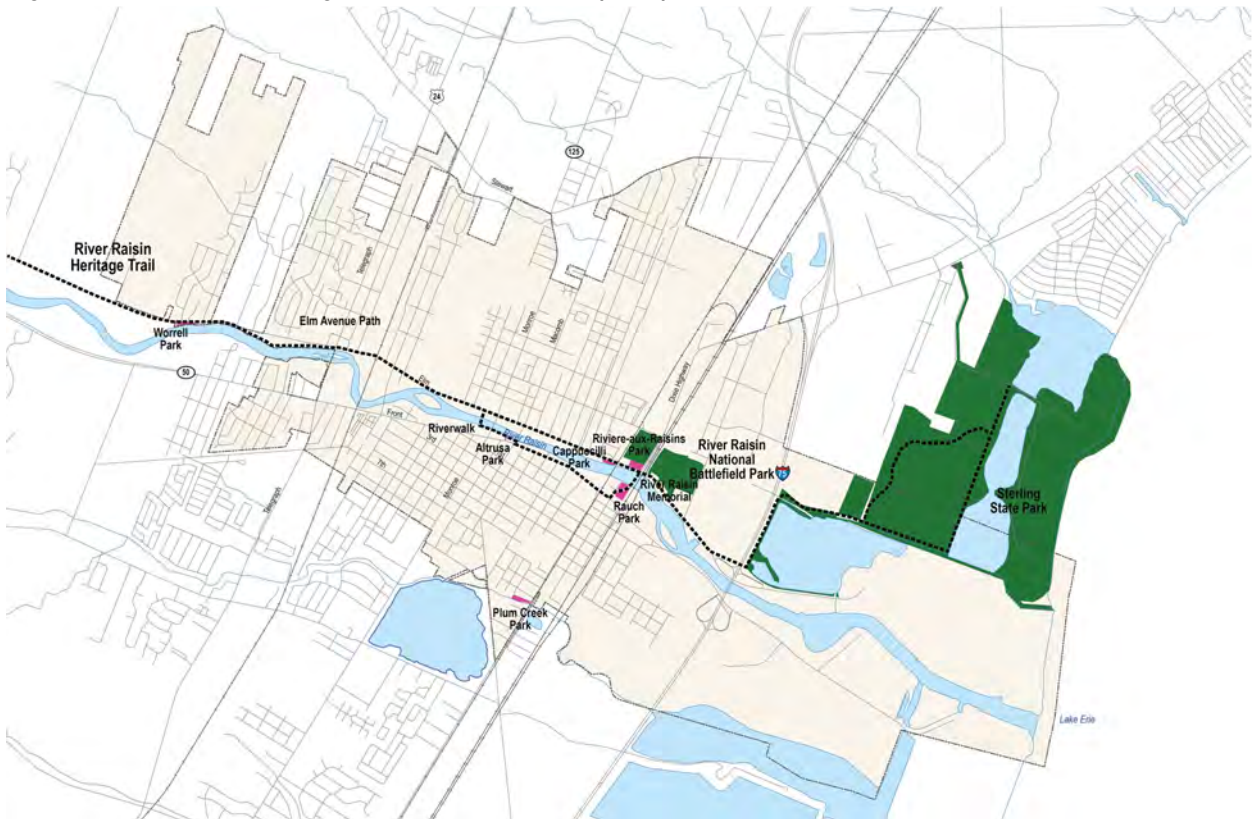
Figure 9. Neighborhood Parks



The **River Raisin Heritage Trail and associated parks and open spaces** include the Elm Avenue Path, the Downtown Riverwalk, and the Heritage Trail along the River Raisin with several associated smaller parks and passive open spaces including Worrell, Altrusa, Cappuccilli, Rivière-aux-Raisins, River Raisin Memorial, Rauch, and Plum Creek.



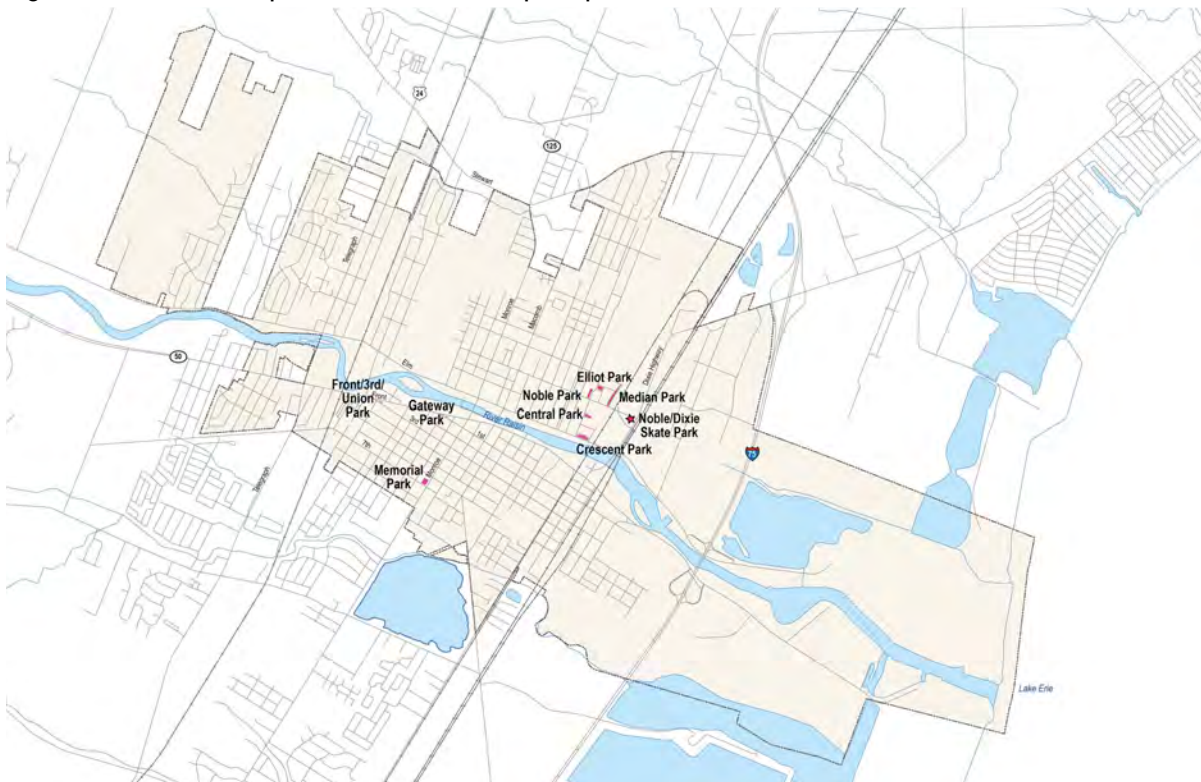
Figure 10. River Raisin Heritage Trail and Associated Open Spaces



Small landscape areas and passive open spaces include the landscape areas at the intersection Front, 3rd, and Union streets and at Front and 1st street, as well as Memorial Place on Monroe Street, the skate park at Noble and Dixie Highway, and the open spaces located in the Mason Run residential development. They are generally passive open spaces with landscape features and sometimes walkways.



Figure 11. Small Landscape Areas and Passive Open Spaces



The City also maintains a few facilities on school grounds including Roessler Field at Riverside School, and playgrounds at the Orchard Center and a playground at Navarre Field (St. Mary's Catholic Central School). In addition, the City owns the Arthur Lesow Community Center and the Sawyer Homestead which are operated by separate non-profit management groups.

Table 7. City of Monroe Parks and Recreation Facilities

	Park Name	Size (Ac)	General Purpose	Lighted Ball Field	Baseball Field (no lights)	Softball Field (no lights)	Football	Soccer	Sand Volleyball	Basketball	Pickleball	Tennis Court	Walking Path	Play Structure	Swings	Other Play Equipment	Outdoor Swimming	Boat Launch	Picnic Shelter	Picnic Tables	Grills	Restrooms	Park Lighting	Signage	Parking Lot	Benches	Bike Rack	Fix-it Bike Station	Irrigation System	Skate Park	Performance Area	Memorials & Monuments	Other
Community Parks	Father Cairns Park	4.2	Sports & play	•										•	•								•		•								
	Hellenberg Park	9.2	Boat launch, sports & play		•					•			•	•				•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•							Part of River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan
	Munson Park	214.0	Sports, play & picnicking	•		•		•	•			•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•				
	St. Mary's Park	3.0	Concerts, play, walk & picnicking							•		•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•			Bocce courts
	Soldiers & Sailors Park	1.2	Sports, play, & picnicking							•		•		•	•				•	•	•			•		•					•		
	Veteran's Park	2.3	Play, picnicking & river viewing										•	•	•	•			•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•			•		
Neighborhood Parks	Arbor-Lorain Park	0.1	Play											•	•								•		•	•							
	Boyd Park	0.5	Play & picnicking										•	•	•	•				•			•		•	•				•			
	Frenchman's Bend Park	0.4	Play & picnicking											•					•				•		•	•							
	Hoffman Park	2.7	Play & picnicking											•						•			•		•	•							
	James & Hendricks Park	3.5	Play & picnicking											•						•					•	•							
	Labor Park	0.1	Passive open space										•										•										Planned for redevelopment
	Lavender Park	1.2	Sports, play & picnicking							•		•		•	•					•			•		•	•							
	Manor Park	5.5	Sports, play & picnicking								•			•	•			•							•		•						
River Raisin Heritage Trail & Associated Parks & Open Spaces	Downtown Riverwalk	0.5 mi.	Non-motorized pedestrian path										•												•								Part of DDA
	Altrusa Park	0.1	Picnic & performance										•						•											•			Part of DDA - Connection Riverwalk-downtown
	Cappuccilli Park	1.9	River viewing & picnicking										•					•	•	•			•		•	•	•						Open Lawn
	Elm Avenue Bike Path	0.8 mi.	Non-motorized multi-use path										•												•								
	Plum Creek Park	2.4	Passive open space																														Part of River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan
	Rauch Park	2.1	Passive open space																				•										Part of River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan
	River Raisin Memorial	0.4	Passive open space																														Part of River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan
	Rivière-aux-Raisins Park	1.9	Passive open space																												•		Part of River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan
	Worrell Park	1.0	Passive open space										•												•			•					Grass & flower bed - Connected to trail
City Gateway & Special Purpose Sites	Front/Third/Union Park	0.1	Passive open space																														Flower bed
	Gateway Park	0.4	Passive open space										•																				Flagpoles, low wall with City sign
	Noble/Dixie Skate Park	1.7	Play and passive open space																										•				
	Memorial Place	0.7	Historic passive space										•										•	•							•		Flower bed & signed monument
Landscape Areas	Elliot Park	0.4	Passive open space										•												•			•					Lawn area & landscaping
	Central Park	0.4	Passive open space										•															•					Lawn area
	Crescent Park	0.7	Passive open space										•										•		•								Lawn area
	Median Park	0.3	Passive open space																														Lawn area
	Noble Park	0.5	Passive open space										•																				Lawn area
Undeveloped	Oak Forest Park	7.0	Undeveloped																														Wooded area
	Mill Race Park	14.2	Undeveloped																														
Indoor Facilities	Arthur Lesow Community Center	0.9	Recreation center & services							•										•		•		•									Indoor Recreation Center game tables
	Sawyer Homestead	1.1	Historic building and garden																														Rental facility
School District Properties	MLK Park – Orchard Center	-								•				•	•	•			•	•	•												Maintained by the City
	Navarre Park & Playground	-											•											•									Maintained by the City
	Roessler Field at Riverside School	-		•		•																		•									Maintained by the Schools

State and Federal Land

The City of Monroe includes within its boundary, Sterling State Park, the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, and part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

Sterling State Park is one of Michigan's most heavily used State Parks located on Lake Erie. It includes a campground, swimming beach, hiking trails, fishing, boating, and nature study areas. A pedestrian and bicycle connection through the Heritage Trail exists to the park from Elm Avenue.



The United States government owns and operates two important outdoor recreational facilities in the City of Monroe: the River Raisin National Battlefield Park and the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

The U.S. Department of Interior's National Park Service took over land formerly owned by City of Monroe, as well as other property, to form the River Raisin National Battlefield Park. This site commemorates the 1813 battle which took place on this location. Recreational facilities include an interpretive museum and outdoor displays and open space.



Plans (See Figure 11) for the area around the National Battlefield Park are underway through a partnership between the Monroe Historical Society and the City of Monroe with input from the National Park Service and the River Raisin National Battlefield Park Foundation. Once established, it will incorporate a larger, National Battlefield site, with distinct activity zones including a visitor center, a recreated French Town settlement, a reenactment zone, and an entertainment zone with a 10,000-person capacity amphitheater, and other features tied to downtown Monroe and the greater Monroe region through the River Raisin Heritage Trail.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge along the Detroit River and western Lake Erie. The refuge consists of nearly 6,000 acres of unique habitat, including islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and waterfront lands within an authorized boundary extending along 48 miles of shoreline, including all of Monroe County's Lake Erie coastal areas. Units within the City of Monroe include the Ford Marsh, Port of Monroe, and Plum Creek Bay units which are not open to the public.



County, School, and Private Recreation Facilities

The County of Monroe owns and operates two small facilities located in the City: Loranger Square containing 1.5 acres of land with a plaza, large pavilion, fountain, picnic tables, and seating, and St. Antoine Cemetery on Elm Avenue containing 1.2 acres of land with a monument and a walking path.



The Monroe Public Schools operate four schools within City limits. They are listed below:

- Arborwood North Elementary School, located at 1135 Riverview Avenue, includes 6.7 acres of land with a soccer field, ball field, picnic shelter, walking path, several play structures, play equipment, and swingsets.
- Arborwood South Elementary School (former Cantrick School), located at 1008 Riverview Avenue, includes 20.2 acres of land with a soccer field, ball field, tennis courts, playground, swingset, and an indoor gymnasium.
- Manor Elementary School, located at 1731 W. Lorain Street, contains 8.8 acres of land with a soccer field, ball field, basketball court, play structure, games, and several swingsets.
- Monroe Middle School, located at 503 Washington Street, includes an auditorium and indoor gymnasium.

In addition, the area private schools also include playground areas and/or indoor gymnasiums such as St. John's Catholic School, St. Mary's Catholic Central High School, St. Michael's Catholic School, and Trinity Lutheran School. The Monroe Family YMCA on Elm Avenue features nine acres of land with an indoor pool, gymnasiums, fitness center, indoor tennis, classrooms, and more.

REGIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES AROUND MONROE

In addition to the parks and recreation facilities located within the City, there are a variety of regional recreational resources available to residents. Monroe County manages five county parks totaling more than 221 acres of land offering natural habitat, river access, trails, walkways, picnic areas, playgrounds, and other amenities. The Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority operates 13 Metroparks totaling 23,630 acres. Facilities and activities provided by the Metroparks include nature trails, interpretive centers, picnic areas, swimming beaches, boating, golf, cross country skiing, and other activities aimed primarily at serving a regional population base. The Toledo area also runs a Metropolitan Park District consisting of seven regional parks and two greenspace parks in the northwest Ohio area.

State of Michigan facilities around the City of Monroe in addition to Sterling State Park include the State Game Areas of Erie, Petersburg, and Pointe Mouillée, as well as many lake and river public access sites. The three State Game Areas offer hunting and fishing, as well as opportunities for hiking and nature study. Other state-owned properties which are used for recreation include the rest areas on US-23, I-75, and I-275, as well as public access sites on Bolles Harbor and Swan Creek. The Michigan Department of Transportation rest area at Otter Creek contains a playground meeting universal accessibility standards.

Additional recreational facilities in the area which serve a regional or even national market include: Cedar Point amusement park, Greenfield Village, the Detroit and Toledo zoos, and Belle Isle.

