

FAQ - How to Ride Metroparks Express

What exactly is Metropark Express?
Metropark Express is a pilot transit program in partnership with SMART. Visitors can take a SMART Flex on-demand service from the Gratiot & 15 Mile bus stop to popular destinations within Lake St. Clair Metropark, including the:

-Plaza (Beach, pool, splash pad, adventure golf, food bar, park office, playground)
-Boat Launch
-Nature Center (Nature Trails)
-Daysail

How do I book a ride to Lake St. Clair Metropark?
The easiest way to book a ride, is by downloading the SMART Flex app on a smart device.

1. Search 'SMART Flex' in the App Store or Google Play Store and tap the download icon.
2. Open the app and enter your personal and payment information. Once you set up the app you won't have to do this again.
3. To travel to Lake St. Clair Metropark on Metropark Express, ride any of these SMART routes - 610 Kercheval/Harper, 560 Gratiot Local or FAST Gratiot 563 to the SMART Gratiot & 15 Mile stop. Select the Gratiot & 15 Mile as your location and press 'Confirm My Pickup Point.' Hit the +sign if you want to bring extra passengers along!
4. For your drop off point, search 'Lake St. Clair Metropark' under 'My Destinations' and choose which location you'd like to travel to within the park and press 'Confirm My Dropoff Point.' Your driver will drop you off at that location.
5. Choose the trip option that's best for you, then tap 'Book This Ride.'
6. Follow the dotted line in the app to get to your exact pickup location, which may be a short walk.
7. The app will display your driver's name, vehicle model, and license plate info to help you locate your ride.

I don't have a smart phone; can I still use this service?
Yes, you can book a ride on SMART Flex by calling (734) 212-8429 and talk with a representative. You will still need to pay via credit card or debit card or use a valid bus pass. Drivers do not carry cash or allow cash payments.

What is the cost to book a ride to Lake St. Clair Metropark?

Rides cost $2 per person, from 15 Mile Road and Gratiot Avenue origin point to Lake St. Clair Metropark or vice versa. Your ride to the park is **FREE** if you are transferring from a SMART fixed bus route. All SMART and Dart passes (except for SMART value passes) are accepted as payment. Visit https://www.smartbus.org/Fares for information on fares, passes and reduced fare eligibility.

Can I use my bus pass on Metroparks Express powered by SMART?
Yes, a valid SMART or Dart bus pass or Dart mobile pass are accepted as payment.

How long do I have to wait to get a ride?
Wait times for SMART Flex are approximately 15 – 20 minutes from the time the ride is booked. The app will count down the minutes to your vehicles arrival and send you a notification when the vehicle is two minutes away and when it arrives.

When can I book a ride on Metroparks Express to go to the park?
You can book these rides anytime between 8am and 8pm Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

Does the service run year-round?
Metroparks Express is a pilot program that will run from September 3rd, 2021 through September 5th, 2022.

Can I pay for my ride with cash?
No, the drivers do not carry cash or accept any payments. The trip must be paid for at the time of booking, either in the app, or via phone, with a credit card, debit card, or a valid bus pass. Visit https://www.smartbus.org/Fares for information on fares, passes and reduced fare eligibility.

Can I bring my bike with me?

SMART is working to install bike racks on Flex vehicles. While they are not available at this time, they will be available in the future so that you may bring it with you to use in the park.

Can I bring my cooler and beach bag or other equipment for the day?

Yes, you are welcome to bring everything you need to enjoy the park. Keeping in mind, however, that you must be able to carry and load/unload your personal belongings yourself (drivers will not). While there are no restrictions on the kinds of things you can bring, your items have to fit on your lap or under the seat while riding SMART fixed routes and safely within the available areas of the Flex vehicle. SMART drivers have to prioritize space for passengers over cargo space.

Do I have to wear a mask on Metropark Express?

Yes. As a reminder, Federal Law currently requires passengers to wear a mask while riding any SMART service, including Flex and Metropark Express – powered by SMART.

Does this get me in the park faster?

It just might! It all depends on traffic conditions entering the park; on some busier days and during special events, cars may have had to wait in line ahead of the tollbooth. Tollbooth staff will prioritize Metroparks Express (transit) vehicles over personal cars to get people swiftly into the park. Once you are past the tollbooth, your driver will drop you off at the curb of your selected park destination.

Can I be dropped off in different areas of the park?

Yes! You can choose one of four locations (Plaza, Boat Launch, Nature Center, Daysail) within the park when booking your trip. The driver will drop off and pick you up at these designated stops.

Can I bring alcohol on the Metropark Express service?

Yes. Metroparks Express – powered by SMART is a public transit service, just like when you take transit to and from the grocery store any alcohol you bring onboard with you must be unopened and stored away.

Follow park rules, located at https://www.metroparks.com/about-us/rules-and-regulations/

How many people fit into a Metropark Express Flex vehicle?

There is a total of 5 passenger seats in the Flex vehicle. If a reservation is made for a party larger than 5, SMART will deploy additional vehicles to take visitors to the park.

Is the service accessible for people with disabilities?

All SMART vehicles are wheelchair accessible. When booking a ride on the Metroparks Express, be sure to toggle on the “Wheelchair Accessible” option in the “Special Settings” section in your account.

If you don’t have a smartphone and require assistance setting up an account, you can call (734) 212-8429 and talk with a representative and let them know you need a wheelchair accessible vehicle.