

# 11 | Recreation

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## 11.1 Purpose of Recreation Analysis

This portion of the Painesville Township Comprehensive Plan is dedicated to identifying the current recreational opportunities within Painesville Township, as well as areas in need of improvement. Focus areas include, but are not limited to: Township parks, recreation leagues and the advancement of recreation opportunities and facilities. Subsequently, goals and objectives will be provided to guide the future of recreation within Painesville Township. The Natural Resources and Economic Development elements of this Comprehensive Plan will provide additional information regarding recreational opportunities and their impacts on Painesville Township.

## 11.2 Painesville Township Parks

There are six public parks in Painesville Township, two of which include small portions of much larger parks. The 1996 Painesville Township Comprehensive Plan emphasized the growing need for more parks in the Township, especially neighborhood and community parks.



Painesville Township Park – Lake Metroparks

### *Headlands Beach State Park*

The majority of Headlands Beach State Park is located within the NW region of Painesville Township. It sits adjacent to Lake Erie and is west of the mouth of the Grand River. Headlands State Park boasts a mile-long natural sand beach, which is the largest in the state. This park opened in 1953 as Painesville Beach State Park, and the name changed to Headlands two years later.

Activities offered at this park include fishing, picnicking, swimming, and trails. The Buckeye Trail is 1.5 miles long and the Fishing Trail is 0.4 miles long. Picnic shelters are also available for reservation by the public.

The park is located relatively far from residential areas in the Township, and it is separated by industrial areas and Grand River Village. Portions of the park are within the City of Mentor.

### ***Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve***

Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve is located adjacent to the Headlands Beach State Park. The northern portion of its perimeter is comprised of Lake Erie. This preserve is home to a natural beach on the lake, footpaths, unusual Atlantic coastal plain plants, and migrating birds and monarch butterflies.

Dunes are sustained by the presence of switchgrass and/or beach grass along the upper beach. Annuals, such as cocklebur and sea rocket can also be found throughout the Preserve.

### ***Helen Hazen Wyman Park***

Helen Hazen Wyman Park was the first park to be acquired by Lake Metroparks in 1959. A century ago, this site was the focal point of an industrial center, which included a sawmill, leather tannery and wool processing facility. A few foundation stones are the only remnants of its industrial past.

This park extends into the SE region of Painesville Township from Concord Township off of SR 86. Within park borders, Big Creek and Kellogg Creek flow into the Grande River. This site is approximately 60 acres, which offer picnic areas, a picnic shelter with a capacity of 75 persons, a playground, fishing spots, and a baseball field.

Like Headlands State Park, this passive recreational area is difficult to reach from residential areas in the Township and is separated by the City of Painesville.

### ***Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve***

Portions of the Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve are located in Painesville Township. This Preserve is owned and operated by the Cleveland Museum of Natural History and is open April through October. It offers a nature center and a 4 mile trail

system, which includes a boardwalk trail. Family nature hikes are offered every Sunday that the Nature Center is open.

This park occupies an ancient abandoned channel of the Grand River. Wetlands occupy the site and it is the location of the largest Phragmites marsh in Ohio. The area provides a habitat for a diversity of wildlife species.

### ***Painesville Township Park***



Painesville Township Park is located entirely within Painesville Township. The 37-acre park is located on the shore of Lake Erie, between Hardy Road and the former Diamond Shamrock/Uniroyal site. The park provides much-needed open space for the nearby Painesville-on-the-Lake neighborhood, as well as some amenities that draw visitors from outside the Township.

The park was established in the early 1920s as a recreational area offering baseball fields, a dance hall, picnic areas, an open-air pavilion and a beach. Due to erosion, the beach and pavilion no longer exist, but a new playground, five softball fields and the dance hall remain as amenities. Ballroom dancing and country dancing are offered at the dance hall for a small fee and a schedule is posted on the Lake Metroparks website. Funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant has allowed for the establishment of a new pocket playground, which is currently being installed.

