



Department of Planning & Community & Economic Development

## Planning Division

Meagan E. Tuttle, Director  
Madison Municipal Building, Suite 017  
215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
P.O. Box 2985  
Madison, WI 53701-2985  
Phone: (608) 266-4635  
planning@cityofmadison.com

**To:** Board of Parks Commission

**From:** Southeast Area Plan (Jeff Greger)

**Date:** December 10, 2025

**Subject:** Southeast Area Plan Update

## Background

Planning Division staff started working on the Southeast Area Plan in September 2024. Staff have worked with the public, coordinated with other agency staff, and drafted Southeast Area Plan actions and maps. Staff are here to provide an overview of the Southeast Area Plan and share the draft actions and maps. Staff are looking for comments from the Commission on the draft actions and maps prior to compiling a final draft of the Southeast Area Plan for introduction to the Common Council. Please see the [project website](#) for background material, public feedback summaries, and material from past meetings.

## Public Engagement

Public participation has included public meetings (virtual and in-person). In addition to the public meetings, staff collected feedback from various other sources such as an online commenting map, resident surveys, Madison Madness bracket exercise, focus group meetings, a neighborhood walk, a business walk, Bike to Work Week event, pop-up events, UW PEOPLE Program engagement with La Follette High School students, neighborhood associations and Neighborhood Resource Team.

This Commission update focuses on community feedback received, and reviewing draft actions and maps.

## Draft Parks Actions

1. Complete and implement the Park Development Plans for the neighborhood and mini-parks.
  - a. Uses for new parkland should include both passive and active recreation opportunities.
  - b. Improve existing park areas, bike paths, and walking paths to provide a wide range of recreational activities for neighborhood residents.
  - c. Improve and/or upgrade park equipment, access, benches, and shelter at Honeysuckle Park.
  - d. Add park amenities to McGinnis Park and other mini-parks that are lacking
2. ~~Consider surplus Quaker Park on Buckeye Road and~~ Explore agreements with the Nuestro Mundo Community School for shared use facilities.

**Hiestand Park**

3. Develop a Master Plan that includes the following improvements:
  - a. Support development of a winter disc golf course
  - b. Install lighting with timers on athletic fields and basketball courts to extend playable hours.
  - c. Renovate the park shelter in Hiestand Park to create a community patio design concept that could include durable outdoor games, swinging benches, and other amenities.
  - d. Improve signage to distinguish walking trails from the disc golf course.
  - e. Add wayfinding signage/ information kiosk.

**Olbrich Park**

4. Advance improvements, including the biergarten, new beach house, and parking lot/basketball court renovations.
5. Explore options for expanding the botanical gardens to the east across Starkweather Creek or to the west as part of the upcoming master plan.
6. Address parking pressures at Garver and Olbrich
7. Evaluate options for dredging or relocating the boat launch.

**Starkweather Park**

8. Integrate findings from the 2025 Parks planning process and account for land deed restrictions on access paths.
  - a. Consider the potential addition of a dog park.
  - b. Enhance public access and experience for park and multi-use path users, and watercraft recreationalists along Starkweather Creek.
  - c. Add benches along Starkweather Creek.

**Monona Golf Course**

9. Evaluate options to renovate or replace the clubhouse, with the long-term goal of creating a more community-oriented space.

**Glendale Neighborhood:**

10. Address the deficiency in park space near Virginia Henderson Elementary School by exploring partnerships with MMSD, acquiring properties, or creating a mini-park/play area (at the end of Woodland within Edna Taylor Park).

**Trees and Canopy Coverage**

11. Evaluate the Cottage Grove Road boulevard and Acewood Boulevard for potential street tree planting sites that reduce speeding, with an emphasis on expanding canopy coverage along corridors.
12. Increase overall tree canopy in the Southeast Area by prioritizing plantings in areas with limited shade or high pedestrian activity, while also adding and protecting greenspace.
13. Prioritize the planting and retention of trees and minimize the amount of impervious surfaces along Stoughton Road, Hwy 30, and industrial areas by utilizing existing tree planting programs like the Leaf Them Alone ordinance.

### **Stormwater Management and Flood Reduction**

14. Consider Herptile relocation program for Acewood Pond when the pond is dredged
15. Implement recommendations of the City's Starkweather Creek and Pennito Creek Watershed Studies.
16. Include rain gardens on city owned property where possible during street reconstructions.

### **Partnerships**

1. Work with public and private organizations to develop recreational programs within existing parks or school playgrounds for area seniors and youth.
2. Encourage neighborhood organizations to help activate open spaces through programming and placemaking events.
  - a. Such as labyrinth in McGinnis Park, Food Truck Events, and other neighborhood led initiatives using Neighborhood Grants, Parks Foundation and other funding sources
3. Exploration of burying overhead wires during street reconstructions on Cottage Grove Road, Milwaukee Street to Highway 51
4. Partner with Neighborhood Groups and others to increase rain gardens in the Southeast Neighborhoods.
  - a. Explore the creation of community gardens at Honeysuckle Park or along the right-of-way of North Thompson Drive. (move to partnerships as they are not managed by parks - master leases with Rooted Wisconsin)

### **Feedback received on Draft Parks Actions**

1. Love the idea of an info kiosk, better lighting at Hiestand and Honeysuckle Parks.
2. Support the evaluation of options to renovate or replace the clubhouse, with the long-term goal of creating a more community-oriented space.
3. More biodiversity of tree plantings.
4. I would love to see more fruit trees at parks/urban foraging options.

### **Board of Parks Commission Discussion**

Staff is seeking feedback from the Board of Parks Commission on draft actions and maps in the Green and Resilient chapter prior to completing a full final draft:

1. Does the Commission agree with the draft Actions?
2. Is there anything you think we missed?
3. Do you have additional comments or questions?

### **Attachment**

- [Draft Actions and maps](#)