

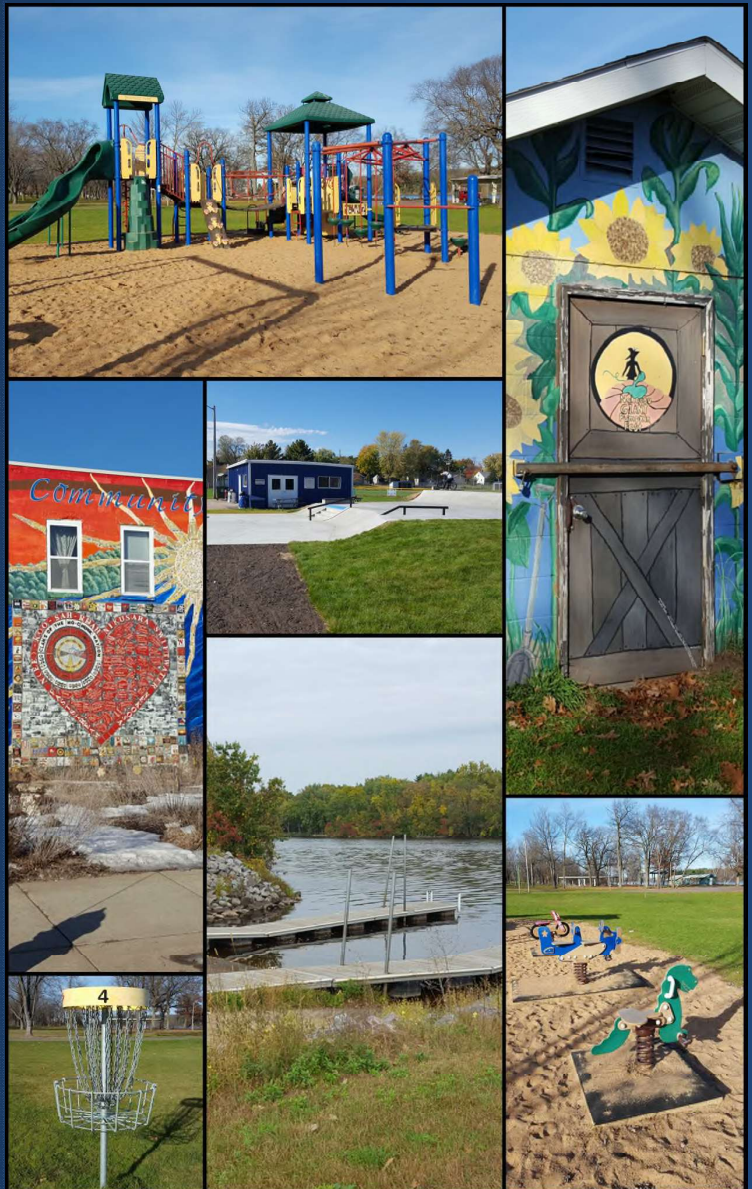
COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

City of Nekoosa
Wood County, Wisconsin

2018

Prepared by:
Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee

With Assistance of the:
Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning



City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

~Acknowledgements~

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*Pictures in this plan were taken in the fall of 2016 and spring of 2017.

The Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning would like to thank all who participated in the planning process.



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Table of Contents

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>I</i>
<i>Table of Contents</i>	<i>II</i>
<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>III</i>
<i>List of Tables.....</i>	<i>IV</i>
<i>List of Appendices.....</i>	<i>IV</i>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Purpose.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Statutory Basis</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Planning Process</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Plan Organization.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Past Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Improvements & Accomplishments</i>	<i>4</i>
II. GOALS & OBJECTIVES	5
<i>Vision.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Goals & Objectives</i>	<i>6</i>
III. BACKGROUND.....	11
<i>Location.....</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>History</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>City of Nekoosa Today.....</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Demographic Information & Social Characteristics</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Physical Landscape Characteristics.....</i>	<i>16</i>
IV. INVENTORY OF EXISTING OUTDOOR RECREATION SYSTEM & SERVICES	18
<i>Parks.....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Open Space.....</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>Quasi-Public Outdoor Recreation Areas.....</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Trails.....</i>	<i>39</i>

<i>Wisconsin River</i>	40
<i>Recreation Programs & Services</i>	40
<i>Neighboring Outdoor Recreation Opportunities</i>	41
V. OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT	42
<i>Public Participation</i>	43
<i>Community Surveys</i>	44
<i>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis (SWOT)</i>	45
<i>Recreation Standards</i>	46
<i>Referenced Plans</i>	49
<i>Benefits of Outdoor Recreation</i>	52
<i>Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2011-2016)</i> ...	52
VI. ACTION & IMPLEMENTATION	54
<i>Action Program</i>	55
<i>Park Recommendations & Capital Improvements</i>	55
<i>Open Space Recommendations & Capital Improvements</i>	58
<i>Quasi-Public Area Recommendations & Capital Improvements</i>	59
<i>Trail Recommendations</i>	61
<i>Corridors & Alignments</i>	62
<i>General Recommendations</i>	64
<i>Accessibility</i>	64
<i>Funding Resources</i>	65
<i>Partnerships, Collaborations & Volunteers</i>	65
<i>Operation & Maintenance</i>	66
VII. APPENDICES	67

List of Figures

(1) Planning Process Timeline	3
(2) Location Map	12

(3) Environmental Constraints	17
(4) Nekoosa Park & Recreation Areas	19
(5) Nekoosa Recreation Map	20
(6) Trail/Route Corridors & Alignments	63

List of Tables

(1) Population Data	14
(2) Population Profile	14
(3) Housing & Household Data.....	15
(4) Educational Attainment Data.....	15
(5) Median Household Income.....	15
(6) Individuals Below Poverty Level	16
(7) Nekoosa Recreation Standards/Guidelines	46

List of Appendices

APPENDIX A. City of Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation Map
APPENDIX B. City of Nekoosa Parks & Outdoor Recreation Survey
APPENDIX C. Community Survey Summary
APPENDIX D. Kautzer Recreational Plaza/Splash Pad Concept Plans
APPENDIX E. Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs Administered by the WDNR
APPENDIX F. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis
APPENDIX G. City of Nekoosa Common Council Adoption Resolution

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I. Introduction

Recreation is an important part of our lives. Quality outdoor recreation opportunities support community and individual well-being, in addition to many other benefits. The City of Nekoosa is experiencing an increase in outdoor recreation demands. Therefore, on March 8, 2016 the Nekoosa Common Council approved moving forward with the development of a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP). The Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee was formed. The committee was tasked with preparing a plan that would establish goals, objectives and recommendations that meet current and future outdoor recreation needs of the community. This plan is the first of its kind for Nekoosa.



Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing

Purpose

Planning stems from the core responsibility of the City of Nekoosa to protect and promote the health, safety, and welfare of its residents. Proper planning is an important step in providing a quality outdoor recreation system. Moreover, proper planning helps communities organize time, financial resources, and efforts, to work towards common goals. This plan is intended to serve as a guide for decision making, and provides direction to meet the outdoor recreation needs and desires of Nekoosa residents. Additionally, the plan provides:

- Direction to guide short and long term community decisions.
- A detailed assessment of the existing outdoor recreation system and services.
- A foundation for coordinating the further enhancement and integration of parks, trails, open space, and other outdoor recreation facilities.
- A means to create additional economic, social and environmental benefits.
- The ability to participate in outdoor recreation grant programs administered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and other related funding programs. (Appendix E.)

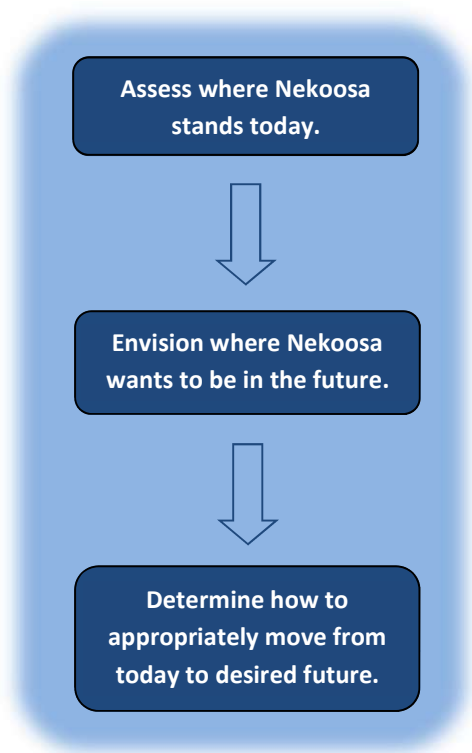
Statutory Basis

This plan was prepared pursuant to § 23.30 of the Wisconsin Statutes:

“The purpose of this section is to promote, encourage, coordinate and implement a comprehensive long-range plan to acquire, maintain and develop for public use those areas of the state best adapted to the development of a comprehensive system of state and local outdoor recreation facilities and services...”

Planning Process

The planning process developed for this plan takes a common sense approach for determining how to meet the outdoor recreation needs of the community. Basically, the following questions were considered: Where does Nekoosa stand today? Where does Nekoosa want to be in the future? How does Nekoosa move from



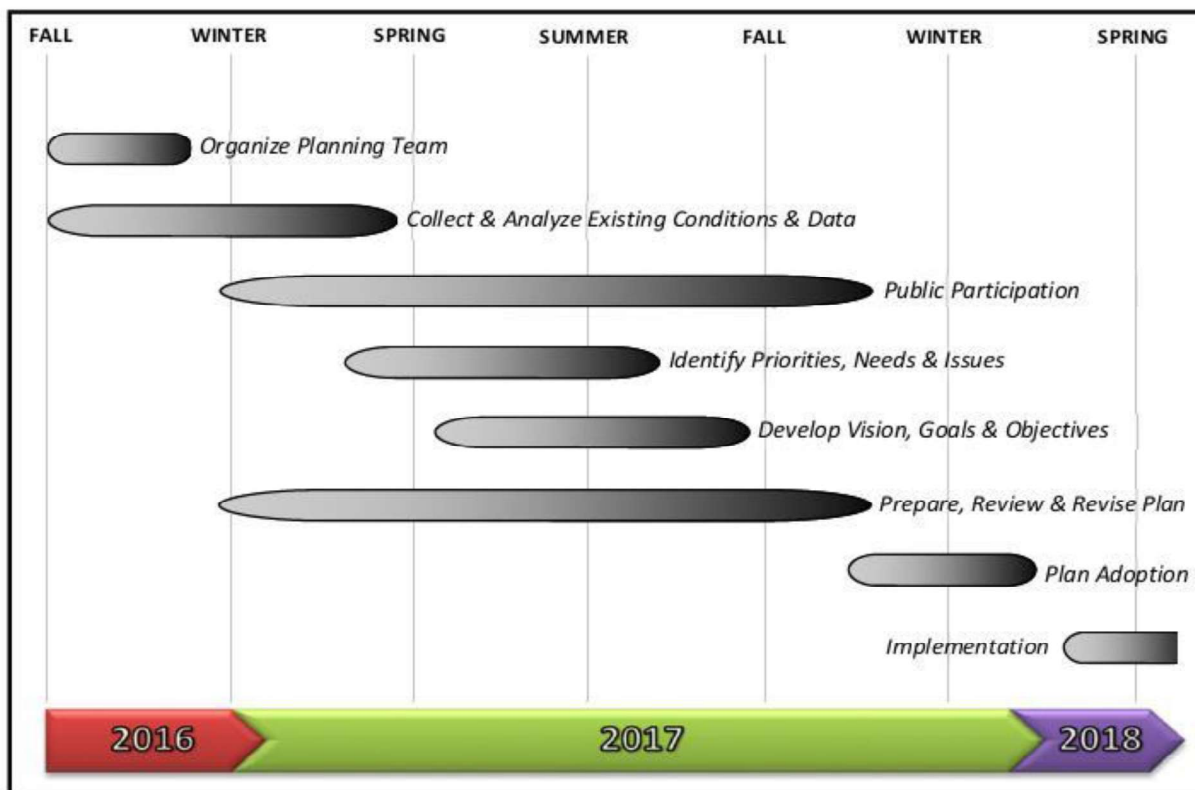
today to that desired future? The answers to these questions developed into a planning process consisting of several layers including: existing conditions analysis; needs assessment; and action/implementation program. Each of these layers builds on the findings and conclusions from the previous to identify unique community goals and objectives. A timeline of the planning process is presented in (Figure 1) below.

Public participation is one of the most important aspects of the planning process. The CORP Planning Committee wanted to ensure the plan truly represents the needs and desires of Nekoosa residents. Therefore, a public participation strategy was developed to ensure public input is responded to and incorporated into the plan. The public participation strategy is presented in (Section V.) of this plan.

The planning process is not finished with the completion or adoption of this plan. The Nekoosa Property, Recreation, and Human Affairs Committee will be responsible for providing direction and guidance to the Nekoosa Common Council on outdoor recreation community decisions. This will ensure that implementation of the plan is consistent with the CORP's goals, objectives, and recommendations.

This plan shall also be submitted to WDNR for approval.

Figure 1: Planning Process Timeline



Plan Organization

- **Section I. Introduction:** Provides an overview of the purpose, planning process, and timeframe for the development of the plan.
- **Section II. Goals and Objectives:** Presents the plan's vision along with uniquely defined outdoor recreation goals and objectives
- **Section III. Background:** Provides a glimpse into Nekoosa's history and details a perspective of the present day community.
- **Section IV. Inventory of Existing Outdoor Recreation System and Services:** Provides an overview of the present-day outdoor recreation system focusing specifically on parks, trails, open space, and quasi-public recreation areas.
- **Section V. Needs Assessment:** Summarizes gaps between existing and desired recreation system by assessing public input and outdoor recreation standards.
- **Section VI. Action and Implementation:** Presents an action program and implementation strategy to guide community decision making over the next several years. Additionally, this section includes recommendations and a potential Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for outdoor recreation facilities and areas.
- **Section VII. Appendices:** Contains supplementary reference material that is helpful in providing a more comprehensive understanding of information presented in the plan.

Past Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans

This is the first CORP ever developed by the City of Nekoosa. This plan should be updated and reassessed every (5) five years to ensure its effectiveness. In fact, changing trends and attitudes in outdoor recreation may require updates sooner.

Should the need arise for unforeseen projects to be added to this document within the 5-year time frame, an amendment to the plan will be needed. Potential amendments should be brought to the attention of the Nekoosa Common Council and Property, Recreation and Human Affairs Committee. Staff will review the proposal for conflicts or duplication of services and recommend to the committee the inclusion, alteration, or rejection of the project. If accepted, the plan will be updated, and notice of the update will be sent to the Department of Natural Resources for inclusion in their copy.

Improvements & Accomplishments

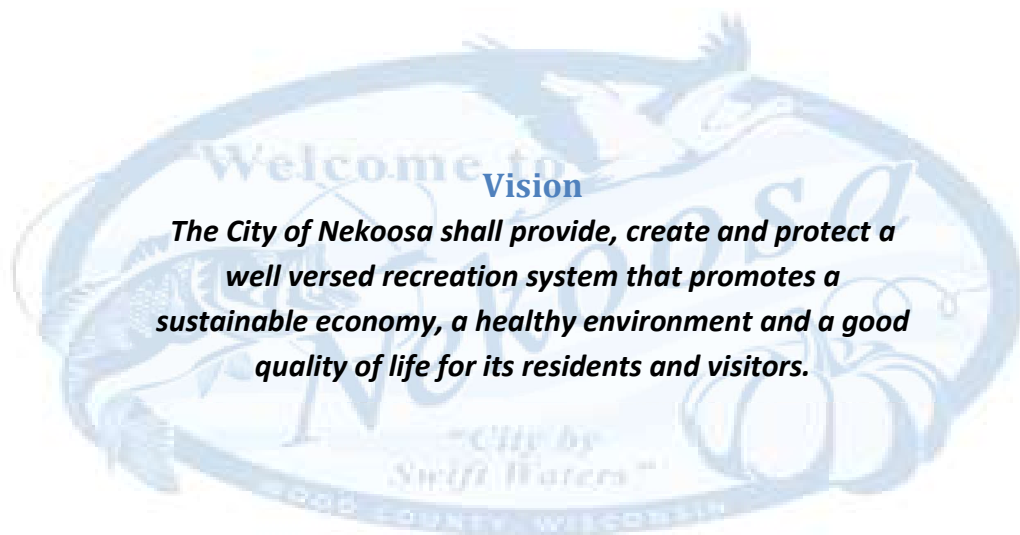
In the future, this section will detail outdoor recreation improvements and accomplishments since the last time the plan was updated. This provides a clearer understanding of the extent of progress made in the implementation of the plan.



II. Goals & Objectives

This plan was developed to motivate and inspire City of Nekoosa residents and leaders. A vision was developed for this plan that is ambitious and exciting, but is also realistic and achievable. The goals and objectives identified in this section were defined by the community, and provide a basis for Nekoosa to make outdoor recreation decisions over the next several years.





Vision

The City of Nekoosa shall provide, create and protect a well versed recreation system that promotes a sustainable economy, a healthy environment and a good quality of life for its residents and visitors.

Goals & Objectives

The formulation of goals and objectives provide the foundation on which the planning process is built. They are detailed descriptions of how the community would like to be in the future. Goals specifically identify the ideals of the community and can be achieved through the actions of government leaders, private organizations, and individual citizens. The objectives break down the goal into specific tasks. These tasks in turn serve as a road map to provide quality outdoor recreation opportunities in Nekoosa and set priorities to improve these opportunities in the future.

Stakeholders, government leaders, private organizations, local businesses, and individual citizens must work together to accomplish these objectives. Collaboration is the key to success. This is the best way to accomplish the plan's goals and bring the vision to fruition. When issues or opportunities arise, they can be responded to by referencing these goals and objectives.

The CORP Planning Committee developed the following goals and objectives through: community input; analysis of the existing recreation system inventory (Section IV.); findings from the needs assessment (Section V.); and recommendations identified in the action/implementation program (Section VI.)

A **Vision** summarizes the ideal state of an organization – or project or resource.

Goals are general statements of desired outcomes of the community.

Objectives break down a goal into specific tasks – subset of goals.

GOAL: Provide and maintain a high quality outdoor recreation system that is available to ALL City of Nekoosa residents and visitors.

OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure outdoor recreation facilities serve people of all ages and physical abilities.
- Ensure future improvements are accessible to the greatest extent possible per the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Ensure outdoor recreation opportunities are reflective of the needs and desires identified in the outdoor recreation community survey.
- Utilize the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identified in the Nekoosa CORP for future park, trail, open space, and other recreation area improvements.
- Reference the recreation standards identified in the Nekoosa CORP when planning new outdoor recreation facilities.
- Ensure improvements to the recreation system are within the maintenance and financial capabilities of the city.

GOAL: Promote an outdoor recreation system that showcases the City of Nekoosa's location along the Wisconsin River.

OBJECTIVES:

- Improve community awareness of the Blueway Water Trail and other water recreation activities the river provides.
- Promote and properly maintain boat launches.
- Utilize the river corridor for multi-use trail development.
- Enhance and maintain existing access to the river.
- Continually pursue community events, businesses, and housing development that supports river activity.
- Promote the river as a community asset and amenity.

GOAL: Improve connectivity of parks, trails and other recreation areas in the City of Nekoosa.

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage multi-use trail, pathway, and route linkages to adjacent communities (Town of Saratoga, Town of Port Edwards, and Village of Port Edwards).

- Pursue development of trails, pathways, and routes along the corridors and alignments identified in the Nekoosa CORP.
- Ensure the downtown area, schools, parks, and other community amenities are well serviced by sidewalks, trails and suggested routes.
- Cooperatively work with the Nekoosa Public Works Department, Wood County Highway Department, and Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT) on future road improvements/projects.
- Evaluate the need for wayfinding signage.
- Evaluate the feasibility of creating ATV/UTV routes in the city.

GOAL: **Develop and coordinate a City of Nekoosa Recreation Program.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Research recreational services and programs that can be offered to the community.
- Provide the community a recreation program in an efficient and cost effective manner.
- Cooperatively work with the YMCA, Nekoosa School District, Charles and JoAnn Lester Library, and other partners.
- Research the feasibility of developing an internship to assist in the implementation of a city recreation program.

GOAL: **Promote and expand upon the “small town” sense of the City of Nekoosa.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Continue to support events and activities at Nekoosa parks, such as Dinner by the River, GIANT Pumpkin Festival, and Walleye Days.
- Pursue a pedestrian friendly/walkable community.
- Ensure the outdoor recreation system reflects the desires of the community.
- Provide safe, reliable and unique outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Encourage citizen involvement and participation.
- Continue to foster the “close-knitness” character of the community, which many residents speak in admiration of.

GOAL: **Preserve, protect and enhance the City of Nekoosa’s environmental and cultural resources.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Encourage the protection of environmentally sensitive lands, such as wetlands, floodplain and areas with steep slopes.
- Implement an urban forestry program.
- Evaluate and address shoreline erosion issues along the Wisconsin River
- Continue to properly maintain the historical markers, memorials and dedication objects in the community.
- Ensure that environmental and aesthetic qualities of the community are considered when planning for recreational improvements.

GOAL: **Encourage partnerships and cooperation between public, private, and non-profit entities to enhance the City of Nekoosa’s outdoor recreation system.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Collaborate with the Nekoosa School District to expand outdoor recreation opportunities, services, and programing in the community.
- Encourage municipal cooperation and communication to reduce redundancy and duplication of facilities and services.
- Provide comments/input on the Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation – Recreation Plan updates.
- Collaborate with Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation to improve and maintain recreational opportunities on lands within the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Nekoosa Hydroelectric Project Boundary.
- Identify organizations, such as the Nekoosa Lions Club, and local businesses that may be willing to donate time, talents and funding for outdoor recreation projects.

GOAL: **Improve visibility and awareness of the City of Nekoosa’s recreation and tourism opportunities.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Ensure the Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation Map is available on the City of Nekoosa’s official webpage.
- Ensure outdoor recreation information is available at the Charles and JoAnn Lester Library and City of Nekoosa Municipal Building.

- Provide outdoor recreation information/maps/handouts at the Downtown and in Riverside Park display kiosks.

