

**City of Hillsboro
Comprehensive Outdoor
Recreation Plan
(CORP)
2019-2024**

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Introduction

To create a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP), the City of Hillsboro received a grant as part of the Senior Capstone Program in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Wisconsin – Madison. Corey Nelson investigated how ideas of human use of space may inform the design of a rural, small town redevelopment project and open space design and linkage. The original investigation gave context and focused on the concerns and goals of the Steering Committee Group from and the Community Development Authority of the City of Hillsboro. The original project includes site designs to address a variety of projects for the city. Additionally, the has completed a series of plans and projects since 2011-2012 creation and adoption of the Senior Capstone Project. The city amended the 2012-2017 CORP in 2019 to reflect plan changes, other related city plans, and additional recreation opportunities.

The contents of the CORP are primarily a result of an outside analysis by Corey Nelson and by other plan development consultants. By adopting the CORP, the City of Hillsboro is not obligated to commit to any of the recommendations or projects detailed in the CORP. The CORP provides guidelines for developing recreational opportunities in the city and may be utilized as the city feels necessary.

Use of Space

How people use and interact with the spaces among us dictates how proper design should accommodate those people and the spaces that they choose to interact with. As a research topic to supplement and guide the design process for this project it is critical to examine how humans use and interact with the spaces around them. This area of study is essential to examine for any type of project in which there is a diverse group of users of a space or spaces as well as a diverse range of activities in those spaces. Within this plan, it is important to examine in greater detail the use of space as it relates to small, rural cities and the unique open spaces that exist in Hillsboro.

Small Community Redevelopment & Open Space Design

This specific plan is looking to address a variety of issues the city is facing. One of the main aspects identified through a strategic planning process by the city was to improve and enhance recreational opportunities within the city. Being a small city in a rural area that is located within an important tourism region, improvement and creation of recreational opportunities is very important for the economic, social, and environmental viability of the city.

There are specific areas in the City that are being examined as part of this plan to improve and enhance the recreational opportunities of the City and can be broken down into these main areas:

1. The Downtown Business District
2. The Open Space/Park and Hospital Along the Lake
3. The Tract of Land South of the Lake (Lake Association Land)
4. The Dam Area and the Bike Trail Trailhead
5. The West Branch of the Baraboo River

These specific areas will be explained in greater detail later in this plan. All these areas are prime examples of open spaces that are under- utilized by the community and that could be designed for better uses that align with the goal to increase and enhance recreational opportunities.

Goals and Opportunities

Goal of the plan is to improve and enhance tourism and recreational facilities, improve and enhance the downtown business district, and link the City open space and recreational opportunities together with the downtown business district and add desired amenities for our residents.

The plan identifies these main opportunities for the City:

1. Currently no sports complex appropriately sized for youth age groups, 20+ minutes to other towns for sports, no facilities to host home games.
2. Cannot accommodate overflow camping inquiries from nearby attractions such as the Kickapoo Valley Reserve and Wildcat Mountain State Park.
3. Three main highways go through town, downtown business district currently is lacking in the ability to stop and retain visitors.
4. The West Branch of the Baraboo River is not currently utilized for recreational opportunities.
5. The Lake is not utilized for recreational opportunities or for its proximity to the downtown business district.
6. The Hillsboro Spur of the regional bike trail system currently ends in a parking lot on the edge of the City and is not linked to anything in the City.
7. The Hospital situated along the lake and is expanding with plans for a Riverwalk.
8. Park space and equipment throughout the city remains underutilized and is aging (New).
9. The Hillsboro Municipal Pool is aging, but a splashpad was added in 2018 (New).
10. The development of a dog park for residents (New).
11. Utilizing the now-closed airport runway for recreation (New).
12. Addition of ATV/UTV routes throughout the city (New).
13. Development of multi-use trails and connecting trails throughout the city (New).
14. Rehabilitation of the downtown basketball and tennis courts (New).

Plan Elements (Original)

Plan elements that were designed in the original scope of this capstone project include a wide variety of specific elements that can be summarized into the following items: A multi-use sports complex, an RV/Campground facility, enhancing and revitalizing the downtown business district, utilize the west branch of the Baraboo River for canoe/ kayak and additional recreational opportunities, utilize the lake for recreational opportunities and its location to the downtown business district, better link and utilize the bike trail to downtown and recreational areas, and finally develop a multi-use site on the hospital site to link with the adjoining open space. Each part of the program is explained in detail in the following sections.

