



TOWN OF OREGON PARKS & OPEN SPACE PLAN

Prepared By Dane County Planning and Development for the Town of
Oregon Parks Committee and Town Board

December 2024

Insert resolution

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Author/Photo Credits: David Frankson. 2024, Parks Committee Chairperson

Chapter 1: Acknowledgements

The Town of Oregon has some of the finest natural resources in Dane County, Wisconsin. Residents and visitors enjoy recreational opportunities, beautiful prairies, wetlands, rivers, and streams carving through the terminal moraine created by glaciation in the Ice Age. This plan presents opportunities to preserve and enhance these activities and resources. This plan prioritizes preserving and enhancing existing parks and natural resources over the next five years.

Despite fiscal and staffing constraints, the Town Board and Parks Committee believe that with dedicated volunteers and this plan, the town will be able to secure funds, through grants and fees, that will facilitate implementing the actions recommended to ensure access to the town's recreational and natural resources.

The Town Board Chair Carl Walser and Supervisors Laurie Fitzgerald, Steve Jernegan (Parks Committee liaison), Arlan Kay, and Tim LeBrun acknowledge the commitment of the Parks Committee for initiating and completing the first parks plan update since the 1982 Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Chair: David Frankson

Members: Gloria Compton, Eugene Lewis, Jeff Nelson, Diane Packett

Finally, thank you to Dane County Planning and Development and Senior Planner Bridgit Van Belleghem for working with the committee to draft this document.

Chapter 2: Introduction

The 2025-2030 Town of Oregon Parks & Open Space Plan seeks to identify significant cultural, historical, and natural resources the town can protect, preserve, restore, and make accessible to the public. The plan also seeks to identify recreation needs and the town's opportunity and responsibility in meeting expected demands. This plan is not a land use plan nor was it created to guide zoning decisions.

Public outreach for this plan included distribution, viewing, and discussion of the content of this document at the August 28, September 18, September 25, and October 30, 2024 Parks Committee meetings, as well as the November 13 Community Input meeting. A revised draft was posted for public comment in advance of the December 10, 2024 Town Board meeting. Public comments received are incorporated into this plan in Appendix 1 and will be considered as specific park improvements are determined. Public comments were generally supportive of this plan and its priorities. The majority of public comments addressed concerns and opportunities for Kennedy Park.

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals, and Policies

A. Vision

Connect people to the natural and cultural resources of the Town of Oregon.

B. Goals

1. Provide sufficient and inclusive park and recreation facilities to meet the demand of current and future residents.
2. Preserve the natural, cultural, and historic resources.
3. Preserve natural and agricultural landscapes at urban fringe areas that provide resource protection and recreation benefits.
4. Provide volunteer opportunities and stewardship education to residents.
5. Protect water resources and vegetative buffers to maintain high water quality, manage water quantity, and sustain water-related recreation.

C. Policies

1. Provide facilities inclusive of differences in age, race, gender, gender identity, national origin, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, political affiliation, residence, physical ability, cognitive capacity, and economic status.
2. Publicize park and recreational areas via media, public events, resident surveys, as well as encourage residents to attend park-related meetings.
3. Provide a designated trail system with potential for biking, cross-country skiing, running, and hiking. Two systems should be considered: one on-road and the other off-road, in order to accommodate differing recreational activities.
4. Connect existing and new trails to Village of Oregon and Dane County routes.
5. Keep service costs to a minimum and design facilities for low or no maintenance because Town resources are limited.
6. Preserve productive farm land for continued agricultural use and protect the unique natural resource areas and historic and archeological sites within the town.
7. Foster a working relationship with the Villages of Brooklyn, Belleville, and Oregon and their public school systems.
8. Include improvements to help the disabled and elderly, such as ramps, traction walkways, grab rails, special seating, and appropriate playground equipment.

Chapter 4: Background

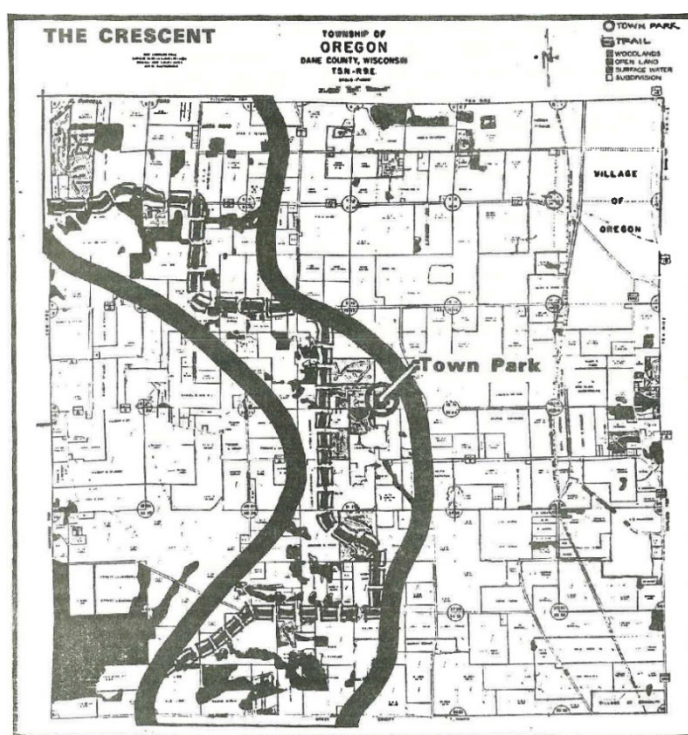
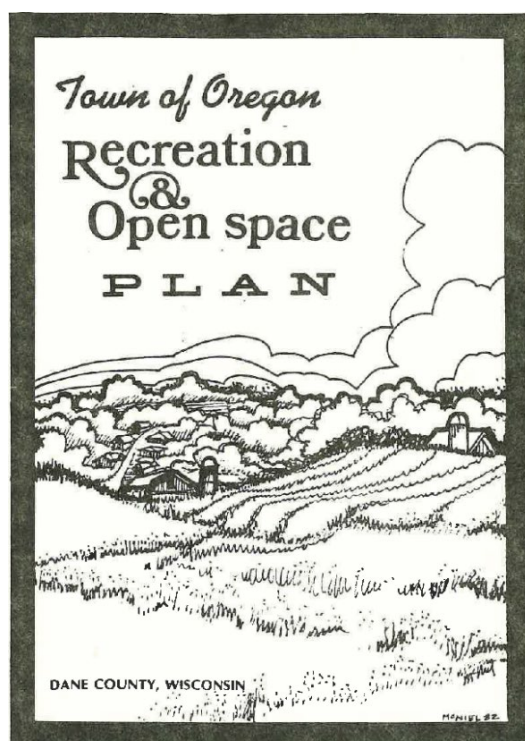
I. Planning Background and Process

A. Oregon Recreation and Open Space Plan (1982)

The Town adopted the first *Oregon Recreation and Open Space Plan* in 1982. The plan calls for a crescent of park and open space in the western half of the town. Much has changed in the town since then, including an increase in population, a desire for a greater diversity of park and open space accommodations, land acquisitions by state and federal agencies, and wear and tear on existing facilities.

The Town of Oregon has also since enacted Exclusive Agricultural Zoning for farmland and open space preservation that limits parcel division to parcels that are 35 acres or greater, significantly reducing opportunities for new non-farm development. This regulation also protects much of the crescent area from development. Before this zoning was enacted, residents were concerned about woodland loss in the crescent area. Since then, woodland losses are negligible. Additionally, wooded areas in the town are typically unsuitable for farming due to soil type or steep slopes. Thus, the woodlands will likely remain intact without government intervention. Much of the land identified in the 1982 crescent concept is privately owned and not suitable for town investment.

Extending trails through the crescent area is very challenging for the Town to pursue given a lack of resources for acquisition and trail maintenance. Federal efforts to extend the National Ice Age Trail through private property, while challenging, will be more



successful in overcoming some of these hurdles because of continuous fundraising and the trail's national recognition.

B. Updating the 1982 Parks and Recreation Plan

The town must adopt a new Parks and Open Space Plan to be eligible for state and federal funding and enact in lieu fees for new development. This planning effort supports the 2023 Town of Oregon Comprehensive Plan Natural Resource Goal 4: Provide sufficient parks and outdoor recreation areas to meet the needs of town residents, and Natural Resource and Policy 9: Update the Town Park and Open Space Plan to ensure eligibility should the Town pursue [grant funding](#) through DNR or other agencies to improve or acquire parks and open spaces. This plan also supports Policy 10: Cooperate with other units of government as well as developers to ensure the preservation and maintenance of open spaces created through conservation subdivisions.

