

## Public Infrastructure and Facilities

According to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, Master Plans shall address land use and infrastructure issues and may project 20 years or more into the future. Infrastructure is a broad term that encompasses many physical elements of the urban form, and might be thought of as a skeleton that holds together the fabric of a community. Generally, infrastructure includes streets, railroads, airports, bicycle paths, pedestrian ways, bridges, waterways, and waterfront developments; sanitary sewers and water supply systems; facilities for flood prevention, drainage, pollution prevention, and maintenance of water levels; and public utilities and structures.

Public infrastructure was considered in terms of the following elements:

1. A New Pier Into Lake Erie
2. A Rebuilt Turtle Island Lighthouse
3. Major Park Improvements at Luna Pier Memorial Park
4. Development of a New Municipal Boat Launch and Supportive Facilities.
5. Development of a New Recreational Destination at the Erie State Game Area
6. A Master Street Plan
7. A New Municipal Complex
8. New Non-Motorized Trails

### A New Pier into Lake Erie

Luna Pier was once a major destination for residents of southeast Michigan and northwest Ohio because of a pier built into Lake Erie. Major headliners such as Guy Lombardo performed in Luna Pier and visitors traveled to the area via the interurban rail system. An adjoining night club also existed along the shoreline in front of this pier. The original pier was destroyed in 1939 by an ice storm and the night club burned in the 1950's. The concrete pier that exists today was built by the Army Corps of Engineers along with other shoreline protection measures.

During the development of this Master Plan, the desirability of rebuilding a pier surfaced during early visioning meetings. While the existing pier structure provides access into the lake, it was not constructed as a multi-use facility.



Source: *Monroe Evening News* 8/25/1928

There are also some technical deficiencies with respect to the existing pier that is related to the fact that sediment accumulates inside the protected area.

The development of preliminary designs for a new pier was considered to be beyond the scope of this Master Plan. Examples of multi-use piers in other communities were found and considered in light of local needs. The wide range of options helped draw attention to the fact that a preferred design will



The walkway to the dance floor at Luna Pier as it was in August, 1926.

involve focused consensus-building and a substantial amount of engineering and architectural expertise. However, since a new pier would become an integral part of the downtown Luna Pier experience, some general expectations for pier design have been established. These centered on the need to uncover opportunities for an entertainment venue, dock for passenger boat traffic, dock for transient boat traffic, restaurant location or retail sales establishments, along with public space and general access to a water environment. Going forward, this Master Plan recommends that the City proceed with efforts to reconstruct the pier following principles that would ensure maximum community-wide impact and value. These principles include:

1. As practical, the new pier should offer some enclosed space so that at least part of the pier provides a year-round destination. Some outdoor space might also include canvas awnings or similar materials to protect areas from the strong elements.
2. The pier should be a multi-use facility offering multiple attractions and destinations.
3. Apart from trying to include ferry and passenger boat facilities, the pier should include transient docks and be accessible by pleasure boats. It should serve as a destination for recreational boaters on Lake Erie.
4. The pier design should include an attractive space area for concerts, entertainment, dancing, weddings and general gatherings. The design should offer as much flexibility as possible and possibly include a retractable or temporary stage and movable chairs, tables and umbrellas. If such an entertainment venue is not possible an amphitheater should be built in Luna Pier Memorial Park (as described on page 3).
5. Outdoor lighting is desirable to strengthen identity and provide for evening use and safety.
6. Overall design should be consistent and complimentary with design elements in local signage and street furniture so that the pier looks and feels like an extension of the streetscape and other public spaces.
7. Fundamentally, a new pier should represent an eastern magnet to draw visitors to the lakeshore and past businesses along Luna Pier Road.

## Prototypical Pier Designs



## A Reconstructed Turtle Island Lighthouse

In this Master Plan, a reconstructed Turtle Island Lighthouse is regarded as being a publicly-owned structure, because of the opportunities to include public functions in this building such as a welcome center, museum or public restrooms. It should be noted that a reconstructed Turtle Island Lighthouse could also be owned and operated by a non-profit or private entity if an appropriate proposal was brought forward. Regardless of ownership, the City recognizes the opportunity to adopt the Turtle Island Lighthouse as a symbolic and functional structure, reinforcing the image that Luna Pier is a place connected to Lake Erie and maritime history. Rebuilding the Turtle Island Lighthouse also provides a significant historic and “place-making” element that can functionally support tourism and economic development initiatives. Like a reconstructed pier, a reconstructed lighthouse provides an eastern magnet to draw visitors from I-75 and past businesses along Luna Pier Road.