GOAL: **Ensure outdoor recreation opportunities in the City of Nekoosa meet the needs of the community today as well as into the future.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Obtain formal adoption of the Nekoosa CORP by the City of Nekoosa Common Council.
- Update the Nekoosa CORP every 5 years to reflect the evolving recreational needs and desires of the community.
- Encourage members of the Nekoosa Property, Recreation and Human Affairs Committee to continually familiarize themselves with the Nekoosa CORP.
- Continually conduct public informational meetings when significant outdoor recreation system improvements are planned.
- Ensure future outdoor recreation facilities meet the needs and standards identified in the Nekoosa CORP “Needs Assessment”.
- Prepare a Master Plan for the Lynn Creek open space area to properly plan and develop a future community park.
- Encourage any future community development activities/projects consider dedication of lands for recreational uses.

GOAL: **Utilize ALL available funding mechanisms to actualize identified outdoor recreation system improvements in the plan.**

OBJECTIVES:

- Continually pursue federal, state, and local grant funding programs.
- Use the Nekoosa CORP as a guide to develop the yearly Public Works Department budget.
- Establish fundraising efforts/activities within the community.
- Encourage donations and use of volunteers to accomplish identified outdoor recreation improvements.
- Research the feasibility of developing additional revenue generating recreational facilities and activities/programs.



III. Background

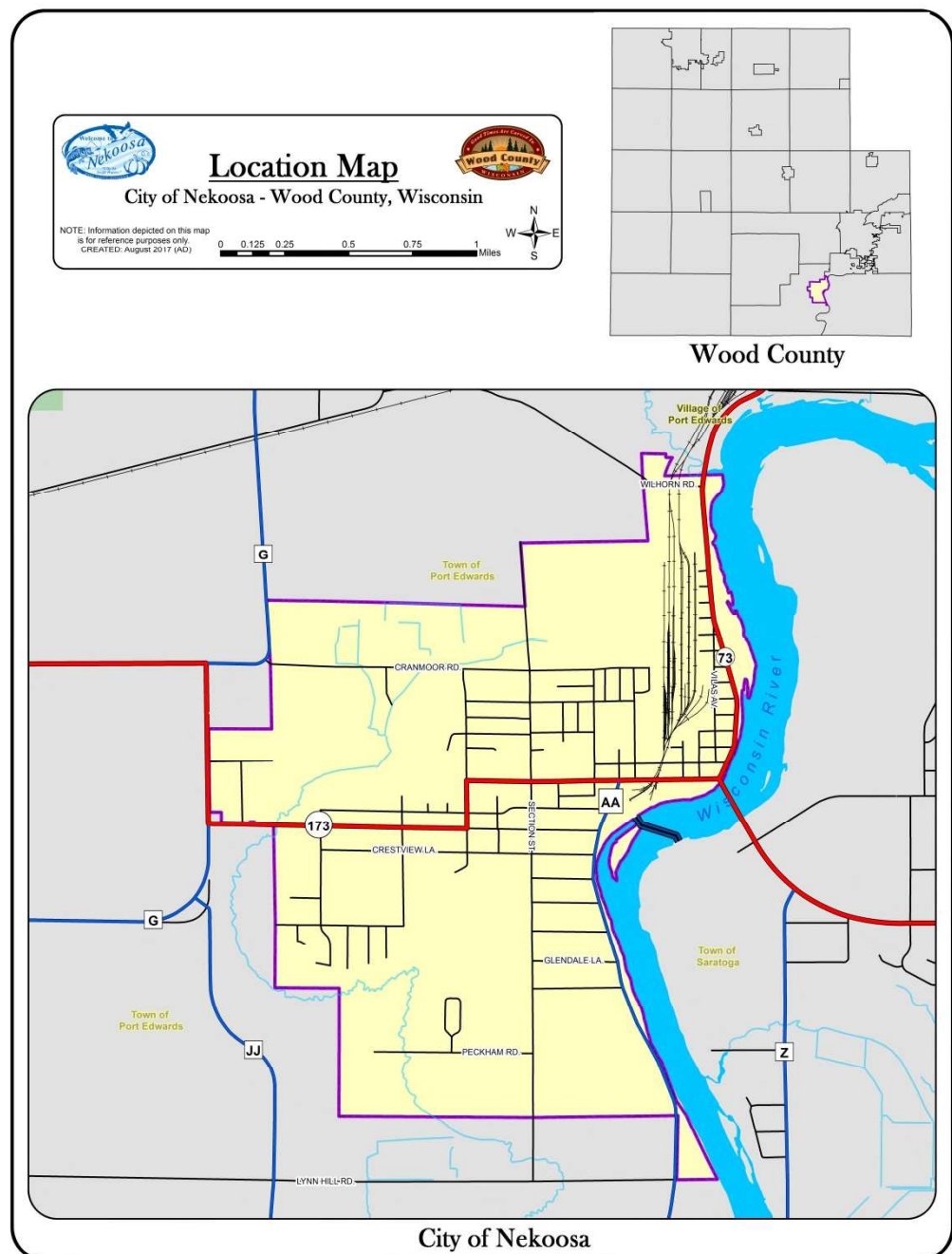
The first step in the development of the plan is to understand the important physical and social characteristics of the community and how it has been changing over time. Nekoosa is a city rich in history that has shaped and forged this small town community into what it is today. This section presents important community facts and insights into the past and present, to conceptualize what it might be like in the future.



Location

The City of Nekoosa is located in Central Wisconsin, in the southeast portion of Wood County. The city consists of 3.39 square miles (2169.6 acres), measuring approximately 2.8 miles from north to south and 2.1 miles from east to west. The city is situated on the west side of the beautiful and scenic Wisconsin River, with the Town of Saratoga located across the river. The Town of Port Edwards borders a majority of the city limits. A small portion of Nekoosa borders the Village of Port Edwards on the north side. Nekoosa is connected via State Highways 73 & 173, as well as County Roads AA and G. (Figure 2)

**Figure 2:
Location Map**



History

Nekoosa, meaning “swift water” began its real history with the settlement named Point Basse. This early settlement was located across the river from present day Nekoosa. In 1831 Daniel Whitney built the first sawmill and dammed the river, making Nekoosa the birthplace of Wood County. Early Nekoosa became a key town with the establishments of large pulp and paper mills. From 1850 to 1880, over 80 million feet of lumber went down the Wisconsin River. The mills played a very important part in the development of Nekoosa and the surrounding area. The original plat of present Nekoosa was surveyed and recorded in 1893. Nekoosa was incorporated into a village in 1907 and a city in 1926. The existing dam was built in 1893. A steel bridge over the Wisconsin River at Nekoosa was built in 1916. Prior to that time, two ferries served traffic across the river. More information on the history of Nekoosa can be found at www.cityofnekoosa.org.

City of Nekoosa Today

Today, Nekoosa is a small town community whose residents are very friendly, resilient and supportive. The city offers affordable housing, access to a full school system and a full level of municipal service. Local shopping, restaurants, and business services located in the city provide access to amenities residents’ desire. To this day, the paper industry continues to play an important role in the Nekoosa community. The area has been experiencing some difficulties due to local paper mills cutting back workforces and shutting down within the last 15 years. However recently, the industry has been experiencing growth. These mills have been reliable employers for many years. The downtown area (Market St.) functions as the primary commercial area. Nekoosa hosts a number of well-attended events throughout the year including; Walleye Days, GIANT Pumpkin Festival and Hometown Christmas. The city consists of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, institutional, and other land uses. New developments in Nekoosa have included; the Business Park developed in 2007, the Community Center completed in 2010, a skate park completed in 2016, and an 18 unit senior housing complex developed in 2018.



Nekoosa Bridge 1916

*Source: Charles & JoAnn Lester Library -
Nekoosa*



Nekoosa Mill 1910

*Source: Charles & JoAnn Lester Library -
Nekoosa*



*Nekoosa Community Center
completed in 2010*



Skate Park completed in 2016

Demographic Information & Social Characteristics

Population

(Table 1) shows population data for the City of Nekoosa. Population data was appropriated from the U.S. Census Bureau and the Wisconsin Department of Administration (WI-DOA). From 1940 to 2000, Nekoosa's population experienced constant growth. According to the 2010 Census, Nekoosa had a slight decrease in population. Based on population projections the city should experience relatively flat population growth looking towards the year 2025. Please note that the WI-DOA is an agency that prepares the official population projections for Wisconsin. Population projections are not a statement of what will happen, but an inference of what might happen. The agency uses several projection methods in an attempt to get the most accurate numbers. The next national census commences in 2020. 10-year census population data is more accurate than projections, and is the main source of information to see how communities change over time.

Population Age Profile

Shown in (Table 2) is Nekoosa's age profile according to the 2010 Census. It is important to understand a community's make-up to identify specific outdoor recreation needs. The city has a median age of 39.3. Similar to national and state trends, Nekoosa is also experiencing increases in the elderly population (age 65 and over). Shifts in the age distribution will be heavily concentrated in the older age categories for many years to come. This growth is due almost solely to the aging of the existing residents into these older age categories.

Table 1 NEKOOSA POPULATION DATA 1910-2016		
Year	Population	Percent Change (%)
1940	2,212	--
1950	2,352	6.3
1960	2,515	6.9
1970	2,409	-4.2
1980	2,519	4.6
1990	2,557	1.5
2000	2,590	1.3
2010	2,580	-0.4
*2016	*2,563	*-0.7
**2025	**2,550	** -0.5
Source: U.S. Census Bureau *(Estimate) Wisconsin Department of Administration **(Projection) Wisconsin Department of Administration		

Table 2 NEKOOSA POPULATION AGE PROFILE 2010		
	Number	Percent
Under 5 Years	156	6.0
5 to 9 Years	188	7.3
10 to 14 Years	201	7.8
15 to 19 Years	202	7.8
20 to 24 Years	141	5.5
25 to 29 Years	129	5.0
30 to 34 Years	141	5.5
35 to 39 Years	153	5.9
40 to 44 Years	192	7.4
45 to 49 Years	175	6.8
50 to 54 Years	171	6.6
55 to 59 Years	132	5.1
60 to 64 Years	131	5.1
65 to 69 Years	118	4.6
70 to 74 Years	116	4.5
75 to 79 Years	75	2.9
80 to 84 Years	74	2.9
Over 85 Years	85	3.3
Median Age	39.4	--
Male	1,233	47.8
Female	1,347	52.2
Source: U.S. Census Bureau		

Housing & Households

(Table 3) displays housing units and household data for Nekoosa. The number of housing units and households has increased from 2000 to 2010. However, the number of households with individuals under the age of 18 has decreased since 2000. Similar to national and state trends, Nekoosa is seeing slightly smaller average household sizes.

Table 3 NEKOOSA HOUSING & HOUSEHOLD DATA 2000-2010			
	2000	2010	Change
Total Housing Units	1,063	1,135	6.8%
Total Households	987	1,065	7.9%
Households with individuals under age 18	373	353	-5.4%
Average Household Size	2.5	2.4	-0.1
Source: U.S. Census Bureau			

Educational Attainment

Shown in (Table 4) are the 2016 estimated education levels for the city, county and state, according to the American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS is an ongoing nationwide survey that is distributed by the U.S. Census Bureau every year. Please note that only individuals 25 years of age and older are displayed in the table. The City of Nekoosa has a comparable percentage of high school graduates to both Wood County and the state of Wisconsin. However, Nekoosa lags behind the county and state with the percentage of individuals with bachelor's degrees.

Table 4 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT DATA (Age 25 and over) 2016 Estimate			
Educational Attainment Level	Nekoosa	Wood County	Wisconsin
High School Graduate	*92.1%	*92.3%	*91.4%
Bachelor's Degree	*12.4%	*20.4%	*28.4%
Source: *(Estimate) American Community Survey (ACS)			

Median Household Income

(Table 5) details estimated median household income data. This value refers to the income level earned by a given household where half of the households in Nekoosa earn more, and half earn less. For 2015, the city had an estimated median household income of \$40,476. This is below both, Wood County and State of Wisconsin.

Table 5 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2016 Estimate	
Civil Area	(\$)
Nekoosa	*\$40,476
Wood County	*\$49,926
Wisconsin	*\$54,610
Source: *(Estimate) American Community Survey (ACS)	

Poverty Level

(Table 6) shows the estimated percentage of individuals below the poverty line. At 20.1%, the City of Nekoosa has a high percentage of people living in poverty. Wood County and the State of Wisconsin both had far lower poverty levels. This is a concern for Nekoosa. The poverty rate measures the percentage of people whose income fell below their assigned poverty threshold. Thresholds are assigned to individuals or families based on family size and composition.

Table 6 PERCENTAGE OF INDIVIDUALS BELOW POVERTY LEVEL 2016 Estimate	
Civil Area	Percentage
Nekoosa	*20.1%
Wood County	*10.6%
Wisconsin	*12.7%
Source: *(Estimate) American Community Survey (ACS)	

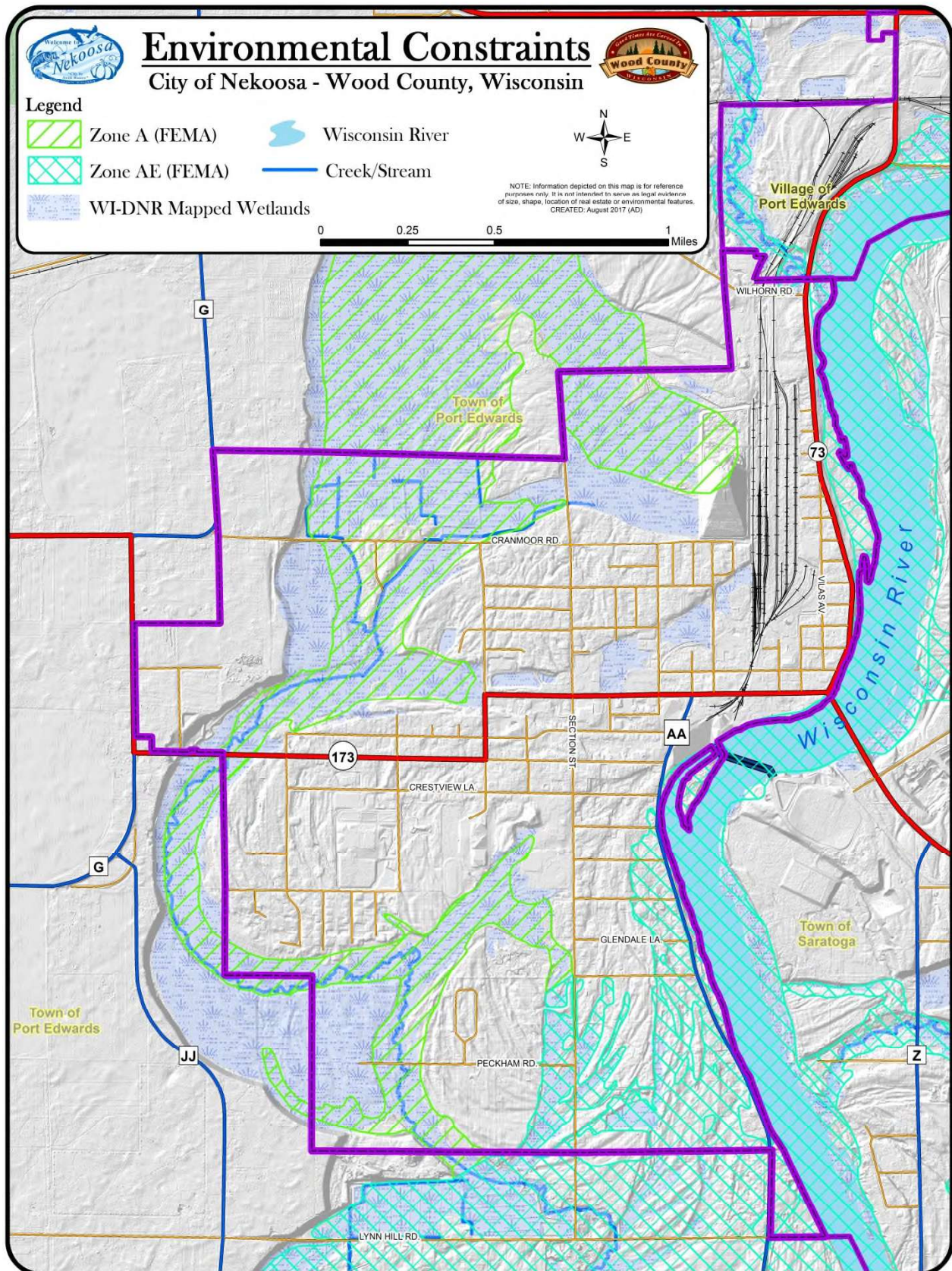
Physical Landscape Characteristics

An important step in the development of an outdoor recreation plan is to understand the natural environment in which the recreation is going to occur. An analysis of the physical landscape, climate, soils, hydrology, flora, and fauna is critical to properly understand unique environmental constraints and limitations.

The natural environment features for Nekoosa are detailed in Chapter 2: Natural Resources of the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan 2012. Please reference this plan for additional information on the physical landscape characteristics of Nekoosa.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mapped floodplain and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI-DNR) mapped wetlands are Nekoosa's top environmental constraints and limitations. (Figure 3) on the next page shows these areas. These environmentally sensitive areas may limit certain recreation uses and facilities.

Figure 3: Environmental Constraints



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IV. Inventory of Existing Outdoor Recreation System & Services

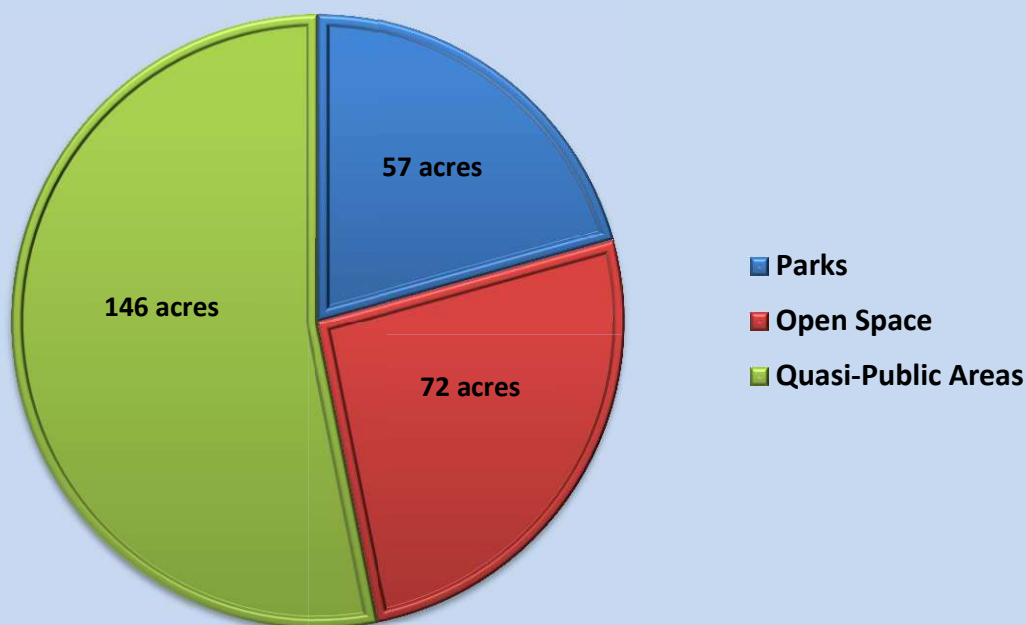
An important initial step in the evaluation of Nekoosa's outdoor recreation system is to inventory existing outdoor recreation opportunities, facilities and services. During the summer of 2017, an inventory of existing parks, trails, open space and recreational facilities was completed. The inventory was primarily completed by the Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning, in conjunction with the City of Nekoosa. In order to complete the review, input was obtained from the Nekoosa CORP Committee and Nekoosa residents.



Riverside Park

The City of Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation System consists of approximately 275 acres of land within the city limits. For this plan, the park and recreation areas in Nekoosa have been classified into the following: parks, open space, quasi-public areas, and trails. Of the total 275 acres, parks account for 57 acres, open space areas account for 72 acres, and quasi-public areas account for 146 acres. (Figure 4) provides a visual breakdown of the existing park and recreation areas in Nekoosa, with regards to acreage. Additionally, (Figure 5) is a map that illustrates the City of Nekoosa outdoor recreation system. This map also serves as a resource and reference document for Nekoosa residents and visitors. A larger version of the recreation map is located in the appendices (Appendix A.) of this plan for references purposes

Figure 4: Nekoosa Park and Recreation Areas

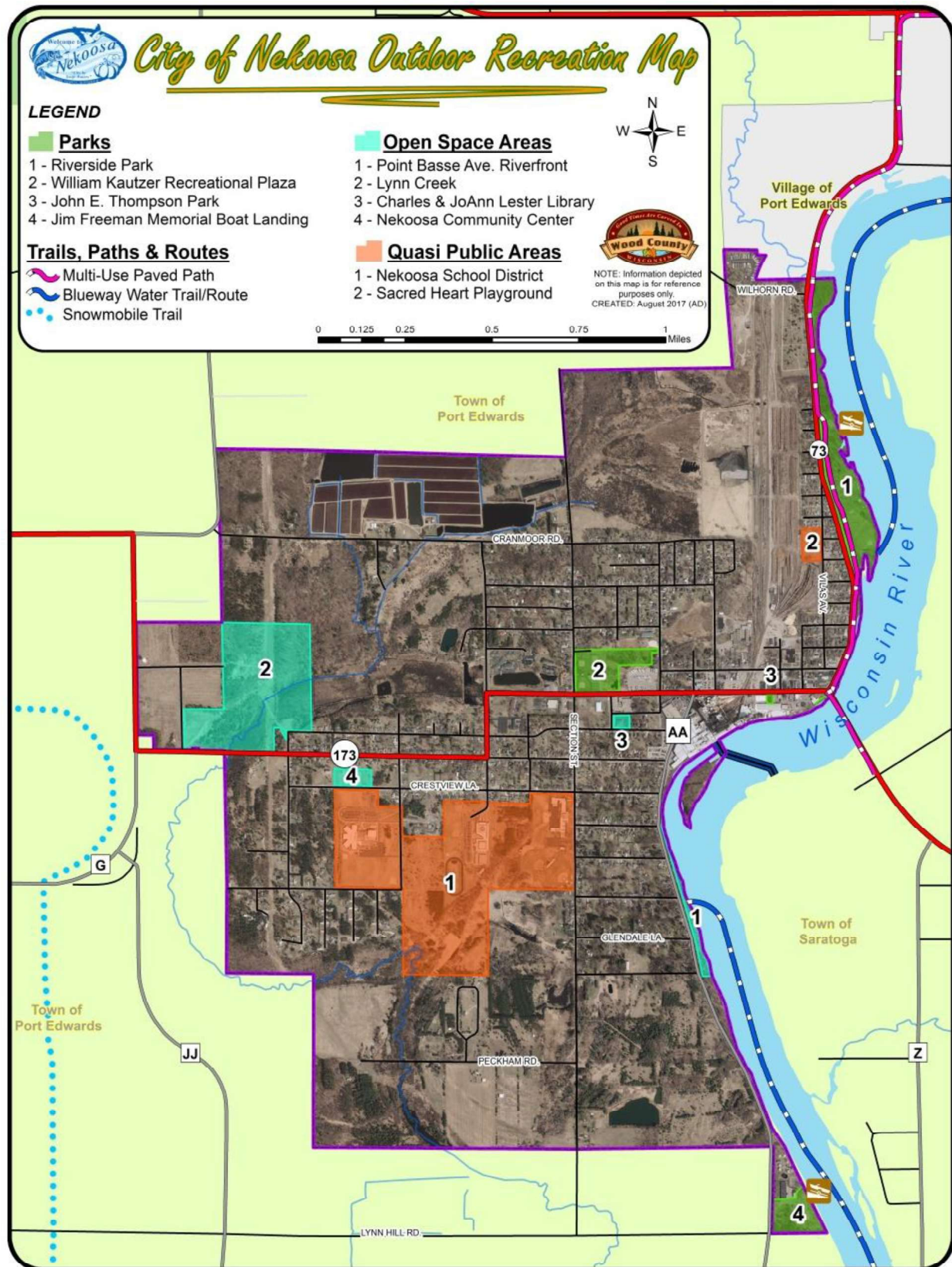


The following is a summary of the outdoor recreation facilities inventory and general analysis of outdoor recreation opportunities in Nekoosa. (Section VI) of this plan details specific recommendations and capital improvements for each feature identified in this section.