The 2023 Town of Oregon Comprehensive Plan identifies significant cultural, historical, and natural resources that should be considered for possible protection, preservation, or restoration. This plan seeks to further detail and prioritize parks and open space needs and the town's role in providing accessible, equitable, and inclusive facilities that meet anticipated demands identified in the public input process used to update the Comprehensive Plan.

This Park and Open Space Plan serves as an *comprehensive outdoor recreation plan* and must be updated and adopted by the Town Board every five years to be eligible for a variety of state and federal funding programs for park land maintenance, acquisition, and development.

II. Other Relevant Plans

A. Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan

The [Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan](#), is relevant to the town, especially related to Anderson Park and the [Anderson Park Master Plan](#). The Parks and Open Space Plan is being updated and the Town was invited to provide new acquisition ideas and/or improvements to Anderson County Park. Should the Town want to encourage large regional use acquisition via the Dane County Conservation Fund or pursue establishing a Park n' Ride (funding available every two years) in the future, these projects would need to be submitted to be included in the County Parks and Open Space Plan.

B. Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The SCORP plan is done every 5 years by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to identify essential issues that affect the future of outdoor recreation and includes appropriate recommendations. All supply, demand, and recreational data is compiled on a regional level and includes eight planning regions throughout the state.

The plan includes a recreational participation survey, demand and needs assessment of recreational resource requirements and demographic data for the Dane County region.

C. Madison Area Bicycle Transportation Plan

The Bicycle Transportation Plan of the Madison Metropolitan Area Transportation Planning Organization (MPO) serves as a blueprint for continuous improvements in service conditions and ridership until 2050. The framework calls for cooperation between state agencies, Dane County, and local governments in planning for and developing bicycle facilities and programs. The plan is intended to educate citizens and policy makers on bicycle transportation issues and present resources for bicycle facilities.

III. Town Profile

The Town of Oregon sits in south-central Dane County between the Villages of Oregon, Brooklyn and Belleville, immediately south of the City of Fitchburg, and north of the Town of Brooklyn in Green County. Location atop the terminal moraine created by glaciation in the Ice Age has left the town with a diverse natural landscape, including the westernmost reaches of the Southeast Glacial Plains ecological landscape.

A. Population Trends, Projections, and Demographics

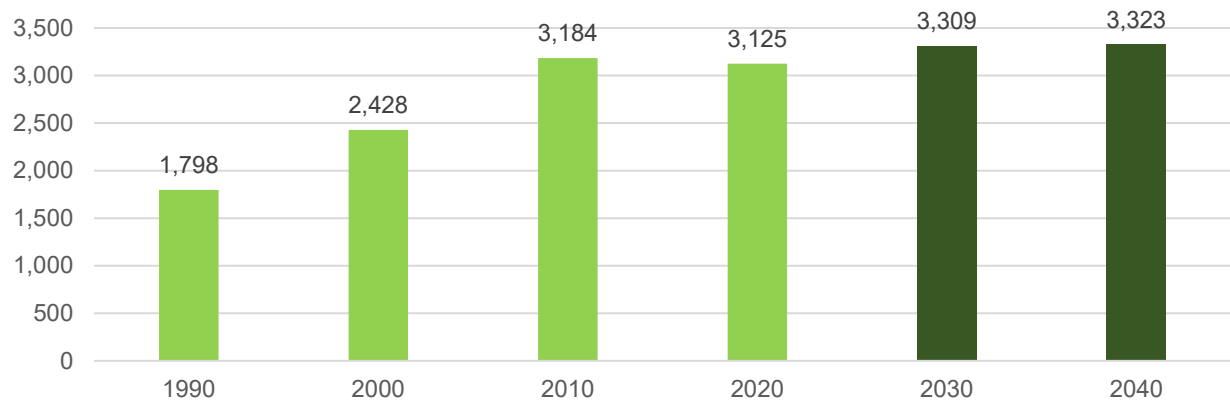
As of the 2020 Decennial Census, the Town of Oregon had 3,125 residents, 59 people less than in 2010. The Wisconsin Department of Administration projects that the town population will increase slowly, 0.45% average annual growth, over the next twenty years; reaching 3,323 residents by 2040. The WIDOA 2020 projections were less than the actual 2020 population, indicating that this estimate may be conservative. Nevertheless, with the town's recent experience, the committee anticipates slow to no growth through 2040 due to annexation and changing property preferences.

Notably, the neighboring Village of Oregon has the 10th largest population gains (by number) amongst all jurisdictions in Dane County.¹ Additionally, Dane County is the fastest growing county in the State. Town of Oregon recreation facilities also serve Village residents and residents throughout the greater region.

The median age increased 12%, from 43 in 2010 to 48 in 2020. This shift is primarily due to a decrease in the concentrations in the under 5 years group, and aging up of the 50-54 bracket, that was formerly the largest group and has now aged into the 55- to 65-year-old age brackets. Oregon is likely to experience an increasing proportion of people in the 65+ year age brackets in the coming decade. U.S. Census data show that the minority population of the Town of Oregon is 2.2% and this population is primarily Latinx people.

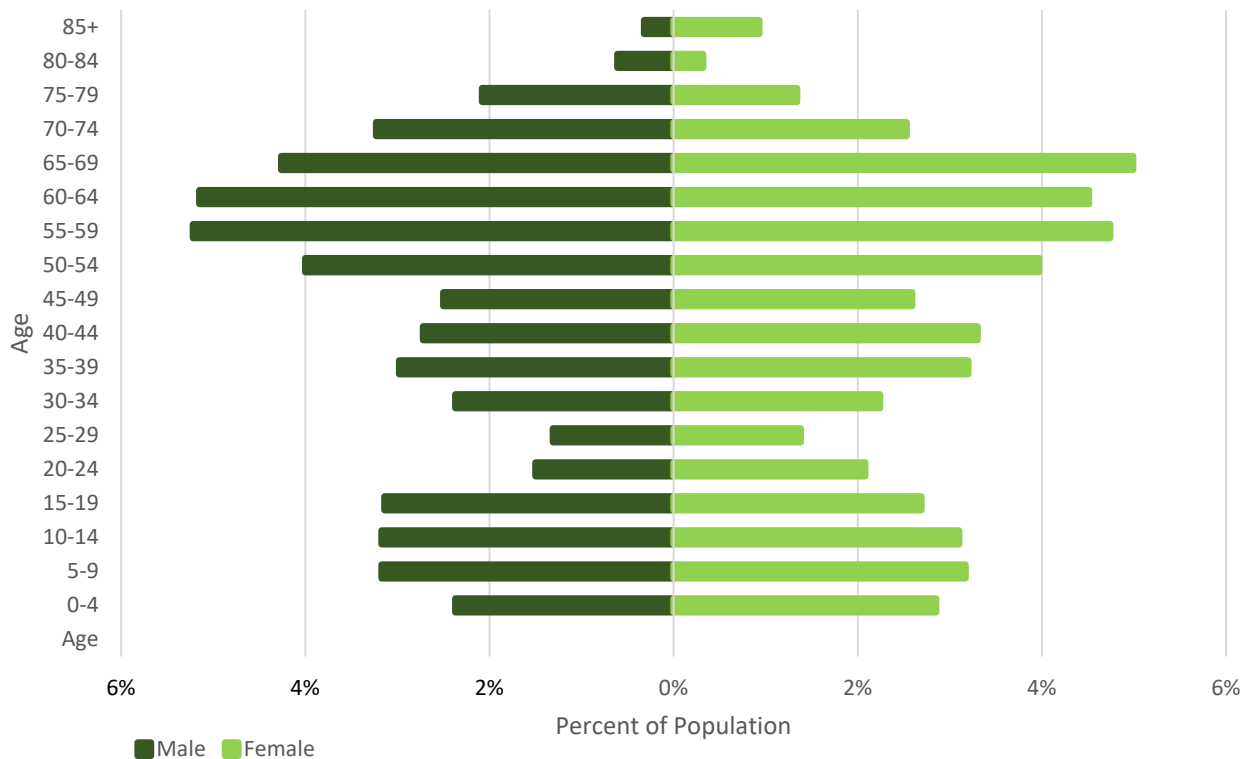
¹ Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan 2017-2023

Figure 1: Town Population 1970-2020, 2030-2040 Projections



Source: Applied Population Lab- Wisconsin Population and housing Estimates

Figure 2: Age Distribution by Gender



Source: Applied Population Lab- Wisconsin Population and housing Estimates

Chapter 5: Existing Resources Inventory

The Town of Oregon manages more than 260 acres of land dedicated to outdoor recreation. Land management practices strive to balance proper stewardship of resources with an appropriate amount of compatible public uses. Recommendations pertaining to land management within this plan must be consistent with a variety of conservation