Significant related considerations include the following:

1. A reconstructed Turtle Island Lighthouse should be located near the Lake in a manner that compliments a new pier, the park space and surrounding property. This new structure replaces the beach house that now houses a concession stand and restrooms.
2. The reconstructed lighthouse should be both functional and visually important and serve as a tourist destination. Ferry tickets and/or parking passes could be sold in this structure and some interior space could be defined as a “welcome center” (or something similar) with interpretive displays, artifacts, movies and lake images.



*Vermilion, Ohio is home to The Great Lakes Historical Society and the Inland Seas Maritime Museum is a local attraction.*



*The Lake Erie Islands Regional Welcome Center in Port Clinton, Ohio provides displays and tourist information.*

3. This building could also provide space for artisans who might make/sell merchandise, while the tower of the lighthouse could provide scenic views of the Lake Erie shoreline. Interior space might also serve as a place for public art, museum of locally-significant artifacts and include an area to tell the story of Great Lakes Lighthouses.
4. Experts should be engaged in order to create a historically-accurate reconstruction of the Turtle Island Lighthouse as funding allows.
5. Partnerships with the State of Michigan and Monroe County Convention and Visitors Bureau are important to fully develop marketing and promotional activities.



*Future View of the Eastern End of Luna Pier Road Next to Lake Erie*

## Development of Luna Pier Memorial Park

The City of Luna Pier is fortunate to have a major centrally located public space to help frame surrounding commercial and residential areas. The development of this Master Plan helped to uncover the tremendous opportunities that exist to create an active and vibrant space that will provide a lasting gift to future generations. Several specific improvements are called for:

1. Develop an outdoor amphitheater or water feature at the far eastern end of the park. The far eastern end of Luna Pier Memorial Park next to Lake Erie is a key focal point and activity center. An amphitheater for concerts would be appropriate at this location provided a similar venue is not located at the end of a new pier (as existed in the 1920’s). Summertime concerts, weddings and similar events could be held in an amphitheater drawing activity and a sense of excitement. The design of such an amphitheater should be as open as possible so as not to obstruct views of Lake Erie. Alternatively, interactive water fountains could be located in this area to help draw visitors and create activity. Such an open space could also be used for ice skating in the winter.





2. **Develop a nautical playground.** To support the nautical themes of Luna Pier, a nautical playground can be built as a unique space. Structures that represent shipwrecks or other nautical elements can provide a fun space for children and simultaneously reinforce nautical themes and images associated with Luna Pier.



3. **Develop a Pavilion and Shelter House.** A new pavilion and shelter house will be built to serve the needs of family gatherings and for picnics. Such a facility will also provide a venue for private parties, community activities, outdoor festivals and a farmers market. It is important that such a structure be designed with an open feel to not obstruct views and to provide restroom facilities.



4. **Create a Focal Sculpture and Parkside Pergola.** The intersection of Luna Pier Memorial Park and Lakewood St. provides a place where the Luna Pier community can express itself with public art. Many possibilities exist, but obviously a nautical structure provides a compelling choice to support an overall community theme. Such public art feature can be framed by a pergola to provide overflow space for a farmers market, festivals or simply a sitting area.



5. **Create a Plaza at Harold Drive.** Future improvements in Luna Pier Memorial Park help to create an outstanding public space that can be punctuated with enhancements to street surfaces and certain landscape elements. This then creates an outstanding opportunity for a future building to be constructed to take advantage of exceptional views of Luna Pier Memorial Park.