Parks

Parks are areas designed to serve the recreational needs of the community. These areas provide active or passive use recreation opportunities. Parks are classified into a variety of categories. (Section V.) of this plan provides further detail on the park classification system that was referenced in the existing outdoor recreation system inventory.

Figure 5: Nekoosa Recreation Map



Riverside Park



Size- ±35 acres

Location- North side of city. East side of Prospect Avenue/State Highway 73.

Ownership- Domtar (Leased by City of Nekoosa)

Inventory:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| ➤ Baseball/Softball Field | ➤ Play Structures & Equipment | ➤ Multi-Use Trail |
| ➤ Disc Golf | ➤ Off-Street Parking Lots | ➤ Shelters, Pavilions, Buildings & Gazebo |
| ➤ Boat Landing | ➤ Veterans Memorial | ➤ Drinking Water |
| ➤ Fishing Pier | ➤ Point Basse (Historical Marker) | ➤ Open Space |
| ➤ Canoe/Kayak Portage | ➤ Picnic Areas | ➤ Signage |
| ➤ Bathrooms | ➤ Grills, Tables & Benches | |

Summary- Riverside Park is an active/passive mixed use community park. The park is an attractive and spacious area that features over 2,500 feet of shoreline along the Wisconsin River. Riverside Park is the largest outdoor recreation area in Nekoosa. Some of the highlights of the park include: 1.2 miles of multi-use paved trail, artwork on park buildings, disc golf course, large play equipment area with safety surface and many scenic views. This location is home to the Nekoosa GIANT Pumpkin Festival, Nekoosa Area Hometown Christmas and other community events attracting visitors year round.

Riverside Park

Legend



Corporate Limits



Park Boundary



Parcels



Paved Trail



Portage

Roads



State Highway



City Street

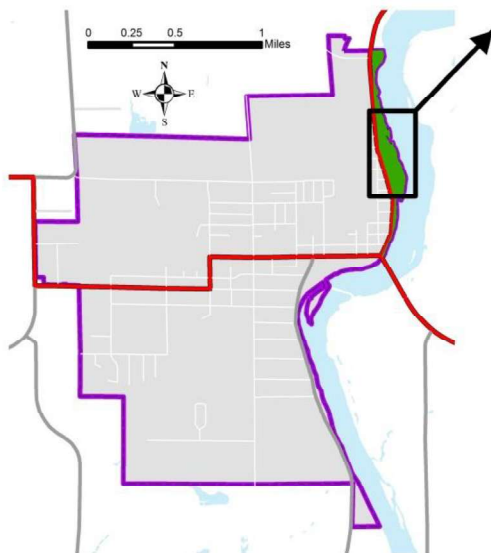


Park Road

0 125 250 500 Feet



NOTE: (Map to right only shows a portion of Riverside Park. Park extends along river an additional 1,980' to the north and 2,050' to the south)



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

William Kautzer Recreational Plaza



Size- ±12.7 acres

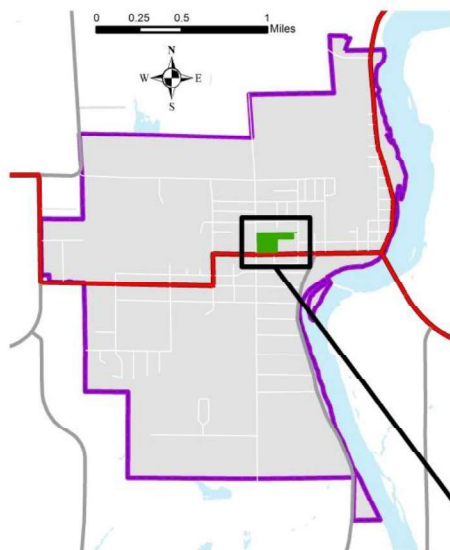
Location- Centrally located in the city. North side of Market Street/State Highway 173.

Ownership- City of Nekoosa

Inventory:

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| ➤ Baseball/Softball Fields | ➤ Play Structures & Equipment | ➤ Ice Rink (Winter) |
| ➤ Skate Park | ➤ Off-Street Parking | ➤ Park Building |
| ➤ Tennis Courts | ➤ Concessions Building | ➤ Drinking Water |
| ➤ Basketball Courts | ➤ Picnic Shelter | ➤ Open Space |
| ➤ Batting Cages | ➤ Picnic Areas | ➤ Dugouts |
| ➤ Bathrooms | ➤ Bleachers, Tables, Benches | ➤ Lighting |

Summary- The William Kautzer Recreational Plaza is an active/passive mixed use neighborhood park. The park is centrally located in the city, which provides recreational opportunities for many Nekoosa residents within walking distance. A splash pad is planned to be constructed in 2018. The park features approximately 6.3 acres of developed park land and 6.4 of undeveloped park land. In the winter, the basketball court transforms into an ice rink providing year round outdoor recreation opportunities. Additionally, some of the highlights of the park include: a skate park, play equipment area with safety surface, picnic shelter, tennis courts and ball fields. The park was renamed in 2015 in honor of William "Bill" Kautzer, a Nekoosa police officer who had a focused dedication and devotion to the youth of the city.



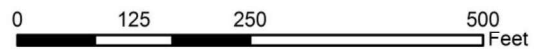
William Kautzer Recreational Plaza

Legend

- Park Boundary
- Parcels

Roads

- State Highway
- City Street



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

John E. Thompson Park



Size- ±.3 acres

Location- Located in the downtown area. South side of Market Street/State Hwy. 173.

Ownership- Domtar

Inventory:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| ➤ Picnic Area | ➤ Park Bench | ➤ Garbage Receptacle |
| ➤ Picnic Table | ➤ Green Space | ➤ Mature Trees |

Summary- John E. Thompson Park is a passive green space mini park, or pocket park. This park provides limited active recreation amenities. However, the park's location is ideal for serving downtown area visitors, shoppers and employees. John E. Thompson Park is located along the 1.6 mile canoe/kayak portage route around the Nekoosa Dam, providing a rest area for users. The park features a picnic area in the heart of downtown Nekoosa. Additionally, views of the beautiful murals on downtown buildings can be enjoyed while visiting the park. Thompson park also serves as the setup location for the Nekoosa Homecoming Parade. The park is named in honor of Dr. John E. Thompson, a longtime member of the Nekoosa Lions Club who was dedicated to community service. In 2005, he was honored by the Heart of Wisconsin as the Wisconsin Rapids Area Citizen of the Year.



John E. Thompson Park

Legend

- Park Boundary
- Parcels
- Portage Route

Roads

- State Highway
- City Street



0 37.5 75 150 Feet



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing



Size- ±9.5 acres

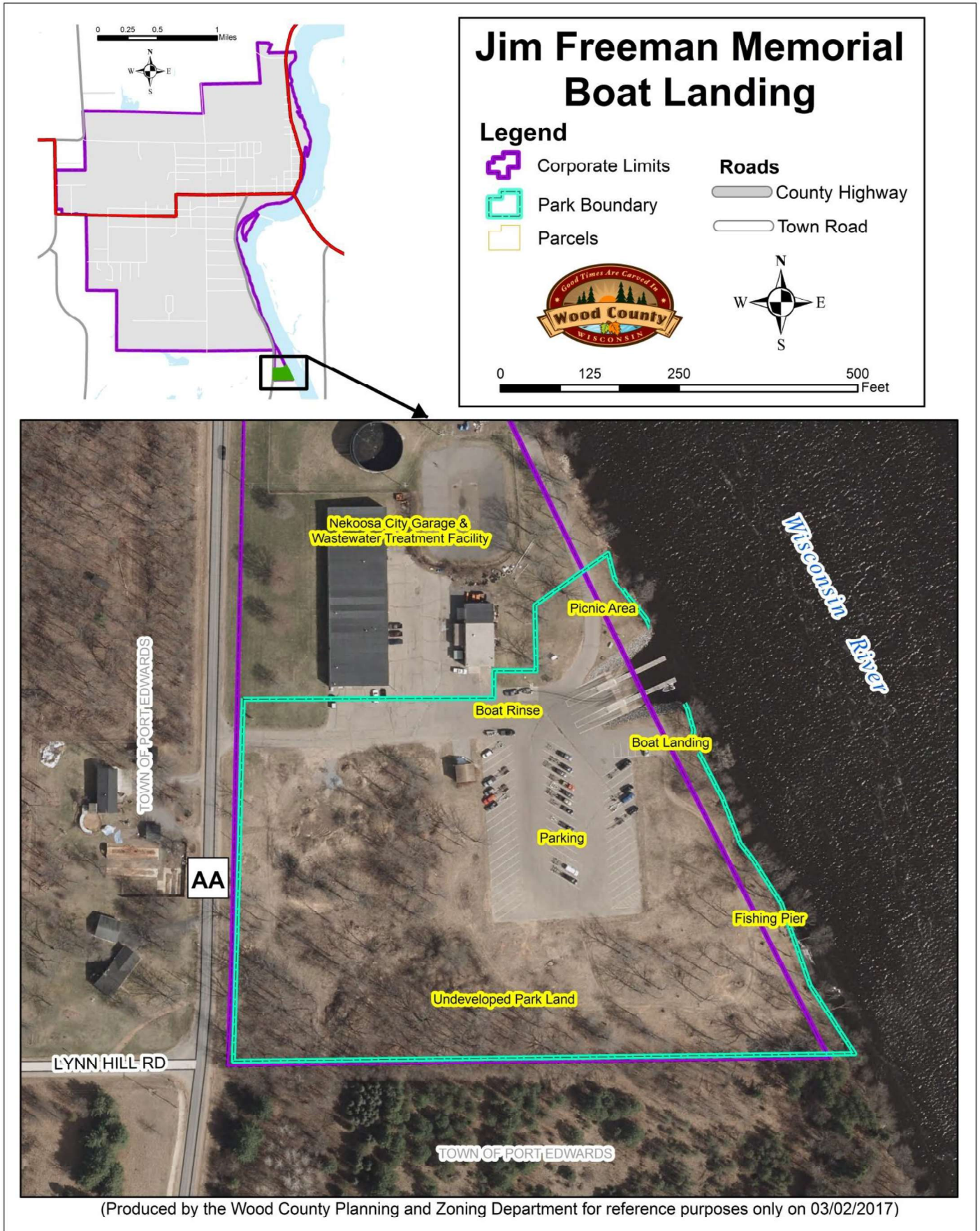
Location- South side of the city. East side of Point Basse Avenue/County Highway AA.

Ownership- City of Nekoosa

Inventory:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------|
| ➤ (4) Slip Boat Launch | ➤ Flag Pole | ➤ Lighting |
| ➤ (2) Docks | ➤ General Off-Street Parking | ➤ Picnic Tables |
| ➤ (53) Vehicle/Boat
Trailer Parking Spots | ➤ Bathrooms | ➤ Benches |
| ➤ Boat Rinse | ➤ Picnic Area | ➤ Open Space |
| | ➤ Unpaved Trail | |

Summary- The Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing is an active/passive special use park. The primary use of this park is the boat launch. The park provides one of the best boat launches on the Wisconsin River, in Wood County. The park features over 800 feet of shoreline along the river, which also provides ample opportunities to shore fish. Riprap has been placed on the shoreline near the boat launch to stabilize the river bank for many years to come. Some of the highlights of the park include: a picnic area, boat rinse station, and a four slip boat launch with 2 docks. Additionally, many scenic views of the Wisconsin River can be enjoyed from this location. The boat landing is dedicated to Jim Freeman, an active Nekoosa resident who started Walleye Days in the early 1990's.



Open Space

Open space areas provide aesthetic and psychological relief from urban development. These lands shall be set aside for preserving natural resources, remnant landscapes, green space, and for providing visual aesthetics/buffering. Additionally, these areas can provide both passive and active recreation use opportunities.

Point Basse Avenue Riverfront



Size- ±4.3 acres

Location- Located south of Nekoosa Dam. East side of Point Basse Avenue/State Highway. 173.

Ownership- Domtar

Inventory:

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------|
| ➤ Picnic Area | ➤ Park Bench | ➤ Garbage Receptacle |
| ➤ Picnic Table | ➤ Open Space | ➤ Mature Trees |

Summary- This location is a passive open space area that is open to the public. This linear space provides limited active recreation amenities. The area features over 2,500 feet of shoreline along the Wisconsin River, which provides ample locations to shore fish below the Nekoosa Dam. During the spring thaw this area tends to flood. The 1.6 mile canoe/kayak portage route that started in Riverside Park ends at this location. The open space area is located within walking distance of many residential neighborhoods that are located to the west.

Point Basse Ave. Riverfront

Legend

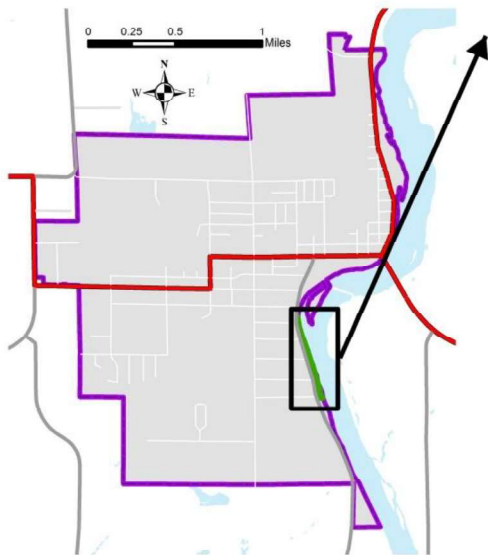
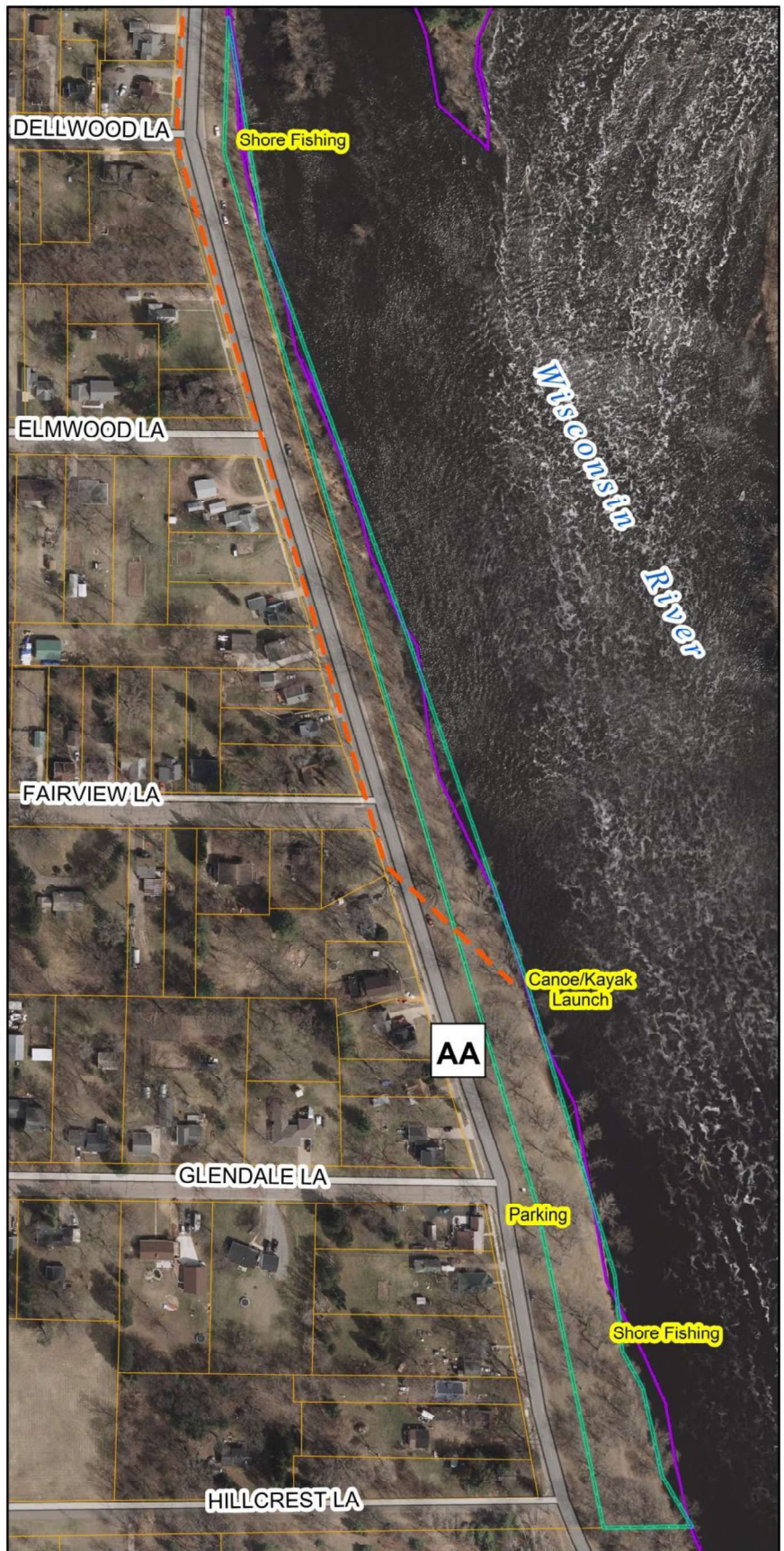
-  Corporate Limits
-  Boundary
-  Parcels
-  Portage
(1.6 mile portage from
Riverside Park)

Roads

-  County Highway
-  City Street



0 125 250 500 Feet



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

Lynn Creek



Size- ±63.8 acres

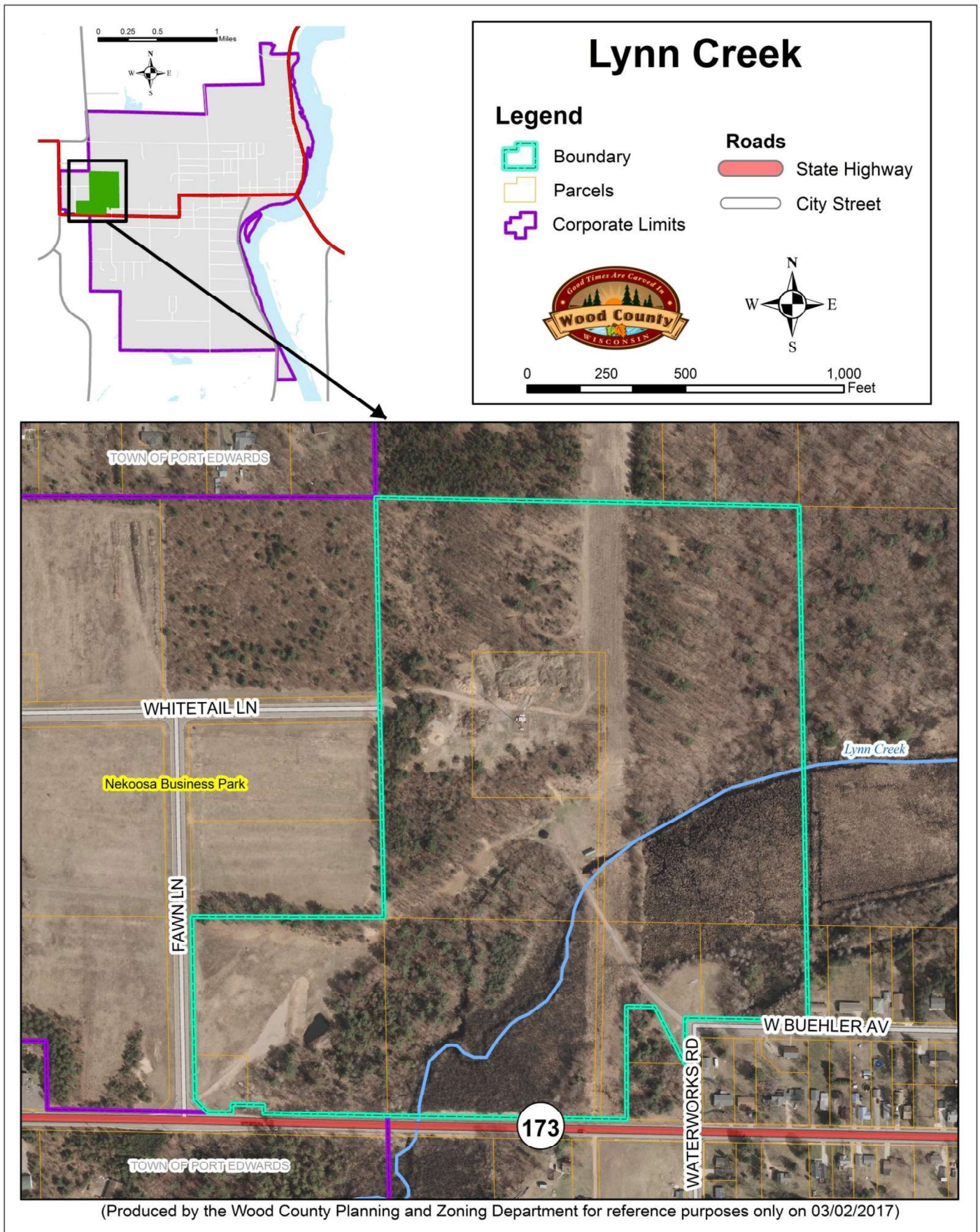
Location- Located west side of city. North side of Wood Avenue/State Highway 173

Ownership- City of Nekoosa

Inventory:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| ➤ Picnic Tables | ➤ Wetlands | ➤ Steep Slopes |
| ➤ Sledding Area | ➤ Highlands | ➤ Enbridge Pipeline |
| ➤ Lynn Creek | ➤ Open/Green Space | ➤ Telecommunications Tower |
| ➤ Mature Trees | ➤ Pond | ➤ Police Shooting Facility |

Summary- This location is an active/passive open space area that is partially open to the public. A majority of the site is undeveloped with fluctuating topography consisting of wetlands and high ground. Lynn Creek traverses the center of the site. An existing telecommunications tower and Nekoosa Police Department shooting range are located on the property. The area along Fawn Lane is used as a sledding hill in the winter. Recreational activities may be developed in the future on this open space site.