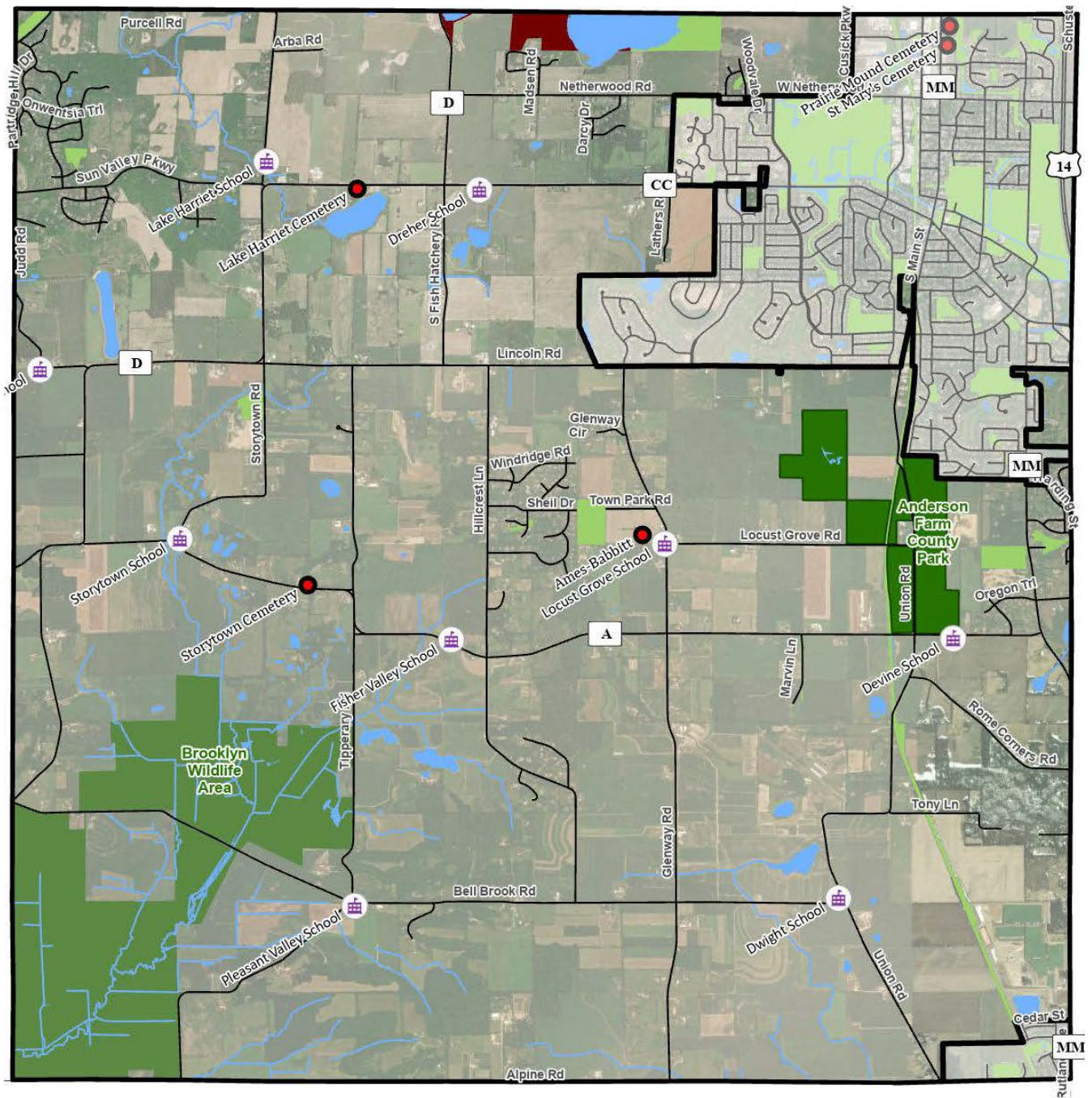
guidelines including Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Best Management Practices, Dane County Chapter 14 storm water management requirements, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service restoration standards, and Farmland Preservation policies. This town features the following park uses:

- Active recreation parks
- Natural resource areas
- Protected wildlife areas
- Trails and paths
- Historic & cultural sites

Town of Oregon parks typically combine several of these park types in one property, such that there may be both passive and active recreation options within one park. In addition to the facilities and land in the Town of Oregon, it is relevant to note the recreational facilities in the Villages of Oregon and Brooklyn. Oregon and Brooklyn Public Schools provide wide ranging facilities (e.g., softball, basketball, field games) town residents use as well. Because the town's population is too small to support operating facilities of this type, continued cooperation between the Villages and Town is important.



Map 1: Parks, Historic and Cultural Resources in the Town of Oregon



- Paved Shoulder
- Historic School
- Cemetery
- River and Stream
- Lake and Pond
- Municipal Parks and Natural Areas
- Publically Owned Land
- US Fish and Wildlife Land
- DNR Public Land

- Municipal Boundary
- Road Centerline

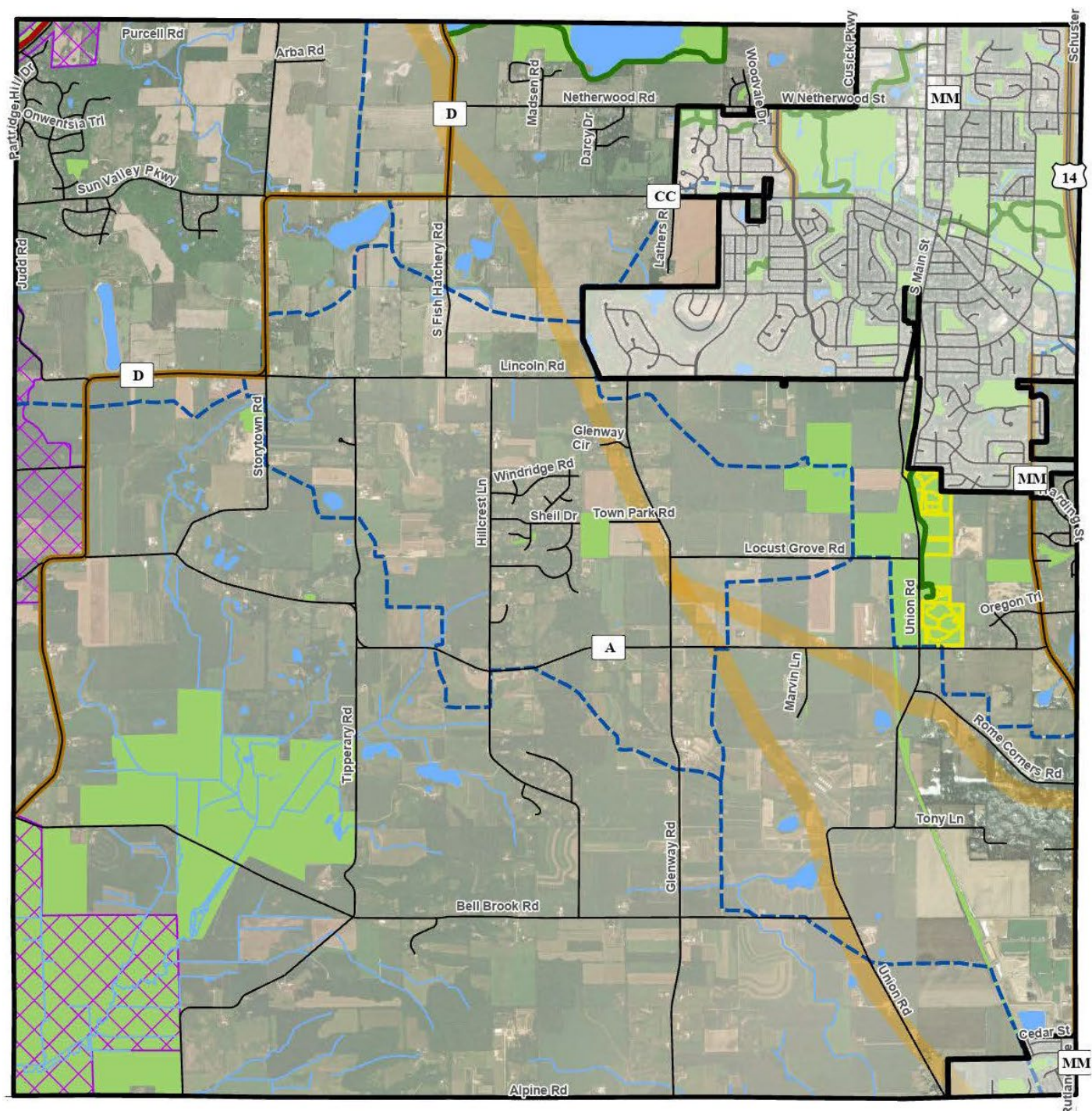


0 0.75 1.5
Miles

2/4/2025

This map was prepared by the Dane County Department of Planning and Development in conjunction with the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Dane County Land Information Office, and the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission.

