

Funding



Funding to restore the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse was made possible with a \$370,000 grant from the Save America's Treasures program administered by the National Park Service. The City of Port Huron provided the local match of 370,000 to insure the preservation of a community icon.

Funding to restore two roofs at the Fort Gratiot Light Station was made possible with a \$40,000 grant from the Michigan Lighthouse Assistance Program administered by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. The grant was made possible through the sale of the Michigan lighthouse license plates. The non-profit group, The Friends of the Fort Gratiot Light provided the local match of \$20,000.



The Friends of the Fort Gratiot Light (FFGL) is a 501 © (3) non-profit, whose Mission is to restore, preserve and maintain the historic Fort Gratiot Light Station for education and the enjoyment of the public. To learn more about the FFGL and how you can volunteer or donate to support their Mission, please visit their website at www.fortgratiotlight.org.

Partnership



St. Clair County Parks and Recreation is working with the Port Huron Museums to offer programming and tours at the historic Light Station.

About Fort Gratiot Light Station.....

Come and see the oldest lighthouse in Michigan! The Fort Gratiot Light Station is located in the City of Port Huron, on the shores of Lake Huron near the headwaters of the St. Clair River. The five-acre park offers breathtaking views of Lake Huron and the Blue Water Bridges. For more information about St. Clair County Parks call 810/989-6960.



Park Rules

- The Fort Gratiot Light Station grounds are open daily from 7 am - 10 pm.
- Walkways in the park are for non-motorized use only.
- The beach at the Fort Gratiot Light Station has dangerous currents. Beach users are encouraged to swim at the adjacent Lighthouse Park. Swim at your own risk.
- Pets must be kept on a leash. Owners must clean up after their pets.
- Admission to the grounds is free. Fees are charged for tours, programs & special events. For scheduled museum hours call (810) 982-0891.

County Parks Information

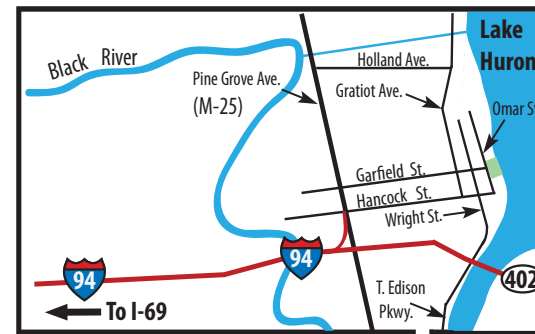
St. Clair County is home to seven county parks: Blue Water River Walk County Park, Columbus County Park, Fort Gratiot County Park, Fort Gratiot Light Station, Goodells County Park, Marine City Dredge Cut, and Woodsong County Park. St. Clair County also operates the Wadhams to Avoca Trail and works with local units of government to develop the Bridge to Bay Trail.



St. Clair County Parks & Recreation Commission

200 Grand River Avenue, Suite 107
Port Huron, MI 48060 • 810/989-6960

www.stclaircountyparks.org
www.fortgratiotlightstation.org



Fort Gratiot Light Station is a St. Clair County Park
2802 Omar Street, Port Huron, MI 48060
For a large print brochure, call 810/989-6960.

Fort Gratiot Light Station

A St. Clair County Park
St. Clair County, Michigan



See the Oldest Lighthouse in Michigan at
The Fort Gratiot Light Station!
www.fortgratiotlightstation.org

History of the Station.....

As the shipping needs on the Great Lakes increased in the 1820's, so did the need for a navigational aid at the mouth of the St. Clair River. In August of 1825, the first lighthouse in Michigan was built at Port Huron. The original tower was located near the base of the present-day south span of the Bluewater Bridge. The original tower did not last long, as poor construction and September storms would lead to its demise when it crumbled in November of 1828.

In early 1829, Congress appropriated funds to build the second Fort Gratiot lighthouse. In April of that year, Lucius Lyon was awarded the contract for construction of the new lighthouse. This time, the tower was built further north so it could be clearly seen by ships approaching the mouth of the St. Clair River from Lake Huron.

Plans called for a 65-foot high tower of stone or brick, 25 feet wide and five feet thick at the base tapering to 12 feet wide and two feet thick at the top, with an octagonal iron lantern room. The plans also called for the construction of a brick or stone keeper's dwelling. The contracted price was \$4445, with an extra \$55 budgeted for adding the Argon lamp from the old tower in the new tower.

In the 1850s the Lighthouse Board began a series of reforms that would affect the Fort Gratiot Light. The first change was the addition of a Fresnel lens.

Fort Gratiot's first Fresnel lens was a fourth order lens ordered directly from France. It arrived in January of 1857. As the traffic on the Great Lakes increased in the 1850s and 60s, so did the need for improved navigational aids. New towers around the Great Lakes were being built at an average height of 80 to 100 feet tall to improve visibility. In 1862, the tower was raised to 82 feet, to accommodate the Fresnel lens' superior range. The addition line can still be seen today.

From the 1860s to the 1930s the property expanded with the addition of the Keepers Duplex (1874), the Fog Signal Building (1900), the Single Keeper's Dwelling (1932), the Coast Guard Station (1932) and the Equipment Building (1938).

When most of the Great Lakes lights were automated in the 1930s, the need for light keepers faded into the sunset. The Coast Guard continued to maintain the Fort Gratiot Light Station from the 1930s until 2004, when they moved into a new station built next door. The light in the tower is still maintained by the Coast Guard today.



About the Park.....

The five-acre retired Coast Guard Station property was officially transferred to St. Clair County Parks from the United States Coast Guard in 2010. The Fort Gratiot Light Station is located next to the new Coast Guard Station in Port Huron and includes the Fort Gratiot Lighthouse (1829), which is the oldest lighthouse in Michigan.

The Light Station also includes the Light Keeper's Duplex (1874), Fog Signal Building (1900), Single Keeper's Dwelling (1932), former Coast Guard Station (1932), Equipment Building (1939), and a three bay garage (1990's).

The Port Huron Museum is leading tours and conducting programs at the Light Station as part of a partnership with County Parks. For more information about tours or programs at the Fort Gratiot Light Station, visit www.phmuseum.org or call 810/ 982-0891.

All improvements to the site are being completed with the aid of various grants and donations. For more information about the park, visit www.fortgratiotlightstation.org or call 810/989-6960.

