POSP Draft Recommendations

The current Table of Contents for the POSP includes both Recommended Strategies and Recommendations in Chapter 6 as shown below.

6.1	Recommended Strategies
6.2	Acquisitions
6.3	System Recommendations
6.4	Lake Access
6.5	Park Facilities

The Long Range Planning Subcommittee Discuss the purpose and place for Draft Recommendations if they are to be included in the POSP at the December 18, 2024 meeting. In preparation for that meeting please review the following documents:

POSP Draft Recommendations

6.2	Acquisition Recommendations (Reviewed by LRP in August 2024)
6.3	System Recommendations
6.4	Lake Access Recommendations (Reviewed by LRP in August 2024)
6.5	Park Facilities

The following Recommendations have not yet been drafted:

- System Recommendations
- Park Facilities

In preparation for the December 18 meeting of LRP, As you review the Recommendations, please consider the following questions:

- Are these necessary?
- If so, where do they fit in?
- Can they be captured within the strategies or elsewhere?
    - Reminder, staff are currently redrafting the “Relevant Plan” section to be more robust, and much of the “Acquisition Recommendations” will be captured there.

Acquisition Recommendations

In 2022, City of Madison Department of Planning, Community and Economic Development (DPCED) launched its Planning Framework, which consolidates the city into 12 planning areas focusing on general recommendations to simplify area planning and make it more equitable. The Area Plans will eventually update and replace the older Neighborhood Development Plans (NDP) that they encompass. The first to move forward, the West and Northeast Area Plans, respectively, were moving through the City's formal review process in summer 2024 and are anticipated to be approved prior to the finalization of this document.

As such, this update of the POSP will speak to both the older Neighborhood Development Plans and the two Area Plans completing the approval process, as well as intergovernmental agreements and park-led initiatives that are not necessarily included in other plans. These different plans and documents represent opportunities to grow existing parks and greenspaces through acquisitions as they become available.

Neighborhood Development Plans

Currently there are twenty-one NDPs (those not yet replaced by Area Plans) that identify 71 potential new park parcels along the City's periphery totaling 441 acres. Sixteen plans call for new parkland development, with 17 of the 71 proposed new park parcels in the Northeast Neighborhoods Neighborhood Development Plan. The current NDP are as follows:

Commented [KK1]: Hannah is verifying parcels vs parkland counts

- Cherokee
- Elderberry
- Felland
- Junction Road
- Marsh Road
- Midtown
- Northeast
- Pumpkin Hollow
- Rattman
- Reiner
- Shady Wood
- Sprecher
- Yahara Hills

Intergovernmental Agreements

In addition to parkland dedicated in conjunction with new residential development, the City of Madison acquires existing parkland in neighboring communities as part of intergovernmental agreements. Currently Madison has intergovernmental agreements with the Towns of Blooming Grove, Burke, and Middleton which will result in the City of Madison obtaining new parks that were previously in other municipalities. Many of the parks contain amenities (e.g. playgrounds) that may or may not have been maintained to the same standard as similar City of Madison park amenities.

The City acquired three new parks with the final attachment of the Town of Madison in 2022, along with a number of new parks with the phased attachment of Blooming Grove in 2020 and 2027 with the final attachment. The City will also acquire eight new parks through final attachment of the Town of Burke in 2036. In total, the City can anticipate acquiring 14 new parks through intergovernmental agreements by 2036.

Park Initiatives

Madison Parks continues to look for and take advantage of opportunities to strategically grow the park system outside of the planning documents mentioned above. Some examples are the recent purchase of 20 acres of mature woodland added to Whitetail Ridge Park and recent acquisitions of private lots to close the gap between the Olin Park Building and Olin Park.

For the purposes of this discussion the city has been divided into three areas:

- East: Everything east or north of the Yahara River
- Downtown: Everything between east of South Mills and north of Haywood to the Yahara River
- West: Everything west of South Mills and south of Haywood

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East

In addition to the acquisitions mentioned above, Madison Parks would like to acquire land currently in quarry use south of Galaxy Park. Specifically, the desired land includes the high point of the quarry and sufficient surrounding land to attach to Galaxy Park. The high point of the quarry provides a view of the surrounding lakes and the addition will bring this park up to a more typical neighborhood park size.

To provide the necessary park facilities to serve the new northside neighborhood developing at the old Oscar Meyer property, Parks would like to acquire additional developable lands either to the north of Roth Street or south of the new Hartmeyer Roth park land.

Downtown

Additional park land is needed to serve the increasing population of downtown Madison. Two focus areas for the future acquisitions are the rail corridor located between East Washington Avenue and Williamson Street, particularly adjacent to or close to McPike Park, and the Yahara River corridor, adjacent to or close to the Yahara River Parkway.