Map 2: Trails and Natural Features in the Town of Oregon



- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Paved Shoulder | Old Lead Trail |
| Ice Age National Scenic Trail | River and Stream |
| Bike Paths | Lake and Pond |
| Type Status | Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor |
| Bike Path | Publicly Owned Land |
| Snowmobile Trails | |
| Dane County Park Trail | |

- | |
|--------------------|
| Municipal Boundary |
| Road Centerline |



0 0.75 1.5
Miles

11/21/2024

This map was prepared by the Dane County Department of Planning and Development in conjunction with the Dane County Land & Water Resources Department, Dane County Land Information Office, and the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission.

Most of the infrastructure in the town's parks is more than 30 years old and needs ongoing repair and replacement. Also, much of the signage throughout the entire park system is outdated and needs to be redesigned and replaced. The following is a brief description of each park, its acreage, function and location. The inventory includes open space, town parks, and state owned and leased hunting and fishing grounds.

I. Town Parks

The town maintains five parks, Bicentennial, Town, Ravenoaks, Hillcrest, and Kennedy Parks that are actively used and primarily meet the existing needs of the town residents. The Town also contains parkland managed by the WI Department of Natural Resources.

Bicentennial Park

A 20-acre conservation area in Section 24 at 845 CTH MM.

Features:

- Gravel parking lot
- Shelter
- Picnic table
- Benches throughout
- Prairie lands

Recommendations:

- Replace deteriorated benches.
- Improve trail surfaces where matting is showing.
- Restore prairie.



Ravenoaks Park

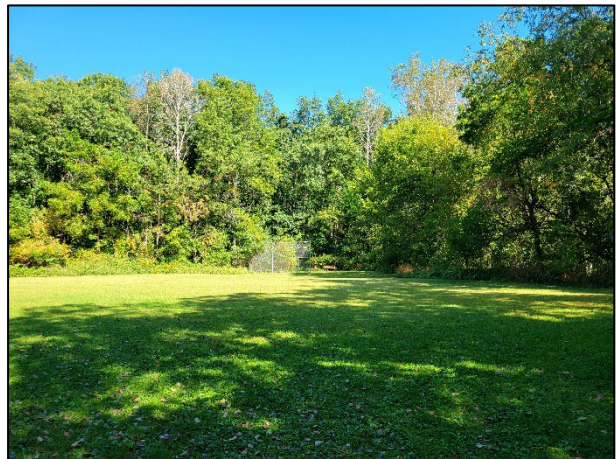
Ravenoaks Park is a 5.6 acre park at 6328 Ahwahnee Court in Section 6 with a wooded area and two acres of grass.

The Park features:

- Street parking
- Dogs allowed on leash
- Swing set
- Walking trails
- Baseball/kickball backstop
- Mowed play areas
- Park sign in parking area
- Park sign at trail entrance
- Prohibited activities sign

Recommended improvements for this park in the next 5-years include:

- Replace worn playground surfaces.
- Clear branches by backstop.
- Add trails.
- Install dog waste station.



Kennedy Park

Kennedy Park is located at 4779 Kennedy Park Road. This is a 7.9 acre park of open space in Sections 13 and 14, in Fahey Heights.

Features:

- Street parking
- Playground equipment
- Dogs allowed on leash
- Tug-of-war equipment (usable)
- Olympic fitness stations
- Large mowed play areas
- Concrete benches (2)
- Picnic table

Recommendations:

- Replace worn playground surfaces.



- Replace playground equipment.
- Create border around playground.
- Cut down two dead trees.
- Add picnic tables.
- Design and install a shelter.
- Convert northwest corner to forest, prairie, soccer field, or sell it.
- Convert 2 acres in northeast swale to prairie, dog park, or mixed use.
- Install trash/recycling bins.
- Install three benches.
- Install rubberized mats under swings.
- Install activity signs at entrances.
- Install a small storage building for tuggers.
- Stripe parking areas.
- Establish parking areas at Hoover Street.



Hillcrest Park

Hillcrest, located at 873 & 876 Della Road, is a 1.7 acre greenway in section 16, First Addition, Hillcrest Subdivision

This neighborhood park features:

- Street parking
- Bike rack
- Playground equipment
- Sandbox
- Slide
- Climbing apparatus
- Little free library
- Swing set
- Shade trees
- Mowed play area (across street)
- Park benches (3)
- Picnic tables (2)

Recommended improvements include:

- Install shade trees.
- Replace prohibited activities sign.
- Add sand to the sandbox.
- Mark playground borders.
- Install border around and soft surface material under the swings.
- Install sign for park area across street.
- Install play equipment for toddler aged children.
- Contract an apiary specialist to manage the sandbox bee problem.
- Inspect bent swing set leg for safety.
- Add new mulch/woodchips.
- Cut dead trees.
- Add bench for the little library.



Town Park

This is the town's largest park covering 24 acres in section 15, SW 1/4, at the Town's geographic center, 901 Glenway Road.

Features:

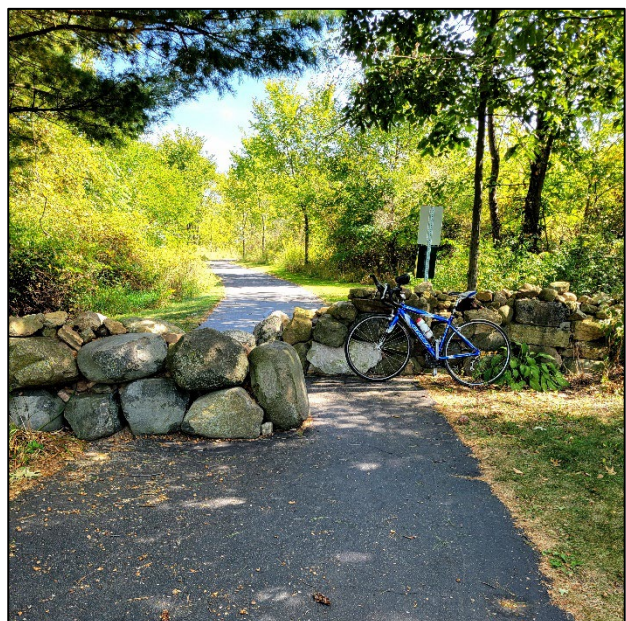
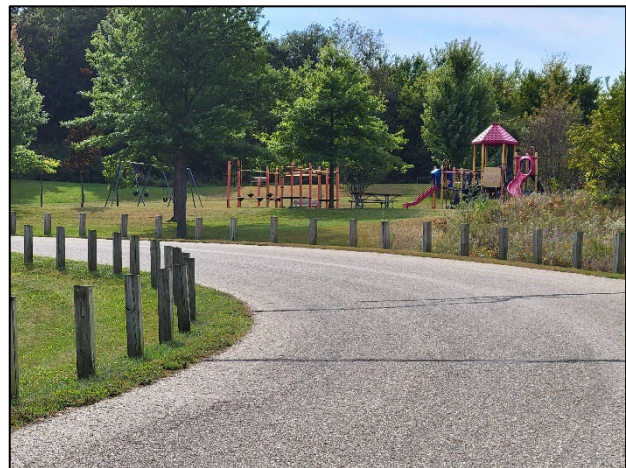
- Paved vehicle access road
- Paved parking lot
- Dogs allowed on leash
- Dog waste stations
- Walking trails
- Mountain biking trails
- Benches throughout park
- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Butterfly/pollinator garden
- Native plant gardens
- Pedestrian/bike park entrance

Recommendations for Town Park include:

- Install entrance and caution sign at pedestrian/bike path.
- Install a park shelter.
- Install additional picnic tables.
- Install more walking trails.
- Replace deteriorated benches and wood chips in low areas.
- Repair playground equipment.
- Incorporate bee study results in existing vegetation.
- Cut down dead and fallen trees.
- Maintain regular trail mowing.

Trails and Paths

In addition to parks, the town maintains trails and paths that connect town parks and other regional recreational resources. Recommended improvements include:



- Connect the Windridge, Sheil, and Marie Road subdivisions to the Anderson Farm County Park Bike Path and the Village of Oregon via Town Park.
- Pave Glenway Road shoulder from 901 Town Park Road to Locust Grove Road.
- Purchase land, easement, or right-of-way and pave a bike lane on either side of Glenway Road.
- Wayfinding through Town Park.
- Create signage for and secure Dane County designation of the biking trail the length of Locust Grove Road.
- Create signage at Locust Grove Road and Union Road intersection.