## New City Hall, Library and Fire Station

Public Buildings such as City Hall, the Library and the Fire Station are all in need of upgrades or full replacement in the future. This convergence of needs for public spaces and activities creates an opportunity to consider the development of a multi-use complex. The benefits of considering combined local needs for public spaces and facilities is one of cost savings as considering facility needs separately could result in expensive duplication of building space and supportive services. Simply put, it can cost less to share meeting rooms, parking areas and common spaces/amenities. The details with respect to the development of a shared municipal complex could be explored in a future feasibility study. Such a study could help to uncover substantial long-term savings in terms of not only initial construction costs, but also long-term operational and maintenance expenses. Substantial consideration should also be given to the location of such a complex. However, decisions related to location are very sensitive given land availability and timing.



## Development of the Municipal Boat Launch

The municipal boat launch area should be upgraded in terms of both the structure itself and in terms of ancillary facilities. Notably, this area could be upgraded with a paved parking area, signage and restrooms. It is also noted that this area will also serve as a staging area for a non-motorized trails extending across LaPointe Drain to the south. Vehicles could utilize parking at this location to walk or bike toward Lake Erie or southward along the old interurban rail right-of-way.



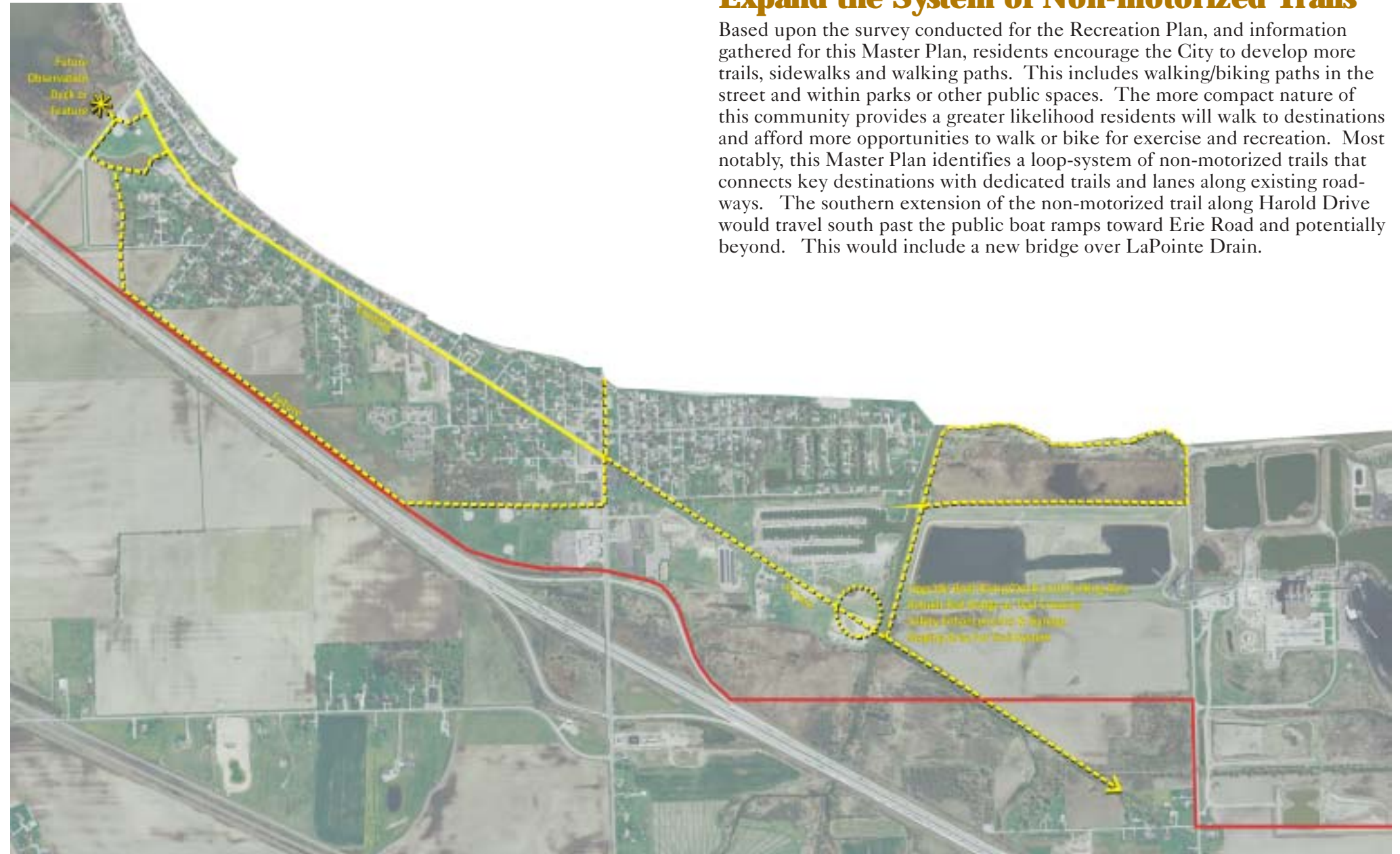
*Existing Municipal Boat Ramp*

## Recreational Destination at The Erie State Game Area

Working in cooperation with the State of Michigan, an observation platform near Water Tower Park is desired to help create a destination for residents. Such an observation platform could provide views of hundreds of acres of natural landscape.