West

Parks continues to search for appropriate land to build a west side sports complex. Parks is seeking a parcel suitable for multiple rectangular fields, as well as possibly additional cricket pitches and ball diamonds. The site needs to be large enough to accommodate the necessary parking lots and support facilities like restrooms, shade structures, and spectator seating.

Parks is also seeking to continue to acquire parcels as they become available that will extend the area of open shoreline from the Parks Olin Administration Building and Olin Park.

Finally, Parks plans to complete Elver Park acquisition by acquiring the parcels along South Gammon Road, north of Midtown Road extended.

Lake Access Recommendations

Access to the lakes is a defining feature of Madison, Wisconsin, as the city is situated around three primary lakes (Mendota, Monona, and Wingra) and is part of a chain of five lakes in the Yahara River watershed. There are many benefits of this geographical feature, to name just a few, warm weather water recreational opportunities (fishing, swimming, sailing, etc.), natural beauty, an excellent venue to host community and cultural events, and when the lakes are frozen, an additional 13,000 acres of public open space for a variety of activities, such as skating, fishing, kite flying and ice boating.

Improving access to Madison's lakes involves several key initiatives to enhance recreational opportunities and ensure inclusivity for all residents and visitors. This plan recommends improvements to existing beaches, boat launches, and the installation of accessible facilities:

1. Improvements to Existing Beaches

- Accessibility Upgrades: Retrofit existing beaches with accessible pathways, ramps, and seating areas to ensure people with disabilities can enjoy beach access.
- Facility Amenities: Install amenities such as accessible restrooms, changing facilities, and shower stations to accommodate all visitors.
- Consider strategically selecting 4 to 6 beaches for shoreline design services and reconstruction with sustainability in mind, minimizing shore scouring, and sand migration and other environmental considerations.

2. Care of Existing Boat Launches

- Maintenance and Upkeep: Regularly inspect and maintain existing boat launches to ensure they are in good condition and safe for use.
- Improvement of Facilities: Upgrade amenities such as parking areas, dock facilities, and signage to improve user experience and safety.
- Environmental Conservation: Implement best practices for stormwater management and erosion control to protect water quality and shoreline habitats. Work with the WisDNR to complete necessary dredging in a timely manner. Consider moving a launch to a more sustainable location if its dredging needs are excessive.

3. Installation of Accessible Kayak Launches

- Distribution: Install accessible kayak launches at strategic locations on Mendota, Monona, and Wingra Lakes to accommodate boat access for individuals with disabilities.
- Location Selection: Identify strategic locations around the lakes for installing accessible kayak launches, considering factors such as ease of access, scenic views, and proximity to parking.
- Design Specifications: Construct kayak launches with ADA-compliant designs, including sturdy ramps, transfer benches, and handrails for safe and convenient use.
- Promotion and Education: Provide outreach and educational programs to promote the use of accessible kayak launches and safety guidelines for paddlers.

4. Accessible Boat and Fishing Piers

- Location and Distribution: Install accessible boat piers at strategic locations on Mendota, Monona, and Wingra Lakes to accommodate boat access for individuals with disabilities.
- Design Features: Incorporate features such as wider platforms, non-slip surfaces, and railing systems that comply with ADA standards for safe boarding and disembarking.
- Fishing Amenities: Install accessible fishing piers with features such as a wide platform to ensure the fishing pier platform is wide enough to accommodate wheelchair users and individuals with mobility aids. Use of a non-slip decking material to provide traction and prevent slips or falls. Install railings around the perimeter of the fishing pier at appropriate heights (typically between 34 inches and 38 inches above the deck surface) with openings no larger than 4 inches to prevent wheelchairs from getting stuck. Include handrails along gangways and ramps leading to the pier for added stability and support. Use transition plates at the pier entrance to smooth the transition from land to the pier, ensuring wheelchair users can navigate the gap safely.

5. Lake Access Support Buildings

- In recent years the Parks Division has built new beach shelters at Warner and Tenney Park
- In coming years the Parks Division has plans to build new support buildings at Brittingham and Olbrich.
- The Parks Division plans to collaborate with local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions to help provide funding and volunteer efforts for the lake access support buildings.
- During the Vilas Park Master Planning process, the Vilas beach house was inspected and found to be in good condition overall, however the uses of the building and interior are in need of updating.

By implementing these improvements, the City of Madison can enhance accessibility, safety, and enjoyment of its lakes for all residents and visitors, reinforcing the lakes' role as a central recreational and natural asset within the community.