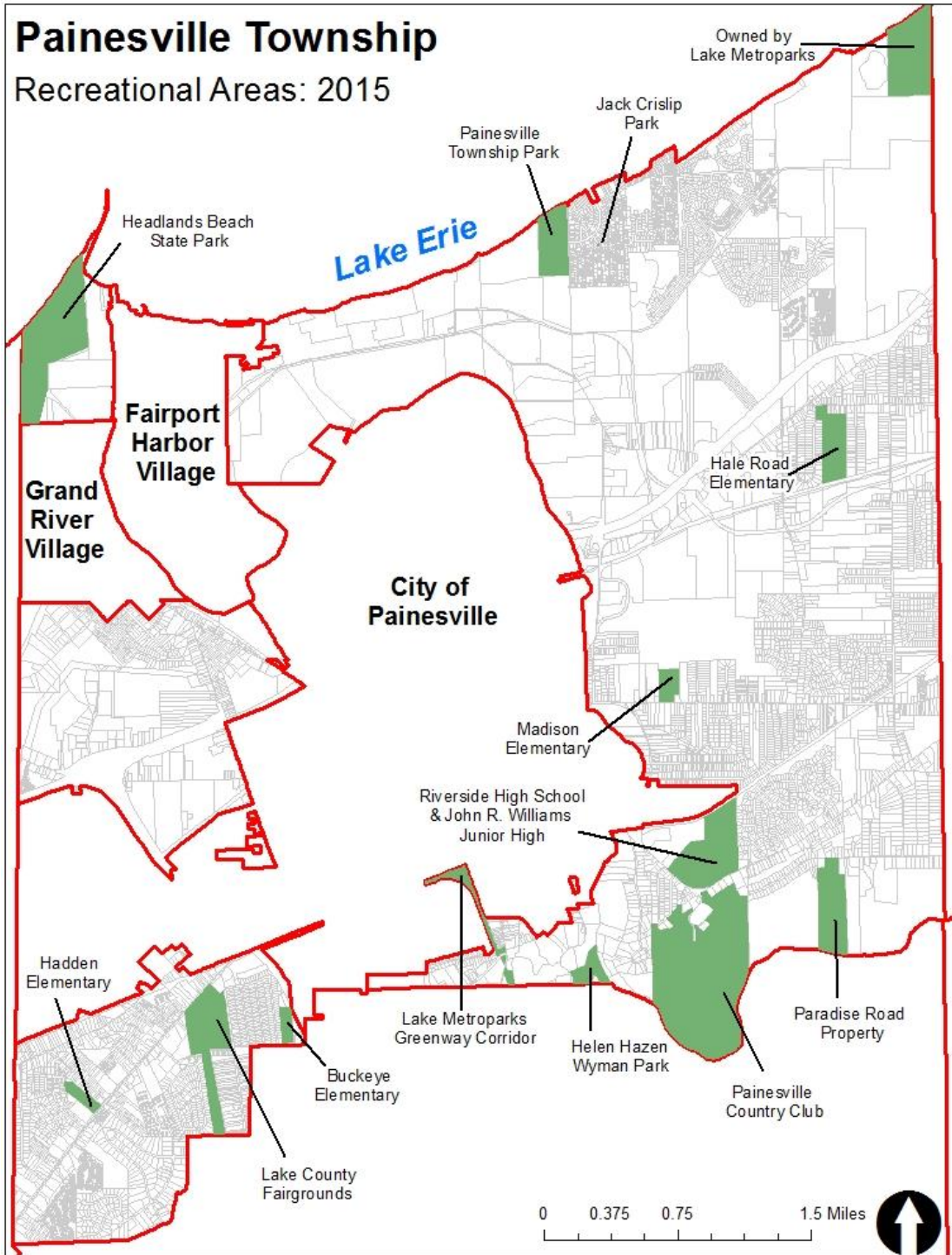
In 1991, Lake Metroparks entered a cooperative lease agreement with the Painesville Township Park Board to operate and manage the park. Since the origin of this agreement, more than \$1,000,000 has been allocated to park improvements, including renovation of the dance hall and ball fields.

Potential improvements to the Park may include a better configuration of the baseball diamonds to attract regional competitions, more efficient parking options and offshore breakwaters to enable beach access for visitors. On a larger scale, constructing a lakefront trail westward that connects to Fairport Harbor's Lakefront Park would create an immeasurable asset to the community.

### ***Jack Crislip Park***

The Painesville Township Trustees and the Lake County Land Reutilization Corporation, also known as the Landbank, recently collaborated to build a mini park in the Township. The park is located at the corner of Sycamore Drive and Pontiac Avenue in the NE region of the Township and contains playground equipment. Upon completion of the park it was donated to Painesville Township. The Jack Crislip Park was opened in October of 2015.