*Prototype of Observation Structure*



## Expand the System of Non-motorized Trails

Based upon the survey conducted for the Recreation Plan, and information gathered for this Master Plan, residents encourage the City to develop more trails, sidewalks and walking paths. This includes walking/biking paths in the street and within parks or other public spaces. The more compact nature of this community provides a greater likelihood residents will walk to destinations and afford more opportunities to walk or bike for exercise and recreation. Most notably, this Master Plan identifies a loop-system of non-motorized trails that connects key destinations with dedicated trails and lanes along existing roadways. The southern extension of the non-motorized trail along Harold Drive would travel south past the public boat ramps toward Erie Road and potentially beyond. This would include a new bridge over LaPointe Drain.





Existing Walking/Bike Lane Along Harold Drive near Water Tower Park.



## Noise Barriers

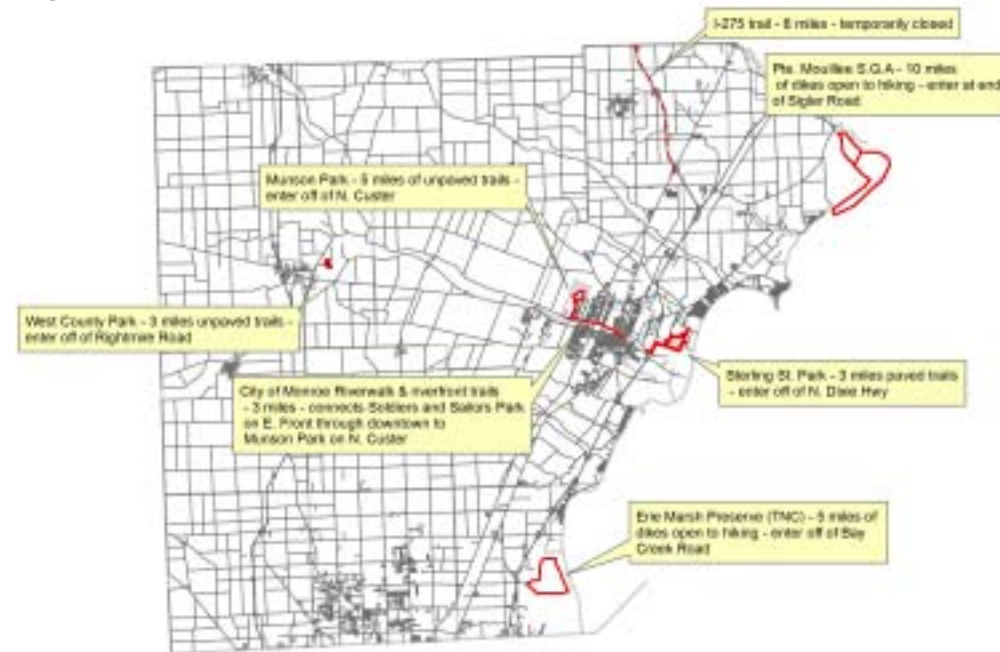
Luna Pier's location next to I-75 provides convenient regional access, but also diminishes environment quality due to noise. With the exception of a minimal amount of vegetation, there are few barriers to reduce noise levels in surrounding residential areas. Substantial measures to diminish noise levels would involve the construction of walls or other noise barriers. Typically, such measures occur in conjunction with future improvement to highways. Local measures to reduce noise could include planting vegetation which can provide some relief. According to the Federal Highway Administration, loudness can be cut in half when vegetated areas are 200 feet in depth and there is a psychological benefit from being visually separated from the traffic.