The Parks Committee prioritized these improvements for funding and implementation scheduling as presented in Table 1.

II. Other Resources

These parks are located in all or part in the Town of Oregon and provide value to local and regional residents and do not require Town of Oregon investment or action.

Anderson Farm County Park: This 310-acre park features woodlands, agricultural fields, and restored prairies. The park offers hiking trails through the Arthur Sholts Memorial Woods. The [Anderson Park Friends](#) volunteer to help maintain the grounds, especially a community garden, a 34-acre dog park, 2-acre small dog park, an electrical charging station, a 7,000 native plant drainage basin and a community orchard.

Brooklyn Wildlife Area: This Park, supported by Friends of Brooklyn Wildlife Area, is located between the Villages of Oregon and Belleville, straddling the Dane/Green County line. The property features 2,608 acres of state-owned land, 337 acres of easement, and 151 acres of leased lands that are available for public hunting, fishing and other recreation. Story Creek, a Class II Trout stream, runs north to south through the property. Landscapes include sedge meadow marsh, riparian hardwoods, oak ridges, restored prairie and farmed cropland. Approximately, 1,500 acres are located in the town. [Map.](#)

Swan Pond Waterfowl Production Area: This U.S. Fish and Wildlife land crosses the northern town border. This area is part of the multi-county Leopold Management District. Waterfowl production areas are free to enjoy and are open to hunting (deer,

upland game and waterfowl), fishing, trapping, wildlife observation, wildlife photography, environmental education, interpretation, berry, mushroom and nut picking (personal use), hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. The WPA features a 1-mile paved section of the 3-mile Oregon Rotary Bike Trail. The natural area can be accessed from County Highway D (Fish Hatchery Road) and County Highway M.

Ice Age Trail: This 1,200-mile trail crosses the northwest corner of the Town. The Ice Age Trail Corridor overlays several areas on the western edge. This extensive, 28 County trail is one of 11 National Scenic Trails. The trail travels through the Brooklyn Wildlife Area.

Snowmobile Trails 41 and 50: Belleville Sno Cats maintain these trails. Trail 41 crosses the town's northeast corner and connects to trails that lead to the Villages of Brooklyn and Oregon. Trail 50 enters at the northwest corner, connecting to trails 41, 89, 90, and 6.

III. Historic and Cultural Resources

A. Schools (See Appendix 2 for details)

Lake Harriet School (1849-1940): Named for Harriet Hayes, daughter of early New England immigrants. John Muir, the naturalist and explorer, taught here in 1861-1862.

Storytown School (1840-1945): This settlement was established by Lewis and Tristan Story in 1845. The oldest home in the Oregon Township stands 1/2 mile west and the Storytown Cemetery is 1 mile east. The school also served as the Baptist Church.

Locust Grove School (1880-1935): Land for the school was leased from Jacob Nelson, a Danish immigrant. This area is known as Dane Corners.

Fisher Valley School (1850-1948): The name was derived from Ed Fisher's Stage House, a stopover for the lead miners between southwest Wisconsin and Lake Michigan.

Dreher School (1850-1937): The Dreher ancestors came to America from Wurtenburg, Germany in 1761. They moved west from Pennsylvania and settled in this area in 1854.

Devine School (1840-1931): Named after Joseph Devine who came from New York and was the first of the Devine brothers to establish farms here in 1845.

Colby School (1886-1938): G.R. Colby, a soldier in the War of 1812, donated the land. Lincoln Road was called Pennsylvania Avenue after immigrants from that state.

Pleasant Valley School (1865-1943): Pleasant Valley school was in the Belleville School District, located at the south east intersection of Bell Brook and Tipperary Roads. The school was initially purchased from the Searles family, The school is now part of a home in the Town of Oregon.

Dwight School: This school was formally located on the northwest corner of Union and Bell Brook Road. The school was demolished and marked with a sign.

B. Cemeteries

Storytown Cemetery: 5894 County Hwy A. Public Access.

Recommendation: Convert 1/4 acre of roadside steep hill requiring dangerous mowing operation to self-sustaining perennial planting not requiring mowing.

Lake Harriet Cemetery: Located between 5799 and 5809 Hwy D. Public Access

Recommendations:

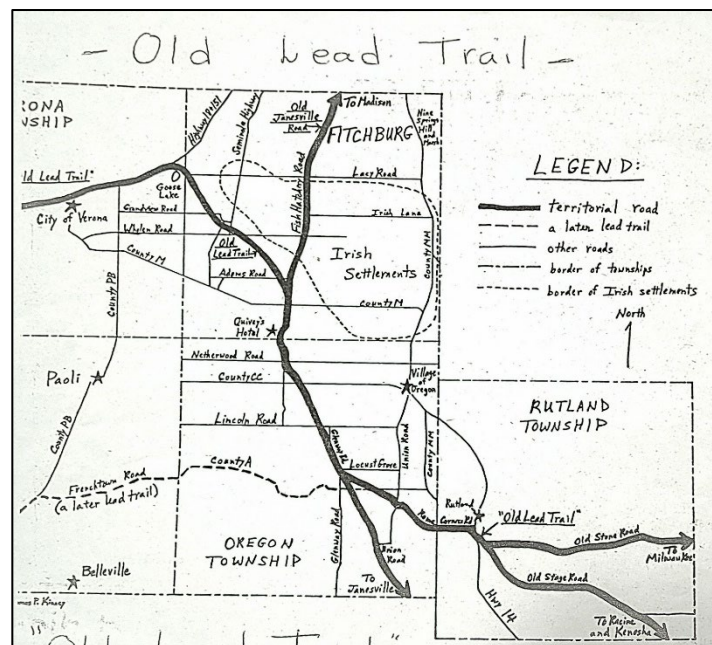
- Improve vehicle access with additional gravel and driveway/parking markers.
- Design/install a sign similar to the Storytown Cemetery sign.
- Design/install a sign with rules and prohibitions.

Ames Babbitt Cemetery: Located between 798 and 869 Glenway Road at the corner of Glenway Road and Locust Grove Road. No Public Access.

Recommendation: Research/propose signage with the Oregon Area Historical Society.

C. Trails

The Old Lead Trail: This trail connected lead mines around Mineral Point to the smelters in Buffalo, New York and other ports in the Great Lakes. The trail travels from Mineral Point to Milwaukee's shipping harbors. The trail ran west of the Village of Oregon to Runey's Tavern on the corner of Union Road and Old Stage Road. Records at the Oregon Historical Society indicate this trail was a route from the Mississippi to the Great Lakes in the 1820's and 1830's.



Courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society

Chapter 6: Prioritizing Park Improvements

The Parks Committee prioritized some of these improvements for funding and implementation scheduling over the next 5 years as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Prioritization of Park Improvements 2025-2030

Priority #	Action	Town	Kennedy	Hillcrest	Ravenoaks	Bicentennial	Paths/Trails	Cemeteries
1	Cut down/dead tree falls (3)	X						
2	Purchase & install shade trees			X				
3	Consult apiary specialist- sandbox bees			X				
4	Inspect swing safety, repair or replace			X				
5	Trail mowing	X						
6	Replace deteriorating and add new benches	X	X			X		X
7	Purchase & install dog waste stations		X		X			
8	Purchase & install entrance signs	X	X	X				X
9	Purchase & install prohibitions sign			X				
10	Purchase & install trash/recycling bins		X					
11	Purchase & add more sandbox sand			X				
12	Purchase & install playground borders	X	X	X				
13	Purchase & install mats under swings	X	X	X				
14	Repair playground equipment	X	X		X			
15	Replace playground equipment		X		X			
16	Purchase & install bike/ped caution sign	X						
17	Repair trails & add mulch	X				X		
18	Add rubber chips to playground		X	X				
19	Purchase & install shed for tuggers		X					
20	Landscape around trees for mowing		X					
21	Complete reading bench			X				
22	Purchase and install bike racks		X		X			
23	Install shelter/pavilion	X	X					
24	Additional picnic tables	X	X					
25	Cut down dead trees		X	X				
26	Purchase & install toddler play equipment			X				
27	Layout more trails (hiking/biking/other)	X	X		X		X	
28	Identify/stripe parking areas		X					X
29	Cut backstop branches				X			
30	Convert 2 acres NW corner to active use		X					
31	Convert 2 acres NE swale to active use		X					
32	Pave shoulder for bike path						X	
33	Purchase land or easements for trails						X	

Chapter 7: Needs Analysis

I. 2040 Park Demand

Several parks in the Town of Oregon are in need of repair, maintenance, and in some cases enhancements. The 1982 plan projected more people in 2000 (3,395) than actually lived in the Town in 2000 (3,125). In fact, the population is still less than the 2000 projected population and is not projected to reach that level through 2040, with a DOA projection of 3,323 people living in the town. They are, however, close. The previous plan anticipated a deficit of 1.8 acres of land needed to support the demand. If priorities 30 and 31, to convert 4 acres into parks, are initiated within this 5-year planning period the anticipated need will be met and exceeded.

