
KENT COUNTY NEWS RELEASE
PARKS DEPARTMENT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2014

**2014-2018 Parks, Trails and Natural Areas Master Plan
Adopted by Kent County Commissioners**

GRAND RAPIDS – The Kent County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution this morning in support of the Parks Department’s new 2014-2018 Parks, Trails & Natural Areas Master Plan. The plan provides a framework for decisions affecting park, trails, open spaces, and natural areas covering nearly 6,800 acres.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires a completed parks and recreation master plan for a department or local jurisdiction to receive grant funding. Kent County’s Parks Department has developed and maintained parks and recreation master plans since the 1960s. The last plan was approved in 2008.

“While we see our parks and trails as successful, we are always looking at ways to maintain and improve them, for future generations to enjoy,” said Roger Sabine, Parks Department Director. “As part of the planning process, we conducted multiple surveys of public satisfaction, and also held a public comment period. Support from the public allows us to strengthen programs focused on park development, improvement, and land acquisition.”

The Master Plan set the following goals for the next five years:

1. Continually improve facilities to provide diverse, high-quality recreational opportunities that meet public demand.
2. Strategically develop parklands in County ownership as need arises and funding allows.
3. Develop a broad network of trails within Kent County that maximizes connectivity between communities, parks and other trail systems.
4. Continue to address the growing need for additional recreational space in Kent County through strategic acquisition of parklands, green spaces and trail corridors.
5. Continue to provide rewarding, efficiently managed volunteer programs and educational opportunities that benefit Kent County Parks and their visitors.
6. Expand public outreach, brand recognition and support for Kent County Parks.
7. Kent County Parks will be recognized by park patrons for clean and safe recreation facilities.
8. Improve the efficiency and effectiveness of maintenance operations as funding allows.
9. Protect the quality and sustainability of the Kent County Parks system by continuing to develop and grow diverse funding sources.

KENT COUNTY NEWS RELEASE
PARKS DEPARTMENT



The Kent County Parks system has 42 parks, green spaces and regional trails totaling 6,772 acres. There are also four regional trails in the county that stretch across 41 miles, and another 40+ miles of trails fall inside park borders.

Any programs or activities requiring new funding must be approved by the Board of Commissioners, or during the County's regular budgeting processes. You can see the plan at www.accessKent.com/parks.

For more information, contact the Kent County Parks Department at (616) 632-PARK (7275).

###