Charles and JoAnn Lester Library

Size- ±0.7 acres

Location- Centrally located in the city, on the corner of Park Street and Buehler Ave.

Ownership- City of Nekoosa

Inventory:

- Garden
- Open/Green Space
- Mature Trees
- Benches

Summary- The Charles and JoAnn Lester Library was constructed in 1997. Materials and services at the library are intended to meet the educational, recreational and cultural needs of the community. Encompassing the facility is passive open space. The area features a well maintained green space that hosts the perfect location for a picnic, or to sit in the shade and read a book. The library does rent out limited recreational equipment to its members for use.



Nekoosa Community Center

Size- ±3.3 acres

Location- Located west side of the city, north of Alexander Middle School.

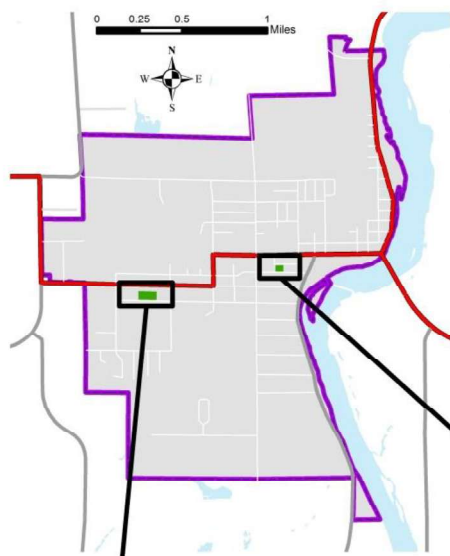
Ownership- City of Nekoosa

Inventory:

- Mature Trees
- Open/Green Space
- Landscaping
- Flower Pots

Summary- The City of Nekoosa Community Center was completed in 2010. The facility hosts receptions, meetings and other events. The building is surrounded with areas of open space. The site features matures trees, green space and beautiful landscaping.





Charles & JoAnn Lester Library & Nekoosa Community Center

Legend



Boundary



Parcels

Roads

City Street



0 75 150 300 Feet



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

Quasi-Public Outdoor Recreation Areas

The quasi-public classification is used to describe recreation areas that are private or public. These sites are comprised of school play grounds, school forests, church playgrounds, etc. These areas are not maintained or managed by the City of Nekoosa, which limits the use of these sites as public parks. However, these types of sites provide opportunities for expanding recreational opportunities available to the community in an efficient and cost saving manner.

Nekoosa School District



Size- ±143.5 acres

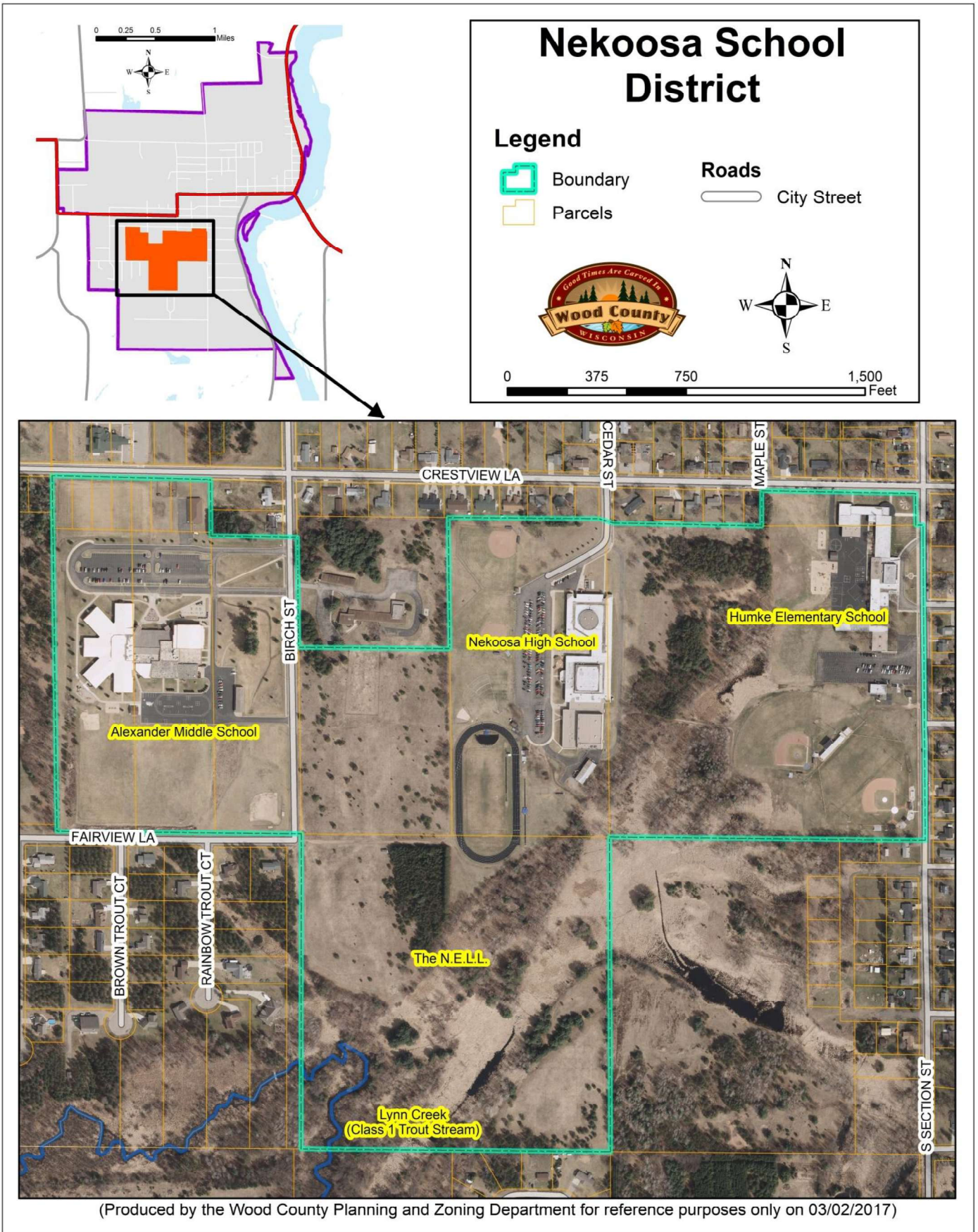
Location- Centrally located in the city, south of Crestview Lane.

Ownership- Nekoosa School District

Inventory:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| ➤ Athletic Fields/Courts | ➤ Play Structures and Equipment | ➤ Disc Golf |
| ➤ Open/Green Space | ➤ Natural Surfaced Trails | ➤ Lynn Creek |
| ➤ School Forest | ➤ The N.E.L.L. | ➤ Wetlands |

Summary- The Nekoosa School District property is considered an active/passive quasi-public recreation area. This is a very unique and diversified property. The school campus hosts a variety of active outdoor recreation facilities adjacent to the buildings. There are also areas of the property that are undeveloped, specifically the Nekoosa Environmental Learning Loop (N.E.L.L.). Throughout the N.E.L.L. one will find many different ecosystems including: prairie, wetlands, and a mix of coniferous and deciduous hardwood forest. Some of the highlights of the site include: a disc golf course, natural surfaced trails, and a variety of athletic fields/courts.



Sacred Heart Playground



Size- ±3 acres

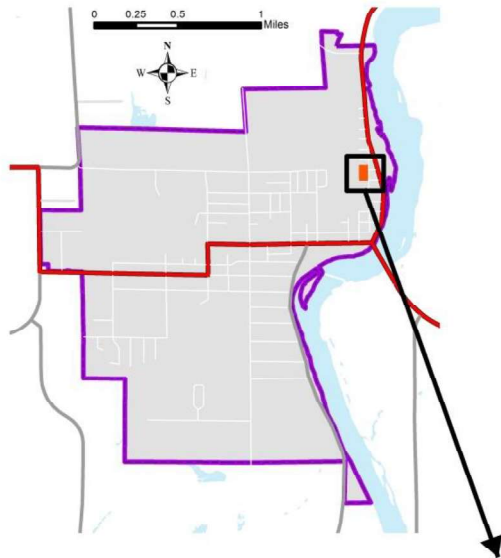
Location- North side of city. West side of Vilas Ave.

Ownership- Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Domtar and City of Nekoosa (*multiple parcels*)

Inventory:

- | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| ➤ Picnic Tables | ➤ Open/Green Space | ➤ Basketball Courts |
| ➤ Trees | ➤ Play Structures and Equipment | ➤ Soccer Field |
| ➤ Parking Lot | ➤ Safety Surface | ➤ Small Fenced in Area |

Summary- This location is an active/passive quasi-public recreation area that is partially open to the public. The area is primarily used as the Sacred Heart School Playground. The site features a large play structure with safety surface and ample open green space area. This site complements other community parks and recreation areas. Riverside Park is only a short walk away from this location providing additional outdoor recreation opportunities. The important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that both, Sacred Heart and Nekoosa park system benefit from shared use of facilities and land area.



Sacred Heart Playground

Legend

- Boundary
- Parcels
- Trails
- Railroad

Roads

- State Highway
- City Street



(Produced by the Wood County Planning and Zoning Department for reference purposes only on 03/02/2017)

Trails



Paved Trails

Currently, the extent of existing paved bicycle/pedestrian trails is limited to a 1.4 mile segment located in the northeast portion of the city limits. See (Appendix A.) for reference purposes. A majority of the trail runs through Riverside Park along the Wisconsin River. This highly scenic landscape provides a variety of recreation opportunities along the way. The trail continues to the north connecting to the Village of Port Edwards and the City of Wisconsin Rapids. Additionally, the trail extends across the Nekoosa Bridge into the Town of Saratoga where it ends. The City of Nekoosa is responsible for trail maintenance.

In recent years, road improvements in Nekoosa have replaced narrow road shoulders with wider paved shoulders and sidewalks. Wider shoulders have improved the safety and overall experience for area pedestrians and bicyclists. Although many roads in the city are not officially designated as official bicycle/pedestrian routes, they still may be safely used by users depending on the time of day and traffic volume.

Natural Surfaced Trails

This trail category encompasses a number of recreation trail uses including: hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and other non-motorized shared use trails.

Currently, the natural surface trails are limited to the Nekoosa School District Property. The Nekoosa Environmental Learning Loop (N.E.L.L.). A primitive trail system has been established in undeveloped areas of the property. The trail traverses a diversity of habitat including: a small prairie, a small jack pine plantation, various groves of hardwoods, and a considerable amount of wetlands.

Water Trails

The Blueway Water Trail is a series of marked portages and water routes along the Wisconsin River. The trail traverses the Village of Biron, City of Wisconsin Rapids, Village of Port Edwards, and the City of Nekoosa. Specific to Wood County, the trail navigates over 20 miles of river and flowages.



Blueway Water Trail at Nekoosa

The Nekoosa Dam portage is located in Riverside Park, while the put-in is located in the Point Basse Ave. Riverfront open space area. The 1.45-mile trail connecting the take-out and put-in consists of an asphalt trail, sidewalks, and city streets. See (Appendix A.) for reference purposes.

Wisconsin River

The Wisconsin River, which traverses the south east corner of Wood County, is the longest River in the State of Wisconsin. The City of Nekoosa is located along its scenic banks. The Wisconsin River plays a vital role in Nekoosa's outdoor recreation system. This plan recognizes its aesthetics and potential for recreation. The river is a natural and scenic area with abundant resources including a variety of habitat types, historical and archaeological sites, abundant wildlife and good quality fisheries. The riverway at Nekoosa is relatively undeveloped along the banks. A majority of the riverbank is owned by Domtar Wisconsin River Cooperation.



Wisconsin River at Point Basse Ave. Riverfront

Recreation Programs & Services

At this time, the City of Nekoosa does not provide any recreation programs. Interestingly, 81% of respondents in the community survey think that the city should offer recreation programs and services. Currently, the Charles and JoAnn Lester Library provides the opportunity to check out recreation equipment (e.g. tennis rackets, balls, discs for disc golf, etc.) to library members. This is a service that the library would like to expand and further develop. Based on community interest, the City of Nekoosa should look into developing and offering a recreation program in the near future. The CORP Planning Committee recommends the city starts small and expands the program as involvement and interest increases.

Neighboring Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

City of Nekoosa residents have access to a number of county and state managed recreation facilities just beyond the city limits. Wood County offers a variety of recreation activities at any of the 7 recreational parks, 3 rivers, many lakes, 38,000 acres of county forest land, and 18,500 acres of Wood County State Wildlife Area. Additionally, the surrounding municipalities host a variety of park and recreation facilities. More information on Wood County recreation opportunities can be found at the following link

<https://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/Parks/>.





V. Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment

This plan was designed specifically for the City of Nekoosa. Every community is unique in its own way. Consequently, an assessment shall be performed to discover a community's most crucial and important outdoor recreation needs. This assessment analyzes public input, recreational standards, and existing planning documents to determine the gaps between existing and desired conditions.



William Kautzer Recreational Plaza

Public Participation

The C.O.R.P. Planning Committee drafted a public participation strategy early in the planning process. Citizen involvement and input is vital at all stages of the planning process and essential to the overall success of the plan. It is important to ensure that the plan truly represents what the community needs and desires for outdoor recreation opportunities. Public participation provides a different perspective from that of city leaders and planning experts. It is through public input that the goals and objectives of the plan are developed, and all future decisions will be based.

Informing the public and encouraging their involvement in the planning process was accomplished in the following ways:

- The C.O.R.P. Planning Committee met once a month throughout the development of the plan. A variety of stakeholders were coordinated to become a part of the planning committee to diversify representation. These meetings were noticed and open to the public.
- A community survey was sent out in early-April 2017 to all residents receiving a city utility bill.
- A public input workshop was held mid-May 2017.
- Plan updates were periodically presented before the Nekoosa Property Recreation and Human Affairs Committee to gather public input.
- Prior to the plan being adopted, a public hearing was held so that the community could comment and make final recommendations on the plan.
- Meeting times and locations were posted at the Municipal Building, City Newsletter and on the City of Nekoosa website.



Community Surveys

In April of 2017, the City of Nekoosa Parks and Outdoor Recreation Community Survey was mailed out to each household in Nekoosa, with the City Newsletter. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather resident input to assist in defining community outdoor recreation values and priorities. Specifically, the survey gathered information on preferred outdoor recreation amenities, park usage, and attitudes towards the development or enhancement of outdoor recreation facilities. A copy of the survey is located in (Appendix B.) of this plan.



The CORP Planning Committee received over 200 completed surveys by the May 2017 deadline. All surveys were reviewed and the data was compiled into a survey summary report. The Community Survey Summary is included in (Appendix C.) of this plan for reference purposes. The summary presents numeric tabulation and graphic representation for each question in the survey. Data presented in the summary document is incorporated throughout this plan. The input collected was also utilized by the planning committee to develop goals, objectives and recommendations for the plan. The following highlights a few findings from the Community Survey Summary:

- 86% of respondents visited a Nekoosa park during the past year.
- 81.5% of respondents rated Nekoosa parks in good to excellent condition.
- Only 1.5% of respondents stated parks and outdoor recreation are not important to the overall quality of life in Nekoosa. The remaining 98.5% said very important to somewhat important.
- 81% of respondents think that Nekoosa should offer recreation programs and services.
- Top five amenities Nekoosa residents would like to see in new/existing park areas:
 - Restroom Facilities
 - Picnic Area/Shelter
 - Fishing Piers
 - Playground Equipment
 - Trails

NOTE: Additional findings are available in the Community Survey Summary located in (Appendix C.) of this plan.

Additionally, key findings from the 2012 South Wood County Community Vision Survey have been incorporated into the plan. Over 4,100 people participated in this survey. Specifically, respondents prioritized nature and outdoor recreation as a very important indicator of quality of life in South Wood County. Additional information on this community survey can be found on Incourage Community Foundation website at incouragecf.org.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats Analysis (SWOT)

Change is an inevitable aspect of any community, including Nekoosa. Identifying community's ever-evolving strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats will help it plan and act effectively. Consequently, the CORP Planning Committee determined a SWOT Analysis should be completed as part of the community needs assessment. SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses assess the internal and direct factors impacting a community, while opportunities and threats assess the factors that lie outside of the control of the community and local leaders but that can impact community development efforts. A SWOT analysis can be used by community leaders to assess the situation of a community in order to make informed decisions and prioritize actions. Moreover, a SWOT analysis can therefore help the City of Nekoosa to determine the strengths on which to build, the weaknesses to avoid or overcome, and the external positive and negative factors that may enable or impede community development efforts. This analysis was completed by the CORP Planning Committee in the winter of 2016. A SWOT Analysis Summary is included in (Appendix F) for reference purposes. The following highlights a few of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified during the SWOT Analysis process:

Strengths

- Location on Wisconsin River/Riverfront
- Access to full school system
- Sense of small town community
- Affordable housing
- Full level of municipal service

Weaknesses

- Lower income/higher poverty level
- Funding/affording the needs of the community
- Decreasing population

Opportunities

- Natural resources/Wisconsin River
- Sand Valley Golf Resort – Rome
- Bridge over Wisconsin River
- Collaboration/cooperation in community

Threats

- Illegal drug Issues
- Population out-migration
- Lack of quality housing stock

NOTE: Additional findings are available in the SWOT Analysis Summary located in (Appendix F.) of this plan.

Recreation Standards

Identifying outdoor recreation standards is another method for assessing a community's recreation needs. A good standards system also helps assess what facilities are available for current use and what types of facilities will be needed to serve the community in the future. The most effective park system to develop and manage is one made up of a variety of different types of parks, open space areas, and recreational venues, each designed to provide a specific type of recreation experience or opportunity.

A wide variety of standards, classifications, and typologies can be found throughout the state, region, and country for the development of recreation systems. For this plan, unique standards have been established by the CORP Planning Committee. The committee determined a smaller community like Nekoosa may require exclusive standards that may differ slightly from typical municipal recreation standards. All future outdoor recreation developments shall follow the standards identified in (Table 7) below.

The recreation standards for this plan were developed based on five considerations:

- National Recreation and Park Association Standards (NRPA)
- S.C.O.R.P. 2011-2016, Park and Recreation Designs
- Nekoosa C.O.R.P. Planning Committee
- Citizen input

Table 7 NEKOOSA RECREATION STANDARDS/GUIDELINES (2018)	
<u>MINI PARK</u>	
Summary	Smallest park classification that provides basic recreation opportunities and limited amenities, such as picnic areas, benches, gathering spaces, and playgrounds. Serves immediate adjacent areas.
Size Objective	2 acres or less
Service Area	¼ to ½ mile radius
Acres/1,000 Population	0.25 to 0.5 acres
Nekoosa Presently	±0.3 acres (John E. Thompson Park)

<u>NEIGHBORHOOD PARK</u>	
Summary	Provides close-to-home recreation opportunities for surrounding neighborhoods. Typically amenities include: playgrounds, outdoor sport courts/fields, restrooms, pathways, multi-use open areas, and picnic areas
Size Objective	2 to 15 acres
Service Area	½ to 1 mile radius
Acres/1,000 Population	1 to 2 acres
Nekoosa Presently	±12.7 acres (William Kautzer Recreational Plaza)

<u>COMMUNITY PARK</u>	
Summary	Focus is on meeting the recreational needs of large portions of the community, as well as preserving environmental and cultural resources. These areas typically accommodate large numbers of people, and offer a variety of facilities, such as group picnic areas and large shelters, sports fields and courts, children's play areas, swimming pools, community gardens, trails, community festival or event space, and green space/natural areas.
Size Objective	+15 acres
Service Area	2 to 5 mile radius (Community-wide)
Acres/1,000 Population	5 to 10 acres
Nekoosa Presently	±35 acres (Riverside Park)

<u>SPECIAL USE PARK</u>	
Summary	Areas for specialized recreational activities or resources. Including, but not limited to: boat landings, access areas, historic sites, dog parks, and other single purpose sites.
Size Objective	Variable
Service Area	Variable
Acres/1,000 Population	Variable
Nekoosa Presently	±9.5 acres (Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing)

<u>SCHOOL PARK/QUASI-PUBLIC AREAS</u>	
Summary	Lands that function as a park/outdoor recreation facility, but are operated and managed by owners other than the City of Nekoosa.
Size Objective	Variable/+25 acres
Service Area	Variable/2 to 5 mile radius
Acres/1,000 Population	Variable/5 to 10 acres
Nekoosa Presently	±145 acres

<u>CONSERVANCY</u>	
Summary	Areas set aside for protection and preservation of significant natural/cultural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and buffering/aesthetics. Provides more passive outdoor recreation opportunities.
Size Objective	Variable (Sufficient to preserve resource)
Service Area	2 to 5 mile radius (Community-wide)
Acres/1,000 Population	Variable/5 to 10 acres
Nekoosa Presently	0 acres

<u>TRAILS</u>	
Summary	Include a variety of trail types that accommodate a variety of activities such as walking, running, hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, etc.
Size Objective	Variable with use
Service Area	2 to 5 mile radius (Community-wide)
Miles/1,000 Population	0.5 to 1.5 miles
Nekoosa Presently	±1.4 miles of paved trail.