Of note, the Village of Oregon population is anticipated to grow with a greater demand for both urban, suburban park opportunities, and rural, natural park opportunities. The latter are likely to occur in the town. The town could consider a user survey to show greater regional importance of the town's parks and recreation features.

Park development is identified in Priorities 30 and 31 in Table 1. These 4 acres are located in Kennedy Park, do not require land acquisition, and can be targeted for additional uses. Some of the considerations in recommending new project areas include restoration potential, strong public support, existing public ownership, partnership potentials, high probability of an active friends group forming, and opportunity to provide a variety of public use.

Park improvements should be designed to have the least amount of visual impact on the natural landscape as possible and have a uniform, natural appearance. Maintaining a consistent design style of all park infrastructure throughout the park system will continue to brand town parks and improve public recognition.

Town of Oregon will continue working with the state, county, and other local units of government to connect bicycle-pedestrian trails from urban areas to town recreation parks and trails. The town also has the opportunity to work with government and private sector stakeholders to take advantage of renewable energy generation opportunities at parks with power lines.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This plan fulfills the Town of Oregon's obligation to create a 5-year Parks and Open Space Plan to be eligible for state and federal funding. Demand for new park needs can be met by existing town properties. The majority of work prioritized in this plan is focused on safety improvements and meeting the needs of changing demographics. The Parks Committee, equipped with this plan and results of the Town Vision Survey in development, aims to engage with residents at each town park in 2025 and 2026 to get additional input on residents' needs and priorities for the subsequent plan update.

Appendix 1

November 13, 2024 Park Committee Public Input Meeting

Overall, written and verbal comments were positive and supportive of this new POSP. Reactions were extremely favorable and multiple community members thanked the Parks Committee for initiating this planning process and their efforts in addressing issues and increasing recreational opportunities in the parks. Specific comments from community members are as follows:

A. Kennedy Park

1. Resident 1:
 - a. For new playground equipment, new shelter, perimeter trail
 - b. Against selling land because wants to preserve green space and flooding issue, soccer field, dog park (already have one nearby), sign at the Eisenhower Road entrance
2. Resident 2:
 - a. For green space, trees, prairies, forbs
 - b. Against soccer field, against dog park (already have one nearby), town funds for Tuggers shed, Tuggers storing equipment in park
3. Resident 3:
 - a. For creating paths through the park for walkers, strollers, bikers, etc., new playground equipment
 - b. Against additional parking lot (loss of greenspace, privacy, increased traffic), dog park (already have one nearby)
 - c. Neither for nor against small dog park for local residents
4. Resident 4:
 - a. For creating paths through the park for walkers, strollers, bikers, etc.
 - b. Against selling northwest corner, or soccer field, etc.
5. Resident 5:
 - a. For new playground equipment, creating paths through the park for walkers, strollers, bikers, etc., basketball court or baseball field, investigating a way to connect Kennedy Park to Bicentennial Park to Anderson Park, prairie plantings to manage flooding and reduce mowing.
 - b. Against additional parking lot, striping cul-de-sac parking area (doesn't want designated parking area), dog park, soccer field, selling northwest corner.
6. Resident 6:
 - a. For new playground equipment, creating paths through the park for basketball court or baseball field, continuing to have the Olympic stations walkers, strollers, bikers, etc., investigating a way to connect Kennedy Park to Bicentennial Park to Anderson Park, prairie plantings to manage flooding and reduce mowing.

- 7. Resident 7:
 - a. For creating paths through the park for walkers, strollers, bikers, etc., new playground equipment, including for slightly older kids, safe crossing on MM from Kennedy to Bicentennial Park.
 - b. Against dog park (another nearby), reducing green space.
- 8. Resident 8:
 - a. For playing in the park as her sons (8 & 12) use them frequently.
 - b. Against soccer field.
 - c. Neither for nor against dog park.
- B. Bicentennial Park
 - 1. Resident 9:
 - a. For Upgrading entrance/parking lot (collects water, can get muddy and icy, vehicles get stuck if not careful during rainy or wintery weather). Suggests additional gravel or other fix. Several audience members echoed his comments.
- C. Ravenoaks Park
 - 1. Resident 10:
 - a. For creating paths through the park for walkers, strollers, bikers, etc., Increased removal of poison ivy in the park area, keeping as much green space as possible, better communication about town and park events/meetings to neighborhood.
- D. Hillcrest Park
 - 1. No comments received in writing or expressed at committee meeting.
- E. Town Park
 - 1. No comments received in writing or expressed at committee meeting.

Appendix 2: Historic Schools

Courtesy of Oregon Historic Society

OREGON TOWNSHIP

COLBY SCHOOL, DISTRICT #11

The Colby School was located at the corner of Highway D and Judd Road west of the village of Oregon.

G. R. Colby donated the land. Colby was a Yankee, born in New York, who came to Wisconsin in 1850, but spent 1863-64 in the gold mines of Oregon and Idaho.

In 1886 the district was divided, and the Colby School organized.

Laura Williamson was the teacher in 1895 and was paid \$25 a month.

Pennsylvania Avenue was the name of

the road in the early days due to the number of families who had emigrated from Pennsylvania, built their homes, and engaged in farming on this fertile stretch of land.

At a school meeting on July 9, 1934, \$150 was raised for school purposes, and nine months of school were to be held.

In 1938 the school closed, and the pupils were sent to Oregon.

The building was torn down in 1946, and the lumber was used to build a home at 472 Jefferson Street in Oregon.

Some of the early residents of the district were: Colby, Williamson, Fincher, Clark, Ace, Steinhauer, and Streif.



COLBY SCHOOL (1886 TO 1938)
(from 1911 Dane County Plat Book)

DEVINE SCHOOL, DISTRICT #5

When the district was organized in the middle 1840's, a log building served the school's population. The school was named for Joseph Devine from New York, who was the first of the Devine brothers to establish farms here.

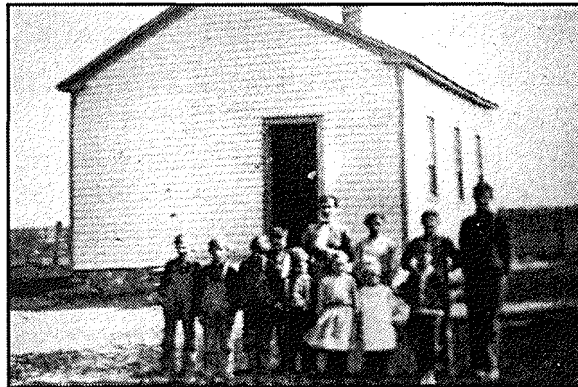
However, because the school soon became too small, a new one was built in 1854 for \$300. In the interim while the new frame structure was being erected, the students met in private homes.

The schoolhouse was on County Highway A just southeast of Union Road. The building became a residence on Rome Corners Road.

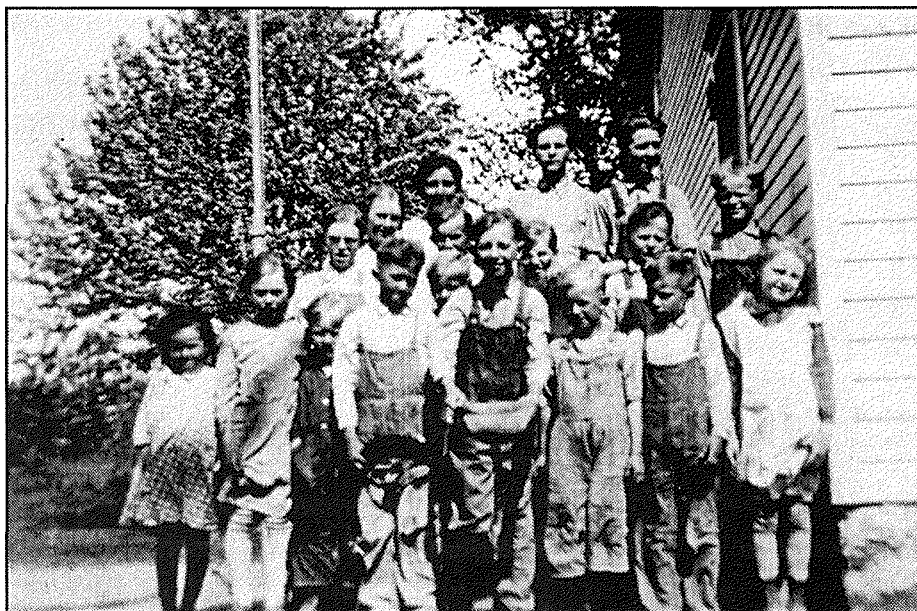
One of the early teachers was Thelma Nelson Gefke.