In 2014, Lake Metroparks and the Painesville Township Park Board reached an agreement to continue the cooperative lease agreement for an additional 25 years. Future goals include a shoreline project that will protect the eroding shoreline, the construction of a 200' pier, and an ADA accessible path to Lake Erie.

**Park Shortfall**

National and state park and recreation organizations, as well as individual governmental agencies, have established a range of definitions and standards for parks. Such standards include: park type, size, access requirements, and site development guidelines. A standard was derived from early studies of urban parks for acres of parkland per resident. Over time, six to ten acres of developed parkland per 1,000 residents became the accepted standard recommended by the National Parks and Recreation Association. This ratio is used by the majority of communities in the United States.

Painesville Township Park is the only developed park located in the Township, and offers 2.6 acres (1 hectare) of parkland per 1,000 residents. Painesville Township does not own parks in the NW, SW and SE regions of the Township, which are the most heavily populated regions. There are elementary schools with playgrounds and athletic fields located in these regions and Concord Township owns Coleridge Park on Buckeye Road that is 500 feet from the Painesville Township border, which offers a playground. Painesville Township also lacks the variety of park types that are recommended to serve the entire Township population.

As of 2013, data from the United States Census Bureau estimates the population of Painesville Township at 16,874 residents. According to national standards, with a population of approximately 20,000 residents there should be a minimum of 200 acres (81 hectares) of developed parkland within the community. Currently, Painesville Township has only 25% of the amount of parkland recommended for a community of 20,000 residents. As all communities are unique, these standards may not be completely applicable to the needs of residents within Painesville Township. They may be helpful to guide the further acquisition of parkland.

Table 11.1 Classification and Minimum Park Area Standards			
Park type	Area per 1000 residents	Size of park	Service radius
<b>Mini park</b> Designed to provide recreational opportunities for a small area in a neighborhood. Typically designed for young children, however in some cases it may be designed for aesthetic purposes.	1 ac (0.4 ha)	0.5 to 1 ac (0.2 to 0.4 ha)	0.25 to 0.5 mi (0.4 to 0.8 km)
<b>Neighborhood park</b> Designed to serve recreational needs of children 6-15 years of age, as well as adults, pre-schoolers, and seniors. Typically includes family picnic areas, unlighted open turf areas for informal sports, and play equipment. Lighted athletic fields would not be included.	3 ac (1.2 ha)	4 to 12 ac (1.6 to 5.0 ha)	0.25 to 0.75 mi (0.4 to 1.2 km)
<b>Community park</b> Designed to serve a wide variety of needs for youths and adults in both active and passive recreation. Facilities for sports fields (lighted when appropriate), open turf areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and off-street parking. Should include restrooms and related facilities. May	6 ac (2.5 ha)	20 to 50 ac (8 to 20 ha)	1 to 2 mi (1.6 to 3.2 km)

include a community center. Components of neighborhood parks and mini-parks should be included in the community park.			
<b>Regional park</b> Open space areas characterized by significant natural resources that provide passive recreation for nearby residents and the surrounding metropolitan area. Small portions of a regional park might be allocated to fulfill neighborhood park requirements.	15 ac (6 ha)	100 ac (40 ha)	Lake County, East Cuyahoga County
<b>Conservancy /open space area</b> Land kept mostly in its natural state. Used to preserve natural areas such as riparian zones, bluffs, wetlands and other lands of recreational and scenic interest. May also include areas devoted to preservation of historic or cultural resources. Could include smaller portions of the area needed to satisfy local neighborhood recreational needs.	n/a	Sufficient to provide or preserve the resource	Northeast Ohio

### Acquiring New Parkland

**Table 11.2**  
Active Recreation Facility Inventory and Standards  
Painesville Township

Park/facility type	Target park/facility size	Existing assets	Year 2014 minimum requirements	Deficiency	** Buildout minimum requirements	Deficiency
<b>Neighborhood park (including acreage for mini-parks)</b>	4-12 ac / 1.6-5.0 ha; 4 ac /1.6 ha:1,000 residents	0 ac 0 ha	60 ac 24 ha	60 ac 24 ha	120 ac 49 ha	120 ac 49 ha
<b>Community park</b>	20-50 ac / 8-20 ha; 6 ac /3.4 ha:1,000 residents	37 ac 15 ha	90 ac 36 ha	53 ac 21 ha	180 ac 73 ha	143 ac 58 ha
<b>Tennis courts*</b>	1:2,500 residents	0	6	6	12	12
<b>Basketball courts</b>	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	6	6
<b>Volleyball courts</b>	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
<b>Baseball diamond</b>	1:5,000 residents	5	3	0	6	1
<b>Softball diamond</b>	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	6	6
<b>Soccer/football fields</b>	1:5,000 residents	0	3	3	5	5
<b>Swimming pool</b>	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
<b>¼ mile running track</b>	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
<b>Handball/racquetball court*</b>	1:20,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2
<b>Dog park</b>	2-5 ac / 0.8-2.0 ac; 1:25,000 residents	0	1	1	2	2

\* Ratio may be decreased due to the declining popularity of racquet sports.