The future construction of a non-motorized trail along I-75 provides an opportunity to include vegetation in the design to help enhance the experience of travel along this trail and provide City-wide benefits as well.

Ultimately, Non-motorized Trails in Luna Pier can connect with a larger regional network of trails.



Potential Alignment of Non-motorized Trail Along I-75. View Looks South From Gaynier Rd.



Source: Monroe County Planning Department.

## Water and Sewer

Luna Pier owns and operates its own wastewater treatment facility and is now in the process of making upgrades to treatment processes to meet discharge limitations. The Luna Pier Wastewater Treatment Plant is permitted to discharge treated sanitary wastewater into LaPointe Drain. The city of Luna Pier has no known combined sewer or sanitary sewer overflows. In the future, the possible redevelopment of land south of LaPointe Drain may necessitate both an extension of Harold Drive and an extension of sewer service to this area to potentially accommodate future development discussed previously in the context of extending Harold Drive southward.





## Master Street Plan

According to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, if a Master Plan includes a Master Street Plan, the means for implementing the master street plan in cooperation with the county road commission and the state transportation department shall be specified in the master street plan in a manner consistent with the respective powers and duties of and any written agreements between these entities and the municipality. Further, when a municipality has adopted a Master Plan or Master Street Plan, the planning commission of that municipality shall review and make recommendations on plats before action thereon by the legislative body under the Land Division Act, 1967 PA 288.

A Master Street Plan is included in this Master Plan to illustrate the development of the local road system in concert with land use changes and other public infrastructure. The creation of a Master Street Plan for the City of Luna Pier requires some type of road classification system based on the physical characteristics and purpose of the road. In Monroe County, the National Functional Classification is used for planning purposes and MDOT determines the classification of roads in Monroe County. In Luna Pier, Luna Pier Road and Harold Drive (North of Luna Pier Road) is shown as being a non-trunkline, federal-aid eligible roadway. Further, MDOT classifies this road connector and being a "Rural Major or Urban Collector." Erie Road, east of I-75 is also classified as a "Rural Major or Urban Collector." Collector streets in the context of small urban centers (under 5,000 people) typically accommodates some through traffic volumes and functions as the means of access to adjoining land uses.

The principal issue with regard to Luna Pier's Master Street Plan is the identification of the possible need to extend Harold Drive south across LaPointe Drain at some point in the future. This improvement is highly dependent on redevelopment scenarios for the land near Consumers Power. The land inside the City that is east of I-75 and South of LaPointe Drain is accessible only via Erie Road. As also discussed in Chapter 6 (page 1), this raises concern in terms of potentially more traffic congestion, road repairs, emergency vehicle response times and generally less direct routes. As a result, Luna Pier's Master Street Plan includes the identification of extending Harold Drive Southward as a possible project. It is important that any future development in this area be accomplished in a manner that does not preclude a future road right-of-way alignment.

## Community Entrance Enhancement

It is also noted that the City of Luna Pier will engage in discussions with MDOT concerning aesthetic improvements to the I-75 interchange. Tree removal, landscaping and grading are needed to improve this important community entrance.

## Utilization of Golf Carts

Apart from the development of the street systems and a non-motorized trail system in the City, there is reason to further consider the use of golf carts in Luna Pier as a means to travel inside the City. The benefits of such of an approach are grounded in environmental, social and even economic grounds. Use of golf carts is permitted or under consideration in many communities across the United States and in neighboring communities such as Gibraltar, Michigan. Golf carts would not only provide an alternative energy efficient means of transportation for residents – but would also help to reinforce the notion of Luna Pier as a recreational community. Golf carts also require less physical parking space. Typically, golf carts would not be permitted along the non-motorized trail system, and would be considered vehicles using the same streets as gasoline powered vehicles. Implementation steps related to this topic should include convening a local task force of community leaders, public safety officials to study this issue.