Distinctive names among the early residents of the area were: Devine, Quale, Jordan, Olson, Larson, Ames, Nelson, Hansen, and Richardson.

In 1931 the pupils were transported to Brooklyn and Oregon.



DEVINE SCHOOL STUDENTS
(from 1911 Dane County Plat Book)



DEVINE SCHOOL STUDENTS, Thelma Nelson, Teacher
Activity Play Day

L to R, front row: Mary Lou Jordan, ?, Ruth Olsen Smith, Eugene Olsen, ?, Ellsworth Hansen, Roy Hansen, Einar Larson, Lorraine Quale Vergeront.

Middle row: Vernon Quale, Claris Quale, Christensen, ?, ?, ?, Svend Hansen.

Back row: Ruth Ames Klotz, Maurice Joppa, Collins Richardson.

DREHER SCHOOL, DISTRICT #8

On March 9, 1850 a special meeting was held to organize school District #8 of the Town of Oregon.

At a special meeting held on April 13, 1853, it was voted to purchase one half acre of land at a cost of \$10. A tax of \$12 was raised to pay for the site and the deed.

An additional tax of \$275 was to be raised in order to build and paint a frame structure 20 x 34 feet.

The parents of the children attending were to pay the teacher for the three months of school that year.

The school was named after Frank Dreher, a Pennsylvanian, who lived across the road; teachers often boarded at his home.

Polly Goodenough was the first teacher

for two terms, six months, at \$6 a month. The next term it was raised to \$8 a month.

It was later voted to have nine months of school.

In 1856 this 20 x 34 structure housed many, many students, just three years after it was erected.

The school was closed in 1937, and the students were transported to Oregon in a converted hearse.

The building is still standing at the same location on Highway CC about 2 miles west of Oregon. It has been remodeled and occupied as a residence for many years.

A few of the family names synonymous with the area were: Burke, Humphrey, Bowen, Christensen, Clark, Dreher, Kelly, Manion, Neath, Nelson, Peterson, and Sholts.



DREHER SCHOOL (about 1900)

L to R, Top row: Adolph "Duffy" Egner, Peter Larsen, Lynn Palmer, Mary Jensen (Teacher), Lottie Palmer, Esther Egner Ladd, Alba Peterson.

Front row: Carl Mareno Larsen, Robert Sholts, Earl Sholts, Lawrence Larsen, Gladys Sholts, Lena Larsen.

FISHER VALLEY SCHOOL, DISTRICT #10

Two New Yorkers, who arrived in 1847, were responsible for the names of both a stage house and the valley where it was located. Fisher Stage House in Fisher Valley was a stopover for the stage and for lead miners from southwestern Wisconsin who were on their way to Chicago or Milwaukee.

The first log schoolhouse was built in the early 1850's and was replaced by a new building about 30 years later.

The building occupied land overlooking an outwash plain.

The location is on Highway A near Hillcrest.

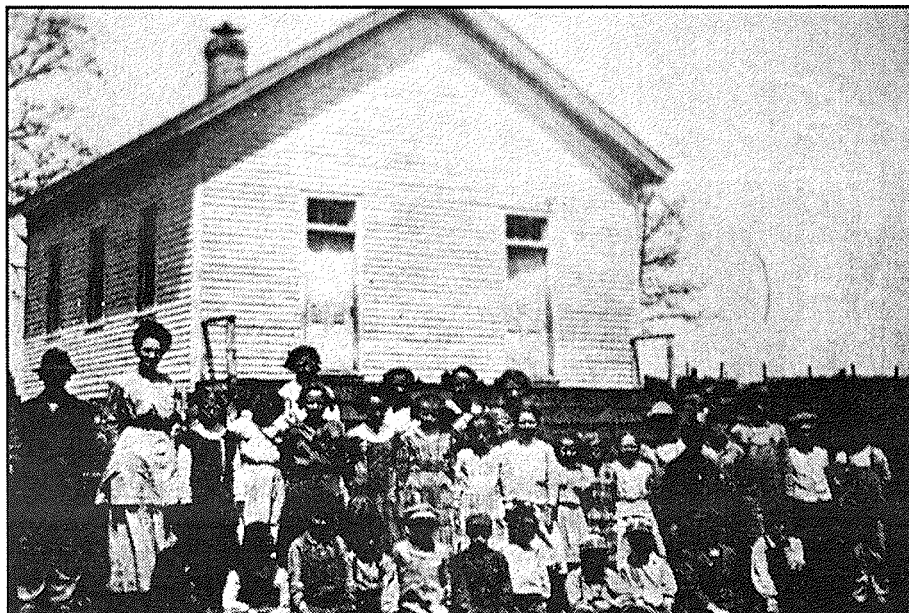
Some of the teachers were: Mrs. Phil Kelly, Margaret Geary, Alice Murphy, Mary Jensen, Mrs. Frank Anderson, Charles Colby, Mabel Grady, Elaine Legler Lien, Mrs. Vincent Purcell, Helen Butts Pernot, Orpha McLaughlin Manion, Mrs. Einerson, Evelyn Butts Piller, Elizabeth Kuehni, and Pearl Long

Hageman (last teacher).

In 1948 shortly after the closing of the school and the transportation of the students to Oregon, the building was moved to the village and joined two other rural schools to help alleviate the overcrowding in the elementary system.

The Mother's Club played a large part in the Fisher Valley Schoolhouse memories. Its members were the ones who held dances, parties, programs, and all kinds of social functions that brought the families together. They were the ones who were on hand to help neighbors who were in need, and their 10-cent membership dues contributed to many worthy organizations.

The Fisher Valley Mother's Club was organized in September 1931 by Marie Denton, Alma Manion, and Orpha McLaughlin. Surnames of members over the years included Nelson, Schuler, Grady, Manion, Kuehni, Palmer, Denton, Spink, Fletcher, Anderson, Bratvold, Barger, and Reiner--quite an ethnic diversification!



FISHER VALLEY STUDENTS

LAKE HARRIET SCHOOL, DISTRICT #2

In 1849 a log school was built for \$100 on the present northeast corner of Storytown Road and Sun Valley Parkway. The first teacher was Sarah Simons.

Nearby is Lake Harriet, named for Miss Harriet Hayes, daughter of early immigrants. The lake, a 'kettle', was formed by the glacier

In 1867 a new larger building replaced the log structure--it was needed to house the 55 students enrolled.

This schoolhouse is still standing on the same spot. It was made into a home soon after the students were transported to the Oregon Public Schools in 1940.

During the winter term of 1861-62, John Muir, the widely known conservationist, taught the young pupils. He also talked to the boys at the Oregon Schools and invited them to visit the Lake Harriet School.

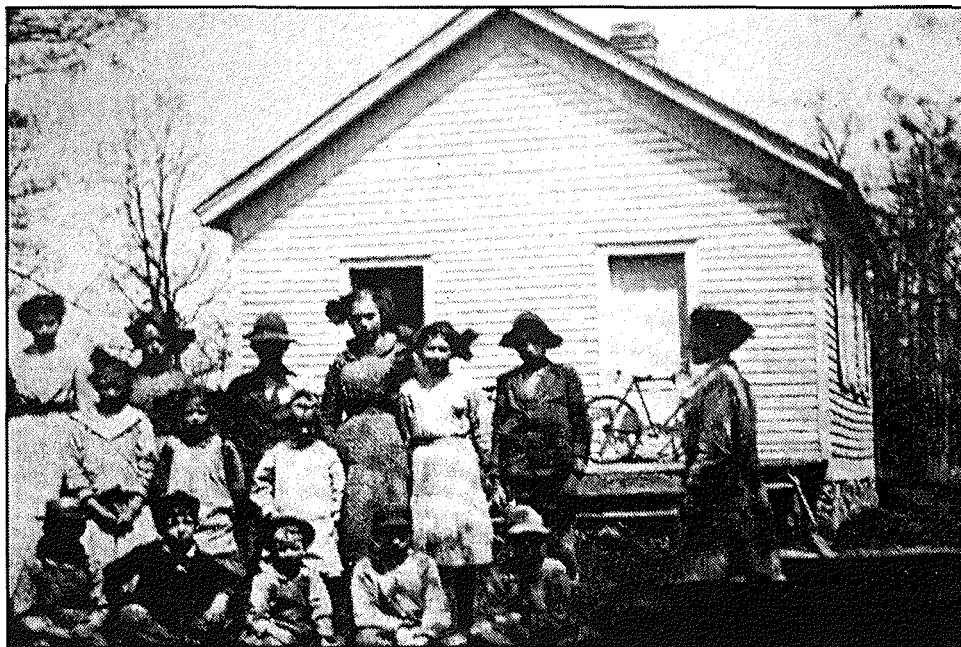
Mr. Muir was attending the University of Wisconsin at that time and needed the income to help with expenses.