The City of Nekoosa currently has approximately 57 acres total of land classified as a mini, neighborhood, or community park. That equates to slightly over 22 acres/per 1,000 residents, based on the U.S. Census Bureau population data of 2,580 for 2010. This is nearly double the National Recreation and Park Association standards (NRPA). Consequently, Nekoosa should focus on the enhancement of existing parks and recreation areas, rather than strongly encouraging new park development. This priority was overwhelmingly identified by residents in Question 7 of the community survey.

Although there is adequate acreage of parks in the planning area according to the above identified standards, additional land acquisition may be beneficial to expand recreational uses or associated needs (such as parking at existing sites) if an opportunity arises. Additionally, Nekoosa yields over 70 acres of open space available to the general public for recreation purposes. Open space areas are identified in (Section IV.) of this plan. These areas can potentially provide land for future parks, conservancies, trail connections, etc.

Size or acreage alone does not assure a well-balanced park system. Outdoor recreation areas in Nekoosa should be designed and developed with a balance of amenities according to the recommended classification type. The proper relationship in the size, number, location, and type of amenities developed for each outdoor recreation site is critical to a relevant outdoor recreation system. Moreover, the amenities should meet the needs of the community. Therefore, the City of Nekoosa should develop highly desired amenities identified in the community survey. Some examples include: restroom facilities, picnic areas/shelters, fishing piers, playground equipment, trails, etc. Additionally, the City of Nekoosa can reference the suggested facilities/amenities guidelines identified in the 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).



Referenced Plans

Other applicable plans that address outdoor recreation in Nekoosa are described below. This plan is consistent with the other referenced plans.

City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Plan – 2012

This twenty-year plan is intended to guide future growth, development, and revitalization in the City of Nekoosa.

Several goals and objectives identified in the plan:

- Utilize the river corridor for multi-use trail development.
- Maintain parks, recreational facilities, and open space for the benefit, enjoyment, health, and well-being of Nekoosa residents.
- Ensure that schools, parks, playgrounds, and similar activity centers are well served by sidewalks and bicycle routes.
- Provide quality, accessible parks and recreational facilities, areas, and services for residents.
- Maintain and enhance the natural resources in the city.

City of Nekoosa Economic Development Plan – 2002

This plan identifies Nekoosa's economic development strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities. It also provides strategies for building on identified strengths, addressing weaknesses, and taking advantage of opportunities.

One goal identified in the plan:

- Improve the City of Nekoosa's ties to the surrounding regions outdoor recreational and tourism opportunities.

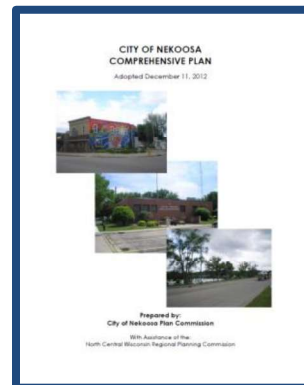
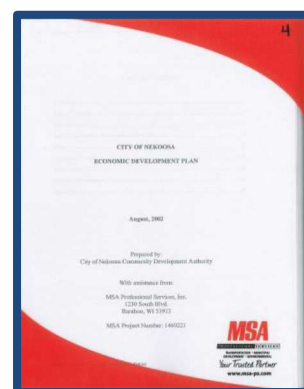
The City of Nekoosa lies very close to natural resources that provide economic opportunity for the city and its residents. Nekoosa lies on the western bank of the Wisconsin River. This river provides a natural setting for outdoor activities that could be utilized by the city to bring in outside dollars. Additionally, the city is located within close proximity of the Tri-Lakes area. These man-made lakes provide an excellent source for water recreation opportunities.

Wood County Comprehensive Plan – 2009

This twenty-year plan is intended to guide physical, social, and economic development in Wood County.

One goal identified in the plan:

- Maintain the quality and availability of outdoor recreation opportunities in the county.



Wood County Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces Plan – 2011

This plan represents a comprehensive study of outdoor recreation in Wood County. Primary emphasis is placed on the role of the County is expected to play in meeting demands for outdoor recreation. Additionally, emphasis is placed on the role of Wood County's towns, cities, and villages, in regards to outdoor recreation.

Two recommendations in the plan:

- Wood County and its municipalities should work together to identify outdoor recreation projects that meet their common goals and are eligible for grant funding. Grant applications that show cooperative effort are more likely to be funded than efforts of a single municipality or organization.
- Encourage municipal cooperation and communication to reduce redundancy and duplication of outdoor recreation services.

Wood County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan – 2005

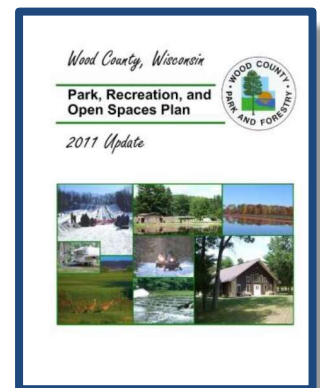
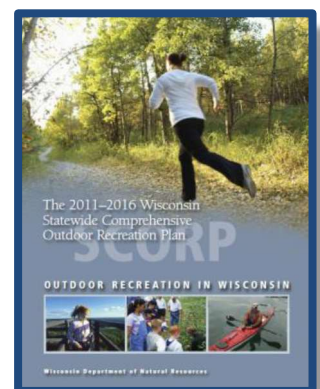
This plan is intended to guide the development of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, services, and policies in Wood County. Within urban and suburban areas, the plan recommends bicycle and pedestrian corridors that will connect people to destinations such as employment centers, schools, residential districts, recreation areas and commercial retail areas. Multiple potential trails and routes are identified in and around Nekoosa. The Wisconsin River is an identified trail corridor that should be given primary planning considerations.

One recommendation in the plan:

- Recommend alignments for a bicycle and pedestrian trail system along the Wisconsin River from Biron through Wisconsin Rapids, Port Edwards, and Nekoosa.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) – 2011-2016

This plan was prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR). The plan evaluates outdoor recreation trends and issues and sets forth ideas about recreation's future role in Wisconsin. Put simply, it is the blueprint for outdoor recreation in the state and provides broad guidance to governments at all levels, communities, businesses, and organizations on recreation needs and opportunities. Outdoor recreation grant programs administered by the WDNR from the SCORP are listed in (Appendix E).



Wisconsin Trails Network Plan – 2003

This plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors across Wisconsin that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. It describes a vision of a statewide network of interconnected rail trails into which smaller state, partnership, county, municipal, and private trails feed.

Potential trail corridor identified in the plan:

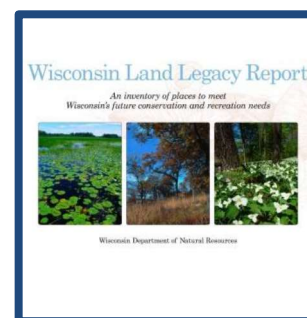
- **Segment 18** – This segment links with potential corridors in the Northern and South Central regions to create a continuous trail route from Ashland to the Wisconsin/Illinois state line. A potential trail route using roadways is recommended that generally would follow the Wisconsin River and its flowages.

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report – 2006

The purpose of this report is to identify the places considered most important to meet Wisconsin's conservation and recreation needs over 50 years. Additionally, the report is intended to serve as an education resource that provides common context from which local governments can use if they are confronted with decisions about land protection, use, and management. The Central Sand Plains ecological landscape, which Nekoosa is located in, is identified in the report. Sixteen special areas or "legacy places" are identified in the Central Sand Plains ecological landscape. The Cranmoor Wetlands, located to the west of Nekoosa are identified as an area of interest.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Recreation Plan – 2017

The FERC requires Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation (Domtar) to prepare a recreation plan as a license requirement. FERC Project 2292 is specific to the hydroelectric project at Nekoosa. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that the development of recreation resources at hydroelectric power projects is consistent with area recreational needs. The plan describes existing recreation facilities in Nekoosa, evaluates whether the facilities are meeting the public's needs, and propose recreation improvements aimed at addressing the need for new facilities.



Benefits of Outdoor Recreation

Access to outdoor recreation opportunities has many benefits. To curb disturbing trends, the City of Nekoosa has placed a high priority on promoting the link between parks and recreation resources and improved mental, physical and societal health. The benefits of outdoor recreation are endless.

Individual Benefits

- Reduces stress, anxiety and depression
- Fun and entertainment
- Learning and education
- Physical activity
- Better health and improves quality of life

Economic Benefits

- Increase property values
- Attracts and retains residents, visitors, businesses, and employment
- Create/Increase spending on food, lodging and other services in the community

Social Benefits

- Provides places to socialize and connect with residents in the community
- Increases pride, volunteerism and stewardship in the community
- Unites families and assists in overall youth development
- Reduces crime

Environmental Benefits

- Creates an awareness and appreciation for the natural environment and its resources
- Absorb and filter storm water runoff and floodwaters
- Promotes and sustains protection of environmentally sensitive areas

Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (2011 – 2016)

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a blueprint for state and local outdoor recreation planning through support of national initiatives, sets the course for recreation within the state by describing current recreation supply and trends, and provides a framework for future recreation development and focus.

Every five years, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources publishes a SCORP as required by the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965. At its core, the document is used to help allocate federal funds equitably among local communities, but the document also transcends many levels of outdoor recreation discussion and policy. At the national level, the SCORP recognizes the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) initiative is based on the idea that the protection of the country's natural heritage is a non-partisan objective shared

by all Americans. The AGO encourages state and local communities to develop local, grassroots conservation and recreation initiatives. In keeping with the AGO's emphasis on local action, the SCORP presents Wisconsin's strategy of how state and local goals and actions can align with AGO initiatives. The document shows a clear vision of how preserving and improving recreation opportunities in Wisconsin fits within a broader national initiative of conservation and recreation. The SCORP describes and quantifies some of the most important benefits of recreation, and establishes goals to improve outdoor recreation for Wisconsinites across the state. The SCORP further targets assessments on several key relationships that include public health and wellness, urban access to outdoor recreation, and public and private partnerships. *(Source: Pg. vii, 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan)*

The 2011 – 2016 SCORP can be found on the WDNR's website at the following link: www.dnr.wi.gov, and search for "SCORP". The WDNR is currently working on the 2017 – 2022 SCORP.





VI. Action & Implementation

Outdoor recreation planning involves more than just drawing on a map, or taking pictures of existing and potential recreation areas. Both, an action program and implementation strategy need to be developed to guide local decision making over the next several years. Most importantly, these programs and strategies should relate to the information compiled during earlier phases of the planning process.



Nekoosa Community Center

Action Program

The purpose of the following action program is to:

- Provide recommendations and general guidelines in which decisions regarding outdoor recreation improvements can be made.
- Identify strategies and tactics that solve or reduce deficiencies in Nekoosa's outdoor recreation system.
- Identify a dynamic Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) based upon community needs, priorities and funding opportunities.
- Provide a program for future operation and maintenance of Nekoosa's outdoor recreation system.



The following recommendations reflect the desired improvements that the Nekoosa CORP Planning Committee believes should be made in order to meet the recreation needs and priorities of its residents and visitors. Additionally, a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) was developed to coordinate implementation of improvements over the next 5 years. The recommendations and CIP are the result of a combination of public participation efforts including: public hearings, focus groups, workshops, and discussion by the Committee. Additionally, a survey was sent out to the public in April of 2017. The Committee reviewed all public input and the community needs assessment to determine what outdoor recreation facilities were wanted and needed in the community. The Committee then reviewed the outdoor recreation recommendations and prioritized the potential improvements to ensure the higher priority recommendations are addressed first. Additionally, estimated costs were prepared for reference purposes. A phased development approach will allow improvements to be made incrementally over time as the funding becomes available. It is important that outdoor recreation improvements be coordinated with other public and private investments to maximize the effectiveness of each. The following recommendations and improvements are specific to each of the sites identified in Section IV. of this plan.

Park Recommendations & Capital Improvements

The following recommendations and CIPs are specific to each of the parks in the City of Nekoosa outdoor recreation system.

Riverside Park

Riverside Park is currently the focal piece of the Nekoosa outdoor recreation system. The focus of this area is on the natural beauty of the Wisconsin River. The community survey identified

preserving and protecting the environment as a high priority. Consequently, the city should preserve, protect, and provide access to the river and its shorelines. Community gathering events should be expanded upon while maintaining the parks fundamental values of providing recreation opportunities and open space. The park is currently leased to the City of Nekoosa. The city should work in collaboration with Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation to implement the recommendations/projects detailed below.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Enhance disc golf course (designated route, signage, launch pads)	(\$)	(1)
Restroom facility	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Trees by playground for shade	(\$)	(1)
Dog waste receptacles	(\$)	(1)
Address goose waste issue	(\$)	(1)
Assess water issues/flooding	(\$\$)	(1)
Expand Christmas display	(\$\$)	(1)
Natural surfaced multi-use trail (north side of park)	(\$)	(2)
Upgrade lighting	(\$\$)	(2)
Wi-Fi	(\$\$)	(2)
Assess shoreline erosion	(\$\$)	(3)
Improve gravel parking lot	(\$\$)	(3)
Crosswalk (1 st St. & Wilhorn Rd.)	(\$\$)	(3)
Canoe/Kayak launch	(\$\$)	(3)
Picnic shelter	(\$\$)	(3)
Upgrade boat landing dock	(\$\$)	(3)
Outdoor stage/Amphitheater/Band shell	(\$\$\$\$)	(4)
Re-pave park road	(\$\$\$\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

William Kautzer Recreational Plaza

The focal point of this park will be the splash pad. Included in (Appendix D.), is a master plan for Kautzer Plaza. This site plan will provide additional guidance for future park improvements and decision making. Kautzer Plaza is planned to be a very active use recreation area, compared to more passive use parks in the community. Outdoor recreation facilities shall serve all age groups, with an emphasis on the youth and families of Nekoosa. Expansion of the park will be limited by wetlands. However, the wetlands could be enhanced and utilized as an education opportunity to increase public awareness of natural environments.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Splash pad	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Develop trails/paths	(\$\$)	(1)
Wi-Fi	(\$\$)	(1)

Assess park boundary fencing	(\$)	(2)
Update restroom facility	(\$\$\$)	(2)
Additional parking lot	(\$\$\$)	(2)
Add pickle ball court to tennis court	(\$)	(3)
Picnic shelter	(\$\$)	(3)
Restripe parking lot	(\$)	(3)
Recreation plaza/building	(\$\$\$\$)	(4)
Education boardwalk (wetland area)	(\$\$\$)	(4)
Plaza entry monuments	(\$\$)	(5)

John E. Thompson Park

Given the location of this park in the downtown area, Thompson Park should be planned to cater to downtown users, such as shoppers and business employees. Picnic areas were the 2nd most requested amenity identified in the community survey. Thompson Park provides an ideal location for a small picnic pavilion or shelter. The park is needed relief from the concrete and asphalt of the downtown area. Enhancing this park is important as Nekoosa tries to attract new businesses and residents to the downtown area. The site shall function as a passive use park that provides a diversion from activity occurring in the downtown areas. The city shall pursue acquisition of this property, as the property is currently owned by Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Picnic tables	(\$)	(1)
Assess Ownership/Acquisition	NA	(1)
Small pavilion/Picnic shelter	(\$\$\$)	(2)
Garbage recycling receptacles	(\$)	(2)
Upgrade electrical	(\$)	(3)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing

Fishing, boating, and other water recreation activities are the focus at the Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing. Facilities related to said uses shall be expanded upon and enhanced for this site. Recently, a dilapidated fishing pier was removed from the park. New fishing piers should be constructed, as it was the 3rd most requested facility identified in the community survey. Picnic areas are planned to provide users a place to rest and have a picnic. The undeveloped area of the park provides a great opportunity to expand available recreation opportunities.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Picnic shelter/areas	(\$\$)	(1)

Fishing piers (2)	(\$\$\$)	(2)
Develop trails	(\$\$)	(2)
Playground	(\$\$)	(3)
Restroom facility	(\$\$\$)	(4)
Campground	(\$\$\$)	(5)
Fish cleaning station	(\$\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Open Space Area Recommendations & Capital Improvements

The following recommendations and CIPs are specific to each of the open space areas in the City of Nekoosa outdoor recreation system.

Point Basse Avenue Riverfront

It is envisioned that this open space will be a linear park that provides a connecting corridor to areas of north and south Nekoosa. The construction of a multi-use trail adjacent to Point Basse Ave. is planned for the future. The shoreline in this area is experiencing some erosion problems, which should be addressed to preserve and protect the open space area.

Constructing a canoe/kayak launch will promote higher usage of the Blueway Water Trail on the Wisconsin River. The city should work in collaboration with Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation to implement the recommendations/projects detailed below.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Off-street multi-use path	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Canoe/kayak launch	(\$)	(1)
Preserve and protect shoreline	(\$\$\$\$)	(1)
Dog waste/garbage receptacles	(\$)	(1)
Site acquisition from Domtar	NA	(2)
Picnic areas	(\$)	(2)
Shelter/Restroom facility	(\$\$\$\$)	(3)
Fishing piers	(\$\$\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Lynn Creek Area

The focus of this area is on natural beauty and restoration of Lynn Creek riparian habitat. Looking long range, this area should be developed into a future active/passive use community park. The more active recreation activities will be developed on the far west portion of the property near the industrial park. A majority of the property is planned for a more passive use to enhance and protect the natural setting and landscape along Lynn Creek. The CORP Planning Committee determined that a master plan should be prepared for this site before any outdoor recreation facilities are developed. This way the future park is developed properly.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Prepare park master plan	(\$\$)	(1)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Charles and JoAnn Lester Library

The Charles and JoAnn Lester Library is a much utilized community resource. However, the open space area located around the library is currently underutilized. This underutilized open space area is envisioned to compliment current library functions, while expanding social and educational opportunities outdoors. Improvements shall be directed towards users of all age groups.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Small playground	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Picnic/reading areas	(\$)	(2)
Gazebo or pergola	(\$\$)	(2)
Garbage/recycling receptacles	(\$)	(3)
Permanent benches	(\$)	(4)
Outdoor reading/recreation addition	(\$\$\$\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Nekoosa Community Center

The open space surrounding the community center is planned to provide passive use opportunities. The recommendations listed below focus on developing a site that provides visual aesthetics for the community to use and enjoy. Vegetative buffering should be considered in areas adjacent to residential properties.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Trees/landscaping	(\$\$)	(1)
Outdoor wedding venue	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Small playground	(\$\$\$)	(3)
Green space (east of parking lot)	(\$\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Quasi-Public Area Recommendations & Capital Improvements

The following recommendations and CIPs are specific to each of the quasi-public areas in the City of Nekoosa outdoor recreation system.

Nekoosa School District

The Nekoosa School District property allows for expanding the recreational, social, and educational opportunities available to the community. The Nekoosa Environmental Learning

Loop (N.E.L.L.) is currently undeveloped and underutilized. Many of the recommendations identified below look to enhance this area with a variety of active and passive recreation opportunities. High priority should be placed on establishing a network of natural surfaced trails throughout the property. The City of Nekoosa and Nekoosa School District should work in collaboration on developing outdoor recreation facilities. The school district owns a large portion of land in the city which can provide opportunities to make trail connections to different locations in the community. The intent is that both the school district and city outdoor recreation system benefit from shared use of facilities and land area.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Develop trail system	(\$\$)	(1)
Connect school trails to city trail system	(\$\$\$)	(1)
Access to N.E.L.L. from Sunny Ridge Circle	(\$\$)	(2)
Small amphitheater/stage	(\$\$\$)	(2)
Pavilion	(\$\$)	(3)
Develop exercise stations along trail	(\$\$)	(3)
Invasive species control/eradication	(\$)	(4)
Athletic complex	(\$\$\$\$)	(4)
Enhance playground equipment	(\$\$\$)	(4)
Dredge pond	(\$\$\$)	(5)
Trail maps/interpretive signs	(\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Sacred Heart Playground

The Sacred Heart Playground is envisioned to compliment the Nekoosa outdoor recreation system by serving as a neighborhood park. The recommendations identified below are typical for what you would see in a smaller neighborhood park. The City of Nekoosa and Sacred Heart School should work in collaboration so both benefit from the shared use of the facilities and land area.

Recommendation/Project	Estimated Cost	Priority
Update playground equipment	(\$\$\$)	(3)
Picnic shelter	(\$\$)	(4)
Plant trees	(\$)	(5)
<i>Estimated Cost- (\$\$\$\$)= Higher Cost to (\$)= Lower Cost</i> <i>Priority- (1)= Higher Priority to (5)= Lower Priority</i>		

Trail Recommendations

The Nekoosa trail system is planned to consist of multi-use trails, pathways and routes that are multi-seasonal; with different uses appropriate at different times of the year. Some trails will be paved while other will have natural surfaces. Additionally, some trails may be on-street routes, while others, off-street paths.

Recommended trail uses:

- Bicycling/Mountain Biking
- Walking/Hiking
- Running/Jogging
- Cross-Country Skiing/Snowshoeing
- In-Line Skating/Skate Skiing/Skateboarding
- Environmental Education/Interpretation
- Fishing Access
- Portaging

Potential future trail uses:

- ATV/UTV
- Snowmobile

The community survey sent out in April, 2017 showed that trails ranked high as a recreation priority for many residents. One reason for this popularity is that they provide the means for many activities regardless of age or athletic ability, and in many cases they may provide a safer and healthier means of visiting neighbors, picking up a few things from the store, or biking to work or school.

Paved trails shall have a minimum width of 8 to 10-foot with an asphalt surface. The existing paved trails in Nekoosa meet this standard. Paved trails are more expensive than gravel, however, they are more likely to be used by the elderly and handicapped. Although paved trails are recommended, site restrictions as well as limited funding will result in a variety of trail widths utilizing a variety of construction materials. Natural surfaced trails and path widths will vary depending on location. The minimum width should be no less than 18 to 30 inches. Trail surface material could include native soil, recycled black-top, gravel, wood chips, mowed grass, etc.