Figure 12. Regional Recreation Resources Around Monroe

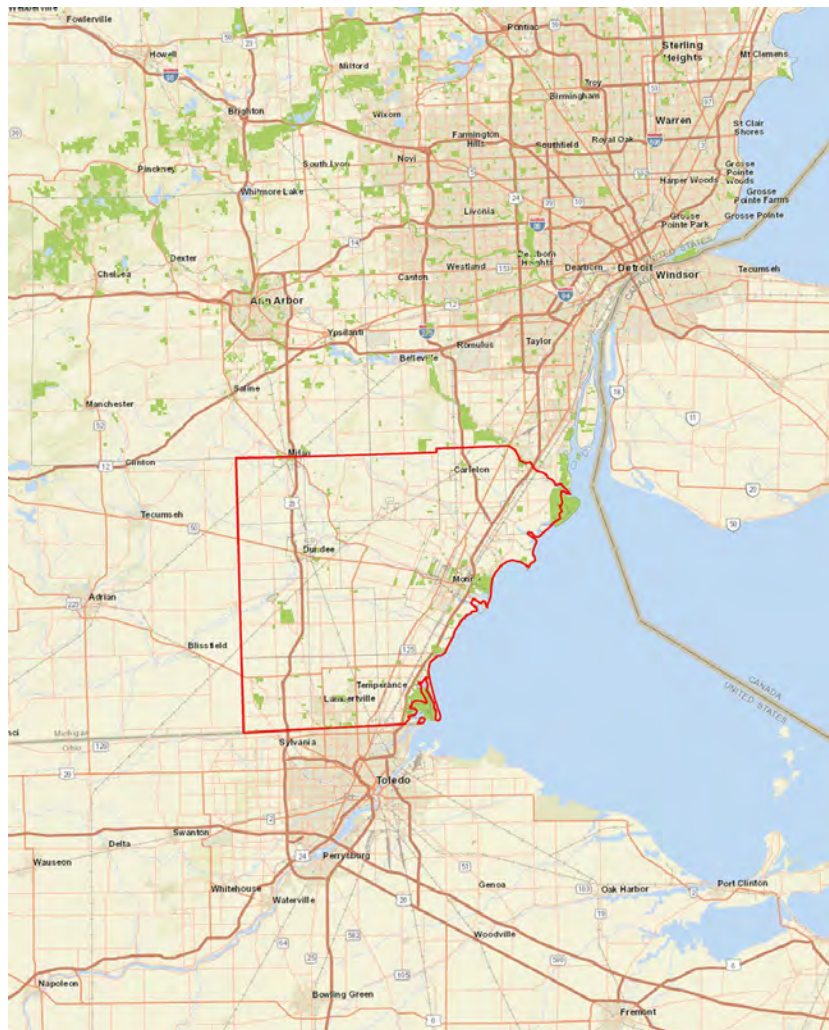


Table 8. County, State, and Federal Owned Sites

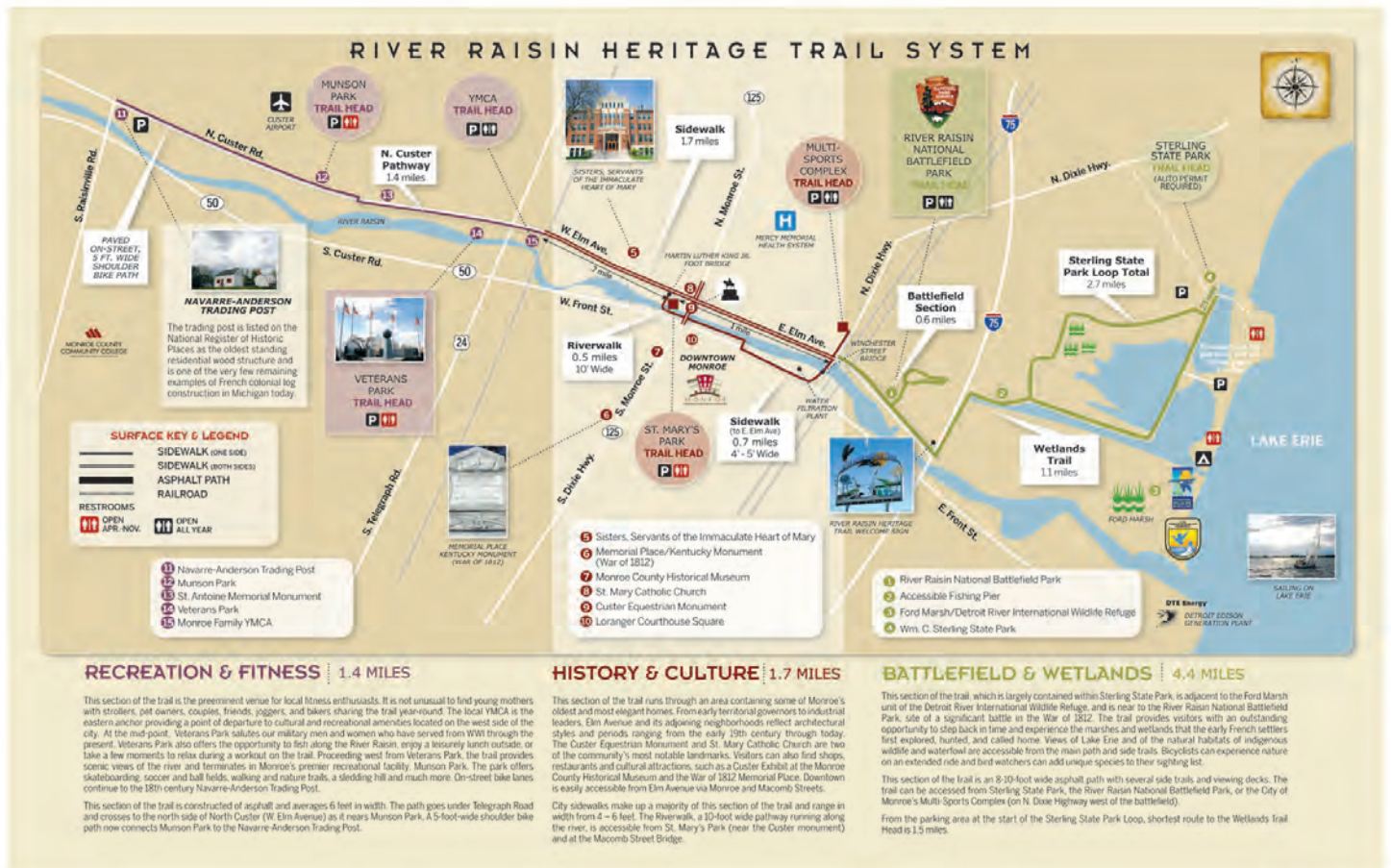
Park	Location	Facilities/Activities	Acres
Monroe County Parks			
Heck County Park	Frenchtown Township	Vietnam veterans memorial and museum, pavilion, paved trail, playground, basketball court, sled hill	15
Nike county Park	Frenchtown Township	Model aircraft area, dog training area, pavilions, and playground	80
Vienna County Park	Bedford Township	Ball fields, soccer fields, disc golf course, pavilions, nature trail, and playground	57
Waterloo County Park	Monroe Township	Pavilions, accessible fishing pier, river access, canoe/kayak launch, paved trail, and playground	9
West County Park	Dundee Township	Restored natural habitat, river access, nature trails, and shelters	60
State Park and Recreation Areas			
Sterling State Park	City of Monroe + Frenchtown Township	Lake Erie beach, boat launch, campground, fishing, playground, nature and multi-use trails	1,300
Petersburg State Game Area	Summerfield Township	Hunting	935
Pointe Mouillée State Game Area	Berlin Township	Hunting, fishing, shooting range, boat ramp	3,466
Erie State Game Area	Erie Township	Hunting, boat launch	1,519
I-75 Rest Area	Monroe Township	Restrooms, picnic area, tourist information	25
US-23 Rest Area	Summerfield Township	Restrooms, picnic area, tourist information	28
I-275 Rest Area	Ash Township	Restrooms, picnic area, tourist information	35
Bolles Harbor Access Site	Monroe Township	Boat launch, fishing, restrooms, parking	77
Otter Creek Access Site	LaSalle Township	Lake Erie access, fishing pier, restrooms	26
Swan Creek Access Site	Berlin Township	Boat ramp, fishing, restrooms	2
Federal Land			
Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge	Erie, Berlin, & Frenchtown townships + City of Monroe	Future visitor center & picnic pavilions, boat docks, pier, trails, hunting, fishing, nature interpretation, wildlife viewing	6,000
River Raisin National Battlefield Park	City of Monroe	Visitor center, picnic shelter, memorials, interpretive signs, open space	40
Total			13,674

LAND AND WATER TRAILS

Trail systems in the City of Monroe include the River Raisin Heritage Trail and various other trails, walkways, and pathways within existing parks.

The River Raisin Heritage Trail is the designation given to the Sterling State Park trail system and its connection to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park and points beyond. The system includes the City's Riverwalk path, and the pathways, sidewalks and paved shoulder along Elm Avenue and North Custer, currently terminating at Territorial Park at the intersection of North Custer and Raisinville Road which encompasses the historic Navarre-Anderson Trading Post.

Figure 13. River Raisin Heritage Trail

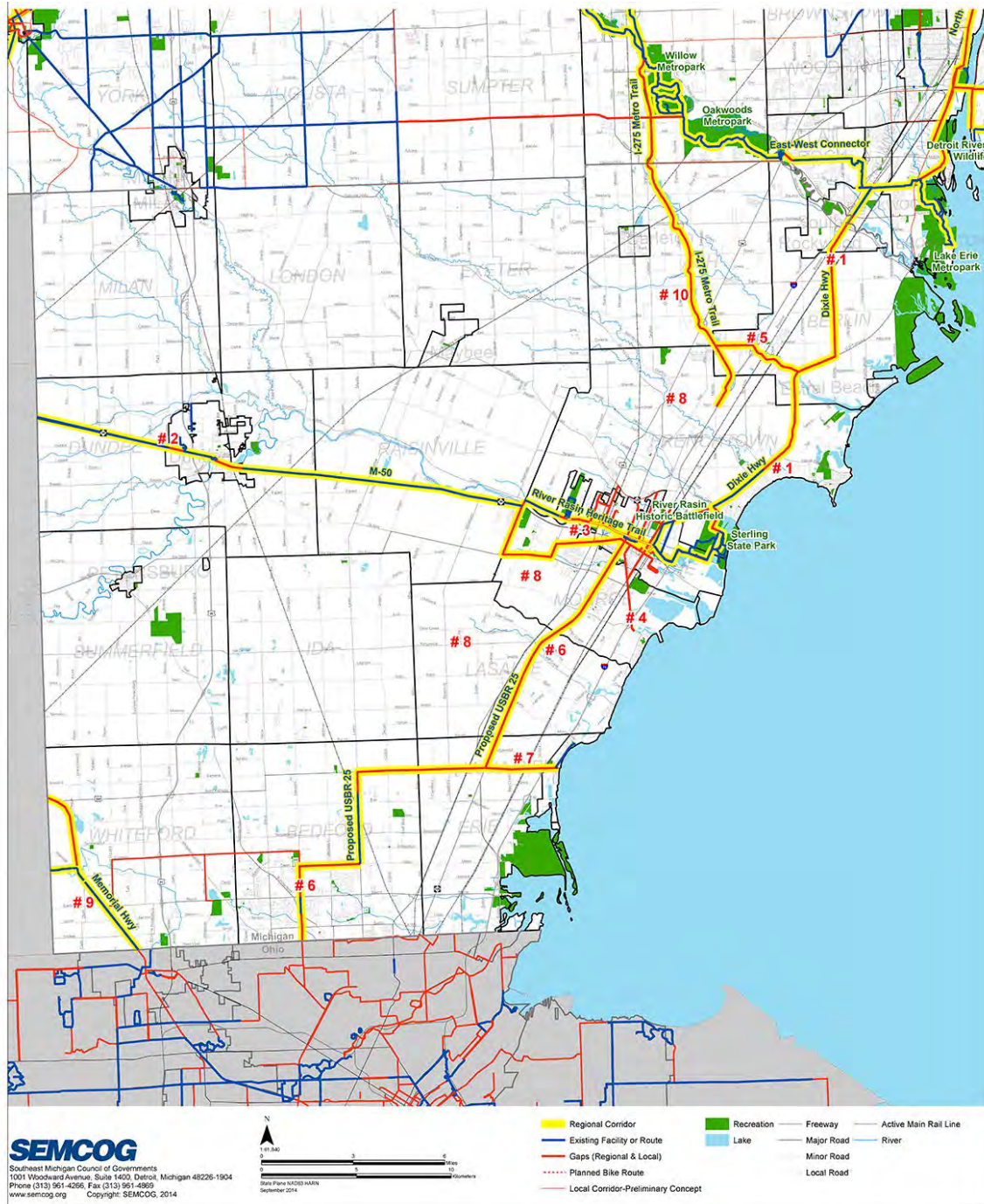


Source: rrtrail.com

The regional vision for non-motorized corridors in the Monroe area has evolved to include a system of on-road and off-the-road facilities. Figure 14, on next page, illustrates the corridors and gaps for Monroe County as identified in SEMCOG's 2014 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Southeast Michigan.

The River Raisin Heritage Trail is planned to connect north to the Downriver Linked Greenways through the gap identified as #1 on Figure 14 which follows North Dixie Highway, U.S. Turnpike Road, and West Jefferson Avenue - Michigan's first road. Another important gap, labeled #3 on the map, would follow West Seventh Street to Raisinville Road and connect the City of Monroe with Monroe High School, Monroe County Community College, Monroe County Fairgrounds, and loop back on Raisinville Road to connect to Territorial Park and the River Raisin Heritage Trail system at the intersection of Raisinville Road and North Custer. The south connection, labeled #6 on the map, would follow Monroe Street/M-125, then west through Bedford Township, and south to reach the Toledo area trails.

Figure 14. Monroe County Non-motorized Corridors and Gaps



Source: Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan for Southeast Michigan – Monroe County (SEMOG, 2014)

Monroe County developed a comprehensive master plan for the region's water trails on the River Raisin and Lake Erie in 2014. The Plan identifies specific recommendations for possible launch sites and other improvements. Figure 15 depicts the water trails planned for Monroe County, with the segment along the River Raisin within the City of Monroe. While rock arch rapids have been installed along the River to restore fish passage through an initiative known as the River Raisin Legacy Project, the low head dams which are located east of Rossler street, west of Veteran's Park, and by Cappuccilli Park still prevent the free passage of canoes or kayaks for those who do not wish to portage or navigate through rapids.



Figure 15. Monroe County Water Trails - City of Monroe Area



Source: Monroe County Water Trail Master Plan, 2014

RECREATION PROGRAMS

Monroe boasts a wealth of recreation programming options for nearly every interest and age group, ranging from sports leagues to gardening, nutrition classes, and more.

As shown in Table 10 below, some of the most well-attended programs are the concerts in the park (which saw an attendance of nearly 19,000 in 2017), the summer adult softball league, and dancing programs such as the Daddy-Daughter Dance and Court Dance. Programs are held all over the City, including concerts in St. Mary's Park, sports programs at Munson Park, and the tot lot program at various parks. Some programs have a participation fee, while many others are available free to residents.



Monroe residents are able to sign up for recreation programs online through the City's website. The City's Parks and Recreation Department also publishes a newsletter highlighting the program offerings for the season. The Department maintains a Facebook page to notify residents of pertinent information in real-time and provides a convenient way for residents to interact with the Department online.

