The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) is working in conjunction with 13 local units of government to develop a 54-mile paved trail from Lakeport State Park to New Baltimore. St. Clair County helps to plan and promote the trail while each local unit of government is responsible for constructing their section of the trail. PARC usually helps to fund the local match required for trail construction grants.

**BRIDGE TO BAY TRAIL**
The St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission (PARC) is working in conjunction with 13 local units of government to develop a 54-mile paved trail from Lakeport State Park to New Baltimore. St. Clair County helps to plan and promote the trail while each local unit of government is responsible for constructing their section of the trail. Even though PARC plays an instrumental coordinating role in the development of the Bridge to Bay Trail, the property that makes up that trail is owned by various municipalities and townships. Most trail construction projects are funded by grants. PARC usually helps to fund the local match required for trail construction grants.

The Bridge to Bay Trail extends from St. Clair County’s northern border; under the Blue Water Bridge; through Port Huron, Marysville, St. Clair, Marine City, and Algonac; and past state and municipal parks, museums, gazebos, and lighthouses. Sometimes the trail is within reach of the water’s edge and sometimes a few miles inland. It connects communities together for walkers, joggers, strollers, and bicyclists of all ages. The trail varies from an 10 foot wide separated paved pathway in the right of way along a road, or a 5 foot wide dedicated bike lane.

The trail can potentially link to the Wadhams to Avoca Trail within St. Clair County, the Discover Michigan Trail, the Macomb Orchard Trail, and – via ferry – the St. Clair Parkway Trail in Lambton, Ontario, Canada. As of 2012, roughly 25 miles of the 54 mile Bridge to Bay trail is complete.

Funding for the Bridge to Bay Trail comes from St. Clair County Parks and Recreation millage, local government funds, and grants. Grant money for the trail has been provided by the United States government through the *Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users* (SAFETEA-LU), and by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), and the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF).

**THE BLUEWAYS OF ST. CLAIR**
One of the goals included in the 2007-2011 Master Recreation Plan was to explore developing a system of water trails in St. Clair County. The St. Clair County Metropolitan Planning Commission, in partnership with PARC, applied for and was granted a Michigan Coastal Management Grant to create a Blueways Vision website for the shoreline of St. Clair County.

Research began in 2009 to find all the public access points along waterways in the County. Next, public input was gathered for popular paddling routes and put-ins. The website was built up with paddling routes, access pictures, information on restaurants, motels, museums and other points of interest. One will find information on the major rivers in the County, including the Black River, Belle River, Pine River, Lake Huron, St. Clair River, and the St. Clair River delta, which is the largest freshwater delta in North America!

The Blueways website lists 16 different paddling routes, totaling 138 miles, in nine unique bodies of water and lots of valuable information related to paddling and shoreline recreation. The website is very dynamic, with driving directions between favorite points, aerial imagery maps, weather report links, and a section to post personal paddling trip stories and pictures.
Check out St. Clair County’s Blueways website at www.BluewaysOfStClair.org

RECREATION STANDARDS

Two recreation standards are applicable to parks and recreation facilities within St. Clair County:

1. Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), which relate to park acreage requirements.
2. Michigan Recreation Opportunity Standards, developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which relate to a variety of park facilities and features as well as acreage requirements.

NRPA STANDARDS

The National Recreation and Park Association’s Open Space Guidelines and Standards, known as the NRPA Standards, are used by many state, regional, and county parks and recreation agencies throughout the United States to aid in the development of master recreation plans.

The Blueways of St. Clair website can be accessed at www.BluewaysOfStClair.org and features a number of interactive tools, including paddling route mapping, trip planning, and safety information.