\*\* Assumes population of 30,000 and no city annexation of residential areas.

The loss of a large industrial tax base, as well as the lack of a large commercial tax base, makes it challenging for the Township to generate the revenue required to establish and operate a large park system. Under current state law, townships do not have the authority to levy impact fees for new development. This includes park impact

fees or parkland acquisition or park-in-lieu fees. Desires for open space should be discussed during initial planning meetings between developers and the Township for large-scale communities. Areas dedicated for open space should be an integral component of the overall development plan and ultimately be the responsibility of the local homeowners association.

Lake Metroparks traditionally maintains large parks, rather than the smaller neighborhood and community parks, which are recommended for the Township. The planning, development, management, and operation of regional parks are much different than that of smaller parks with more active recreation space.

When a centrally-located public facility is permanently out of operation, or a large tract of land owned by a government agency is vacant, the Township may potentially pursue the conversion of such land to parkland. For instance, if the current site of the Lake County Fairground becomes available in the future then at least 25 acres (10 hectares) of the site is recommended for use as a community park serving the SW region of the Township.

State and federal grants may be available to assist in funding the acquisition of additional parkland. It is recommended that the Township pursue every available opportunity to acquire funding for new parkland where appropriate.

School grounds provide valuable opportunities for active recreation. However, there are constraints to this use as a community recreational space. With educational use of school grounds as the primary use, schools are often unavailable for general public use. Additionally, sports leagues occupy many school groups after school hours.

### ***Standards for New Parks***

The Land Use element describes the issues associated with the location of open space in subdivisions zoned as Flexible Planned Unit Development, and recommends standards to make open space more visible, accessible and usable. These standards can be used as the basis for establishing new mini-parks, neighborhood parks and community parks. Such standards include:

- At least 50% of the perimeter of a neighborhood park, and at least 30% of the perimeter of a community park, must have frontage on a public road. Exceptions could be made for large parks (more than 20 acres, or with more than 500 feet/150 meters of street frontage), and linear parks (rails-to-trails, lakefront corridors, riparian corridors, etc.).
- Parks must not take the form of narrow strips (exceptions may include: trails, lakefront areas and riparian corridors).
- Convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to parks must be provided.
- Parks must not function as backyards for adjacent residents.
- Parks must be welcoming and have adequate safety features.



- Retention ponds, wetlands that stay saturated through half the year or more, areas under high tension power lines, traffic islands and medians, and entrance features cannot be used in meeting total park area requirements.
- Linking new parks to existing parks or other desirable land uses (schools, retail areas, cultural or institutional centers) will be encouraged.
- Parks must be improved with water, sanitary sewer (if available), storm sewer (if available) and electrical service. All utilities must be underground.

### ***Future Park Locations***

The following are recommended locations for new parks in Painesville Township. This list is not intended to be a park location plan, and all locations and acreages should be considered flexible. The ultimate goal is to provide approximately 200 acres of developed parkland for Painesville Township residents.

#### **NE Region**

- 150 acres (61 hectares) along the Lake Erie shoreline and Grand River corridor in Lakeview Bluffs/Hemisphere area
- 60 acres (24 hectares) along the Lake Erie shoreline east of Sunset Point
- Proposed neighborhood park (.25 acres) in the community adjacent to Painesville Township Park
- 113 acres (45 hectares) of Lake Metroparks property along Northeast township border
- 100 acres of the former Fairway Pines Golf Course

#### **SE Region**

- 15 acre (6 hectare) neighborhood park(s) in Casement Airport area
- 5 acre (2 hectare) neighborhood park east of Bowhall Road, south of CSX/Red Creek

#### **SW Region**

- 25 acres (10 hectares)

#### **NW Region**

- 5 acre (2 hectare) neighborhood park

Recommended locations for future Lake Metroparks and state park sites include the Grand River corridor in the SE region of the Township, the Lake Erie shoreline and Grand River corridor in the Lakeview Bluffs area, and the Lake Erie shoreline east of Sunset Point. Developed portions of Metroparks and state park sites may be counted towards meeting the goal of 300 acres (121 hectares) of developed parkland in the Township.