Table 9. Recreation Programs

Program/Activities	2015 Resident	2015 Non-Resident	2015 Total Participants	2016 Resident	2016 Non-Resident	2016 Total	2017 Resident	2017 Non-Resident	2017 Total	Projected 2018	Projected 2019
Local Tournaments										1	1
Adult Summer Softball (# of Teams)			74			66			58	66	66
Summer Adult Softball	257	955	1,212	246	871	1,117	167	778	945	1,000	1,000
Fall Adult Softball Teams			32			29			19	29	30
Fall Adult Softball	122	345	467	102	329	431	68	207	275	430	430
Adult Indoor Volleyball (# of Teams)			7			7			7	7	8
Adult Volleyball	10	53	63	18	53	71	20	85	105	100	100
Summer Youth Ball	294	225	519	259	209	468	226	221	447	450	460
Indoor Basketball Camp	37	69	106								
Daddy Daughter Dance			423			413	166	261	427	425	425
Garden Plots	18	7	25	14	7	21	12	8	20	25	25

Program/Activities	2015 Resident	2015 Non-Resident	2015 Total Participants	2016 Resident	2016 Non-Resident	2016 Total	2017 Resident	2017 Non-Resident	2017 Total	Projected 2018	Projected 2019
Mother Son Bowling			104			96	29	59	88	95	96
Family Story Time w/ Monroe County Library			28			62			30	40	50
Boys Flag Football	11	9	20								
Adult Sand Volleyball teams			9			11			9	10	10
Adult Sand Volleyball	36	69	105	27	60	87	19	56	75	80	80
Tennis	2	7	9			0	5	6	11	13	13
Track	11	9	20	13	6	19	4	7	11	15	20
Park Rentals	63	30	93	62	28	90	58	31	89	90	90
Tot Lot			2,085			1842			2,649	2,000	2,000
Walk Monroe	8	22	30	1	24	25					
Concerts in the Park			9,289			13,538			18,912	19,000	19,000
Historic Monroe	29	62	91			176			77	185	185
Adult Yoga			278			313			389	335	335
Kids Free Yoga			77			34		13	13	35	35
Free Fishing Derby	9	9	18	4	3	7	7	2	9	20	20
Bus Travel Trips	5	11	16		2	2					
AKC Canine Classes	7	9	16			0	6	16	22	20	20
Guided Bike Tours										5	5
Pickleball	52	59	111			221	84	152	236	250	250
Body Sculpt in the Park			42			117	34	35	69	75	75
Tai Chi in the Park			43			49	21	26	47	50	50
Birding Groups	4	14	18	4	21	25				20	20
Court Dance			1,331			960			766	950	950
Tiny Tikes Triathlon	3	9	12	7	4	11				10	10
Art in the Park	2	3	5	7	2	9					
Girls Indoor Volleyball Camp	5	12	17	5	6	11					
Adult Flag Football (# of Teams)									3	4	4
Adult Flag Football							5	27	32	40	40
Adult Soccer Spring (# of teams)									4	4	4
Adult Soccer Spring							10	38	48	50	50
Adult Soccer Summer (# of teams)									5	5	5
Adult Soccer Summer							15	41	56	56	56
Adult Soccer Fall (# of teams)									5	5	5
Adult Soccer Fall							14	48	62	62	62
Total	984	1,987	16,682	763	1,623	20,125	970	2117	26,020	26,112	26,140

ACCESSIBILITY ASSESSMENT AND GRANT-ASSISTED PROJECTS

A critical component in planning for recreation facilities is providing access to accommodate the needs of all people, including those with disabilities. The City park system is intended for the use by all persons, regardless of their disability status. It is the intent of the City to comply with accessibility standards and guidelines for play areas, outdoor developed areas, parking areas, and other facilities which fall under the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All recent improvements to City parks have been designed to comply with or exceed accessibility guidelines and standards, and to retrofit, when appropriate, those facilities which pre-date ADA standards.

Each of the City parks was evaluated using the MDNR suggested ranking system. The elements evaluated include parking areas, paths of travel from parking to activity areas, the activity areas themselves, and support facilities such as restrooms and surfacing. Table 10 presents the results of this evaluation. The ranking system ranges from 1 to 5 as follows:

1. None of the facilities meet accessibility guidelines;
2. Some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines;
3. Most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines;
4. The entire park meets accessibility guidelines; and
5. The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design.

Table 10. Accessibility Assessment

Type of Parks	Park Name	Rating	Evaluation
Community Parks	Father Cairns Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component but there is no accessible swing; There are no accessible routes to the park facilities (ball field bleachers or play area).
	Hellenberg Park	2	The parking area includes barrier free spaces; The basketball court is accessible and the play structure has an accessible component; The restrooms are not accessible and there are no accessible routes to ball field bleachers, picnic shelter, or play area.
	Munson Park	3	Most of the park facilities (parking areas, play structure, swings, picnic tables, grills, restrooms, picnic shelters, tennis courts, front ball fields, skate park, soccer concession) are accessible, include accessible components, and are connected to accessible routes.
	St. Mary's Park	3	The parking area and most park activity areas (bandshell, picnic shelter, and restrooms) are accessible; The play structure has an accessible component but there is no accessible swing; There are no accessible routes to play structure, basketball court, tennis courts, or bocce courts.
	Soldiers & Sailors Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component but there is no accessible swing; The tennis courts are accessible; There is no accessible route from the City sidewalks to the play structure, picnic shelter, swings, half basketball court, and some of the other activity areas.
	Veteran's Park	3	The parking area includes barrier-free spaces; There are accessible picnic tables and restrooms; Most activity areas are connected to accessible routes except for the picnic shelters.

Type of Parks	Park Name	Rating	Evaluation
Neighborhood Parks	Arbor-Lorain Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component but there is no accessible swing; There are no accessible route from the City sidewalk to the play structure, bench, or swings.
	Boyd Park	3	The play structures have accessible components but an accessible swing is lacking; There are no accessible route to the play structures, swings, or the other park activity areas; There are no accessible picnic tables.
	Frenchman's Bend Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component; There are no accessible route to the play structure or picnic table/shelter.
	Hoffman Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component but an accessible swing is lacking; There are no accessible route to the play structure, bench, picnic table/shelter, or swings.
	James & Hendricks Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component; There are no accessible route to the play structure, bench, or picnic table/shelter.
	Labor Park	2	There is no accessible route to the picnic tables; The park is connected to City sidewalks.
	Lavender Park	2	The play structure has an accessible component but an accessible swing is lacking; There are no accessible route to the play structure, bench, swings, or tennis courts.
	Manor Park	2	The parking area does not include a barrier-free space; The play structure has an accessible component but an accessible swing is lacking; There are no accessible route to the play structure, bench, swings, pickeball courts, or picnic shelter,
River Raisin Heritage Trail & Associated Parks & Open Spaces	Riverwalk	3	The pathway is accessible; A safe guardrail along the River's edge is needed.
	Altrusa Park	2	There is an accessible picnic table, but it is not connected to an accessible route; The connection to the Riverwalk is not barrier free.
	Cappuccilli Park	3	The walkway is accessible; The picnic tables/shelters are not accessible and not connected to the accessible walkway.
	Elm Avenue Path	3	The pathway is accessible.
	Plum Creek Park	N/A	No park facilities.
	Rauch Park	3	Walkways are accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
	River Raisin Memorial	3	No park facilities; Located along City sidewalks.
	Rivière-aux-Raisins Park	3	Historical Stone monument; Bike path running along Dixie Highway is accessible.
City Gateway & Special Purpose Sites	Worrell Park	4	Located along Elm Avenue Pathway and accessible.
	Front/Third/Union Park	4	No park facilities; Located along City sidewalks.
	Gateway Park	4	Plaza and flagpole areas are accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
	Noble/Dixie	4	Skate park is accessible and connected to City sidewalks.

Type of Parks	Park Name	Rating	Evaluation
	Skate Park		
	Memorial Place	4	Walkways are accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
Landscape Areas	Elliot Park	4	Seating area is accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
	Central Park	4	Walkways are accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
	Crescent Park	4	Walkways and benches are accessible and connected to City sidewalks.
	Median Park	N/A	No park facilities
	Noble Park	3	Walkway is accessible but there is no connection along Baptiste Avenue to City sidewalk along Noble Avenue.
Undeveloped	Oak Forest Park	N/A	No park facilities.
	Mill Race Park	N/A	No park facilities.
Indoor Facilities	Arthur Lesow Community Center	3	Community center includes accessible restrooms and elevator, is connected to City sidewalk, and includes an accessible route from the parking area.
	Sawyer Homestead	3	Historic building connected to City sidewalk including an accessible route from the parking area located in the rear.



Since 1978, Monroe has received nine grants which have been used to develop and improve the parks. Table 11 lists all the MDNR Grants received by the City. Post-completion self-certification report forms are being submitted as required for each of these grants.

Table 11. Grant Assisted Projects

Park	Year & Grant #	Amount	Project elements	Condition
Munson Park	1978 LWCF 26-01060 22	\$180,000	Development of 3 ball fields with backstop and fencing, restroom/ concession/ storage building, 4 tennis courts, 2 parking lots, access drive, recreation pond, bleachers, litter containers, landscaping, signage, spectator area, and drainage improvements.	All these elements are intact and in good condition. The concession building and tennis courts have been upgraded and additional facilities have been added since this part of the park was developed.
Hellenberg Park	1985 LWCF 26-01417	\$105,000	Development of a boat launch, parking lot improvements, new parking lot, landscaping, park bridge, and support facilities.	All the project elements are intact and maintained in good condition. Additional facilities have been added since 1985.
Munson Park Phase III	1985 LWCF 26-01422	\$65,000	Development of an accessible playscape, picnic shelter/restrooms, pond lighting, landscaping, signage, and sledding hill.	The playscape was replaced by a larger one. The other facilities are intact and maintained in good condition.
Hellenberg Park	1988 MNRTF TF88-259	\$190,200	Acquisition of 2.5 acres of land adjacent to existing park.	Recreation facilities were developed on that portion of the park property.
Dick Waters Swimming Pool	1990 BF90-193	\$175,000	Renovation of the outdoor pool, four tennis courts, playground, and band shell.	The pool which was jointly operated by the City, the Monroe YMCA, and the Monroe Public Schools was closed in 2014 due to cost constraints.
Riverwalk Extension	1997 MNRTF TF97-072	\$290,125	Extension of a walkway along the River Raisin connecting Downtown with Soldiers and Sailor Park.	The Riverwalk is intact and in good condition. It is currently being considered for another extension.
Munson Park Soccer Complex	1999 CM99-25	\$233,879	Development of 12 soccer fields, exercise trail, and drainage improvements.	The soccer fields are in good condition and well-used by the community soccer groups.
Munson Park Improvements	2002 LWCF 26-01599	\$195,416	Improvements to the drive and parking, concession building development including utility extensions and connectors, tennis court reconstruction, and development of a skate park.	All the project elements are intact and maintained in good condition.

Park	Year & Grant #	Amount	Project elements	Condition
River Raisin Corridor Urban Recreation Connections	2014 MNRTF TF14-0208	\$4,086,200	Land acquisition of riverfront properties and open land adjacent to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park as part of the River Raisin Heritage Corridor - East Master Plan.	This grant is still in process.

LWCF: Land and Water Conservation Fund
 MNRTF: Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
 BF: Recreation Bond Fund
 CM: Clean Michigan Initiative

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A critical component in the recreation planning process is determining the needs and desires of the community as a basis for an action plan to improve the park and recreation system. Needs and preferences provide the rationale for the formulation of goals and objectives that lead to an action plan. To assess needs and desires, consideration was given to current City plans and initiatives and input from community stakeholders, public officials, and the residents of Monroe.

PARK ACREAGE COMPARISON

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends a minimum amount of parkland to adequately serve a given population size. The purpose of the NRPA guidelines is to provide minimum parkland and facility development standards that are applicable nationwide for recreation planning purposes. While the NRPA standards are useful benchmarks addressing minimum park acreage, a parks and recreation system should be tailored to meet the needs of the community.

According to the NRPA, parks are categorized as mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, and regional parks. The mini, neighborhood, and community parks are the *close-to-home* parks, designed to satisfy the recreational needs of local communities as described on the right. According to NRPA standards, the suggested amount of *close-to-home* parkland is 6.25 to 10.5 acres for every 1,000 residents. The close-to-home parks include all the City parks.

Regional parks serve a broader area (an area within a 40-mile radius) and focus on meeting the recreation needs of the region and preserving unique areas. Regional parks in Monroe include the County Parks as well as the federal and state-owned parks and recreation areas described in the preceding chapter. The NRPA also recognizes other types of parks such as school grounds which can contribute to the local park and recreation system.

NRPA Close-to-home Park Land:

Mini-Park: Addresses limited recreational needs; serves an area less than 1/4 mile distance.

Neighborhood Park: Is the basic unit of the park system and serves as the recreation and social focus of a neighborhood; focus is on informal active and passive recreation; serves an area 1/4 to 1/2-mile distance and is uninterrupted by non-residential roads or other physical barriers.

Community Park: Serves a broader purpose than neighborhood parks; focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs and preserving unique landscapes and open spaces; usually serves two or more neighborhoods at 1/2 to 3-mile distance.

Table 12 presents a comparison of the NRPA suggested parkland standards with existing parks based on the 2010 City population of 20,733. According to these standards, local and regional parks meet the suggested minimum acreage for total *close-to-home* and *regional* parkland. Monroe residents are particularly well-served by the City parks and regional park facilities provided by the federal, state, and county governments that are located nearby.

Table 12. Comparison to Suggested Parkland Acreage Standards

Type of Park	NRPA Suggested Amount Acres/ 1000 Pop.	Suggested Acreage per 2010 Population (20,733)	Existing Acreage
Close-to-Home Parkland	6.25 - 10.5 Acres	130– 218 Acres	286 Acres
Regional Parks	15 - 20 Acres	311 – 415 Acres	13,674 Acres
Public Schools	-	-	36.7 Acres

CITY PLANS AND INITIATIVES

A series of City plans and initiatives have taken place or are currently underway which have relevance to the current plan. A review of these existing plans was conducted to inform the needs assessment and provide valuable information and insights on the desired improvements of the City park and recreation system. They include the River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan (2013), the 2014 City Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the 2017 Envisioning the Parks through Six Park Master Plans, the Resilient Monroe 2017 Master Plan, the 2018 Downtown Monroe Master Plan, and the 2018 National Citizen Survey.

River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan

The River Raisin National Battlefield Park has given the City of Monroe a unique opportunity to reinvent itself as a destination for historic, cultural, recreational, and ecological tourism. The placemaking concept advanced in this Plan and embraced by the community includes more than just the City and more than just the City parks. The concept envisions the River Raisin as a heritage corridor linking the National Battlefield Park with Sterling State Park, the International Wildlife Refuge, many of the community's parks, as well as downtown Monroe. A number of the existing City parks are an integral part of this concept and play an important role in connecting these recreational resources together and to the region. They include:

- The Multi Sports Complex, which has been repurposed for use by the National Battlefield Park and is planned to possibly house a future visitor or education center for the Park.
- Hellenberg Park, located immediately across the River from the current National Battlefield Park visitor center and the future re-created french settlement, which will become a venue for special events and spectacles. It is planned to include an amphitheater, a pedestrian bridge across the River, improvements to Sterling Island, an accessible canoe/kayak launch, and many support facilities such as playgrounds, pavilions, and parking.
- Rauch Park, also located on the south side of the River Raisin, which will become the site of an international peace garden.
- Rivière-aux-Raisins Park and the River Raisin Memorial, which will become part of the re-created french settlement.
- A new greenway between the two railroads which will connect the Park south with Plum Creek Park and the Plum Creek Unit of the International Wildlife Refuge.
- The Heritage Trail, which would be enhanced and extended along both sides of the River Raisin connecting the Park to Downtown Monroe and many of the other community parks.