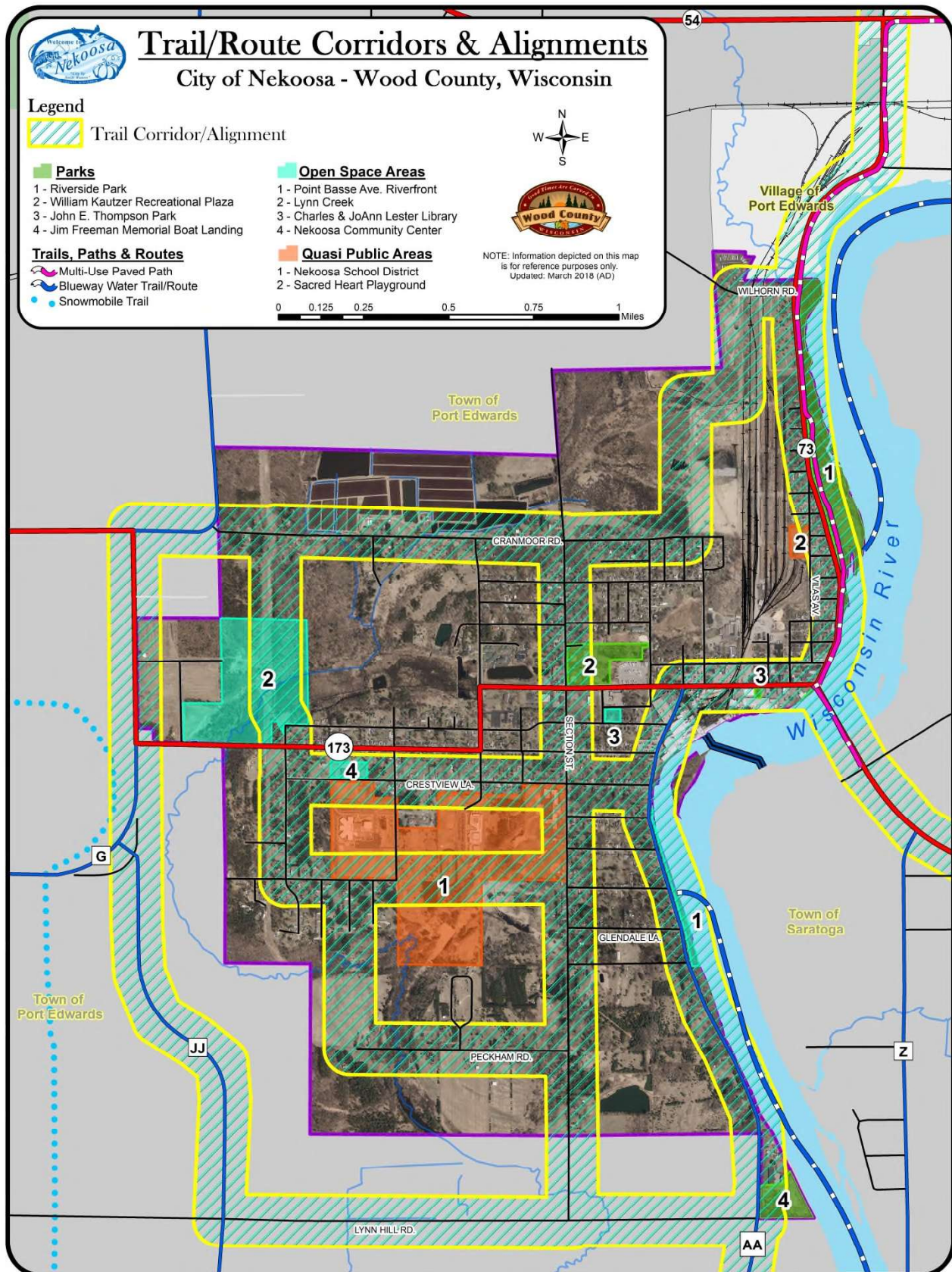
Future trails in the network should be off-road where possible. This design philosophy addresses safety concerns and promotes diversity in trail users. The trails would be open year-round and will be universally accessible to the greatest extent possible. Motorized vehicles will not be allowed except for maintenance and emergencies. To make the trail experience safer and more enjoyable, lighting may be installed where necessary, and directional, informational and educational signage could be provided. Parking areas may be designated to provide access to the trail by all. Flowers, landscaping, and benches may be added to improve the overall aesthetics of the trail experience.

The CORP Planning Committee received input from two local ATV/UTV clubs (Saratoga ATV/UTV Riders Club and Petenwell ATV Club). The clubs were in support of potential ATV/UTV routes in the city limits that provide a linkage to bordering towns. The committee analyzed: existing ATV/UTV routes in the Town of Port Edwards and Town of Saratoga, road classifications and jurisdictions, potential access points to the city, destination locations for users, and stakeholder input to identify a potential ATV/UTV route in the city. Through this analysis two potential routes were identified. The first potential route: Section Street from city limits (south) to W 3rd Street, W 3rd Street from Section Street to North Street, North Street from W 3rd Street to 1st Street, 1st Street from North Street to Prospect Avenue/State Hwy. 73. The second potential route: County Highway AA/Point Basse Avenue from Lynn Hill Road/city limits (south) to 1st Street, 1st Street from Point Basse Avenue to Prospect Avenue/State Highway 73. A linkage across the bridge to the Town of Saratoga is identified and desired, however, the bridge is a State Highway with higher traffic counts. The Property, Recreation and Human Affairs Committee should further analyze the feasibility of creating ATV/UTV routes. The city should work in coordination with residents, clubs and applicable road jurisdiction (state, county and town) on any future routes and obtain required approvals.

Corridors & Alignments

The Nekoosa trail system is planned to provide connectivity to all areas of the community, as well as linkages to surrounding communities. Trail corridors illustrated in (Figure 6) represent potential trail alignments. Any route, or combination of routes, within the search corridor could be a potential trail alignment. The corridors identified in this plan are not the only possible alignments, but rather, several options at the time of planning. The corridors generally follow the most scenic, feasible, and desirable routes. The goal is to find alignments that take users off road right-of-ways, provide access to natural and community amenities, and find scenic routes to showcase the Wisconsin River. Utilizing a combination of designated on-street routes and off-street trails could expedite the process of creating a contiguous trail segment.

Figure 6: Trail/Route Corridors & Alignments



General Recommendations



Improvements considered for all Nekoosa outdoor recreation facilities include: landscaping; installation of picnic tables and grills, benches, and trash receptacles; signage for informational and educational purposes.

Minimal cost and impact improvements such as mowed grass trails or cleared brush through wooded areas may be sufficient to convert seldom-used public property into recreational opportunities.

The City of Nekoosa has a park and recreation system that is maintained on the existing city budget. Adding additional parks to the park system, in order to meet the increasing demands for additional outdoor recreation activities, would only increase the demand on an already limited budget. 88% of the community survey respondents placed a medium to high priority on enhancing existing park and recreation areas. While, only 61% of community survey respondents placed a medium to high priority on developing new parks and recreation areas. Where appropriate, Nekoosa should utilize existing parks to expand the recreation opportunities available.

The City of Nekoosa should thoroughly evaluate the recreational usage of the Wisconsin River and adjacent flowages. The city should begin efforts to preserve and appropriately develop the Wisconsin River Corridor. This should be a cooperative effort between the county, city, and towns to maintain the quality of this corridor for public recreation and enhancement of water quality.

Accessibility

Local municipalities must ensure that all park and recreation programs and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities, per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Nekoosa should complete an evaluation of the accessibility of its existing facilities, programs, and services. This will provide future direction on how to achieve compliance with ADA requirements.

All existing outdoor recreation facilities that are repaired, modified or reconstructed should meet the requirements of ADA. Furthermore, any new outdoor recreation development should meet ADA requirements. A few examples of accessible designs include: wide doorways, specialized playground equipment, ramps, wider parking spaces, etc.

Trails shall be accessible to people with disabilities wherever possible. Trail surface, grade and width should meet ADA guidelines. Grades in excess of 5% may be unavoidable on some natural surfaced trails.

Funding Resources

The most common challenge is low funding for the development of park and outdoor recreation facilities. The most common remedies include finding alternative public revenue sources, soliciting donations, and obtaining grant funding. While the scope of the recommendations in this plan is large and may be beyond the current financial capability of the City of Nekoosa, this should not influence adoption of the plan.

Grant funding programs are available to assist the city in implementing this plan. The city should take advantage of any local, state, and federal aid programs. Outdoor recreation grant programs administered by the WDNR and other related funding programs are detailed in (Appendix E.) of this plan. Additionally, Incourage Community Foundation administers grant programs that advance equity, opportunity, and shared stewardship in the south Wood County area.

There are a variety of other funding opportunities that focus on parks and recreation facilities and activities. Some grant programs have funds available on a reoccurring basis while some are available on a one-time basis. City staff and elected officials should monitor grant funding opportunities on a regular basis

Fundraising can bring the community together in an effort to achieve a common goal. This method of funding gives the community a sense of ownership in the projects and builds civic pride. The City of Nekoosa should explore public/private partnerships to share the responsibility of providing a diverse, high quality parks and recreation system. Since fundraising and grant funding are so important to the success of future outdoor recreation amenities in Nekoosa, the following strategies are important to identify and implement to ensure success:

- **Community Informational Documents-** Incorporate a form for donations into community informational documents, such as newsletters, pamphlets, and recreation maps.
- **Fundraising Committee-** Establish a fundraising committee tasked with coordinating funding efforts.
- **Donor Recognition-** Implement ways of recognizing the efforts of donors.
- **Grants-** Establish a grant writing team comprised of local leaders, citizens and others.

Partnerships, Collaborations & Volunteers

Partnerships and collaborations can be highly effective in actualizing the goals and objectives of this plan. By combining the resources of two public agencies, the Nekoosa School District property allows for expanding the recreational, social, and educational opportunities available to the community in an



efficient and cost effective manner. School park sites often complement other community recreation areas. As an example, an elementary/middle school site could also serve as a neighborhood park. Likewise, middle or high school sports facilities could do double duty as a community park or as youth athletic fields. The important outcome in the joint-use relationship is that both the school district and Nekoosa outdoor recreation system benefit from shared use of facilities and land area. Moreover, the city should work in collaboration with Domtar Wisconsin Dam Corporation and the Nekoosa Lions Club to expand outdoor recreation opportunities in the community.

The backbone of many organizations is its volunteers, and the success of proposed projects in this plan is dependent on the generosity of individuals, organizations and businesses who donate their time, talents, services and materials. Relying on volunteerism and donations to better local communities and accomplish projects can be challenging, but is welcomed since it does not require a large amount of tax-levied money for implementation. The volunteer experience is embraced by the community, and at the same time it can be personally gratifying and have a positive impact on your community.

Operation & Maintenance

The Nekoosa Public Works Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the city's recreation system, including: parks, trails, open space, urban forestry, and the boat landing; along with many other public works functions. The department operates from their main office located in the Nekoosa City Hall, 951 Market Street. The department is comprised of 11 full-time employees, 2 part-time employees, and 4 part-time seasonal employees. Department budgets are approximately \$3,024,000 total annually; with \$100,000 budgeted to operate and maintain Nekoosa's outdoor recreation facilities. Revenues received are approximately \$15,000 in boat landing fees.

Major consideration should be given to the ongoing operation and maintenance costs of Nekoosa's outdoor recreation system. The City Council, and the Property, Recreation, and Human Affairs Committee acknowledge the responsibility to ensure that improvements to the recreation system are within the maintenance capabilities and budget of the city. This will ensure that recreation facilities are kept in excellent condition.



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VII. Appendices

- A. *City of Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation Map*
- B. *City of Nekoosa Parks & Outdoor Recreation Survey*
- C. *Community Survey Summary*
- D. *Kautzer Recreational Plaza/Splash Pad Concept Plans*
- E. *Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs Administered by the WDNR*
- F. *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis*
- G. *City of Nekoosa Common Council Adoption Resolution*



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APPENDIX



City of Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation Map

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City of Nekoosa Outdoor Recreation Map

LEGEND

Parks

- 1 - Riverside Park
- 2 - William Kautzer Recreational Plaza
- 3 - John E. Thompson Park
- 4 - Jim Freeman Memorial Boat Landing

Trails, Paths & Routes

- Multi-Use Paved Path
- Blueway Water Trail/Route
- Snowmobile Trail

Open Space Areas

- 1 - Point Basse Ave. Riverfront
- 2 - Lynn Creek
- 3 - Charles & JoAnn Lester Library
- 4 - Nekoosa Community Center

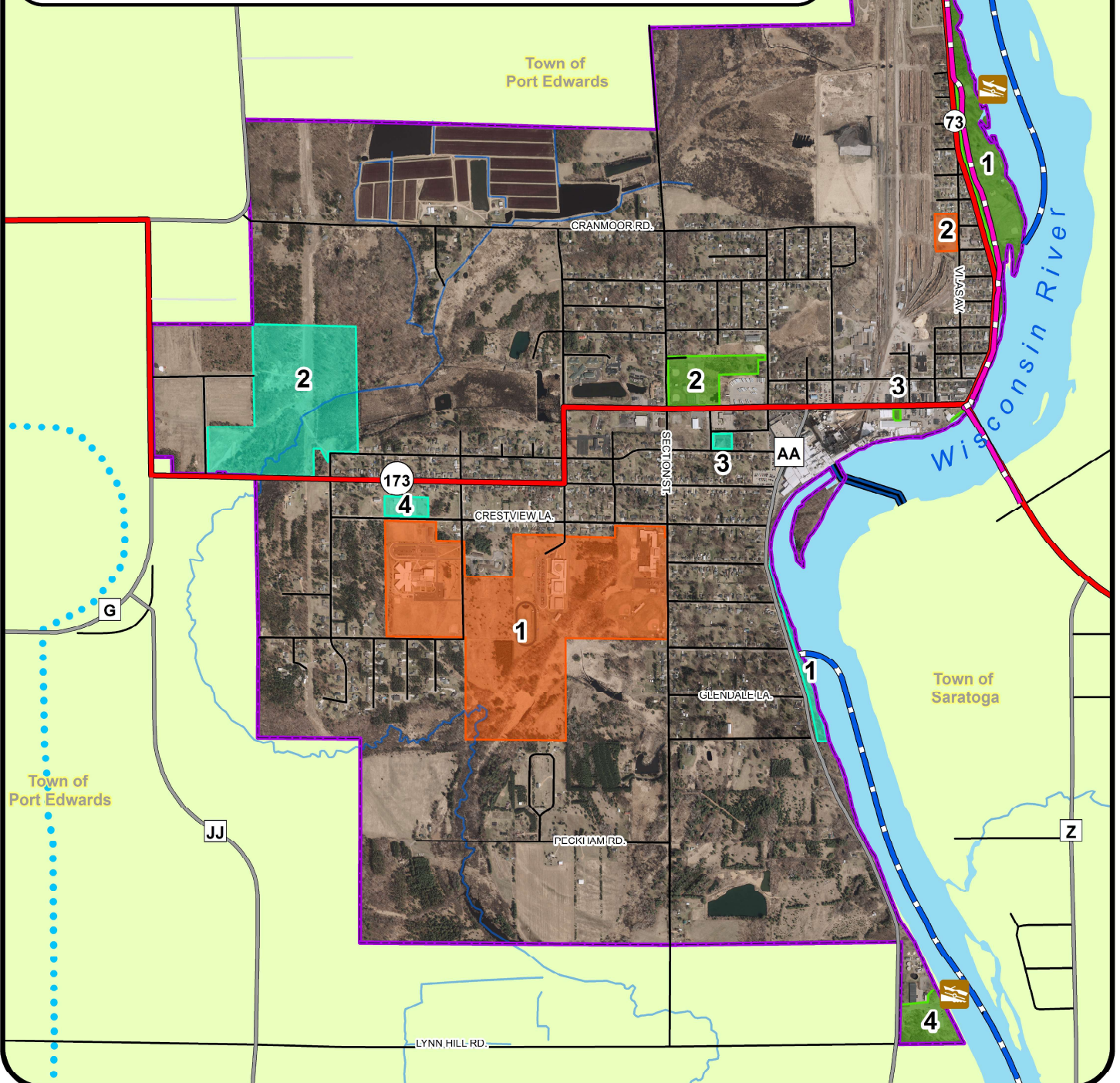
Quasi Public Areas

- 1 - Nekoosa School District
- 2 - Sacred Heart Playground



NOTE: Information depicted on this map is for reference purposes only.
CREATED: August 2017 (AD)

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles



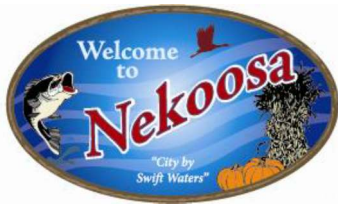
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APPENDIX

B

City of Nekoosa Parks & Outdoor Recreation Survey

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City of Nekoosa

Parks & Outdoor Recreation Survey

The purpose of this questionnaire is to survey opinions of Nekoosa residents, and to determine the future needs for outdoor recreation facilities, services, and opportunities in our community. The survey is anonymous and confidential. Please take a few minutes to complete the survey.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN BY MAY 1st, 2017:

Option 1: Return with sewer/water bill.

Option 2: Drop off at City Hall, Charles & JoAnn Lester Library, or sewer/water bill drop-off box.

Option 3: Mail to: City Hall 951 Market St. Nekoosa, WI 54457 (*see back side*).

(Questions 1-6 please check your answer)

1. Have you or members of your household visited any Nekoosa parks during the past year?

____(1) Yes ____ (2) No

2. Approximately how often did you or members of your household visit Nekoosa parks over the past year?

____(1) 0 to 5 visits ____ (2) 6 to 10 visits ____ (3) 11 to 19 visits ____ (4) 20 or more visits

3. Overall, how would you rate the condition of ALL Nekoosa parks visited?

____(1) Excellent ____ (2) Good ____ (3) Fair ____ (4) Poor

4. How important are parks and outdoor recreation opportunities to the overall quality of life in Nekoosa?

____(1) Very Important ____ (2) Somewhat Important ____ (3) Not Important

5. Do you think the City of Nekoosa should develop more parks and trails?

____(1) Yes ____ (2) No

6. Do you think that Nekoosa should offer recreation programs and services?

____(1) Yes ____ (2) No

7. How much priority, if any, should each statement have? (*Please circle one answer per question*)

Pursue, promote and develop recreation opportunities

on and along the Wisconsin River..... NOT LOW MEDIUM HIGH

Encourage the enhancement of existing parks and recreation areas.....

NOT LOW MEDIUM HIGH

Encourage the development of new parks and recreation areas.....

NOT LOW MEDIUM HIGH

Preserve and protect the natural environment.....

NOT LOW MEDIUM HIGH

8. Check up to SIX amenities you would like to see in new/existing park areas:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ☐ Paved Trails | ☐ Restroom Facilities | ☐ Picnic Area/Shelter |
| ☐ Natural Surfaced Trails | ☐ Sport Courts/Fields | ☐ Snowshoe Trails |
| ☐ Playground Equipment | ☐ Ice Skating | ☐ Mountain Biking Trails |
| ☐ Open/Green Space | ☐ Canoe/Kayak Landings | ☐ Cross Country Skiing Trails |
| ☐ Campground | ☐ Dog Park | ☐ Other _____ |
| ☐ Fishing Piers | ☐ Sledding | ☐ Other _____ |

9. Additional comments or suggestions?

Thank you for supporting the planning efforts in your community by completing and returning this survey!

****PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY BY MAY 1st, 2017****

(tape closed)

(fold)

CITY OF NEKOOSA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
951 MARKET STREET
NEKOOSA, WI 54457

*Place
Stamp
Here*

CITY OF NEKOOSA MUNICIPAL BUILDING
951 MARKET STREET
NEKOOSA, WI 54457

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APPENDIX **C**

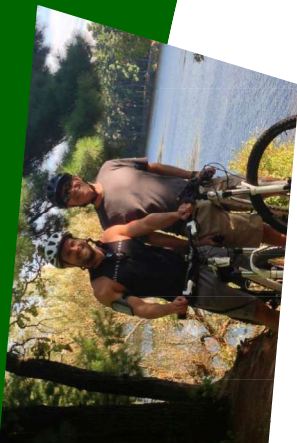
Community Survey Summary

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Community Survey Summary

Nekoosa Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (C.O.R.P.)

May 2017



Compiled by:

City of Nekoosa CORP Planning Committee



In collaboration with:

Wood County Department of Planning & Zoning



INTRODUCTION

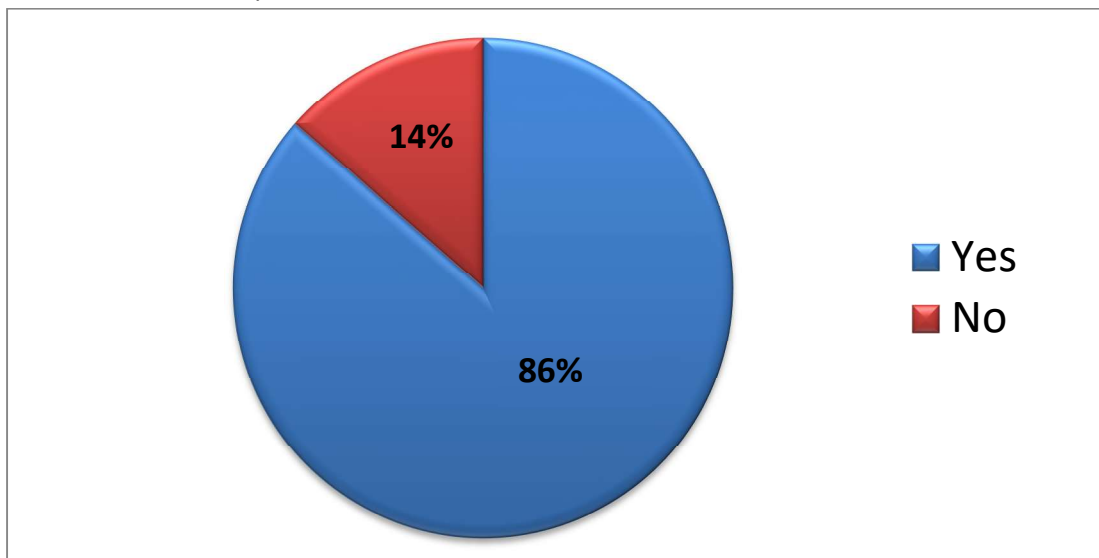
The City of Nekoosa, Wood County, began developing its first Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (C.O.R.P.) in the fall of 2016. A public participation strategy was identified early in the planning process to incorporate an accurate representation of resident opinion into the plan. A community survey of all Nekoosa residents was one means of collecting public input. Surveys were mailed out to each household along with the Nekoosa Newsletter in April 2017. Over 200 residents completed and returned the survey by the May 2017 deadline. The survey gathered information on preferred outdoor recreation amenities, park usage, and attitudes towards the development and enhancement of outdoor recreation opportunities in the community.

This report summarizes the needs, desires and attitudes of Nekoosa residents in regards to parks and outdoor recreation in their community. The report presents numeric tabulation and graphic representation of the questions and answers in the community survey. The input collected through this survey will be used by the C.O.R.P. Planning Committee to develop goals, objectives and recommendations for the plan.