Sports Complex

The first of the plan element is to develop a multi-purpose sports complex with a baseball field, softball field, football/ soccer field, volleyball court, basketball court, and possibly other activities. Currently, there is a great need for the City and surrounding community for recreational facilities, particularly for youth sized sports facilities. Currently, there are no youth -sized soccer or baseball fields in the City, with the nearest being in other communities over twenty minutes away. There is a larger tract of vacant land within the City that could be a possible site for a sports complex.

Campground/RV Facility

The second plan element is to develop a campground/RV facility. Hillsboro is located very close to Wildcat Mountain State Park and currently receives many overflow requests for camping but currently has no facilities to accommodate those requests. There is a larger tract of land along the south side of the lake adjoining the City limits that was once commonly owned by a now defunct lake association. The City is currently in the process of re-activating that lake association long enough to purchase the tract of land. The land adjoins the south side of the lake and South Branch Creek and could be a great location for a small campground. The tract of land is mostly wooded lowland, adjoined by farmland that would facilitate a private camping experience while just being across the lake from downtown. In locating and siting the campground, assessing the existing tree cover and ecosystem as well as floodplain areas will be essential to ensure that any campground designed will have little to no environmental impact on the tract of land or the water quality of the watershed.

Enhance, Promote, and Attract Visitors to Downtown

Currently, the downtown area is the junction of three state highways for the area which largely depends upon tourism and agriculture to drive the economy. However, the City currently does not successfully attract and retain visitors that drive through those three highways. Creating a more aesthetically pleasing downtown with better architectural and street treatment standards will go a long way to help and retain visitors not only to the City but the regional area as well. In addition, revitalizing the downtown and in turn linking it with the new and existing open spaces of the City will ensure that recreational and economic tourism- driven activities work together and engage the City as a cohesive whole.

West Branch of the Baraboo River

Currently the west branch of the Baraboo River is not utilized for any recreational activities. The river is deep enough to accommodate canoeing and kayaking and possesses a unique and intimate character that could provide an outstanding river experience if the right facilities and recreational plan for the river was implemented. Currently, there is a lot of down trees and debris in the River that could be cleaned and managed by volunteer groups to provide access. In creating a recreational plan and

suggesting facilities for accommodating Canoers and Kayakers, ensuring protection of the watershed shall be of the utmost importance.

Field Veterans Memorial Lake

Currently, Field Veterans Memorial Lake is situated along and on the backside of the main downtown business district of the City. The lake is not presently utilized for recreational uses although great potential for a variety of recreational opportunities exists. There is a great dam and open space area along one end of the lake that could provide for a unique type of space that could be better utilized by the community. In creating and designing spaces to link and bring together areas around the lake, ensuring protection of the watershed for the lake and enhancing storm water quality shall be of utmost importance.

Hillsboro State Bike Trail

Currently the Hillsboro State Trail Spur of the 400 State Trail is just under five miles long and ends in a parking lot on the edge of the City. Other than a primitive restroom facility that is sometimes locked, the trail ends there surrounded by an industrial district. There is no real direction or wayfinding provided into the main downtown area of the City and no connection to other open spaces or attractions in the City. To improve these current problems, the trail should be extended into the main downtown area and/ or link with the open spaces within the City. In extending the trail and delineating routes within the City, ensuring health, safety, and welfare of residents as well as trail/route users will be essential.

Hospital Site and Adjoining Park

The existing site of the Hospital along the lake close to the central business district is building a new hospital. Currently, the site is also next to one of the City parks along the lake with a Veteran's Memorial, fishing pier, and multi-purpose buildings. This Riverwalk planned by the Hospital could be a great site to link the downtown area with the lake and open spaces of the City by creating some type of mixed-use development.

Design Recommendations

In looking critically at the design solutions proposed, it has been the goal to provide solutions that are feasible and could be implemented. None of these solutions and designs are ones that can or should be implemented immediately, but rather are great planning tools and an excellent facilitator for discussion on what the City should be or seek to be into the future. All the design solutions represent as a collective whole designs and ideas that could be implemented over a long period as resources and needs of the City allow and dictate for. All these designs and solutions seek to improve and/or preserve the health, safety, and welfare of not only the residents of the City, but also tourists and visitors to the region.