Source: River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan, 2013

Figure 16. River Raisin Heritage Corridor - East Master Plan



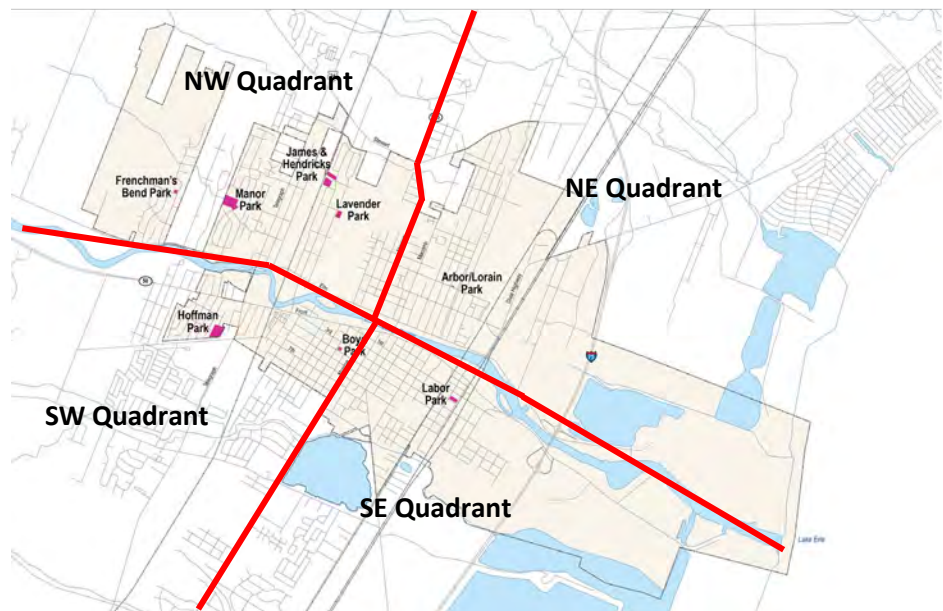
Source: River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan, 2013

2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The 2014 City Parks and Recreation Master Plan outlined an action program which has provided a strategy and road map for the development of the City's parks and recreation facilities for the past five years, a number of which have been accomplished such as the decommissioning of Winston and Calgary parks, repurposing of the parks planned for the River Raisin Heritage Corridor, and the development of park master plans for six City parks.

The 2014 plan also provided valuable information regarding the distribution of the City's neighborhood parks and suggestions for their future improvements. It included a "pedestrian shed" analysis done using Census 2010 data and ArcGIS mapping. This analysis provided an estimate of the number and age of the population living within a quarter mile radius of each of the City neighborhood parks and some of the school sites. Suggestions were offered on the type of recreation facilities which would be better suited to serve the immediate areas' population. The following discussion highlights those findings and includes additional suggestions structured by City quadrants roughly defined by the River Raisin and Monroe Street.

Figure 17. Neighborhood Parks per City Quadrants



Northwest Quadrant

- While this is the only neighborhood park serving both the Frenchman's Bend and Cranbrook Estates residential subdivisions, Frenchman's Bend Park has an estimated 390 residents living within a quarter mile with an estimated 16% under 15 years old and 19% over 65. The park could be developed with features for all age groups.
- Located next to Manor School, Manor Park is the only developed park within the Riverside Manor residential subdivision and the residential area extending east to Telegraph Road. Manor Park has an estimated 863 residents living within a quarter mile, 23% of whom are less than 15 years old. An upgraded playground at this Park would have a great potential for use.
- The Roessler-Lavender neighborhood, which is bounded by Elm Avenue, Stewart Road, the railroad track, and the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (SSIHM) property, includes two neighborhood parks: James and Hendricks Park and Lavender Park which have similar characteristics in terms of the population age distribution living within a quarter mile. James and Hendricks Park has an estimated 531 residents living within a quarter mile with more than twice as many residents over 65 (32%) compared to those under 15 (12%). Only an estimated 325 residents live within a quarter mile of Lavender Park with 33% over 65 years old compared with 13% under 15. Both these parks could appropriately incorporate passive recreation amenities such as walking trails or community gardens aimed at an older population.

Northeast Quadrant:

- An estimated 661 residents live within a quarter mile of Arborwood South School with slightly more residents under 15 (20%) than residents over 65 (17%). This mix would make the property equally suited to children's activities and amenities for seniors. It should be noted that both Arborwood North and South currently feature several play structures and play equipment.
- The former Christiancy School property, located on Lincoln between Elm and Noble avenues, has a large estimated number of residents living within a quarter mile (1,141) with 23% under 15 and only 8% over 65. This would make the former school property very well suited for the development of a neighborhood park containing a playground.
- Arbor-Lorain Park is located between the two preceding school properties and is the only current neighborhood park serving the entire northeast quadrant. An updated play structure and equipment at this location would present a great opportunity for use in this area.

Southeast Quadrant:

- Labor Park is currently considered for redevelopment to serve both as a neighborhood park and an extension of the Arthur Lesow Community Center. An area encompassing land between Winchester and Eastchester streets and including the vacated 2nd street and other vacant properties is planned to encompass this new park.
- Navarre Field, a property belonging to St. Mary's Catholic Central School, contains a mix of school athletic facilities and a playground. An estimated 658 residents live within a quarter mile, 21% of whom are under 15, and 8% over 65. Upgrading the play equipment at this location would potentially serve a neighborhood need.

Southwest Quadrant

- With an estimated 501 residents living within a quarter mile, Hoffman Park serves a fairly equal mix of residents under 15 and over 65 years old (19% and 16% respectively). This park has ample green space, and could be programmed with community gardens or other uses.
- Father Cairns Park has a high estimated number of residents within a quarter mile (1,038), with 23% under 15 years old and 13% above 65. This park is planned to be redeveloped as a community park while maintaining its use as a neighborhood park with an upgraded playground.
- Boyd Park has a high estimated number of residents living within a quarter mile (1,223), with 23% under 15 and only 7% above 65 years of age. This recently improved neighborhood park is very attractive and serves the area well.

Resilient Monroe 2017 Master Plan

In 2013, the City of Monroe, along with adjacent Frenchtown and Monroe townships worked together in reviewing their respective master plans under a project known as Resilient Monroe. This planning effort engaged the greater Monroe community in thinking about their assets and resources together. A Resource Atlas was produced including valuable information on the community at large along with a description of the extensive public participation and civic engagement process which took place. A wide range of recommendations and options for action were presented, most general to the greater community and some specific such as property redevelopment of the vacant La-Z-Boy property on Telegraph Road and Mill Race Park. Armed with these general goals, each community remained tasked to formulate and adopt their own updated master plan. The City of Monroe finalized this process in 2017.

The City Master Plan highlights the natural and cultural resources that contribute to Monroe's quality of place and provides recommendations on how they can be enhanced and incorporated into future plans. It provides recommendations for where new development should be directed and the character and standards to which new buildings should adhere to. In addition, it identifies the characteristics of neighborhoods, ways to improve public health, and improvements to the transportation system. The goals and objectives set forth in the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan were incorporated in this comprehensive plan.

Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe through Six Park Master Plans (2017)

Six of the larger parks were evaluated and re-envisioned through this planning effort. Current conditions, maintenance concerns, accessibility, recreation needs, public preferences, and other factors were taken into account in the development of these plans. The following highlights the vision for each park.

- The vision for St. Mary's Park is a vibrant downtown riverfront park, opening up views and access to the River Raisin by creating a riverfront promenade with an esplanade, seating, and river access. A new band shell for special events and concerts is proposed along with new play structures, a splash pad, picnic shelter, and restrooms. Plazas, seating areas, and walkways are proposed for pedestrian circulation and connection to the Martin Luther King pedestrian bridge, Monroe Street, and downtown.

Figure 18. St. Mary's Park Master Plan



Source: Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe Through Six Master Plans, 2017

- The plan for Munson Park is extensive with a complete transformation of the front part of the park to include a new boulevard entry, landscape open areas with walkways, reshaped natural pond, a new playground, splash pad, three picnic pavilions, and restrooms. The central portion of the park would remain focused on the organized sports facilities with additional ball fields and support facilities including parking, picnic shelters, playgrounds, and restrooms. The back portion is envisioned for continued restoration of natural habitat and would be enhanced with a pond, small nature center, nature trails, and wildlife viewing.

Figure 19. Munson Park Master Plan



Source: Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe Through Six Master Plans, 2017

- Currently underused, Father Cairns Park is proposed to become an important community park destination with the development of multiple court games while maintaining a neighborhood use with playground and walking paths. The park would include a parking area, eight pickleball courts, three bocce ball courts, two sand volleyball courts, three tennis courts, picnic shelters, playground, splash pad, restroom, walking paths, and extensive tree plantings.

Figure 20. Father Cairns Park Master Plan



Source: Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe Through Six Master Plans, 2017

- The development of Mill Race Park has been envisioned in 2013 during the Resilient Monroe planning process and its master plan was further refined in 2017 to include vehicular access, an accessible canoe/kayak launch, a picnic pavilion, a system of walkways, boardwalks, and viewing platforms along the River Raisin with connections to the adjacent neighborhood. A MDNR Passport grant is currently being sought for its development. The feasibility of the accessible launch will need to be considered in light of the close proximity of the low head dams in the River. Portages and other improvements may need to be in place to make this an accessible navigable segment of the River.

Figure 21. Mill Race Park Master Plan



Source: Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe Through Six Master Plans, 2017

- Labor Park provides an important neighborhood park for the southeast part of the City of Monroe and an extension of the Arthur Lesow Community Center. The site for this park is planned to be expanded to include the parking area and the vacated Second Street between Winchester and Eastchester streets. The proposed plan focuses on providing a green space with picnic areas, play areas, and walkways. A refined master plan is currently being developed for the park with funding earmarked for its development in 2019-2020.
- Manor Park currently includes facilities that are no longer in use such as an inline skating surface. Poor soil conditions and drainage have resulted in pavement and court surfaces that are prone to heaving and cracking and that are hard to maintain. With the relocation of the pickleball courts at Father Cairns, Manor Park is planned to be redeveloped with community gardens, walking paths, picnic pavilions, and updated play structure and equipment. Drainage improvements, restoration of natural habitat, and extensive plantings are also planned along the park's edges.

Figure 22. Manor Park Master Plan



Source: *Planning a Legacy: Envisioning the Parks of the City of Monroe Through Six Master Plans, 2017*

Downtown Monroe Master Plan (2018)

The City of Monroe and the Monroe Downtown Development Authority partnered to develop a Downtown Master Plan to provide a guide for the revitalization of the downtown. Expanding the use of the riverfront and the Riverwalk was one of the primary recommendation of the plan.

A wider pathway and additional park spaces were opportunities identified in combination with the redevelopment of riverfront sites. Recommendations included the extension of the Riverwalk eastward through Soldiers and Sailors Park, wayfinding improvements to and along the Riverwalk through basic signage or artistic wayfinding painted onto walls or other surfaces, and enhanced lighting or artwork.

Improving existing access points by installing inviting features was also suggested. Altrusa Park is recommended for re-development potentially with furnishings that attract visitors and encourage people to sit and experience the space. To enhance the Riverwalk, the following was recommended:

- Activate the Riverwalk with artistic lighting and other art installations;
- Implement wayfinding signage along the Riverwalk and throughout downtown that highlights walk times to and from popular destinations;
- Extend the Riverwalk to the east through Soldiers and Sailors Park;
- Enhance access points including Altrusa Park;
- Explore the reconstruction and expansion of the Riverwalk in combination with redevelopment to improve access along the river.

2018 National Citizen Survey

To promote community engagement programs and enhance service delivery through customer experience improvements, the City of Monroe conducted a citizen survey in 2018 using the National Citizen Survey™ (NCS). The survey and its administration are standardized to assure high quality research methods and directly comparable results across other NCS communities. The NCS captures residents' opinions within the three pillars of a community which include Community Characteristics, Governance, and participation, and across eight central facets of community including Safety, Mobility, Natural Environment, Built Environment, Economy, Recreation and Wellness, Education and Enrichment, and Community Engagement.

Most residents rated the quality of life in Monroe as fair or better. The proportion of residents who rated the quality of life as excellent or good was lower than seen in other communities across the nation. Most facets of community livability received ratings similar to the national benchmark except for Economy and Recreation and Wellness, which were lower.

Some of the lower-rated items included health and wellness opportunities, availability of affordable quality general health, and mental health care and services. Recreational opportunities were rated positively by only 44% of respondents, a rating below the benchmark, but fitness opportunities received a rating similar to the benchmark comparison. Monroe residents were more likely than the comparison communities to have engaged in active transportation (bicycling and walking). City parks were given high marks by two-thirds of respondents, a rating similar to the benchmark, but recreation programs and centers were viewed less positively and had ratings lower than the benchmark. The availability of affordable quality food was also rated as excellent or good by less than half of respondents, a rating below the benchmark comparison.

Three-quarters of respondents considered access to recreational opportunities on the river or the Farmers' Market as essential or very important strategic planning areas for the overall quality of life in the City of Monroe.

CURRENT PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN PUBLIC INPUT

The current Parks and Recreation Plan planning process included community outreach. Public input was received through an online survey of residents and at an open house.

Parks and Recreation Survey

Residents were invited to provide ideas and suggestions for the City parks and recreation system through an online survey available on the City's website during the months of August and September. The survey was advertised through postings on the City's website, social media, and a newspaper public notice. More than 155 surveys and comments were received and compiled. Key findings from the surveys are outlined below. A complete tally of the responses gathered is attached in the Supporting Documents chapter of this report.

Park Visitation

The top three most visited community parks are:

1. Munson Park;
2. St Mary's Park; and
3. Veteran's Park.

The top three most visited neighborhood parks are:

1. Arbor Lorain;
2. Manor Park; and
3. Frenchman's Bend.

The top three most visited or seen City gateways/landscape areas are:

1. Noble/Dixie Skate Park;
2. Front/3rd/Union; and
3. Memorial Park.

The top three most visited River Raisin Heritage Trail and associated parks and open spaces are:

1. Downtown Riverwalk;
2. Elm Avenue Path; and
3. River Raisin Memorial Park.

New Park Facility Preference

In general, respondents top three choices for preferred recreation amenities in order of importance are:

1. Walking/running/bicycling paths or trails;
2. Nature trails; and
3. Playground structures.

The top three facilities or parks that respondents are most likely to visit are those including:

1. Bicycle trails and walking/running paths;
2. Nature preserves with nature areas and nature/hiking trails; and
3. Neighborhood parks with playgrounds and benches.

Recreation Program Preference

The top five recreation programs that are most important to respondents include:

1. Concerts in the Park;
2. Walking/biking program;
3. Exercise in the Park/ fitness and wellness programs;
4. Enrichment programs; and
5. Fishing.

The top three senior recreation programs that are most important to respondents include:

1. Fitness and wellness programs;
2. Walking/biking program; and
3. Social interaction opportunities.

The most cited reason for not participating in programs is the lack of time. Respondents cited new park amenities, lower fees, and increased advertising as what may make it easier for them to participate.

Community Park Improvements

Respondents' level of agreement regarding the following statements vary as follows:

1. *Parks and recreation facilities and services are important to our community and worthy of taxpayer support:* 94% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.
2. *The City of Monroe should invest in additional parks and recreation facilities and services:* 79% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.
3. *To the extent possible, parks and recreation facilities should be supported by those who use them rather than by general taxpayer dollars:* 62% of respondents disagree or strongly disagree with this statement.
4. *It is currently difficult to walk and bike places and to adjacent communities:* 61% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.
5. *The City of Monroe should actively plan for and sponsor arts and cultural activities:* 76% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.
6. *I feel safe when visiting Monroe parks:* 78% of respondents agree or strongly agree with this statement.