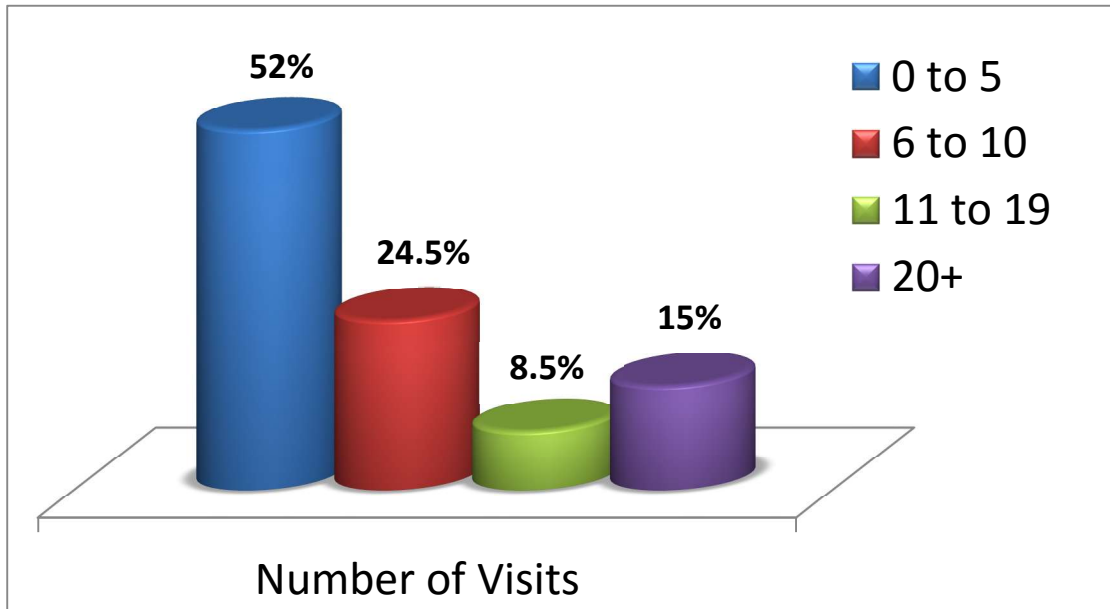
Question 1: Have you or members of your household visited any Nekoosa parks during the past year?

- 86% of respondents answered yes
- 14% of respondents answered no



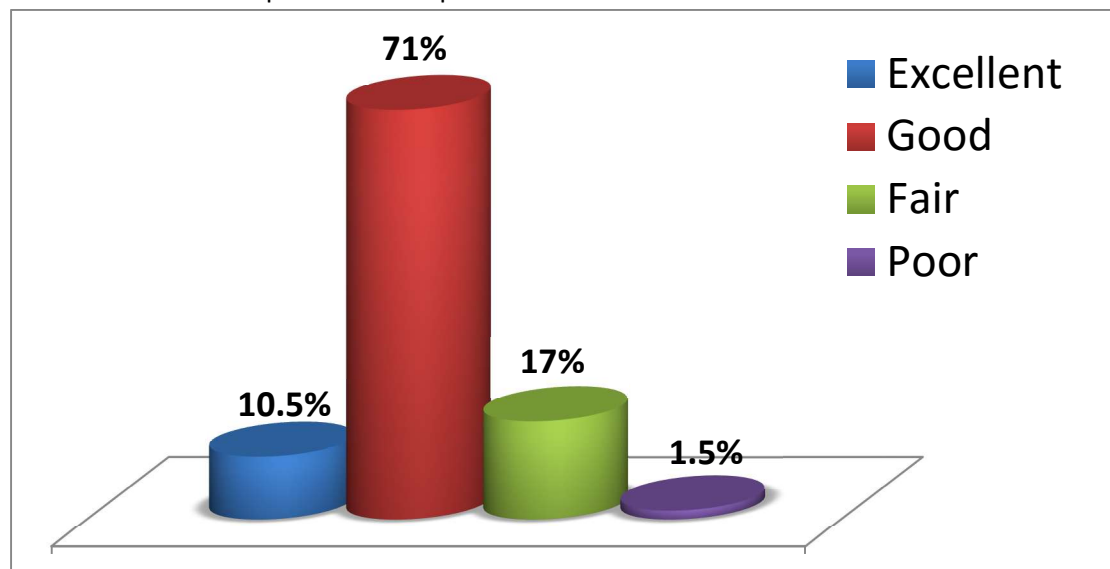
Question 2: Approximately how often did you or members of your household visit Nekoosa parks over the past year?

- 52% of respondents answered 0 to 5 visits
- 24.5% of respondents answered 6 to 10 visits
- 8.5% of respondents answered 11 to 19 visits
- 15% of respondents answered 20 or more visits



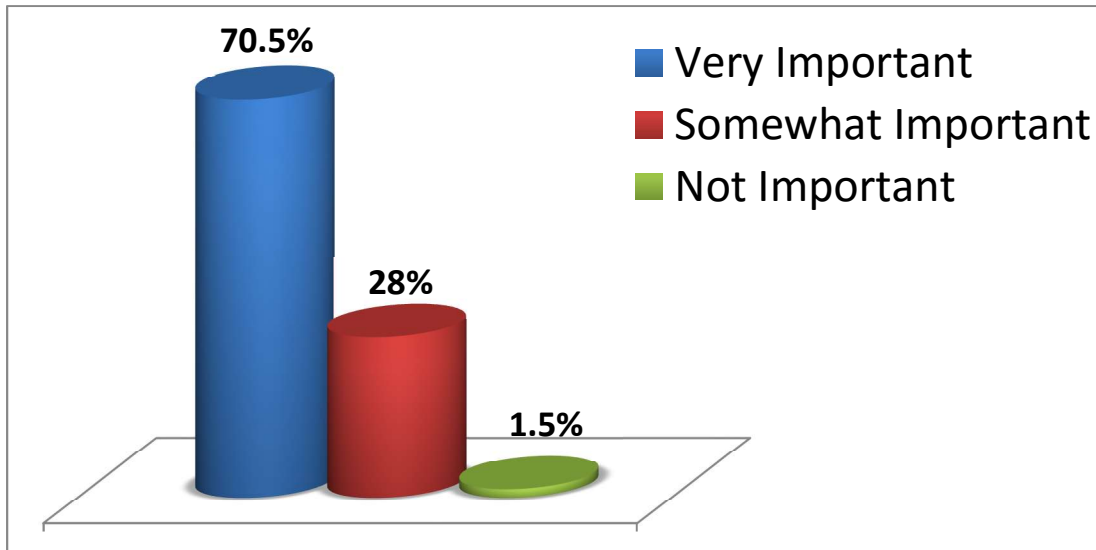
Question 3: Overall, how would you rate the condition of all Nekoosa parks visited?

- 10.5% of respondents said excellent
- 71% of respondents said good
- 17% of respondents said fair
- 1.5% of respondents said poor



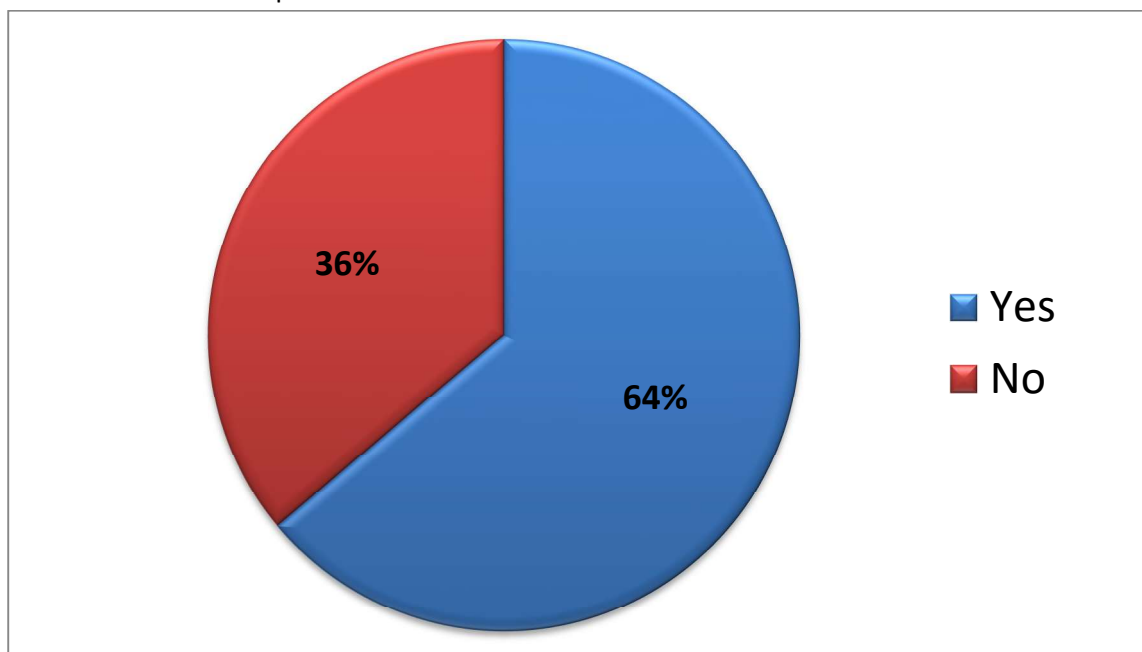
Question 4: How important are parks and outdoor recreation opportunities to the overall quality of life in Nekoosa?

- 70.5% of respondents said very important
- 28% of respondents said somewhat important
- 1.5% of respondents said not important



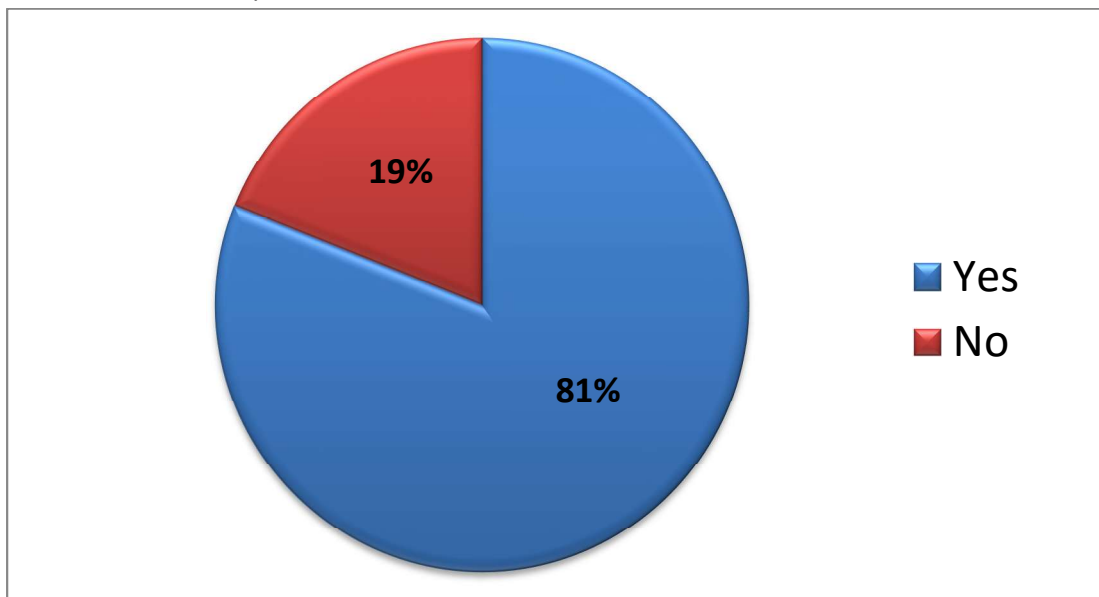
Question 5: Do you think the City of Nekoosa should develop more parks and trails?

- 64% of respondents answered yes
- 36% of respondents answered no

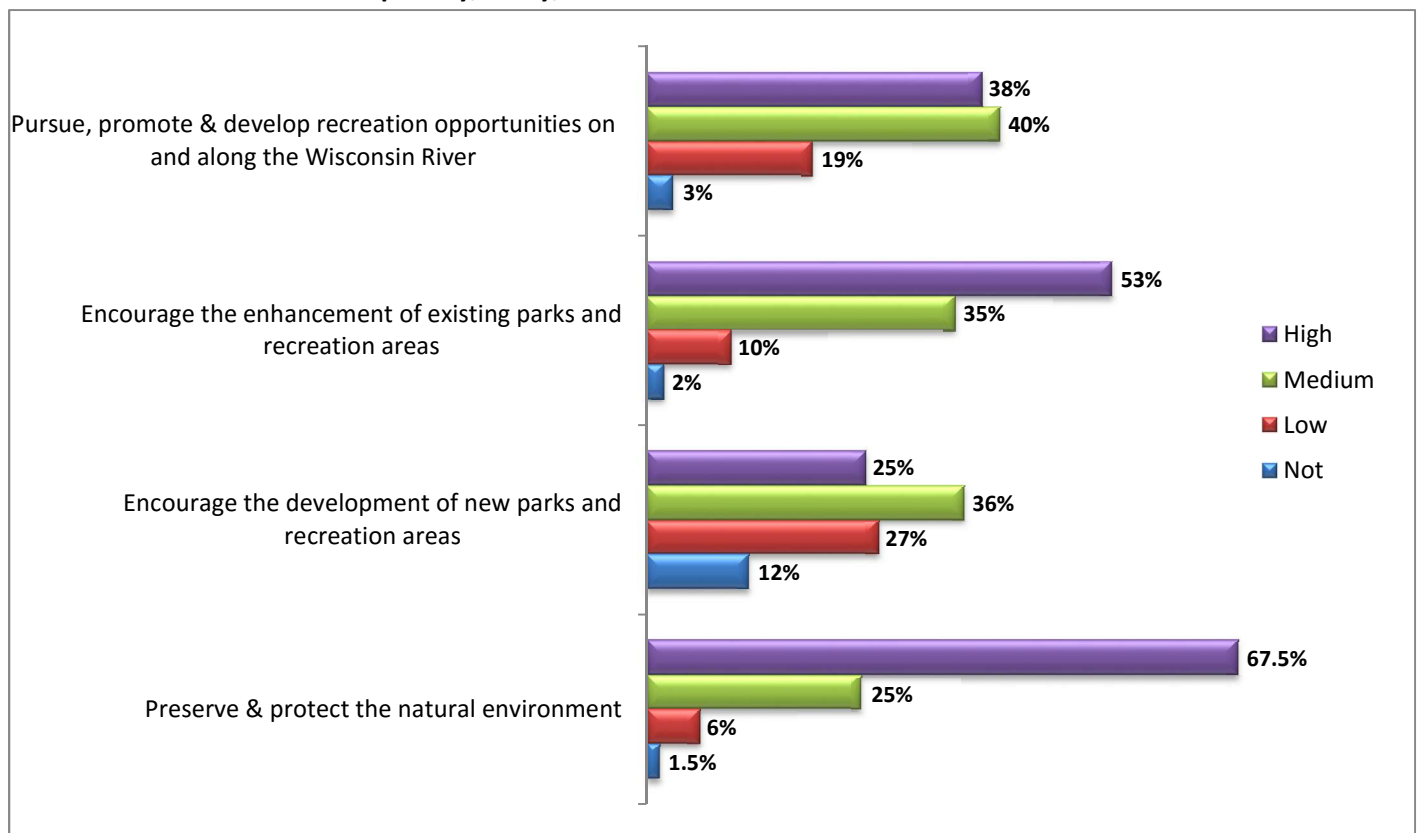


Question 6: Do you think that Nekoosa should offer recreation programs and services?

- 81% of respondents answered yes
- 19% of respondents answered no



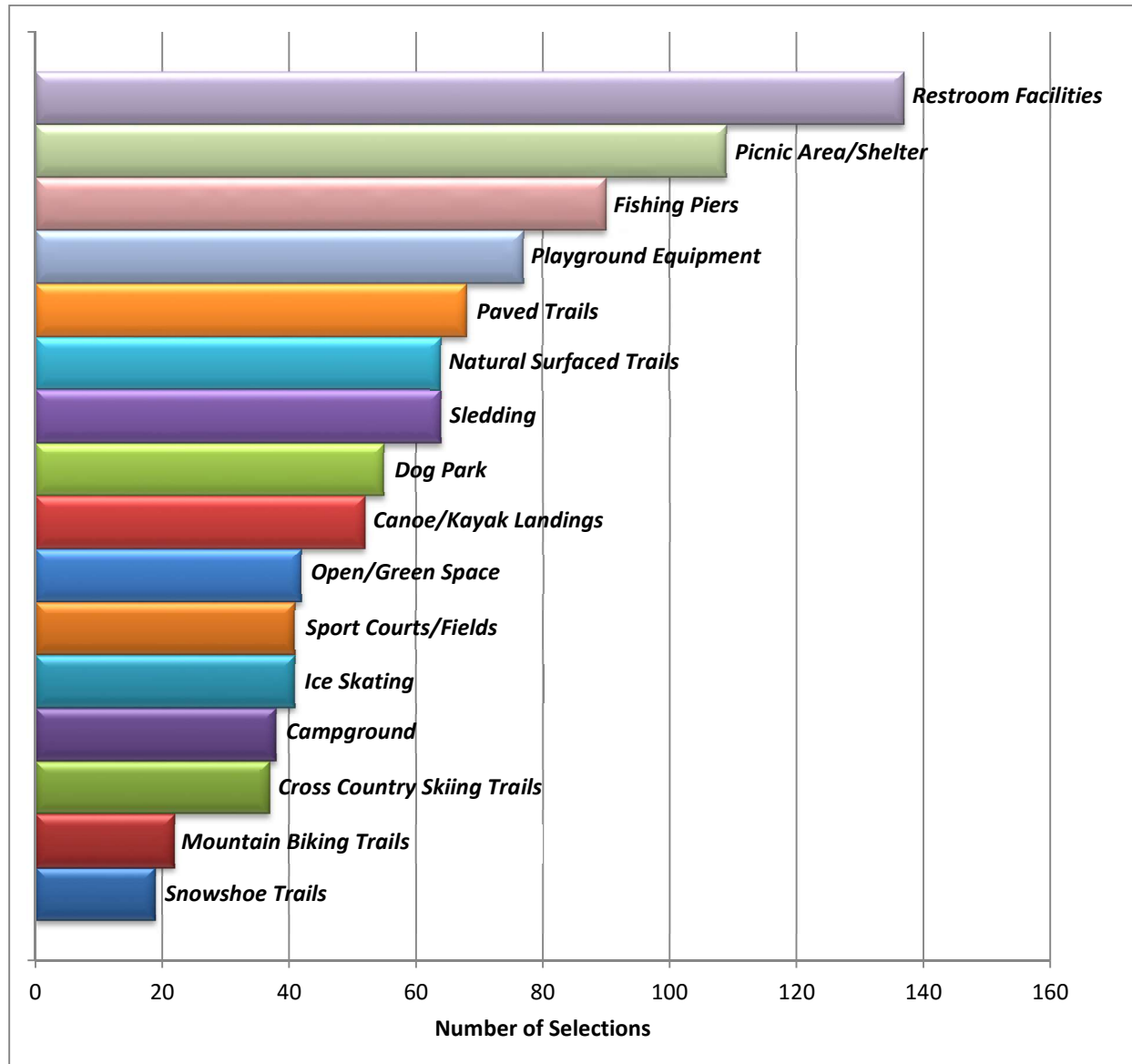
Question 7: How much priority, if any, should each statement have?



Question 8: Check up to SIX amenities you would like to see in new/existing park areas:

➤ Top six amenities selected by respondents were:

- 1- Restroom Facilities (+135)
- 2- Picnic Area/Shelter (+105)
- 3- Fishing Piers (90)
- 4- Playground Equipment (+75)
- 5- Paved Trails (+65)
- 6- Natural Surfaced Trails (+60)



Question 9: Additional comments or suggestions?