As of July 2015, the Painesville Township Trustees and the Lake County Land Reutilization Corporation, also known as the Landbank, have worked to demolish four

abandoned houses to build a mini park. The park will be located at the corner of Sycamore Drive and Pontiac Avenue in the NE region of the Township. Upon completion of the park, it will be donated to Painesville Township. The anticipated opening of the park is August of 2015.

### ***Private Parks***

In Painesville Township there are two private, active parks owned and operated by homeowners associations. One of these parks is a lakefront park located in the subdivision of Lake Erie Shores. This park, which is owned and maintained by the Lake Erie Shores Homeowners Association, offers a pavilion, walking path, and a stairway that leads to the Lake Erie Shoreline. The other park is operated by the Fairway Pines Homeowners Association. This private park offers a baseball diamond, a pool, and other amenities which can be used by residents of The Pines subdivision.

## **11.3 Recreation Leagues**

### **Recreation Opportunities for Children**

Although there are no recreation leagues sponsored directly by Painesville Township, there are various recreation leagues available for the children residing within the Township. Some of these leagues include, but are not limited to the following: the Painesville Area Little League, Lake County Youth Football League, Riverside Youth Football League, Riverside Youth Soccer, ONE United FC Soccer Club, and Lake County Youth Lacrosse.

#### ***Painesville Area Little League (PALL)***

The Painesville Area Little League (PALL) is a baseball little league for the children in communities within Lake County. Since 1952, PALL has served approximately four hundred children from the communities of Painesville Township, Concord Township, Leroy Township, the City of Painesville, Grand River Village, and Fairport Harbor Village. PALL is a non-profit organization and relies on fundraising and sponsorship.

The PALL fields are located at Painesville Kiwanis Recreational Park. The range of ages for this league is four to sixteen years. There are thirty-six teams, including t-ball. PALL offers a league for children with disabilities or special needs.

#### ***Lake County Youth Football League***

The Lake County Youth Football League offers football and cheerleading to the youth of Lake County. The Madison Avenue School field, located in Painesville Township, is used by this league. There are three divisions of this league and players are distributed by age, with an age range of six to eleven years.

### ***Riverside Youth Football***

The Riverside Youth Football League consists primarily of Riverside School District players. This league includes three divisions, and players are distributed by age. Ages range from seven to eleven years. The Riverside Youth Football League competes with teams from Mentor, Chardon, Kirtland, Willoughby, Eastlake, Willoughby Hills, Willowick, and Fairport Harbor. Home games and practices are held at LaMuth Middle School, which is located within Concord Township.

### ***Riverside Youth Soccer Club***

The Riverside Youth Soccer Club is a not-for-profit organization that was founded in 2002. This travel soccer club allows boys and girls from the Riverside Local School District to compete with surrounding communities. The age range for participating children is five to fourteen years.

### ***ONE United FC Soccer Club***

The ONE United FC Soccer Club is an Ohio North East State League Soccer Club open to children ages four to seventeen years. Residents of Painesville Township, the City of Painesville, Leroy Township, and Concord Township are eligible for membership.

### ***Lake Erie Youth Lacrosse***

Lake Erie Youth Lacrosse is comprised of players from Painesville Township, Concord Township, Kirtland, Perry Township, Mentor, and other communities from Lake County and northern Geauga County. The league is open to boys and girls who are in third through eighth grade. This league is a not-for-profit and operates entirely on the support of parent volunteers.



## **Adult Recreation**

In comparison to the recreation opportunities for children, there are relatively few organized and well-advertised recreation leagues for adults and seniors. According to the resident survey that was conducted in 2015, the majority of residents desire more recreation opportunities for adults. Painesville Country Club facilitates adult golf leagues, which will be discussed in the following section.

## **11.4 Golf Courses**

The Painesville Country Club was opened in 1928 and is located in the SE region of Painesville Township at 84 Golf Drive, near Riverside High School. The Grand River borders the southern and western sides of the property. This club offers eighteen holes of Championship golf, a driving range, and practice putting green. Additional amenities include inside and outside dining, a snack bar, and a golf shop. This club has a five star rating from Golf Digest.