The priorities for park improvements are from top priority to least priority:

1. Maintain/renovate existing parks;
2. Continue to improve the Riverwalk, the Elm Avenue path, and the River Raisin Heritage Trail;
3. Develop an interconnected City wide walk/bike system;
4. Develop new facilities at existing parks;
5. Continue to improve the River Raisin National Battlefield Park as planned; and
6. Develop new River Raisin access sites.

Some of the additional specific suggestions for park improvements include:

- Disc Golf at Munson Park
- Renovate parks on a rotating basis
- Dog Park
- Striped bike lanes
- Safe cycling in Monroe with well-marked crosswalks and pathways
- Kayaking and fishing access
- Riverwalk improvements
- Paved trails connected to Heritage Trail
- Continued work on River Raisin Heritage Corridor Plan
- Play structure repair at Veteran's Park
- Free youth development programs
- Splash pad
- Father Cairns improvement as a neighborhood park
- Basketball repair at St. Mary's
- Monitor park usage numbers
- New multi-use sports center

Respondents Demographics

Most respondents reside north of the River (with a fair number of respondents not living in the City), have lived in Monroe for more than 15 years, are between the ages of 35 to 44 years old, and have 0 to 2 children at home.

Open House

Residents were also invited to attend an open house which was held on September 18, 2018 from 3:00 to 8:00 pm in the Monroe City Hall lobby. Notices were published and posted on Facebook and the City's website and an article advertising the event was published in the Monroe News on the weekend before (September 15, 2018). More than 22 participants provided valuable comments. They were asked to consider and prioritize suggested improvements for each of the City Parks as envisioned from the parks master plans or based on other needs. Table 13 presents the result of this exercise with the top votes highlighted in red. Participants' additional suggestions are also noted.

Table 13. Open House Results

	Weighted Votes
COMMUNITY PARKS AND COMMUNITY CENTER	
Munson Park	
• Front: Transform the front with new playground, splash pad, 3 picnic pavilions, restrooms, landscape open areas with walkways, reshaped natural pond, and new boulevard entry into the park (removal of play structure and existing picnic shelter)	42
• Middle: Keep existing 4 ballfields and develop more ball field complex beyond soccer complex	11
• Back: Develop access, trails and natural area in the back	20
Veteran's Park	
• Update and install new play equipment	20
• Consolidate smaller shelters into one large pavilion	7
• Maintain as memorial park and river promenade	25
St. Mary's Park	
• Create a large plaza at the Elm/Monroe park entrance	6
• Add parking along west side of the park in conjunction with a new bandshell	9
• Add a riverfront promenade, river overlooks, and fishing areas	28
• Replace play structure with two playscapes targeting small and older kids and including a splash pad	40
Soldiers and Sailors Park	
• Extend Riverwalk along the river (and beyond to Dixie Hwy/Winchester)	41
• Add pedestrian lighting	12
• Upgrade playground equipment	10
Father Cairns Park	
• Develop a new playground and picnic shelter	18
• Construct access and parking area	6
• Redevelop Father Cairns as the tennis courts and pickleball community park destination	14
• Install a restroom building	8
Mill Race Park	5
• Develop entrance and parking area	22
• Develop pathways around the park and along the river with overlooks and neighborhood connections	12
• Add picnic pavilions	10
• Add canoe/kayak launch	28
Arthur Lesow Community Center	
• Continue to support the ALCC Board management of the center	14

	Weighted Votes
Hellenberg Park	
• Repurpose for the River Raisin National Battlefield Park	18
Participants Suggestions	
• Add signs for upcoming events	
• Disc golf course	
• Would like to see Pickleball really catch on in Monroe by creating courts in a much more visible and accessible location	
• Spread out volleyball, basketball, tennis, etc. courts at all parks	
• Would love to see all the plans for Father Cairns Park to be at manor Park – More desirable area	
• We want to keep the pickleball courts at manor- Have a large group there several morning and evenings already	
• Let's implement all the plan at Mill Race Park	
• Restore old Mill Race for fishing and wildlife habitat (i.e., mussels would require a bridge)	
• Remove old fish ladder and open old mill race	
• Add a bridge connecting Veteran's Park and Mill Race Park	4
• New playground and splash pad are a nice addition. In desperate need for new playground at Munson.	
• New parking lot at St. Mary's will cause more chaos for people turning off Borgess	
• Move bathrooms at St. Mary's towards church parking lot	
• Keep tennis courts and basketball courts at St. Mary's - they are used daily.	
• Would prefer that bandshell at St. Mary's does not move. Do not want it directly in front of my house	
• Splash pad for kids and big swings for older kids	
• With splash pad or playground not, both (water net to playground?) 1-corrosive to equipment; 2-slippery running back and forth; 3-wet butt on equipment	
• Water play at a different park than St- Mary's	
• St. Mary's Park basketball courts get used a lot. I think the basketball courts should stay.	4
• I do not like concentrated sports in one spot. Poor kids do not have transportation to get to far-away park	
• Soldiers and Sailors Park – add a splash pad	
• Please leave horseshoe pits at Soldiers & Sailors. People use them! Kids also need things to do!	
• Please keep horseshoe pits at Soldiers & Sailors Park (polish the amenity please)	
• St. Mary's Park needs more swings. Veteran's Park needs swings and an updated playscape	
• Pickleball courts and trails are great at Cairns	
• Cairns: This area is not desirable for seniors who want to play pickleball	
• Cairns: This would be a better area for the community gardens	
• Cairns done first!!!!	
• Munson: warming area for sled hill	
• Munson: ice skating, cross country skiing	
• Plant trees on the sledding hill	
• Munson: Add dog park and splash pad	
• Munson: Consider a dog park	
• Munson: Do we need baseball full size?	
• Munson: would like pickle ball courts here instead of Cairns.	
NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS	
Frenchman's Bend	
• Install accessible route to and around playground area	7
• Upgrade playground	5
• Add park benches	6
Manor Park	

	Weighted Votes
• Reclaim park property, maintain an open central area, manage central meadow with wooded park edges	26
• Add walkway system connected to sidewalks and providing accessible route to playground	14
• Relocate paved area/pickleball courts to Father Cairns to create and replace with community garden plots	7
• Add exercise equipment along walkways	5
• Update playground	12
• Add picnic pavilion with a rustic toilet	8
• Improve parking area	
James and Hendricks Park	
• Upgrade play structure	5
• Add sidewalks, a walkway system, and an accessible route to the playground area	10
• Install a picnic shelter	6
• Add trees for shade and increase natural habitat	17
Lavender Park	
• Add park walkway system connected to sidewalk system and accessible route to and around playground	3
Arbor Lorain Park	
• Add accessible route to and around playground area and swings	2
• Upgrade playground equipment	17
Labor Park	
• To be redeveloped in 2019-2020	17
Boyd Park	
• Continue to maintain park	25
Hoffman Park	
• Consider redevelopment of portion of the site involving neighborhood residents in the process	16
• Improve natural habitat	10
• Install walkway system connecting sidewalk system and providing a connection to W. Seventh Street.	15
Other	
• Develop an “adopt a park” program and neighborhood watch for maintenance and safety of neighborhood parks	11
ELM AVENUE BIKE PATH, DOWNTOWN RIVERWALK, AND RIVER RAISIN HERITAGE TRAIL	
• Elm Avenue Path and Worrell Park	
• Continue to maintain as pathway and associated landscape areas	41
• Add interpretive signage along the pathway pointing to historical sites	25
Downtown Riverwalk and Altrusa Park	5
• Support the DDA’s efforts to improve the Riverwalk and its connection to Downtown through Altrusa Park and other connections	22
• Extend Riverwalk south of the River from Soldiers and Sailors Park to Rauch Park (Dixie Highway)	33

	Weighted Votes
Cappuccilli Park	
• Install fishing pier and overlooks	32
River Raisin Memorial Park and Rivière-aux-Raisins Park	2
• Maintain as open spaces and memorials along the River Raisin Heritage Trail	18
• Add interpretive signage along the pathway	6
Rauch Park	
• Redevelop as the Peace Garden with Front Street realignment	5
Hellenberg Park	
• Redevelop as an event space with amphitheater, large parking area, river overlook and access including picnic pavilions, walkway, restrooms and a pedestrian bridge connection to the River Raisin National Battlefield Park	15
Plum Creek Park	
• Develop north-south greenway/pathway connection from Plum Creek Park to Front Street between the two railroad lines which would also connect to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Plum Creek Unit.	27
Other	
• Provide walking/biking map of the overall River Raisin Heritage Trail along the trail at key locations with other pedestrian amenities such as water drinking fountain, benches, and other facilities	20
Participants Suggestions	
• Add Sawyer Homestead to Parks and Recreation Master Plan as part of the Heritage Trail and Soldiers and Sailors Park	
• Connect Heritage Trail to Dunbar Road via Plum Creek to the Plum Creek Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge	
• Maintain access to recreation trail at Sterling State Park	
• Worrell Park: landscaping needs to be changed; cannot see benches from the road; maybe a small tree and or burning bushes to honor Worrell. Too much of the same plants	
• What about putting painted murals on wall by Riverwalk behind buildings. Have an art teacher or an artist in charge of group of young people. Maybe would end graffiti	
• Riverwalk: mural project on replaceable panels. System of 4X4 runners with panels to paint in select areas	
• Fishing pier with Riverwalk extension, east portion of Soldiers/Sailors	
• I notice lots of people using the trails for walking and biking. Good Stuff!	
• YMCA to Munson Trail is great. Please keep the traffic dividers in place to slow down vehicles	
• Consider a recreation themed mural for the I-75 underpass for the Heritage Trail to the State Park	
• Put a stencil of the lotus along the Heritage Trail as pavement markings	
• Maintain the access to recreation trail from the Battlefield to Sterling State Park with repairs and erosion control	
• Connect the park system to the fishing pier at the foot of E. Front Street	
OTHER OPEN SPACES AND LANDSCAPE AREAS	
Mason Run Open Spaces: Central Park, Crescent Park, Elliot Park, Median Park, and Noble Park	
• Maintain as open spaces and passive landscape areas	24
Front/3rd/Union Landscape Area	
• Maintain as open space and landscape area	27
Gateway Park	

	Weighted Votes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain as city gateway with attractive landscape area with features including special pavement, low decorative wall and flag poles 	27
Memorial (cemetery) Park (7th and Monroe Street)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain as special purpose park and City gateway with walkway and memorial 	22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add interpretive signage 	14
Noble/Dixie Skate Park	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain as skate park until equipment falls in disrepair and turn over to RR National Battle Field Park for their use as part of the Visitor Center. 	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider developing the corner as a City Gateway entrance 	29
Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a Beautification Commission/Garden club to take charge of flower beds for maintenance and update. 	15
RECREATION PROGRAMS	
Top Programs (Participation)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerts in the Park 	36
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Tot Lot 	49
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Adult Softball 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Court Dance 	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Youth Ball 	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Daddy Daughter Dance 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall Adult Softball 	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Yoga 	17
Top Programs (Survey)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerts in the Park 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking/Biking Program 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise in the Park / Fitness+Wellness Programs 	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrichment Programs 	7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fishing 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Garden Plots 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nature Education Programs (Birding and Others) 	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer Tot Lot 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Baseball and Softball 	11
Suggestions from the Survey	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historical Walking Tour of Downtown Monroe Homes 	30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kayaking Program 	26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Festivals 	27
Top Senior Programs (Survey)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking/Biking Programs 	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fitness and Wellness Programs 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Interaction Opportunities 	24

	Weighted Votes
Other	
• Continue to improve ways to communicate program offerings via web-based communication tools	17
• Complete a “Promoting Active Communities” assessment from the State Department of Community Health, the Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness, Sports, and Health, MSU and the Prevention Research Center of Michigan to generate ideas, interest, and support for the City of Monroe parks and recreation services.	12
• Continue to improve “Stewardship Monroe” program to build volunteer groups participation	16
Participants Suggestions	
• Add bike, pedestrian road education offerings 3 times a year Spring through Fall	
• Juggling in St. Mary’s Park (Monroe Juggling Club)	
• Making History Fun with chase/interact with historical figures represented in our historical plaques through an app like Pokémon-go	
• Hot spots Wi-Fi, limited hours? Address required? Access would be awesome.	
OTHER PRIORITIES	
Land Trail	
• Participate in the development a comprehensive non-motorized plan for the City of Monroe to guide the development of on-street and off-street bicycle facilities and ensure complete streets are considered in future street project	56
• Work with other Departments to set priorities for the implementation of the City-wide non-motorized plan	20
• Install site amenities at pathway access points to include trail map, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, mile markers, and interpretive and directions signs	38
Water Trail	
• Determine the most appropriate points to access the River Raisin for canoeing, kayaking and fishing	50
• Evaluate the potential to use the River Raisin through the City with the development of portages around the dams	32
Coordination	
• Maintain and coordinate partnerships with area recreation providers and other groups to benefit recreation opportunities for City residents	14
• Continue to aggressively pursue state and other grants for parkland and trail acquisition and development	22
• Build a Friends of the City of Monroe Parks group to provide support for park project and funding	11
Land Acquisition	
• Seek and consider opportunities to acquire park land located in areas adjacent to existing parks, in underserved areas, providing non-motorized connections, and land in accordance with the River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan	33
Participants Suggestions	
• Connect Plum Creek Park with land owned by the International Wildlife Refuge (Plum Creek Bay Unit) or use Almyra Street to Plum Creek along Railroad tracks	

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Parks provide inherent positive environmental, recreation, and public health benefits to Monroe residents. Enhancing and promoting Monroe's parks and public places is a shared vision to the City's successful placemaking. The goals and objectives will provide direction for the shared long-term vision of Monroe's park system. They express are broad enough to encompass the suggestions expressed from the public, officials, staff, and meet the observed deficiencies of the area's resources. They consider demographic changes, current and anticipated growth, the area's physical resources, and the on-going City plans and initiatives.

GOAL 1. PARK MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENT

Provide safe, high-quality recreational experiences that increase residents' quality of life.

The maintenance and improvement of existing City park facilities is essential to ensure continued enjoyment and safety. This includes upgrading aging equipment, removing barriers to access, and general park upkeep. This also includes developing new recreation facilities to meet the changing recreational needs of residents.

- 1.1 Continue to offer high quality recreation programming and services for residents;
- 1.2 Ensure park facilities and equipment are well-maintained, clean, and safe to use;
- 1.3 Upgrade or repair aging play equipment, paved surfaces, park structures, and furnishings as needed;
- 1.4 Ensure that all parks meet accessibility standards;
- 1.5 Maintain, preserve, and enhance the City's neighborhood parks as the focal point of the neighborhoods;
- 1.6 Implement the park master plans envisioned for the larger City parks; and
- 1.7 Recommend an annual capital improvement budget and maintenance program for the City's budgeting process.

GOAL 2. RIVER RAISIN CORRIDOR - LAND & WATER RECREATION

Fully capitalize on the River Raisin for land and water recreation.

Linked by a river trail system through the City, the River Raisin corridor serves as the primary natural asset and recreation corridor for the City. It connects several of the community parks, the downtown, Territorial Park, the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, the International Wildlife Refuge, and Sterling State Park. It is the principal recreation asset of the City's park system and provides a framework for developing land and water trails to connect parks and community facilities thereby serving to promote active lifestyles and enhance the health and well-being of City residents.