Project Design Solution and Rationales (Original)

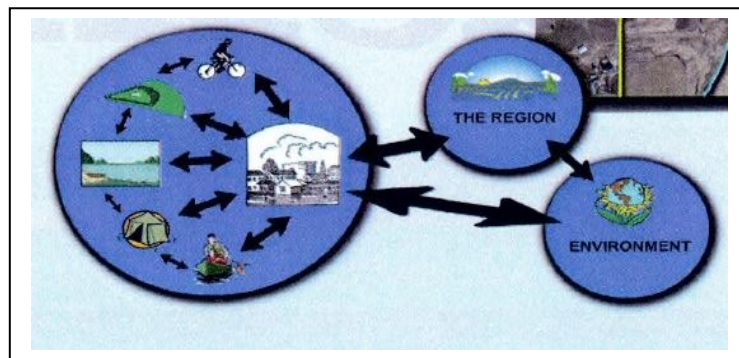
As described in previous sections, creating linkages will be essential for the overall success of this project. To accomplish this, this plan will include concepts of a Recreational and Open Space Master Plan for the City of Hillsboro. This plan seeks to accomplish the following three objectives:

1. Link together all the different recreational opportunities of this Community that are currently non-existent or underutilized.
2. Renew the downtown business district and make it more appealing to visitors.
3. Bring together the recreational opportunities with the downtown business district.

In doing so, these three objectives will result in these three goals being fulfilled and realized:

1. Planning and implementation of facilities and open space to unify the city will increase the economic, social, and environmental viability of the city.
2. Revitalization and planning for the downtown area to link it with the recreational opportunities and open spaces will enhance tourism and economic activity within the city.
3. Linking the downtown area and the recreational opportunities and open spaces will enhance tourism and economic activity within the region and the surrounding environment it is situated in, located in a unique part of Wisconsin known as the Driftless Area.

In developing the design solutions for this project, it was realized early on as a small city that it would be essential for all these different parts to work together to accomplish these common objectives and goals for the city, the following graphic essentially summarizes linking the recreational opportunities to the City's downtown, the region, and the surrounding environment. Appendix A contains full design report.



Sports Complex

In beginning the design process for this site, it was important to examine the surrounding context of the site. It is essential to ensure that people and all users can easily access the site from all different areas. Being a rural community, I found another important design consideration to be fitting the infrastructure of the sports complex into the existing environmental features more so that it blended into the landscape and surrounding site

context. This was accomplished by creating terraced seating for both the baseball and softball diamond, as well as the soccer field. This terraced seating fits into the new proposed grading and eliminates the need for disruptive metal bleacher structures. Instead the seating blends right into the grading of the site, constructed of local cut limestone pieces and a reinforced gravel geo-grid to allow for stormwater infiltration. Stormwater infiltration and management was also another important aspect of this site design and looked at addressing stormwater from the site as well as stormwater from further up in the watershed. A final part of the design solution for the sports complex included an extensive drain tile system under all athletic fields. This drain tile system will collect all stormwater for these areas and store it in underground cisterns beneath the spectator seating areas. During dry periods, this stored water can later be used for turf irrigation of athletic fields. Cistern overflow drains to the bio-swale are provided to ensure the fields will still drain during a significant rainfall event.



Original Concept of the Sports Complex

Campground/RV Facility

For the Campground/RV Facility, the city group expressed interest in having it accessible for RV's and automobiles. After assessing the Lake Association site, the topography, and potential access, a design decision was made to limit access to the campground to pedestrian walk-in or bicycle access via the proposed bike trail system around the lake or by canoe and kayak access from the proposed put-in site near the existing lake boat launch. As there is no public access presently available to the site, and the only public access road possibility would have to be one along the lake through a narrow easement. This would negatively impact the visual beauty of the lake area and could be hazard and waste of resources due to washout and damage during periods of the river flooding. Besides this, limiting access to the following means described above would create a unique camping experience that many tourists would find appealing-a remote campsite

within visual range of downtown. Campsites were sited based upon existing topography of the site and access. The proposed multi-use trail system of the city would pass through the site.

Downtown Revitalization

In developing a design solution for the downtown, the main goal was to keep in mind linking it together with the recreational and tourist opportunities of the city to be truly successful in revitalization. The main way to accomplish this was the decision to drastically modify the streetscape. The main downtown street is unique in that feeder streets only intersect on one side and the other there are none. To take advantage of this, the design solution proposes having the city bike trail system come right down the main street corridor on the side of the street with no intersections. This provides that important link between the businesses and the surrounding recreational and tourist base. Along with the bike trail, planting buffers to separate the bike lane from traffic lanes and parallel parking lanes were implemented. To increase pedestrian accessibility, seating areas were created to provide stopping places along the street for dining and interaction of people. Close to these seating areas bike racks are provided for parking. These bike racks could then be taken on by each store owner and each one be unique that would increase the cultural identity and sense of place within the city. Other aspects of this design solution involve the implementation of permeable pavers throughout pedestrian walkways for stormwater infiltration as well as stormwater storage matrices under hardscape areas with load-bearing capacity. These matrices provide uncompacted soil areas to promote mature street trees by maximizing root zones.