The Painesville Country Club offers existing golf leagues, and welcomes customers to create their own leagues. There are currently six men's leagues, two women's leagues, a couples league and a junior league. It is currently open as a public club.

## **11.5 Advancing Recreation Opportunities in Painesville Township**

### ***Recreation Council***

For some communities, recreation councils have been established to facilitate recreation opportunities for residents. The purpose of a recreation council is to develop and promote recreation programs and activities for community residents for personal enrichment, health advancement and an overall enhanced quality of life. Recreation councils may promote programs for children, teens, and adults, as well as education and volunteer opportunities, sports leagues, special events, and health and wellness opportunities.

Painesville Township may establish a recreation council consisting of representatives from the local government of Painesville Township, Lake County General Health District, the Lake County YMCA, Township residents and other relevant entities. In addition, Painesville Township may join forces with nearby communities to create a recreation council for a group of communities. Collaborating with nearby communities may increase the availability of resources and community support.

### ***Partnerships***

In addition to establishing recreation councils with communities within close proximity, Painesville Township may institute other types of partnerships with nearby communities. Partnerships may be formed with various entities for use of recreation facilities. For instance, Painesville Township may partner with Riverside Local School District for use of school facilities, such as gyms or basketball courts. Other examples include partnering with communities, such as the City of Mentor for discounted pool access for Painesville Township residents. As of 2015, Painesville Township does not offer public pool access to residents.

The 2015 resident survey results indicate that the vast majority of Township residents desire the establishment of a community center for use by Township residents. To accomplish this task, partnerships may be formed with nearby communities or organizations to allow for access to a community center. For instance, partnerships may be formed with the Lake County YMCA to provide discounted access to the Lake County Central YMCA facility, as well as the Outdoor YMCA located in Perry Township. Another method includes partnering with an adjacent community for a shared community center. It is recommended that Painesville Township determine the most feasible option for offering residents access to a community center.

### ***Painesville Township Events***

To enhance a sense of community and offer fun and safe recreation opportunities for residents, it is recommended that Painesville Township continue to organize events for

Township residents. Such events may include a 5k run or health fair. Effectively advertising for future Township events is crucial for desired attendance and community participation. It is recommended that volunteers from the community be sought out for participation in organizing and managing Township events.

### ***Utilizing Natural Resources for Recreation***

Portions of Painesville Township are bordered by valuable natural resources, including Lake Erie and the Grand River. Such resources present an opportunity for recreational use by residents. Such uses may include fishing, canoeing and kayaking. By increasing public access points to Lake Erie, the Grand River and other natural resources, additional recreation opportunities may become available and accessible for Painesville Township residents. There are currently no access points to the Grand River in Painesville Township, but there are three located in nearby communities. These access points include Grand River Landing in Fairport Harbor Village, Beatty Landing in the City of Painesville, and Mason Landing in Leroy Township. The utilization of natural resources for recreational use will be discussed in greater detail in the Natural Resources and Economic Development element.



### ***Funding***

Results from the 2015 resident survey indicate that the majority of residents are more in favor of promoting fee-based programs to support recreation opportunities. Residents also supported the utilization of volunteers and partnerships to achieve recreation goals for the Township. The majority of residents who took the survey were not in favor of enacting a levy for the funding of recreation opportunities.



## 11.6 Goals & Objectives

**R-1            Natural resources will be utilized to establish recreational areas within the Township**

R-1-01        Fishing spots with easy access will be designated along Lake Erie, the Grand River, and other major streams.

R-1-02        Recreation activities, such as canoeing and kayaking will be promoted within the Township.

R-1-03        Create a recreation overlay district(s).

**R-2            The Township will continue to explore options for parkland used for recreational purposes.**

R-2-01        Coordinate with Lake Metroparks and the Painesville Township Park Board to continue acquiring parkland.

R-2-02        Coordinate with Riverside Local School District to utilize their land for recreation purposes.

**R-3            Painesville Township events will be organized to engage residents and promote a sense of community and unification.**

R-3-01        Organize annual events and advertise accordingly to reach entire community.

R-3-02        Coordinate with non-profit organizations to organize and promote a Township 5k run in support of a charity working within the Township.

R-3-03        Continue and expand the annual Family Fun Day activities.

R-3-04        Develop a group of community members to assist in organizing and staffing Township events.