- 2.1 Work with the River Raisin Watershed Council, the River Raisin Institute, Monroe County, other state and regional agencies, and the City Commission on the Environment and Water Quality to protect the water quality of the River Raisin, remove invasive species, and restore natural habitat;
- 2.2 Make the riverfront park properties a priority for future improvements (Elm Avenue Pathway, Worrell, Veteran's, St. Mary's, Riverwalk, Altrusa, Soldiers and Sailors, Cappuccilli, and Hellenberg);
- 2.3 Coordinate with Monroe County and other agencies interested in developing a system of land and water trails to organize a management structure to oversee and implement the system;
- 2.4 Evaluate the potential to use the River Raisin as a kayak adventure course, including determining where appropriate depth can be achieved through channels and the most appropriate points to access the River Raisin for recreational use such as canoeing/kayaking and fishing;
- 2.5 Enhance and extend the riverwalk along the south side of the River to Hellenberg Park; and
- 2.6 Enhance and promote the River Raisin Heritage Trail, Elm Avenue Path, and Riverwalk by providing trail heads and coordinated wayfinding and interpretive signage with pedestrian amenities such as seating areas, restrooms, and other support facilities.

GOAL 3. HERITAGE, ARTS AND CULTURE

Build and promote Monroe as a heritage or cultural tourism destination.

With the National Battlefield, State Park, Wildlife Refuge, and the City's strong heritage, Monroe is uniquely positioned to offer a cultural tourism destination. Cultural tourism refers to travel designed around an area's cultural offerings, including performance, artistic, architecture, historical, recreational, and natural resources.

- 3.1 Continue to work with the Monroe County Historical Society, National Park Foundation, and adjacent Townships to implement the River Raisin Heritage Corridor-East Master Plan projects and coordinate unified park facilities and recreation programs;
- 3.2 Explore program opportunities to partner with interest groups to provide public art and interpretation of historic events within City parks;
- 3.3 Establish a "Veteran's Honor Trail" that links Heck Park, Soldiers and Sailors Park, Veteran's Park, Memorial Place, and the National Battlefield Park as a commemorative trail with educational interpretive stations; and
- 3.4 Partner with the River Raisin National Battlefield Park and the Monroe County Historical Society to design and install a cultural asset wayfinding system.

GOAL 4. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE NETWORK

Connect City parks and facilities and connect the City to the region.

There is an opportunity to plan for and develop an interconnected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide safe and efficient travel for both commuting and recreation between key places within Monroe, including parks, neighborhoods, schools, downtown, and neighboring communities.

- 4.1 Ensure parks and trails are bicycle friendly with pathways that are sufficiently wide, available bicycle parking and appropriate amenities such as drinking fountains, restrooms, rest areas;
- 4.2 Develop a City-wide non-motorized plan containing a mix of on-street and off-street bicycle accommodations that connect the City parks and trails to community facilities;
- 4.3 Support the adoption of a "complete streets" policy for the City and implement complete streets infrastructure with street construction and improvement projects; and
- 4.4 Participate and promote the implementation of the Monroe area loop trail connecting the City to Monroe High School, Monroe County Community College, the County Fairgrounds, Territorial Park, and the River Raisin Heritage Trail.

GOAL 5. STEWARDSHIP

Ensure high-quality operation, maintenance, and stewardship of parks.

Park stewardship is a value embodying responsible planning and management of resources, both physical and financial.

- 5.1 Manage and enhance the parks' trees and natural habitat to increase the park system resiliency;
- 5.2 Incorporate best practice standards for storm water management with park improvements;
- 5.3 Develop an asset management plan for existing facilities and natural resources, establish maintenance standards, and ensure adequate funding for operation and maintenance is in place;
- 5.4 Encourage growth in "Stewardship Monroe" to boost community involvement;
- 5.5 Continue to evaluate and monitor recreation programs to assess their value to the overall system, make sure they respond to changing needs, and work to broaden participation;
- 5.6 Foster partnerships with health providers and agencies to coordinate services and activities; and
- 5.7 Actively pursue opportunities to leverage funding through public and private grant programs, sponsorships, and donations to assist in park and trail development.

ACTION PROGRAM

The action program details the manner in which the goals and objectives will be met. It includes a list of specific projects as well as strategies for implementation.

PARK STRATEGIES

The 2014 park strategies recommended for each City-owned park are still valid and have been updated to reflect current circumstances. Five park strategies are recommended and are presented in Table 14 as follows:

1. **Maintain + Upgrade:** Taking care of what we have by maintaining existing assets in good repair is the first park strategy. It includes the continued maintenance of parks with the replacement/repair of aging play equipment as needed, the addition of accessible routes, refurbishing safety surfaces, resurfacing of parking, court games, and pathways, structure repair and renovation, management of the existing tree canopy and vegetation. This strategy is supported by **Goal 1: Park Maintenance and Improvement**.
2. **Improve:** This action includes the improvement of the existing community and neighborhood parks with the addition of new recreation facilities and the phased redevelopment of the larger park master plans. As funding is secured, the implementation of the park master plans will need to be re-aligned with grant potentials and the available funds. This strategy addresses most particularly the objectives listed in **Goal 1: Park Maintenance and Improvement** and **Goal 2: River Raisin Corridor: Land and Water Trails**.
3. **Repurpose:** This action includes the development of parks as planned in the River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan and coordinated with an advisory team. Transferring ownership to the National Battlefield Park for their use and exploring organizational approach to managing the repurposing of these properties will need to be considered. This strategy is supported by **Goal 3: Heritage, Arts and Culture**.
4. **Decommission:** Some City-owned properties with Monroe may be better served if they are decommissioned. Oak Forest Park is a left-over piece of wooded land between tucked within residential developments, which is difficult to access. Conversations with adjacent property owners should be started to explore management solutions. This strategy is supported by **Goal 5: Stewardship**, particularly fiscal responsibility.
5. **Develop:** As was recommended in the previous plan, the former Christiancy Elementary School presents the opportunity for the development of a new neighborhood park to serve this underserved area of the City. This strategy addresses the need to meet the changing recreational needs of residents which was part of **Goal 1: Park Maintenance and Improvement**. Park land acquisition is encouraged and an important policy that is presumed with this plan, particularly properties that would provide river access, present opportunities for park and trail development, and continue to further the City's major initiatives. With DTE Energy's plans to decommission its plant in the future, there may be an opportunity to restore this property as natural Lake Erie shoreline habitat thereby creating additional parkland.

Table 14. Park Strategy

Type of Parks	Park Name	Maintain/Upgrade	Improve	Repurpose	Decommission	Develop	Action
Community Parks	Father Cairns Park						Phase in development
	Hellenberg Park						Implement per RRHC-EMP
	Munson Park						Phase in development
	St. Mary's Park						Phase in development
	Soldiers & Sailors Park						Riverwalk extension, lighting, fishing
	Veteran's Park						Play equipment, consolidate shelters
Neighborhood Parks	Arbor-Lorain Park						
	Boyd Park						
	Frenchman's Bend Park						
	Hoffman Park						
	James & Hendricks Park						
	Labor Park						To be developed in 2019
	Lavender Park						
	Manor Park						Phase in development
River Raisin Heritage Trail & Associated Parks & Open Spaces	Altrusa Park						Coordinate with DDA
	Cappuccilli Park						
	Elm Avenue Bike Path						
	Downtown Riverwalk						Coordinate with DDA
	Plum Creek Park						Implement per RRHC-EMP
	Rauch Park						Implement per RRHC-EMP
	River Raisin Memorial						Implement per RRHC-EMP
	Rivière-aux-Raisins Park						Implement per RRHC-EMP
	Worrell Park						
City Gateway & Special Purpose Sites	Front/Third/Union Park						
	Gateway Park						
	Noble/Dixie Skate Park						Improve as a City gateway
	Memorial Place						
Landscape Areas	Elliot Park						
	Central Park						
	Crescent Park						
	Median Park						
	Noble Park						
Undeveloped	Oak Forest Park						Decommission
	Mill Race Park						Phase in development
Indoor Facilities	Arthur Lesow Community Center						Operated by the Arthur Lesow Community Center Board
	Sawyer Homestead						Operated by The Sawyer Homestead group
Other	Former Christiancy School Property						Owned by Monroe Public Schools
	Other school properties						Discuss long range agreement/disposition with schools

RRHC-EMP: River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan

ACTION PLAN

Table 15 lists the individual projects along with the specific tasks to be accomplished, the project objective reference, a cost estimate, and potential funding sources. In addition, the projects are listed in a sequential order and a time frame for completion has been assigned. Short-term (ST) projects are recommended for completion within one to two years while long-term (LT) projects may take longer to be completed, within five to six years. Mid-term is between the two (MT). On-going projects (OG) include activities occurring on a regular basis.

Table 15. Capital Improvement Projects

Project	Goal	Cost Estimate	Time Frame	Funding Sources
Riverwalk Lighting and Security	2	\$300,000	ST	DDA, General Funds
Riverwalk Expansion Enhance existing Riverwalk and extend through Soldiers and Sailors Park, install restrooms at the Park	2	tbd	ST	DDA, General Funds
Labor Park Redevelopment Remove streets and pavement, restore green space, add walkways, seating areas, play equipment, and more	1	\$579,000	ST	Grants, General Funds, CDBG Funds
Cappuccilli Park Install fishing stations	1	tbd		Grants, General Funds
Land Acquisition Acquire property to establish the planned greenway along the former Michigan Southern Railroad ROW which connect Downtown to Woodcraft Square Apartments (W. Seventh and Union streets)	1	tbd	ST	Grants, General Funds, CDBG Funds
Veteran's Park Play Equipment update	1	\$75,000	ST	Grants, General Funds
Mill Race Park Development – Phase 1 Construct an entry drive and gravel parking area, trails, pathway, boardwalk, plaza, canoe/kayak launch, park sign, and landscaping	1+2	\$313,400	ST	Grants, General Funds
Mill Race Park Development – Phase 2 Build concrete walks and connections to adjacent neighborhood, surface parking area, install large picnic shelter, viewing platforms add interpretive signage, site furnishings, and natural habitat restoration	1+2	\$404,140	MT	Grants, General Funds
Fr. Cairns Park Redevelopment – Phase 1 Construct parking area, concrete walkways, entrance from 8 th Street, pickleball courts, install play equipment, site furnishings, park sign, and landscaping	1	\$522,258	ST	Grants, General Funds
Fr. Cairns Park Redevelopment – Phase 2 Build peripheral pathway, concrete walkways, install picnic shelter and patio, sand volleyball courts, tennis courts, rustic restrooms, site furnishings, and landscaping	1	\$539,057	MT	Grants, General Funds

Project	Goal	Cost Estimate	Time Frame	Funding Sources
Fr. Cairns Park Redevelopment – Phase 3 Build additional concrete walkways, covered team seating, splash pad, install picnic shelter, site furnishings, and landscaping	1	\$366,603	LT	Grants, General Funds
Manor Park Redevelopment Remove pavement, grade and improve site drainage, construct perimeter walking trail, concrete walkways, community gardens (with fence, pathways, garden shed, trellis garden), install picnic shelter, play equipment, site furnishings, natural habitat restoration, and landscaping	1	\$387,690	MT	Grants, General Funds
St. Mary's Park Redevelopment – Phase 1 Remove fence, grade and stabilize riverbanks, develop promenade along the waterfront with a waterfront and monument plazas, overlooks, seating, improve connection from pedestrian bridge with central gathering area, install large picnic shelter, new play equipment, and landscaping	1+2	\$471,639	MT	Grants, General Funds
St. Mary's Park Redevelopment – Phase 2 Resurface and enhance existing parking area, enhance monument plaza, build a water play fountain, continue to enhance central gathering area with a trellis and special pavement, provide additional overlooks, install site furnishings	1+2	\$923,896	LT	Grants, General Funds
St. Mary's Park Redevelopment – Phase 3 Construct west parking area, add new stage, restrooms, develop wedding terrace, viewing patio, and additional shade structures, install site furnishing	1+2	\$1,120,909	LT	Grants, General Funds
Munson Park Redevelopment – Phase 1 Redevelop the front part of the park with new playground, splash pad, new picnic pavilions, restrooms, landscape open areas with walkways, reshaped natural pond, and new boulevard entry	1	\$2,311,400	LT	Grants, General Funds
Munson Park Redevelopment – Phase 2 Resurface pavement, add picnic shelters and picnic areas, and reassess the master plan implementation	1	\$793,987	LT	Grants, General Funds
Land Acquisition Former Christiancy School Property Park Development	1	\$400,000	MT	Grants, General Funds, Donations

tbd: To be determined

OTHER INITIATIVES

In addition to the park strategies discussed, other actions and initiatives are recommended with this plan which involve many more community stakeholders than just the City including the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, Sterling State Park, Monroe County, the Monroe County Historical Society, Monroe Public Schools, Monroe County Community Foundation, Monroe County Community College, and other agencies.

Water Trail

The River Raisin corridor provides opportunities for the development of a water trail that connects waterfront parks and serves to promote active lifestyles and enhance the health and well-being of City residents. Coordination with Monroe County, the National Battlefield Park, the State Park, and the International Wildlife Refuge will be important in developing a water trail on the River Raisin. Clearly, there is a need to evaluate the most appropriate points to access the River for canoe and/or kayak use and to assess the potential to use the River Raisin as a kayak adventure course. This would include determining where appropriate depth can be achieved through channels particularly for the stretch within the City which still has a few low head dams. Once a route and access points have been ascertained, developing launches, portages, and signage from both the water and land user points of view can proceed. Promoting the water trail through marketing and programming will also become an important element of this initiative.

Land Trail and Non-Motorized Connections

This initiative also involves the City as well as the region's stakeholders and includes three distinct components: the extension of the Riverwalk, the continued development of the River Raisin Heritage Trail, and the development of on-street bicycle facilities within the City.

The extension of the **Riverwalk** is a project already initiated by the City Downtown Development Authority and is envisioned to eventually reach Rauch Park or what will become the Peace Garden as part of the River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan. Enhancements are planned to incorporate lighting, overlooks, fishing stations, seating, and more.

The continued development of the **River Raisin Heritage Trail** is envisioned as developing connections both north to Iron Belle State Trail through North Dixie Highway and Michigan's first road (U.S. Turnpike Road) and west to form the Monroe loop which would connect Territorial Park, the County facilities along Raisinville Road, Monroe County Community College, Monroe High School, and West Seventh Street back to the City. Once established, trailheads may be developed with coordinated wayfinding and interpretive signage and amenities such as seating areas, restrooms, and other facilities.

There is also an opportunity to plan for and develop a city-wide interconnected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities that provide safe and efficient travel for both commuting and recreation. This initiative would entail making it easier and safer to walk and bike to more places in the City by developing a **City-wide non-motorized plan** containing a mix of both on-street and off-street bicycle facilities, as well as other "complete streets" infrastructure implemented with street construction and improvement projects.

Area stakeholders need to come together to coordinate a region wide system of land and water trails and consider ways to organize a management structure to plan for, fund, and implement the system.

River Raisin Heritage Corridor – East Master Plan

The continued work to implement the River Raisin Heritage Corridor - East Master Plan is an on-going initiative that has seen great strides in the past five years since it has been initiated. As progress is made, it will be imperative to continue to coordinate and further the partnerships built with the area recreation providers and community stakeholders to promote the shared-use of the area's parks and recreation facilities. This is important not only to coordinate the unified development of the planned park projects but also to organize events and programming such as historic interpretation programs and a cultural asset wayfinding system.

Operations, Programming, and Administration

There is a need to ensure that existing City park facilities are maintained to a high quality standard and to continue developing outstanding facilities and programs. Park facilities and recreation programs that are safe, functional, well-maintained, and continue to respond to the changing needs of the community are essential to the success of the City of Monroe parks and recreation services.

