

THE GREAT LAKES WAY



Vision: All residents and visitors of southeast Michigan are connected to and benefit from world-class fresh water, wildlife, recreation, and heritage right in our backyard through a Great Lakes Way – an interconnected set of greenways and blueways stretching from southern Lake Huron through western Lake Erie that provides access for all ages and abilities.

The purpose of the Great Lakes Way is to build upon the groundwork laid by so many others to strengthen and define the greenways and blueways of the Huron-Erie corridor and ensure each of us—people of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities and interests—feels welcomed and shares in its benefits. It will build on existing assets and mapping, ensure broad equity, and put the Great Lakes Way into the consciousness of residents and visitors via marketing and communications.

The provided map is a vision for the future and depicts the following: how we will connect Lake Huron to Lake Erie and how we will connect residents of all backgrounds to both each other and to the unique amenities in the region. The Great Lakes Way is rich with world-class fisheries, flyways, and parks, bustling urban centers and small village towns, preserved old growth woodlands and restored wetlands, rich history and industrial heritage, and working waterways. Traversing through the Great Lakes Way offers experiences that can only be found here.

Creation of The Great Lakes Way brings together the collective assets of Monroe, Wayne, Macomb, and St. Clair counties. By designating these greenways and blueways as the Great Lakes Way, the region can focus on the important linkages still to be developed, while additionally delivering a clear brand and message that will be recognizable to its residents. Creation of the Great Lakes Way links residents and visitors to the impressive collective of natural, educational, and recreational assets that many are unaware are right in their backyard.

KEY

- Greenway Route
- Blueway Route
- Greenway Connection
- Blueway Connection



- LAND TRAILS**
- A Bridge to Bay Trail
 - B Jefferson Path
 - C Iron Belle Trail
 - D Detroit River Trail | Iron Belle Trail
 - E Detroit Riverwalk | Iron Belle Trail
 - F West Riverfront Trail | Iron Belle Trail
 - G Southwest Detroit Greenway | Iron Belle Trail
 - H Downriver Linked Greenway | Iron Belle Trail
 - I Lake Erie Metropark Bike Trail
- WATER TRAILS**
- J Blue Water Bridge Water Trail
 - K Island Loop Water Trail
 - L The Blueways of St. Clair
 - M Anchor Bay Water Trail
 - N Lake St. Clair Coastal Water Trail
 - O Detroit Heritage River Water Trail
 - P Monroe County Water Trail

- POINTS OF INTEREST**
- 1 Fort Gratiot Lighthouse
 - 2 Blue Water Bridge
 - 3 Blue Water Riverwalk
 - 4 Algonac State Park
 - 5 St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area
 - 6 St. John's Marsh Wildlife Area
 - 7 Selfridge Air National Guard Base and Museum
 - 8 Lake St. Clair Metropark
 - 9 Edsel and Eleanor Ford House
 - 10 Belle Isle
 - 11 Gabriel Richard Park
 - 12 Dequindre Cut
 - 13 Outdoor Adventure Center at Milliken State Park
 - 14 Detroit Riverwalk
 - 15 Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Centennial Park
 - 16 Riverside Park
 - 17 Fort Wayne
 - 18 Gordie Howe International Bridge
 - 19 Fort Street Bridge Park
 - 20 Elizabeth Park
 - 21 Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Gateway
 - 22 Lake Erie Metropark
 - 23 Pointe Mouillee State Game Area
 - 24 Sterling State Park
 - 25 River Raisin National Battlefield Park
 - 26 Erie Marsh



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RIVER RAISIN NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK commemorates areas relating to the January 1813 battles of the War of 1812 and their aftermath in southeast Michigan. These battles resulted in America's first wartime rally cry "Remember the Raisin" and opened the west to U.S. Expansion. This expansion led to the forced removal, relocation, and assimilation of Native Nations.



DETROIT RIVER INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE works with partners to build a sustainable future for the Detroit River and western Lake Erie and strengthen communities' connections with nature. The refuge conserves more than 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.



LAKE ERIE METROPARK features three miles of captivating Lake Erie shoreline, the "Great Wave" swimming pool, Marshlands Museum, an 18-hole golf course, boat launches, a marina, and both paved and natural-surface trails. This designated "Important Bird Area" is one of the premier hawk-watching sites in North America.



EDSEL AND ELEANOR FORD HOUSE sits on the shores of Lake St. Clair and was the final residence of the Fords. Their impressive yet unpretentious home is where they raised and nurtured their four children. The Fords were cultural, social and economical leaders in an era of great optimism, as well as a turbulent time of economic depression and world war.



DETROIT RIVERWALK currently spans more than 3.5 miles and is a popular destination for walking, running and bike riding where visitors enjoy nature and stunning views of Detroit and Canada. Beautiful parks and green spaces along the riverfront include amenities such as a splash pad, carousel, bike shop, cafes, butterfly gardens, a floating bar and children's playgrounds.



BELLE ISLE is Detroit's 982-acre island park with historic, cultural, and environmental resources – all beloved for generations. The park hosts the Belle Isle Aquarium, Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory, Dossin Great Lakes Museum, Belle Isle Nature Center, and the southern trailhead for the Iron Belle Trail offering over 2,000 miles of hiking and biking from Detroit to Ironwood in Michigan's upper peninsula.



FORT GRATIOT LIGHTHOUSE is Michigan's oldest lighthouse. With the surge of vessel traffic on Lake Huron in the early 1800s, the need for a light station to guide vessels became important. It is one of the few operating lighthouses that allows visitors to climb the tower and step out onto the catwalk for a breathtaking view.



FORT WAYNE is a sacred indigenous burial site that became a military fort in 1842, best known for its role in major military conflicts from the War of 1812 to Vietnam including serving as a Civil War Training Camp, WWI garrison for African American troops, and part of the WWII Arsenal of Democracy. Today, the Fort brings history alive for visitors as partners work to rehabilitate its beautiful historic buildings and riverfront.



SELFRIDGE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE AND MUSEUM was established at the base in 1975 to help preserve the heritage and traditions of the Michigan Air National Guard, Selfridge Air National Guard Base, and the units that are/were stationed there. It was named after Lt. Thomas E. Selfridge, the nation's first military pilot.



ST. CLAIR FLATS STATE WILDLIFE AREA is over 10,000 acres of public land located on the islands at the delta of the St. Clair River. The properties offer opportunities for hunting, fishing, boating, paddling, birding and nature study.



LAKE ST. CLAIR METROPARK is a popular recreation destination with its sandy beach, swimming pool, Squirt Zone spray ground, and numerous court games. A paved trail, natural surface trails, and boardwalks offer picturesque views of Lake St. Clair and the Point Rosa Marsh. In the winter, enjoy ice fishing for perch, cross-country skiing on groomed trails, a game of hockey or ice-skating outdoors.



RALPH C. WILSON, JR. CENTENNIAL PARK is scheduled to open in 2023. The 22-acre park will be a regional gathering place featuring basketball in the Sport House, a children's playground with larger-than-life animal structures to climb, an expansive lawn for special events, and a water feature. This park was made possible by a gift from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.