Caryl Farrell's class planted a tree on Arbor Day one year to honor John Muir and placed their names in a quart glass jar to go deep in the hole.

A framework was built around the tree to protect it from the wind and rabbits--but one day a pony came to school and ate all of the leaves and tender new branches--so the tree died. But the jar still remains buried under the widening of the highway--or at least, they hope so.

Family names in the area were: Ace, Bernard, Bethel, Brown, Byrne, Clark, Maher, O'Neill, and Pierce.

Some of the teachers were: John Muir, Mary Jensen, Delette Sholts, Golda Lappley Brannan, Letha Williamson, Catherine Gorman, Evelyn Butts Piller, and Dorothy Sholts Flood.



LAKE HARRIET SCHOOL
(from 1911 Dane County Plat Book)

LOCUST GROVE SCHOOL, DISTRICT #4

At the conflux of Glenway and Locust Grove Road, early known as Dane Corners, the residents of District #4 built a school in the 1880's to accommodate their children.

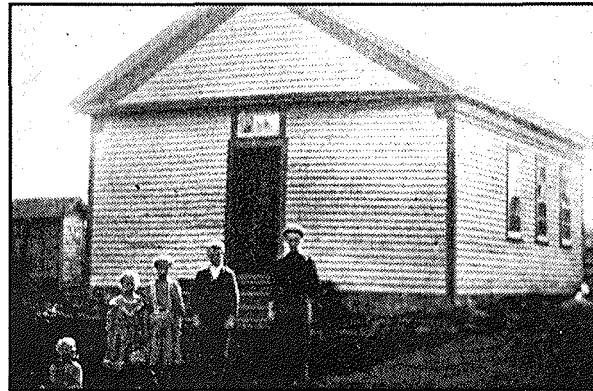
Many Danish immigrants who arrived in the 1880's had purchased land in this area and were intent on having their families become fluent in the English language and knowledgeable about the history of their new country.

Teachers who contributed to this education were: Ethel Champnor, Elizabeth Christensen, and Thelma Nelson Gefke.

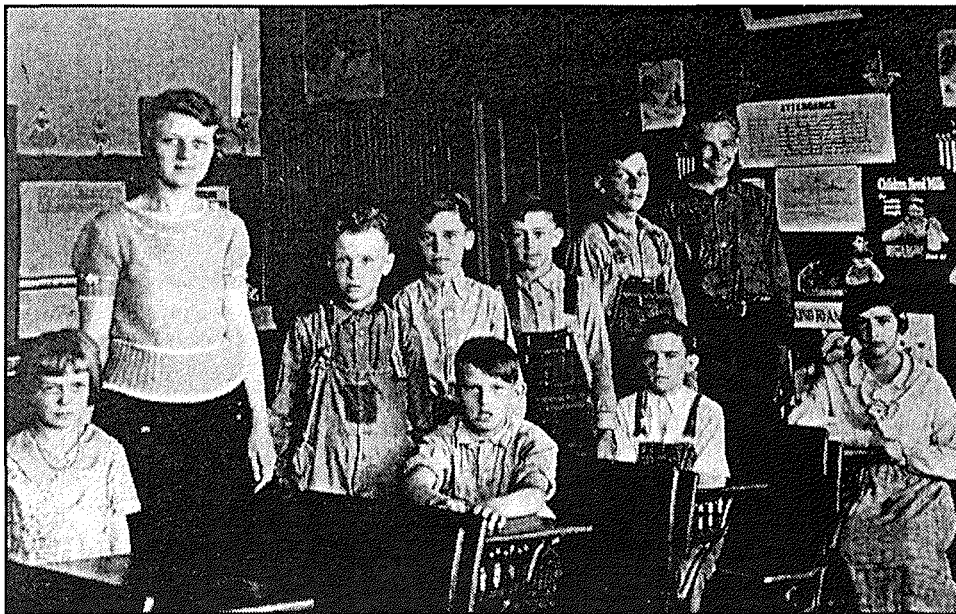
The school was closed in 1935, and the children were transported to Oregon and Brooklyn. The building was later

moved to Brooklyn where it became a home.

Jensen, Nelson, Fredrickson, Egan, Lewis, Damson, Hansen, Pernot, O'Brien, Thornton, and Vesaas were representative names of many of the residents.



LOCUST GROVE SCHOOL
(Note outhouse)



LOCUST GROVE SCHOOL (1931 OR 1932)

L to R, Seated: Arlo Frederickson, Ralph O'Brien, Regina Egan Ace.
Standing: Lorraine Lewis, Thelma Nelson (Teacher), Paul Damson, Robert O'Brien, Herbert Lewis, Keith Thornton, Harvey Frederickson.

STORYTOWN SCHOOL, DISTRICT #3

Three families by the name of Story settled south and west of the present Village of Oregon and called the area Storytown.

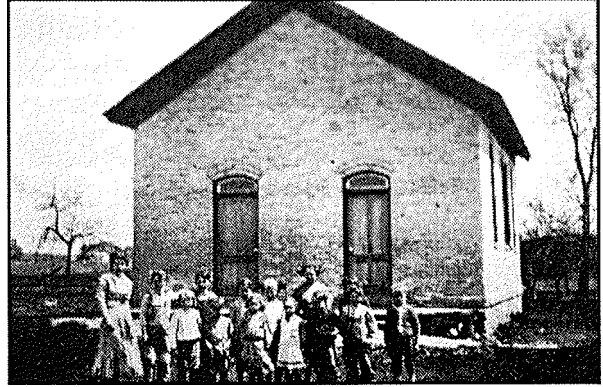
A small schoolhouse was built in the early 1840's and also used for church services. The site was on County Highway A and Storytown Road.

In 1882 the original building was replaced by a larger brick building.

Teachers over the years included Lillian Ellep and Katherine Sullivan.

The children were transported to Oregon in 1945, and the school was made into a private home.

Some of the families sending their children to the Storytown School were: Ace, Byrne, Lawry, Murphy, Norton, McGowan, Rasmussen, Scott, Stuessy, Kroyer, Wade, Francois, and Tipple.



STORYTOWN SCHOOL
(from 1911 Dane County Plat Book)



STORYTOWN SCHOOL (about 1937), Katherine Sullivan, Teacher

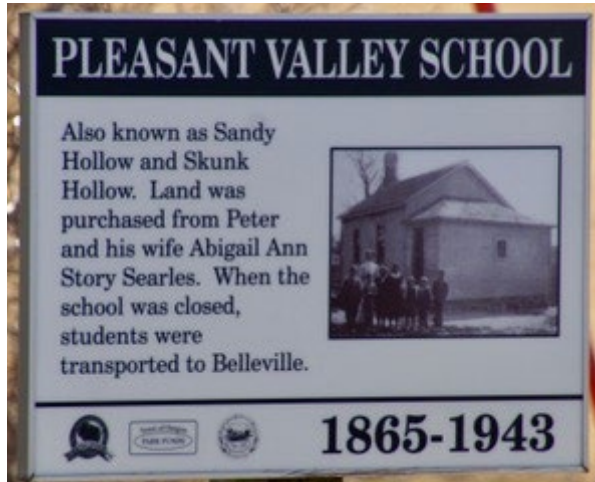
Left row, back to front: Melvin Ace, Bernard Murphy, Raymond Lawry, Marie Pernot, Sammy Ace.

Middle row: Gladys Murphy, Forrest Faulks, Helen Lamboley, Roger Lawry, Russell Pernot.

Right row: Mary Lamboley, Rose Pernot.

PLEASANT VALLEY SCHOOL

The Pleasant Valley school, SE of intersection of Bell Brook and Tipperary Roads, was not included in the Oregon School District schools as it is in the Belleville School District. The school is now part of a home in the Town of Oregon.



DWIGHT SCHOOL

The Dwight School, was located on the NW corner of Union and Bell Brook Roads. It is now a vacant field.