Fiscally sound administrative and operational strategies will need to be put in place to sustain outstanding services. This will entail monitoring fees and costs for recreation programs and services, establishing a cost recovery policy based on the desired level of community subsidy, working to increase revenues, developing a maintenance plan for each park to include routine and preventive maintenance tasks, and scheduled improvements. Increasing staffing and maintenance equipment to support additional facilities, and providing proper training and management of personnel will become equally important to continue to provide quality services.

With the Monroe area parks and recreation resources owned and operated by a variety of public and quasi-public entities, the role of the City Parks and Recreation Department will need to evolve as a recreation facilitator and coordinator.

Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

The vision for the City Parks and Recreation services was outlined in the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and amplified through recommendations contained in this plan. A foundational component of the vision is its relationship to the City of Monroe City Council Goals and Objectives which emphasizes investment in recreational, cultural, and historical assets. This goal ties together the local park and recreation services with efforts to improve the Arthur Lesow Community Center, expand access to the River Raisin, build a strong relationship with the River Raisin National Battlefield Park, and establish an Arts and Cultural Committee. The alignment of these interconnecting initiatives offers the opportunity to reorganize the current Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC).

The key difference is abandoning the responsibilities of serving as an appeal board for athletic program disputes and instead establishing a board that brings together the various factions that provide recreation, cultural, and leisure activities to the Monroe community. This embraces the notion that recreation is personal. It is more than providing organized sports opportunities. It acknowledges that recreation includes a variety of venues, such as children play activities, walking, biking, historical interpretation, canoeing and kayaking, bird watching, musical performances, and organized sports. Recreation becomes an underpinning of Monroe's quality of life.

The proposed reorganization of the Parks and Recreation Commission would include several citizen members and representatives from other groups, such as the Committee on the Environment, National Park Service, Downtown Development Authority, Arts and Cultural Commission, A. Lesow Community Center, and River Raisin Centre for the Arts. In turn, the Parks and Recreation Commission would become advocates for the redevelopment of local park master plans, the Action Plan outlined in the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and provide input during annual budgets and capital improvements programming.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

To accomplish the recommended actions during the next five years, it will be necessary to secure adequate funding. The current budgets provide a limited amount of money for parks and recreation facilities. Therefore, the following strategies are recommended in order to proceed as planned.

Apply for Federal Funding

At the federal level, MDOT, in conjunction with SEMCOG, funds Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). A minimum 20% local match is required for proposed projects and applications are accepted online on an on-going basis. Activities may include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles including new or reconstructed sidewalks, walkways, curb ramps, bike lane striping, wide paved shoulders, bike parking, off-road trails, bike and pedestrian bridges, and underpasses;
- Provision of safety and educational programs for pedestrians and bicyclists designed to encourage walking and bicycling; and
- Acquisition, planning, designing and constructing abandoned railway corridors.

The City of Monroe is designated an "Entitlement Community" by the federal government due to median family incomes and other impaction factors and received Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Funds must be used to benefit low and moderate income families and neighborhoods. The planned development of Labor Park will be funded through CDBG funds.

Apply for State Funding

At the state level, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) continue to be the primary funding sources for parkland acquisition and development. The new Recreation Passport grant also offers some state funding to local units of government.

The MNRTF provides funding for the purchase and development of parkland for natural resource-based preservation and recreation. Grant proposals must include a local match of at least 25% of the total project cost. There is no minimum or maximum for acquisition projects. For development projects, the minimum funding request is \$15,000 and the maximum is \$300,000 in 2018. Applications are typically due April 1st.

The LWCF is a federal appropriation to the National Park Service, which distributes funds to the MDNR for development of outdoor recreation facilities. The focus of the program has recently been on meeting community recreation needs such as playgrounds, picnic areas, skate parks, ball fields, soccer fields, and walking paths. Minimum grant requests were \$30,000 and maximum grant requests were \$300,000 in 2018. The match percentage is 50% of the total project cost. Applications are usually due on April 1st.

The Recreation Passport grant program offers funding for the development of outdoor public recreation facilities for local units of government. Minimum grant requests are \$7,500 and maximum requests are \$150,000 in 2018. The local match obligation was 25% of the total project cost. Applications are usually due on April 1st as well.

The Coastal Zone Management Program provides grant funds to coastal communities to protect and restore healthy coastal ecosystems including fish and wildlife habitat, creating and enhancing public access to the Great Lakes and coastal resources, preserving historic maritime structures, revitalizing urban waterfronts, minimizing the loss of life and property in areas vulnerable to coastal hazards including erosion, floods, and dangerous currents, and increasing recreational opportunities along Michigan's Great Lakes coast. The program is administered by the Michigan Department of Environmental quality. It is a state/federal partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Grants are usually due by December 31st with maximum grant awards no more than \$100,000 and a one to one match required.

Other funding conducted in partnership with the MDNR is available through other state government divisions, such as the Fisheries Division (Inland Fisheries Grants) and the Forest Resources Division (Community Forestry Grants).

The Inland Fisheries programs consider projects that enhance habitat and fisheries, riparian property for public fishing use, water quality, and ecology. While not currently offered, they may become available in the future.

Municipalities may use Community Forestry grants to develop a management plan for a municipal forest which would include a component targeting outreach to private landowners. Grant requests may be up to \$20,000 depending on the project type and applications are usually due in the middle of the summer. DTE Energy also offers tree planting grants for up to \$3,000 to local municipalities in its service area.

Apply for Other Grant Funding

There are also a variety of smaller grant programs available for the establishment of greenways/ pathways or greenway-related facilities such as Bikes Belong Coalition. The Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Their mission is to put more people on bikes more often. The program funds projects in three categories: facility, education, and capacity building. Requests for funding can be up to \$10,000 for projects such as bike paths, trails, lanes, parking, and safe routes to school. Applications are reviewed on a quarterly basis.

The DALMAC Fund also contributes grants to expand bicycling in Michigan. About \$50,000 was expected to be awarded for 2018 and applications were due on March 1, 2018 with final decisions made by May 15, 2018.

Seek Other Sources of Funding

Foundations, private grant opportunities, business sponsorships, donations, and corporate grants are additional sources of funding which should be aggressively pursued to raise funds for park trail and development.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The planning process for the City of Monroe Parks and Recreation Master Plan included an online survey. A tally of all the responses is provided as follows.

1. How many times have you or a member of your household visited our community parks and our community center over the past year?

Community Parks	Never	5 times or less	6 to 10 times	Over 10 times
Father Cairns Park	112	12	7	17
Hellenberg Park	103	36	4	3
Munson Park	5	50	28	69
St. Mary's Park	8	52	37	56
Soldiers and Sailors Park	64	60	10	13
Veteran's Park	19	60	24	47
Arthur Lesow Community Center	125	14	5	2

2. How many times have you or a member of your household visited our neighborhood parks in the past year?

Neighborhood Parks	Never	5 times or less	6 to 10 times	Over 10 times
Arbor Lorain Park	121	13	5	9
Boyd Park	131	13	3	1
Frenchman's Bend	122	18	1	8
Hoffman Park	135	11	1	1
James and Hendricks Park	129	14	2	3
Labor Park	135	11	1	1
Lavender Park	128	16	1	3
Manor Park	114	22	5	7

3. How many times have you or a member of your household visited our City gateways and landscape areas in the past year?

City Gateways and Landscape Areas	Never	5 times or less	6 to 10 times	Over 10 times
Central Park (Mason Run)	112	24	5	7
Crescent Park (Mason Run)	117	19	3	7
Elliot Park (Mason Run)	125	15	3	3
Front/3rd/Union	98	25	3	21
Gateway Park	112	21	4	9
Median Park (Mason Run)	125	15	2	4
Memorial Park	111	20	6	9
Noble/Dixie Skate Park	101	21	10	15
Noble (Mason Run)	121	14	5	6

4. How many times have you or a member of your household visited the River Raisin Heritage Trail and associated parks and open spaces in the past year?

River Raisin Heritage Trail and Associated Parks	Never	5 times or less	6 to 10 times	Over 10 times
Altrusa Park	95	26	7	16
Cappuccilli Park	99	30	7	10
Elm Avenue Path	42	36	15	55
Downtown Riverwalk	23	54	20	55
Plum Creek Park	128	15	0	3
Rauch Park	127	15	0	4
River Raisin Memorial Park	64	57	16	13
Rivière-aux-Raisins Park	105	35	1	6
Worrell Park	90	30	13	14

5. Please indicate to what extent each of the following park facilities/activities are important to you. Mark each of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not important at all and 5 is extremely important.

	1 Not important at all	2 Slightly important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
Walking/Running/Bicycling Paths or Trails	1	2	16	41	93
Nature Trails	4	9	27	46	67
Playground Structures	12	15	35	33	59
Picnic Areas and Pavilions	15	27	40	48	22
Ball Fields (Soccer, Baseball, Softball, etc.)	20	20	44	27	40
Sport Courts (Tennis, Pickleball, Basketball, Volleyball, etc.)	21	24	45	32	30
Skate boarding and/or BMX Bike Facilities	63	25	29	20	15
Cross Country Skiing Trails	61	39	27	14	11
Fishing	29	21	37	35	30
Your Suggestions:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need a park with a rec center. We are bigger than surrounding cities that have rec centers. Something that offers classes. A place that has a swimming pool, splash pad, indoor play for kids. • 18-hole Disc Golf Course (perhaps at Munson) • Splash pads (+ three additional similar responses) • Invest money in current bike trail. • Al Cappuccilli park on Elm St. used to be a walking destination for our granddaughter when she visits. Now that she's 6, she calls it the "boring park," because it has no playground equipment whatsoever. Pls. consider a swing set or some other play equipment for the little ones. Thanks. • Special days/activities for the special needs' adults. Contact local group like Mon-Arc to work with them to provide activities. • Well maintained parks are the best. unfortunately, we don't have those in Monroe • Bicycle lanes that go all the way to an intersection instead of ending 100 yards from the traffic light would be a big improvement. • Need a water park, B.M.X track, larger playscapes, hold sports tournaments. Festivals using the parks. • More greenspace. More trees (I know it takes a while for trees to grow) natural stuff. Unpaved trails. I understand and see the value in a paved trail. However, if everything is ada, although accessible, for some it takes away the beauty and adventure. 					

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disc golf facility in town. Vienna Park is too far away for most people.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog Park (+ four additional similar responses)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the parks so that they can be used. Take pride in the parks so the citizens can to. When the weeds are overgrown, and the equipment broken, and the trash not picked up it makes things worse. No one will care if you don't care first.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both off road and paved bike trails would be awesome. Right now, we go to willow metropark and wildwood metropark for trails
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monroe really needs to have a dog park with the popularity these have. Have it aligned with membership values of neighboring communities (Glass City Dog Park) with the same requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community concerts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kayak launches, disc golfing, and paved bike/ nature trails
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community gardens
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be nice if the city would develop the Central Park in Mason Run. More Trails and designated kayaking areas would be nice as well.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swimming pool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting in a splash pad at Munson park.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dog park feature for at least 1-2 locations in Monroe would be awesome. Many residents have dogs that need a place to run and socialize safely.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ariel Park? Like Treetop Adventures in West Bloomfield? We make the drive to visit the Corner Park and aquatic center in Adrian at LEAST once a week!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. Mary's Park has a playground structure, BUT there is only 1 bench near the playground and this bench faces the river, not the playground. I am suggesting more benches are needed so parents may be near their children while they are playing the playground structures. I would bring my grandson more frequently if I knew I would not have to stand for the whole duration of our visit. I spoke to my city council person but received no results.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pave and/ or repave current bike and running trails.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the River Raisin Legacy project to incorporate canoe/kayak landing sites at other river-side parks such as Capucelli Park.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More access points would be nice to take children and grandkids fishing. Currently (without a boat) the spots set up for fishing are either full or limited.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we not have a splash pad! Even small cities have been able to build one.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not every demographic will access this survey via social media. I hope there are alternative methods to interview.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update the playground at Saint Mary's park. It's old and Parts broke so they were taken down. Just needs a new playground.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need park amenities that provide residents with the ability to use on their timetable. Walking and biking are huge here, with people on the bike path all the time. It makes our town feel safe and charming.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think a splash pad at Labor Park would be amazing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basketball hoop at St Mary's Park has been down for many many years now nobody seems to want to address this I think it's time I think Saint Mary's basketball court has waited enough years to have something this simple fixed that Park is the heartbeat of Monroe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground structure at veteran's park needs fixed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize on all outdoor spaces! Communities are hungry for outdoor events and activities. Take a look at the city of Buffalo "Rails to Trails" initiative. Protecting and improving green spaces should be a top city priority. Great job moving the Tuesday market to afternoons! I think that'll have great benefits adding new customers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workout stations on walking/running trails

6. Which type of parks or facilities would you be most likely to visit? Please mark the choices on a scale of 1 to 3 where 1 is your least likely to visit and 3 your most likely to visit.

	1 - Least likely to visit	2 - Likely to visit	3 - Most likely to visit
Parks with athletic fields and courts	49	53	48
Nature preserves with nature areas and nature/hiking trails	14	43	96
Neighborhood parks with playgrounds and benches	36	47	68
Bicycle/walking/running paths or trails	5	30	117
Indoor fitness center with gymnasium and fitness classrooms	50	46	56
Your Suggestion			
• A park with a splash pad or community swimming pool.			
• I would play a local disc golf course about 3 times a week (or more). I would also be willing to help design a course.			
• Disc Golf Course (+ one additional similar response)			
• Splash pads, nature centers			
• More off-road bike trails			
• Fitness classes for the adults with special needs			
• anything well maintained			
• Pickle ball courts			
• Kayaking paddle boarding rental			
• Well maintained park.			
• Bike trails			
• Dog Park (+ six additional similar responses)			
• concert and community events			
• Parks with kayaking, fishing and biking opportunities			
• Swimming pool			
• Splash pad (+9 additional similar responses)			
• Outdoor Adventure Park (or indoor)			
• More and friendly seating in the parks.			
• Ice Rink			
• Free Fitness Center			
• Splash pad or community pool			
• Monroe needs connected bike paths that go across town taking you to shopping or businesses.			
• Free Walking club for residents			
• indoor playground with walking track for the 6 cold months			
• More Pickleball courts			
• An indoor community facility.			
• Clean and safe area to enjoy the outdoors with your family			
• fishing spots			
• Multipurpose facility with ice			
• Parks with safe and convenient launches for kayaking			
• Pools			

7. Please indicate to what extent each of the following recreation programs or activities currently offered by the City are important to you. Mark each of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not important at all and 5 is extremely important.