West Branch of the Baraboo River

To promote the recreational use of the West Baraboo River, facilities must exist that support this. Primary activities would consist of Canoeing and Kayaking from the Lake to the next town downriver. Downed timber and snags should be removed from the river and then a unique canoe/kayak experience would be possible down this stretch of river. A site to provide these facilities and more is the current open space adjoining the dam. The design solution for this area consisted of creating parking for the recreational facilities at this dam open space as well as to downtown. A performance amphitheater is set into the grade along the River, providing a unique outdoor performance area that could accommodate a variety of uses and be a cultural attraction for the city as well as the region. This site also provides access for canoe/kayak take-in/take-out points above and below the dam as well as a boat launch and trailer parking for canoe and kayak enthusiasts. The proposed bike trail system was also connected through this site and would be the main entry point of users entering the city via the regional multi-use trail system. The site has a gazebo at the entrance of the trail to the park with an information kiosk. Also employed in this site was the incorporation of moving water. The West Branch of the Baraboo River does have some nutrient pollutants and sediment pollutants mostly from the farming and agriculture in its watershed. To highlight this further and increase the human interaction with water throughout the site the design solution employs

the use of two culverts through the existing dike. This water flows through the site, through a variety of sedimentation drop-outs and then also through a variety of filtering plants that help to bio-remediate any pollutants. This water flows through bioswales throughout the site along pedestrian walkways providing for unique interaction before it spills back into the river along a rock and boulder wall next to the information gazebo. This provides a great eye-catching feature for trail users entering the City as well as the falling water increases oxygen levels for the river downstream to increase and enhance the River System's ability to support fish and other wildlife.



Original Concept of Dam Park

Field Veterans Memorial Lake

To enhance the use and access to the lake area, the multi-use and bike trail system was designed to go around most of its shores. This provides access by a wide variety of means that was not present before as well as linking and connecting it to not only the downtown, but the other recreational facilities of the city as well. To further facilitate lake access, the current boat launch was slightly modified to provide a more delineated and legible access point to the lake.

Hillsboro State Bike Trail

As mentioned previously, the current regional bike trail ends in a parking lot on the edge of the city with no wayfinding or connection to anything within the city. The design solution for a bike trail system in the city seeks to connect all the different recreational areas and opportunities as well as connect right into downtown. The trail system was delineated through the city by routes that would currently allow access such as public or vacant lands. When one of these options was not available or feasible, short sections of local streets were used to allow for that connection. In other areas, such as the bike trail

section opposite the dam open space area, a former railroad corridor was used to allow for the trail connection.

A more immediate project that the City of Hillsboro would like to explore is the extension of the Hillsboro State Bike Trail to Hammer – Klopfeisch Park. Currently, the Hillsboro State Bike Trail has an endpoint that leaves users in an industrial park area, away from more attractive portions of the City. By extending the trail to Hammer – Klopfeisch Park and adding a campground and other activities, the City feels the bike trail will be more attractive to users and better benefit the City as a whole. Project details include:

1. Extension of bike trail to Hammer – Klopfeisch Park.
2. Land acquisition and easements will be necessary as a path is determined.
3. Bridge Construction: Depending on the path, small bridges will need to be constructed to cross the West Branch of the Baraboo River.
4. Street bike crossings and lanes marking for bicyclist safety.
5. Creation of a campground at Hammer – Klopfeisch Park. Bike trail connects directly to 3-5 primitive style campsites.
6. Bike trail connects to existing shelter area with grill.
7. Parking area for cars, bikes, and RV's.
8. Canoe and kayak landing into the FVM Lake.

Hospital Site and Adjoining Park

With the Hospital project including a Riverwalk, this will provide a great point of connection for linking Field Veterans Memorial Lake Park together also. The design solution for this site also involves the inclusion of an Adirondack chair park, a Hammock park, free little libraries, a handicap fishing pier and kayak launch, and public art. The Riverwalk would connect to the new Settler's Park Cheyenne Heritage Society gazebo across the state highway. Future addition of a pedestrian bridge to the full boat launch is desirable. The Riverwalk extension concept is pictured below:



Additional Plans Adopted in the CORP

The following Plans have been developed by the City of Hillsboro and are adopted into this Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan:

City of Hillsboro Park and Trail Improvement Plan by MSA Professional Services (Appendix B)

Baraboo River Corridor Plan: Phase II by MSA Professional Services (Appendix C)

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Adoption 2019-2024

By adopting the CORP, the City of Hillsboro is not obligated to commit to any of the recommendations or projects detailed in the CORP. The CORP provides guidelines for developing recreational opportunities in the city and may be utilized as the city feels necessary.

Adopted: _____

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C