- You people are to be commended - Well done!
- Our environment around here is a blessing!
- Outdoor recreation is greatly appreciated.
- An outdoor stage for live music, something like Piffner Park in Stevens Point, with restroom facilities close by. Summer concerts, music fests, etc. room for vendors.
- I moved to Nekoosa this year and love the area very much. I have 9 grandkids and they love the parks here.
- Keep everything natural and environmentally sound. Don't do anything more if it means raising our taxes!
- Buy the area by Piggly Wiggly and apartments. Clean up and make into a park area for retirement people.
- First maintain the parks we have.
- We don't need higher taxes. Doing more to the parks would mean an increase in tax.
- Shooting range
- Make Riverside Park/Path more pedestrian friendly by: 1. Add more pedestrian cross walks along Prospect Ave. 2. Reduce the speed limit to 30 mph. Enforce Prospect Ave. speed limit. 3. Ticket vehicles that exceed the noise ordinance.
- Get rid of geese problem down in park. Add restroom on north side of park.
- Yes the kids need that splash pad. We need to keep them busy with fun things.
- Need a pool and outdoor memorial of how Nekoosa came about.
- We are not Wisconsin Dells, we are a small town. Maybe you alderman try to save the taxpayers some money instead of spending on foolish playground equipment and etc. and put money towards road projects and try to lower water bills and property taxes so you can get people to move into this town. There must be 50 houses in this town for sale, this probably is why people don't move here, high taxes, high water bills and ?X#*% roads.
- Swimming pool
- Continue bike paths. Partner with schools and library for recreation programs and services.
- Lower water bills.
- Need walking trail between mill and boat landing/sewer plant. Cars go too fast along Point Basse to walk there without a trail.
- Let's work on keeping Point Basse river shoreline clean.
- Snowmobile & ATV friendly to & from the City!
- Still promote economic development. It doesn't have to be one or the other. Be reasonable! Both concepts should and can work together!
- Extend the bike path and loop it around Nekoosa. Have trails that connect to school district trails.
- ATV route into city. Town of Port Edwards has new board member supporting "all roads" open for ATV/UTV use. Would be nice to have connecting route for ATV/UTV into City of Nekoosa.
- Between the city and schools we have plenty of recreational facilities. Even if you get grants to build these things they turn into money pits down the road. We need to support public works servicing and road repair.
- You need to tile Riverside Park - it is an eye sore.
- What we have is sufficient. What is needed was a pool. I don't need to see another memorial or park. Get our water bills decreased - that's what's necessary!!!
- Water Park & Pool
- To save natural trails can be used for snowshoe and cross country skiing trails.
- No splash pad. Who will pay for upkeep?
- A pickle ball court should be placed on 1 tennis court. Believe play would be heavy once people were aware of it.
- Open up to UTV/Snowmobile routes and connect trail ways. UTV trail access from city.
- City importation.
- Mini Golf & Splash Pad.
- Swimming Pool. Pay more attention to what young families need instead of the elderly community. Families are the future of Nekoosa. My children age 20 & 30 won't be back to Nekoosa to raise their family because there is nothing here. Nekoosa raised a bazillion dollar for a community center that families use but tore out the community pool which my family used all the time. Who voted on that???
- Build a covered shelter in the Thompson Park area like the ones in the park to rent out for family gatherings & no mess from geese. Front area would still be available for Christmas decorations. Rear building could be used for the roast and baked potato contest too.
- A letter like this would have been nice in regards to the swimming pool. There could have been a fundraiser or something to keep that. Fix the roads instead of spending money on a park.
- You would have a beautiful green space if you still hadn't let them build that stupid box store.
- Parks-No, Trails-Yes

- When I was a kid we "lived" at the pool. Hated to see it go. Hopefully the new splash pad will be a place for kids to go in summer-use & enjoy w/their friends. We need things for older kids & the teens to do.
- Pool in cooperation with Nekoosa School District. Band shell for Music (live)/Scheduled Events
- ATV Trail
- Would like to see an outdoor movie theater put up in one of the parks so families can go one night a week (preferably on fri or sat nights). This would not only bring family time back to families but also help the town people to get know everyone in town and their merchant's owners.
- I am very happy to see that Nekoosa is putting in a splash pad. My granddaughter goes to one in Madison and she loves it. She is looking forward to coming and going to ours.
- ATV Trails - Just like Crandon, Park Falls, Phillips, Eagle River and many others have ATV routes right through town.
- It would be awesome if the park was like Kash Park in Stevens Point and to have more trees around the playground so everything isn't hot.
- Please! The roads in Nekoosa need to be fixed before we can think about parks. The goose dropping problem needs to be solved in our beautiful Riverside Park before we can enhance it. Thank you to all the people that try to make Nekoosa a better place to live.
- Event with family to go to in the park that is on the weekend during the day.
- Would really like a dog park. Always have to go to Rome. :-{
- Nekoosa is a wonderful place to raise kids. Happy to see the city leaders are making an effort to keep interest in the city & families wanting to relocate here. Outside activities promote a good, healthy, lifestyle. You are doing a great job.
- Keep what we have clean and in good repair.
- More entertainment.
- Streets could use some cleaning up.
- Would go down more often if it weren't for the goose poop. It's pretty nasty, and smelly!! And the restrooms are not reliable w/supplies.
- Would love to see miniature golf course. It would benefit all ages, both sexes, fun for the whole family and reasonable.
- Work with the Boys and Girls Club and offer activities for kids who have nowhere else to go. Organize an opportunity to transport kids to the Y for swimming lessons/use of Y facilities.
- Develop campground by boat landing area.
- Control geese. Have pumpkin fest by river. Have small swimming pool so kid can learn how to swim and that will give kids a summer job.
- New splash pad-heard that it won't be recycling the water?? Please reconsider & recycle the water! Invest now & it will pay off in the future!!! And be better for our kid's environment!
- Restroom facilities-Upgrade one by river.
- More docks.
- Water activities.
- Place for teens to hang out/supervised.
- Fix tennis court add lessons in the library program.
- The grass needs to be filled in w/more dirt. It's always wet. Had to play on swings & things when the grass is flooded.
- I don't feel as the city should dispose of any items attached to a grave stone in the cemetery at their discretion. Clean up in the cemetery has taken place every year, but not totally stripped. Hope you are proud!
- Work with the school district to develop a nature trail that is handicapped accessible, ready for bikes, learning opportunities, bird watching, cross country skiing...
- I still & always think a swimming pool would be the best for our town. We have a lot of small children that would use it over a splash pad.
- Groom bike trails in winter to use as CC ski trails. Adult exercise areas (outdoor) Stairs for sledding hill. Cleaner sidewalks-edged.
- Eliminate geese by Riverside Park - very messy - doo doo all over. Can't take kids to play - not healthy.
- Basketball courts-full size (more than 1)
- Get rid of the geese in Riverside Park so it is usable without all of the goose manure. Improve the level of maintenance of the cemetery to the level of 2014 & 2015. Enforce the boat launching fee method of the boat landing at the city garage.
- Need a shooting range back in Nekoosa.
- More senior things.
- Clean-up/ remove tree brush & down trees along Riverside Park & river on south end of grave sites. It's an eye sore to see not only for people living here but visitors coming here.
- Do not put garbage cans next to the benches where a person sits along the walking path. Who wants to sit next to a garbage can?
- Clean up the marsh and wet lands in Nekoosa area. People are throwing trash in these areas.
- Picnic Area/Shelter – Enclosed.
- Sport Courts/Fields-pickle ball. Extend bike trail
- Swimming area and natural areas.

- Would love to use the disk golf course along the Wisconsin River in Riverside park however the course is not marked and there are no launch pads in place.
- We need somewhere in Nekoosa to swim. Years ago a swimming pond was mentioned. That would be wonderful!! Summer programs for kids would be great.
- Band shelter in town for family movie night & bands to play.
- The largest playground is by the river, however, this park is not as nice as the one by the library. The park by the river often has standing water/sloppy areas; no shady areas near the playground, and too much mess from the geese!! I would move that playground up to where the pool was.
- Clean up the space by the cemetery, encourage businesses to keep their properties well kept & sidewalks weed free, keep the city building lawn green & weed free, clean up the wet lands across from the city building (Safety Center). Unfortunately the way Nekoosa presents itself – no one drives through town and thinks WOW I'd really like to live here. I've seen worse small towns but I've seen a lot better ones too.
- I feel that the City of Nekoosa needs to put our money back in the outlay accounts so there is funds for the equipment needed, after you have a budget that plans for the city needs then save money for parks & toys.
- Gun & rifle range.
- It would be beneficial to have the biking path continue along the river by Point Basse down Hwy A area for safety.
- It would be wonderful to see Nekoosa offer a "parks & rec" type program! I don't think more parks need to be added, just upkeep to the parks Nekoosa already has.
- Just upkeep what we have already.
- Better lighting & electrical updates. Better playground equipment - swings - merry go round in poor condition.
- Splash pad in Nekoosa! Having Nekoosa put Christmas lights along the Nekoosa Riverside Park was great! Look forward to seeing that grow!!
- Lower monthly water bill-its triple the cost of other cities.
- Pool.
- I feel you're doing a real good job! Hope the children use the skate park more!!
- Splash pad.
- Try to promote healthy, outdoor activities for youth.

The Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning would like to thank all who participated in the planning process.



Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning

Adam R. DeKleyn, County Planner

400 Market Street

P.O. Box 8095

Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-8095

<http://www.co.wood.wi.us/>

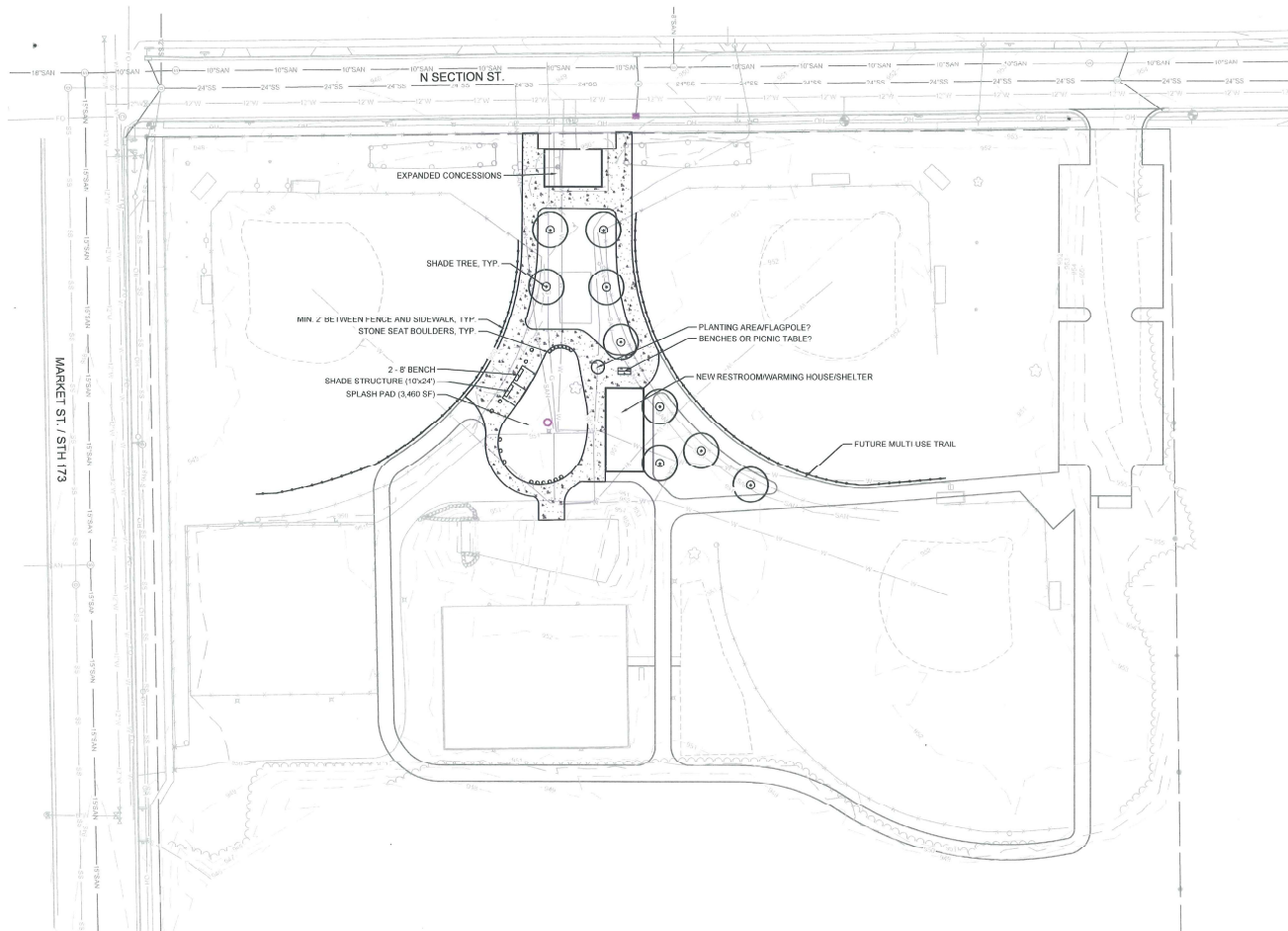
(715) 421-8466

APPENDIX

D

Kautzer Recreational Plaza/Splash Pad Concept Plans

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PROJECT NO.	00146054	SCALE	AS SHOWN	DATE		REVISION	
PROJECT NAME		DRAWN BY	BT				
F.R.		CHECKED BY	TNT				
PLT DATE	10/20/18	FILE NO.	00146054-001	CONSTRUCTION	Phase 1 Laid		



ARCHITECTURE / PLANNING / ENGINEERING / SURVEYING
 146 North Central Ave. Marshfield, WI 54449
 (715) 844-2143 (715) 294-6577
 www.msa-wi.com
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SPLASHPAD AND PARK IMPROVEMENTS
 CITY OF NEKOOSA
 WOOD COUNTY, WI

PHASE 1 LAYOUT

00146054
 P 1



vortex-intl.com

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Kautzer Splashpad®, WI
Revision 02 - Option 03 - 26425

View 1





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Kautzer Splashpad®, WI
Revision 02 - Option 03 - 26425

View 2



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APPENDIX

E

Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs Administered by the WDNR

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Outdoor Recreation Grant Programs Administered by the WWDR:

All Terrain Vehicle Trails

Section 23.33, Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 64, Wis. Admin. Code

Counties, cities, villages, and towns are eligible for up to 100% (including \$ per mile caps) of the costs of maintenance, development, rehabilitation, insurance, and acquisition of ATV trails and intensive use areas. Applications are due to the DNR by April 15 each year. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, over \$3.4 million was available for eligible projects through ATV registration funds and motor fuel tax funds.

ATV Enforcement Patrol

Section 23.33 (9), Wis. Stats.; s. NR 64.15, Wis. Admin. Code

County Sheriff Departments are eligible for up to 100% of their net costs (salaries, fringe benefits, travel, materials, supplies, etc.) associated with all-terrain vehicle patrols and enforcement. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the DNR on or before July 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the DNR on or before September 1. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, \$500,000 was available.

County Conservation Aids

Section 23.09 (12), Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 50, Wis. Admin. Code

Counties or recognized Indian tribes are eligible for 50% of the costs of carrying out fish or wildlife management projects that enhance fish and wildlife habitat or relate to hunter/angler facilities. Applications are submitted throughout the year until funding is depleted. For the 2012-13 fiscal year, \$297,000 is available.

Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration

16 U.S.C. 777-777k, 64 Stat. 430 (also known as Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act)

The DNR prioritizes fisheries related projects (sport fish restoration, boating access, fishing piers) to identify projects eligible for a 75% cost share; the DNR sometimes negotiates contracts and develops use agreements with counties, villages, and towns for use of this funding for construction of boat landings and fishing piers. The amount of funding available varies depending upon excise tax revenue from fishing equipment sales and the federal gas tax.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Programs: Acquisition and Development of Local Parks

Section 23.09(20), Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 51, subchapter XII, Wis. Admin. Code

Qualified towns, villages, cities, counties, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations as defined under s. 23.096, Wis. Stats., are eligible for up to 50% of the costs of acquisition of land or conservation easements and development of facilities for public park and

recreation areas used for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. For the 2011-12 fiscal year, \$8.0 million was available for eligible projects.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Programs: Acquisition of Development Rights

Section 23.09(20m), Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 51, subchapter XV, Wis. Admin. Code

Qualified towns, villages, cities, counties, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations as defined under s. 23.096, Wis. Stats., are eligible for up to 50% of the costs to acquire development rights (conservation easements) in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial, or commercial development would provide or enhance nature-based outdoor recreation. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. For the 2012-13 fiscal year, \$800,000 is available for eligible projects.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Programs: Urban Green Space

Section 23.09(19), Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 51, subchapter XIII, Wis. Admin. Code

Qualified towns, villages, cities, counties, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations as defined under s. 23.096, Wis. Stats., are eligible for up to 50% of the costs of acquisition of land and conservation easements for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes that will protect open natural space and land with scenic, ecological, or natural values in urban areas. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. For the 2011-12 fiscal year, \$1.6 million was available for eligible projects.

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Local Assistance Programs: Urban Rivers

Section 30.277, Wis. Stats.; Ch. NR 51, subchapter XIV, Wis. Admin. Code

Qualified towns, villages, cities, counties, Indian tribes, and nonprofit conservation organizations as defined under s. 23.096, Wis. Stats., are eligible for up to 50% of the costs of acquisition of land or conservation easements and development of facilities for public park and recreation areas, including shoreline enhancements, for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes along urban waterways and riverfronts. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. For the 2011-12 fiscal year, \$1.6 million was available for eligible projects.

Land and Water Conservation Fund

(LWCF) LWCF Act of 1965, Public Law 88-578, 78 Stat. 897; 36 CFR Ch 1, Part 59

Qualified towns, villages, cities, counties, Indian tribes, and school districts are eligible for up to 50% of the costs of acquisition of land and development of facilities for public park and recreation areas. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. The amount of funding available varies depending upon the amount appropriated by Congress to the program within the Department of Interior's budget each year.

Municipal Water Safety Patrols State Assistance

Section 30.79, Wis. Stats.

Municipalities, tribes, inland lake rehabilitation and protection districts, and sanitary districts are eligible to receive up to 75% of the costs (salaries, supplies, and equipment) of operating a Boating Law Enforcement program, including conducting boating education programs, providing professional enforcement of boating laws and local regulations, and providing search and rescue for live persons. Applicants must file an Intent to Patrol form with the DNR on or before March 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the DNR on or before January 31. For the 2010- 11 fiscal year, \$1.4 million was available.

Recreational Boating Facilities

Section 30.92, Wis. Stats.

Counties, cities, villages, towns, sanitary districts, public inland lake protection and rehabilitation districts, and qualified lake associations are eligible for up to 50% of the costs of feasibility studies and the construction of capital improvements related to the development of safe recreational boating facilities, purchase of aquatic weed harvesting equipment, purchase of navigation aids, dredging of channels of waterways, and chemical treatment of Eurasian watermilfoil. An additional 10% may be available if a municipality conducts a boating safety enforcement and education program approved by the DNR. Projects of statewide or regional significance may be eligible for additional 30% cost-sharing assistance. Applications are due to the DNR and are reviewed and recommended quarterly by the governor-appointed Wisconsin Waterways Commission. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, over \$2.5 million was available for eligible projects.

Recreational Trails Program

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - Title 23 United States Code (23 U.S.C.).

Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governing bodies, school districts, state agencies, federal agencies, and incorporated organizations are eligible to receive up to 50% of the costs of maintenance and restoration of existing trails, development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages, construction of new trails (with certain restrictions on federal lands), and acquisition of easements or property for trails. Funds are available for both motorized and non-motorized trails. Applications are due to the DNR by May 1 of each year. The amount of funding available varies depending upon federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used by off-highway vehicles.

Snowmobile Trail Aids

Section 23.09(26) and Ch. 350, Wis. Stats.

Counties are eligible for 100% (including \$ per mile caps) of the cost of approved trail maintenance, development, major bridge rehabilitation, and trail rehabilitation. Applications are due to the DNR by April 15 of each year. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, over \$7.3 million was available for eligible projects through snowmobile registration, motor fuel tax, and nonresident trail pass funds.

County Snowmobile Enforcement Patrols

Sections 350.12(4)(a)(4) and 20.370(4)(ft), Wis. Stats.; s. NR 50.12, Wis. Admin. Code

County sheriff departments are eligible for up to 100% of their net costs (salaries, fringe benefits, travel, materials, supplies, etc.) associated with snowmobile patrols and enforcement. A county must file a Notice of Intent to Patrol form with the DNR on or before June 1 of each year. Claim forms shall be filed with the DNR on or before June 1. For the 2010-11 fiscal year, \$396,000 was available.

APPENDIX

F

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

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Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis

– Nekoosa Community –

Strengths

- Wisconsin River – location/access/boat launches/scenic beauty/riverfront/recreation
- Affordable housing
- Access to full school system
- Local shopping and restaurants
- Room for businesses to grow
- Small town community
- Friendly and close-knit residents
- Safe and supportive community
- Year round activities
- Full level of municipal service
- Bike and pedestrian trail
- Grocery store
- Close proximity to Tri-Lakes and Lake Petenwell
- Great paper industry history
- Community events and activities: Pumpkinfest, Hometown Christmas, Walleye Days, etc.

Weaknesses

- Lower income/higher poverty level
- Lack of long range vision for city improvements and planning
- Funding/how to afford the needs of the community
- Need for a forestry program
- Not enough community trails/routes/paths
- Business recruitment
- Lower resident involvement in community
- No drive through appeal (e.g. flags on light poles, plants, etc.)
- Differing opinions within local leadership
- Downtown needs revitalization
- Lack of diversity in industry
- Future highly dependent on paper mill
- Small labor pool
- City cannot expand due to physical environmental limitations (e.g. river, wetlands, floodplain)

Opportunities

- More planning to provide direction and guidance for the city (economic development, recreation, housing, roads)
- Government financial organizations for rural areas
- Collaborations - REGI/school district/non-profits/city
- Develop strategy to educate citizens and area on Nekoosa services/opportunities
- Community is willing to work together to accomplish goals
- Christmas display/parade/fireworks
- Promote Nekoosa as a place to retire
- Promote as an area for businesses
- Community garden
- Pumpkinfest/Walleye Days
- Positive, optimistic people
- Sand Valley Golf Course
- Cooperation amongst groups (churches, schools, city, volunteers)
- Teaching kids ownership and pride
- Riverfront property
- Industrial park
- Lynn Creek open space area
- Room to improve downtown
- Ability for partnerships
- Natural resources
- Bridge crossing Wisconsin River
- Future splash pad

Threats

- Funding/Budgets
- Drugs/Crime
- Low income/poverty
- Not actively pursuing jobs and businesses to move here
- Lower test scores
- School losing staff
- Decreasing population
- Other communities in area are proposing projects and plans for economic development
- Lack of manufacturing diversity

*Developed by the Nekoosa Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee - 12/19/16
Facilitator – Adam DeKleyn - County Planner, Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning*

APPENDIX

G

City of Nekoosa Common Council Adoption Resolution

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RESOLUTION NO. _____

**ADOPTING THE CITY OF NEKOOSA
COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (CORP) – 2018**

WHEREAS, the City of Nekoosa's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee's vision is to provide, create and preserve a well versed recreation system that promotes a sustainable economy, a healthy environment, a good quality of life for its residents and visitors; and

WHEREAS, the City of Nekoosa, in cooperation with Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning, has prepared the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) - 2018; and,

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee developed a public participation strategy early in the planning process to ensure the plan truly represents the needs and desires of the community; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee conducted monthly outdoor recreation planning discussions at regular public meetings during 2017-2018; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning Committee has complied goals, objectives and recommendations that meet the current and future recreational needs of the community; and

WHEREAS, this plan inventories Nekoosa's existing outdoor recreation system and identifies foreseeable recreational needs for the City of Nekoosa; and

WHEREAS, this plan identifies specific recommendations and priorities for enhancing the recreational opportunities within the City of Nekoosa; and

WHEREAS, this plan is a requirement of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in order to be eligible to obtain state and federal cost-sharing financial aids for the development of outdoor recreation facilities; and

WHEREAS, this plan has been reviewed by the Nekoosa Property, Recreation and Human Affairs Committee on February 8, 2018, March 6, 2018, and recommended adoption of this plan on March 13, 2018; and

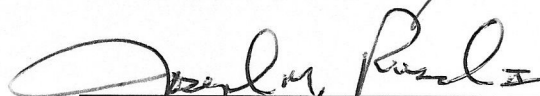
WHEREAS, this plan has been reviewed the Nekoosa Common Council on March 13, 2018, and was the subject of a Public Hearing on March 13, 2018;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Nekoosa Common Council hereby adopts the City of Nekoosa Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) – 2018 as a guide for future outdoor recreation improvements.

Adopted this 13th day of March, 2018


Allan K. Marcoux, Mayor

ATTEST:


Joseph M. Rusch II, City Clerk

The Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning would like to thank all who participated in the planning process.



Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning

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