	1 Not important at all	2 Slightly important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
Youth Baseball and Softball	34	21	29	26	42
Youth Tennis	49	29	32	20	21
Youth Track and Field	30	35	35	24	27
Adult Outdoor Team Sports	33	28	36	30	22
Adult Indoor Volleyball	57	31	31	15	17
Pickleball	78	29	20	10	13
Summer Tot Lot	33	18	33	36	31
Concerts in the Park	8	3	21	39	82
Court dances	58	25	32	20	15
Exercise in the Park / Fitness+Wellness Programs	17	14	28	46	48
Walking / Biking Program	9	14	25	41	63
Guided Bike Tours (River Raisin Heritage Trail)	33	23	38	27	32
Fishing	26	16	35	36	38
Family Storytime in the Park	32	25	43	27	25
Nature Education Programs (Birding and Others)	25	23	34	40	31
Enrichment Programs	21	14	32	48	34
Dog Obedience Classes	45	25	38	23	18
Special Events (e.g., Daddy-Daughter Dance)	33	19	37	31	30
Community Garden Plots	23	13	44	30	40
Other Program	7	1	7	3	24
Other:					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga, martial arts, Zumba, CrossFit, • I would love city-sponsored disc golf tournaments. I know people who would be more than happy to help organize the tournaments, arrange registration, etc. • Disc Golf League • Family activities planned and more planned nature exploring. • Because I'm older I don't need most of these but to make a good community these are important. • What about a formal dance for the special needs' adults? • If the Heritage Park Trails ever repaired would go higher on my list. Right now, much of it is impassible on a bicycle. • Disc golf • Public outdoor pool • the problem with certain programs at St. Mary Park (Jazz Festival) is that the crowd has out grown the area and better parking/etc. needs to be considered. The city had a chance to enhance the multi sports center and create an indoor/outdoor venue close to expressways, historical sites, and build up the significantly historic nature of the orchard area. (Bringing business back.) Instead they gave it away in a poor trade. If I had an event that drew that many people into such a small area the city would have refused. Time to put personal feelings and music favorites aside to really create a 					

historic meaningful city that recognizes the native Americans and every distinct group that brought something to this region.
• swimming pool (+ one additional similar response)
• dog parks bring the community together (+ one additional similar response)
• Handicrafts classes- i.e., sewing, painting, woodworking etc.
• Movie night in the park
• Summer theater at St. Mary's for elementary age children to be involved.
• Swimming classes
• Indoor and outdoor winter programs such a running, cross country skiing
• Arts, crafts, comics, music, other interests for preteens and teens
• More movies in the park!!
• Family festivals with activities where you compete like balloon toss, obstacle course, sports, corn hole, and anything to get families outside together
• Cooking classes from garden fresh ingredients
• Historical walking tour of downtown Monroe homes
• Ice skating
• It would be great to have a kayaking program or group, so I can kayak with others and not feel so unsafe as kayaking alone.

8. Please indicate what type of senior recreation programs or activities are or are likely to be important to you. Mark each of the following on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is not important at all and 5 is extremely important.

	1 Not important at all	2 Slightly important	3 Somewhat important	4 Very important	5 Extremely important
Senior Sport Leagues	45	16	46	20	16
Pickleball	67	18	36	10	13
Walking / Biking Programs	19	7	35	41	44
Fitness+Wellness Programs	24	5	34	40	43
Nature Education and Appreciation Programs	28	12	38	35	33
Enrichment Programs	31	10	37	32	33
Social Interaction Opportunities	22	10	35	34	43
Your Suggestions					
• Special nature education programs for families and youth.					
• Offer enrichment classes specifically for the special needs' adults.					
• Battlefield					
• Swimming pool					
• dog park (+ one additional similar response)					
• Cake walks, cards in the park, crafts and movies.					
• Educational opportunities for seniors - genuine, not basket-weaving.					
• Bird watching & Tai chi.					
• Anything active and outside					

9. If you do not visit our parks or participate in our recreation programs, what is the reason? (Please check all that apply)

I do not have time	17
I do not feel safe	7
I usually exercise indoors	4
I am not interested in the City's recreation programs	6
I am not interested in the City's park amenities	3
Other	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do not visit most parks because they are either too small and don't offer things that would hold my kids' interest. I like the idea of the smaller parks for a quick stop and play but we like to go to parks to stay and play. We love Munson because it offers a little more. • There are not a lot of programs that I know of. • I use our local Y • Need restrooms • New in town. Don't know what they are. • Facilities are in poor order. Broken, weeds, trash. • I am not interested in the Battlefield. • I attend faith or Christ centered events • Not enough sitting areas to enjoy any particular view. Munson Park nature area is sadly neglected yet it is a jewel for the city. Larger venues should be done there to show off the beauty of the area and make people aware of everything it has to offer. • go to state park • I love our parks ...I didn't even realize we've had so many options till this survey • Not aware of them. • The facilities are subpar • I have no idea what is available. Usually find out too late on Facebook for anything interesting. • Didn't know about • Bathrooms • It's hard to be informed of all the happenings. I'd love to know of more activities when they are happening • My work schedule. Most of the family activities are in the evening while I'm at work • Lack of knowledge of where they are located. 	

10. What would make the City parks and recreation programs more attractive or easier for you or your family to use?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we had one Central Park that offered it all like other cities do we would be there more often. We like to stay close to home for fun and we find ourselves going out of town to enjoy other cities parks. We'd ride out bikes more if the bike paths were safer. My kids and I would love to ride to Sterling State park but the bike paths are not safe. There are also no sidewalks on N. Dixie. I know you are not supposed to ride on a sidewalk but a sidewalk wide enough to include a bike path and a walking path would be used more. No one wants their kids riding their bikes on a busy street. • restroom facilities • If my kids were older, so that I could bring them with me more easily. It's just a hard time of life with two kids under 3. I can bring them disc golfing with me in a stroller, but not with other running or exercise activities. • Better website and more advertising. • Reduce number of parks and invest in what we currently have, don't add new parks. Work with what we currently have. City has trouble maintain current parks and trail. • Concerts on another night. Too much going on on Thursday with other nights dead. • Special needs adult programs that are designed for adults age 18+ that have developmental disabilities. Please offer 	
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adaptive art classes and a gym class to enhance the physical and social needs of this population. Special swim sessions would be wonderful.
• better maintenance. better managed.
• Disc golf
• More wheelchair accessibility
• Clean the Port a John at manor. It's so disgusting
• Detailed information about when and where. A brochure with the trail out to Sterling would be helpful. I see beautiful pictures on Facebook page with no mention on where they were taken. Not everyone knows!
• Less fees to play softball/volleyball. Maintenance. Weekly visits from city workers picking up trash and clearing weeds and fixing broken things and sidewalks.
• If the parks were better maintained.
• not sure...I utilized Munson and park for bible study this summer
• 1. Expansion of Munson gravel cycling/walking pathways deeper into the park. 2. N. Custer Riverwalk lighting and Munson pathway lighting for seasonal shifts in daylight.
• Parking
• Better roads leading up to them, improved trail maintenance, quality of trails. Kayak, canoe, and boat access. Disc golfing
• Keeping the parks in good order is a start. The people that maintain the parks always seem to be rushed. Doing a better job at trimming and mulching would be a good start.
• dog park with a splash pad
• Recreation programs I wish were better advertised. I didn't know all of that was available.
• We love the playground features, history boards, walking trails, fishing opportunities and landscaping.
• A variety of interests taught by capable instructors
• Toddler play groups. Individual strength training parks.
• More benches!
• Change the play structures out for new types of structures. I visited Utah over the summer and their parks are all different than just swings and slides. They have fun things such as small zip lines for kids (they are seated not harnesses and only a foot or so off the ground), many have splash pads and other fun things for kids. Their parks are always busy.
• Cut the grass more often, keep them clean, repair broken equipment, police the areas. Lots of inappropriate activities going on in parks
• Keep the drugs and trouble makers out.
• Dog park area Other than that I love them
• I would eliminate Cairns Park, Hellenberg Park and all the neighborhood little parks that no one uses and make Munson Park the main attraction with so much more things, Bocce Ball courts, dog park, putt putt golf, more playground things, etc... Also keep St. Mary's, Veteran's Park!
• More welcoming to everyone.
• More kid/adult yoga/exercise type classes, family exploration trips, family time outside, family bike trips, etc.
• More structures to be involved with.
• Connected bike paths.
• Make sure all playground structures are safe for the children and have some sort of bathroom access
• We need to determine what is the MAXIMUM potential use of location and what programs would fit. We have many parks that seem underutilized. We also have potential areas like the proposed kayaking site that has very shallow water levels (mere inches).
• Splash pad for the kids
• Instead of depending on friends or word of mouth, get the info out ahead of time on social media and other outlets such as mailers, or email newsletters.
• I love the parks!
• Advertising
• The parks need to be made more handicap accessible.
• More splash pads and picnic areas for families

• I would love a dog park at Munson. I would use this every day. I would also like tennis league for adults, or even lessons.
• I think the programs are attractive they usually don't work with my schedule
• Maintained playground equipment, movies in the park and a community swimming pool.
• Having a fun safe playground at veteran's park.
• Water park, splash pad, misters to cool Down
• More nature trails
• Lighting for safety
• Would love more nature/hiking opportunities
• Cleaner with better up keep. Some playground parks are extremely outdated and keep having sections taken off.
• Wheelchair access
• Activities for teenagers, not just playscapes for young kids.
• There are no sidewalks on main roads which makes it dangerous/deadly to try walking places in our city especially with strollers and children.
• This year was great w summer long yoga and cardio classes
• We love the programs that you have!! We use the bike paths often. And we go to as many concerts as possible, and the free exercise is awesome!!!!
• Pet friendly
• It would be nice if programs were always free and offered at more times.
• Cut grass, play areas, benches

11. Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements

	1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - No Opinion	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
Parks and recreation facilities and services are important to our community and worthy of taxpayer support	3	1	5	28	115
The City of Monroe should invest in additional parks and recreation facilities and services	10	9	13	38	80
To the extent possible, parks and recreation facilities should be supported by those who use them rather than by general taxpayer dollars	44	49	26	19	12
It is currently difficult to walk and bike places and to adjacent communities	2	20	37	50	42
The City of Monroe should actively plan for and sponsor arts and cultural activities	3	8	25	58	58
I feel safe when visiting Monroe Parks	4	19	10	69	51

12. How would you rank the following possible improvements to the overall community parks and recreation system? Please mark each of the suggested improvements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is least priority and 5 is top priority.

	1 Least Priority	2 Low Priority	3 Medium Priority	4 High Priority	5 Top Priority
Maintain/renovate existing parks	4	8	24	23	28
Develop new facilities at existing parks	5	22	24	25	14
Continue to improve the Riverwalk, Elm Avenue Path & Heritage Trail along the river to Lake Erie	5	10	18	26	26
Develop an interconnected City-wide walk/bike system	7	19	19	20	23
Develop new River Raisin access sites	19	19	14	6	6
Continue to improve the River Raisin National Battlefield Park as planned	41	20	11	13	10
Continue to improve the City recreation program offerings	6	13	20	19	18
Your Suggestion					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A quality Disc Golf course would be a low-maintenance way of creating a new way to get younger residents outdoors. • I think you are leaving out an important group of taxpayers. The lack of opportunities for the adult developmentally delayed is shameful. • We don't need more parks. We need to take care of what we have already. • Dog park (+ two additional similar responses) • Stop spending our money on the Battlefield. Use our money to maintain and improve youth activities. • save money on parks update water and sewage...infrastructure • Splash pad (+ one additional similar response) • Make sure play structures are safe for children • Capitalize and add attention to the River Raisin • Ice arena 					

13. Is there anything else you would like us to consider?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Splash pad! Community pool! • I'm going to go ahead and be a broken record, I'd love to help the City design a disc golf course. • Please improve the softball fields at Munson park. there is no shade or protection from the elements at all. the dugouts need to be enclosed and cemented. when the weather isn't perfect they are awful to use. • We have visited Munson park w/our 6-yr old granddaughter, but this past year have noticed older men lying/sitting on the benches who are unaccompanied by children. There are many areas where children are out of sight as they run around and play. For this reason, we have stopped using Munson. • Supporting activities for the special needs' adults. Specifically offering them dances, exercise programs, etc. Keep in mind there are many that are non-ambulatory. Other cities offer social recreation opportunities specifically for the special need population taxpayers. • All outdoor activities are geared for summer months. What about winter? Since Council was eager to close the Ice Rink, there is no place to skate. How about an outdoor skating rink somewhere in Monroe, like Munson Park or downtown? • Don't add new stuff take care of what we have first. fix the bike trail so it can be ridden. Make bike lanes in the street and ticket cars who get too close. It is the law. Stop bikes on the sidewalk. It is dangerous to walkers and elderly people. • MVP disc is a Michigan based company that'll give you resources and planning tips for disc golf in Monroe. • The city needs to help landlords fill the empty buildings. Leaving these empty takes away from the area. I am impressed with all the new flowering trees and landscaping. The whole community is lifted when these large eyesores are filled with opportunity and energy. Some of the ideas for indoor activities can be placed at the Mall, for example.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better management of the recreation program. The softball program has been declining for the past several years. The parks continue to need improvement and nothing is being done. Renovate each park on a rotating basis to keep everything fresh. AND weekly maintenance of the parks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog Park (+ two additional similar responses)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop spending money on the Battlefield.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More signage in parks regarding pets being on a leash!!!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we should update practical systems like water and sewage systems between the city and townships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When additional park and recreation improvement investment is considered, we should make sure the improvement is well maintained (sustainable). Additional emphasis needs to be placed on [safe] cycling throughout Monroe with well-marked and highly promoted crosswalks and pathways.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wish the St Mary's concerts were not on the same night as the jazz festival. Would like to attend both, but unable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding kayaking and fishing access/ opportunities to parks with water access. Paved trails connecting to heritage trail. Continued work with NPS on master corridor plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything that the City could do with the Monroe Mall, for Health purposes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a family, we spend a lot of money and time traveling outside the city/county for recreational activities. Look at what other communities have to offer for ideas and support. Monroe is very focused on team sports but does not have much to offer in terms of family memberships of activities of all ages.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a sleepover in the park for preschool-3rd grade children. Bring their own tents and a parent. What fun!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the river walk more like the river walk in South Bend Indiana.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disc golf course at Munson park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all the park properties and determine which is used, which is not. It would seem logical that the City P&R Team could sell the properties that are underutilized and use the revenue to improve/update those that are. It's only a thought.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think the parks are looking so much better these last few years! Keep up the amazing work!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free Youth development programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please consider building a splash pad so Community members can enjoy one in our own community rather than getting into cars and going elsewhere.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fix the play structure at veteran's park
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have many parks in Monroe. Father Cairns is extremely underutilized, but then again there is not much to look at just green grass, one bench and a couple of swing sets. When you look at the population surrounding that park there are numerous multi-family housing units within one block of the park. Spiff it up, let folks use that as their backyard. Another thought....pickle ball....really?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers, etc. to ensure comfort, security, and safety for those who would like to explore all said areas but are afraid to do so on their own due to too much rift raft. Create buddy systems/clubs/partners for those who are loners/friendless, etc. to get together and enjoy all the programs the city has to offer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swings for handicapped. youngsters
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, just fix the basketball court at St Mary's Park it's been too many years that it's been neglected, and kids use it every single day and again Saint Mary's Park is the heart of Monroe
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make downtown Monroe more appealing. Need parking foremost or else no one will come. Also, I think a brewery in downtown would attract new customers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga in the park is highly successful. Continue to offer this in September.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider putting in a Splash pad for family to enjoy in the spring/summer. The closest splash pad to Monroe is Brownstown and Woodhaven. Lots of families here would love it if we didn't have to drive out of town for one.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New multi-use sports center
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more open to new events and groups who want to use the parks. I tried to bring my group event to a Monroe park, but the City had too many hoops to jump through and wouldn't allow for any of the simple things required to run my event. Instead I ended up working with the City of New Baltimore Parks and Rec department because they were not only willing to let me use the park in the way I needed to, but also very supportive in helping me make sure my event (which brought in visitors from 5 states) went smoothly. Because Monroe is so difficult to work with, I won't even bother trying to host anything within our park system anymore.

14. In which area of the community do you reside? (Refer to the map provided)

1	32
2	18
3	13
4	15
5	6
6	3
7	8
8	7
9	6
I live outside the City of Monroe	44

15. How long have you lived in the City of Monroe?

Less than 5 years	18
6 to 10 years	19
11 to 15 years	16
More than 15 years	82

16. How old are you?

Under 25	3
25 to 34	33
35 to 44	47
45 to 54	33
55 to 64	23
65 and over	14

17. How many children under 18 live in your household?

0	64
1	23
2	49
3	14
4	2
5 or more	1