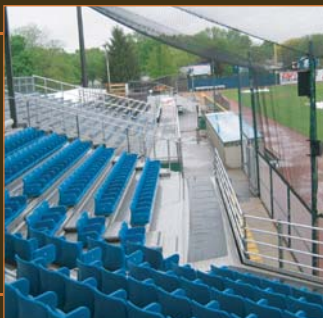




City of Beloit

2006-2010 Parks and Open Space Plan

Adopted: November 20, 2006



Prepared by

Vandewalle & Associates
Madison · Milwaukee

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

City Council

Martin Densch, President
Kevin Leavy, Vice President
Douglas Eddy
Terrence Monahan
Chad Murry
Joel Patch
James Van De Bogart

Plan Commission

Henry Clement, Chairperson
Gene Barbera
Marlene Erickson
Daniel Boutelle
Rory Owens
Melissa Henderson

Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Advisory Commission

Brad McNely, Chairperson
Peter Marino
Matthew Parish
Therus Collins
Todd Dever
Edward Esler
Robert Sveom
Kim Thompson
Jeff Klett
Martin Densch

Consultant Staff

Jim Schaefer, ASLA, Project Manager
Mark Roffers, AICP, Principal in Charge
Jessica Schmiedicke, Assistant Planner
Erika Rence, GIS Intern
Ellen Hall, Communication Manger
Nicole Anderson, Administration

Vandewalle & Associates
120 East Lakeside Street
Madison, WI 53713
(608) 255-3988
www.vandewalle.com

City Staff

Lee Fassett, Director of Parks & Leisure Services
Lori Williams, Director of Leisure Services
Julie Christensen, Community Development
Director
Tim Bragg, Assistant Planner
Mark Edwards, Parks Supervisor

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I INTRODUCTION

Communities throughout the country recognize that park land, recreation trails, and natural areas are key components of a high quality living environment. Such open spaces provide a community with many benefits. These include helping to meet human needs for outdoor recreation, promoting and accommodating a healthy lifestyle for residents, enhancing the aesthetic quality of a community, increasing property values, attracting visitors and tourists, shaping development patterns, and protecting the natural environment.

The City of Beloit has a well-developed system of public parks, urban spaces, and natural areas. These spaces and facilities have evolved with the growth of the City to provide opportunities for recreation and gathering, civic pride, and natural resource appreciation. New parks and recreation facilities occasionally may be needed, or certain existing park facilities may require renovation, but in general, Beloit possesses a fine park system with expert park leadership.

Over the past five years, the City has focused on park preservation and maintenance, as was outlined in the *2001-2005 Parks and Open Space Plan*. Most new athletic facilities during that period were established by private recreation providers, while the City focused on rehabilitation of existing park facilities and downtown urban spaces and pathways. This updated *2006-2010 Parks and Open Space Plan* will identify new goals for park uses and make detailed facility improvement recommendations based on community and City staff input.

This *Plan* was initiated by the City of Beloit, Parks and Leisure Services Division. Vandewalle & Associates, a planning and design firm in Madison, Wisconsin, was asked to assist the City in creation of the *Plan* with direct input from the Director of Parks and Leisure Services and the Director of Leisure Services. The City of Beloit Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Advisory Commission and Plan Commission also contributed ideas and direction to the *Plan*. Assistance from the City's Community Development Department was also invaluable.

This *Plan* was prepared in accordance with guidelines that will make it certifiable by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and qualify the City for matching grant funds through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON) and the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Fund. The *Plan* must be updated every five years to ensure that it reflects the current needs of the community and retains its DNR certification. This *Plan* was also prepared as a detailed component of the City's Comprehensive Plan, under Wisconsin Statutes 66.1001.

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II BACKGROUND INFORMATION

A. General Regional Context

Although the exact history remains disputed, the word Beloit is recognized as a derivative of the French word “balotte” meaning “handsome ground”. The spelling was changed to model “Detroit”, which the community saw as a great symbol of trade and growth. Incorporated as a village on February 24, 1846, Beloit was officially incorporated as a city by the State of Wisconsin on March 31, 1856. One hundred and fifty years after incorporation, the City of Beloit covers approximately 17 square miles. Situated on the Wisconsin-Illinois state line, Beloit is about an hour south of Madison and an hour southwest of Milwaukee. The City of South Beloit, Illinois, borders Beloit to the south; the Town of Turtle lies to the east; and the Town of Beloit borders to the west. Located at the intersection of Interstates 39/90 and 43, Beloit has large areas of commercial and industrial activities in addition to residential land uses.

B. Natural Resources

A survey of Beloit’s natural environment provides an important framework for guiding the park and open space planning process. There are several characteristics of the City’s natural landscape that will help direct the development of future park and recreational facilities.

1. Climate

South central Wisconsin’s climate is characterized by four distinct seasons. Warm summers generally span the months of June through August. The winter months of December, January, and February are cold, with average temperatures below freezing. The region is characterized by temperate conditions in spring and autumn. The first autumn freeze typically occurs around the second week of October, and the last spring freeze is usually during the first week of May.

2. Soils

The City of Beloit is within the glacial drift region of Wisconsin. Deposited with layers of silts, sand, and clay, a small proportion of land (17 percent) is classified as National Prime Farmland. That is, the soil is well suited for the production of food and has the capacity to sustain high yields of crops when properly managed. Furthermore, 46.6 percent of land in the city has been identified as Farmland of Statewide Importance. Currently, approximately one-third of city land is in agricultural use.

3. Watersheds and Surface Waters

Straddling the Rock River, the City is entirely within its drainage basin. The City is further divided into four smaller watersheds: the Lower Sugar River, Bass Creek, Blackhawk Creek, and Turtle Creek. In addition to the Rock River, there are smaller water bodies in the City including Turtle Creek, Lenigan Creek, and Springbrook Creek.

4. Vegetation

At the time of European settlement, much of south central Wisconsin was covered with prairie and oak savannah, oak woods, and lowlands. Since that time, most of the land has been converted to agricultural and urban uses. Currently, approximately 6.6 percent of the City remains wooded. The majority of these areas are located along the Turtle Creek Greenway.

5. Wildlife Habitat

Species of wildlife that are common to the south central Wisconsin region are rabbits, squirrels, woodchucks, raccoons, muskrats, and beavers. Larger mammals such as white-tailed deer, coyotes, and foxes also inhabit the region. Common bird species include pheasants, cardinals, robins, wood thrushes, great blue herons, and killdeer.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, there are occurrences of aquatic endangered species in the southwest and northeast areas of the City. There were occurrences of both aquatic and terrestrial endangered species in the southwest and the areas surrounding Rock River. Detailed information regarding the types of endangered animals, plants, and natural communities can be found at the Department of Natural Resources' website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/er/nhi/countymaps/>.

C. Population Trends and Forecasts

Table 1 compares the City of Beloit's population trends over the past thirty years with several neighboring communities, the County, and the State. Between 1990 and 2000, the City experienced a 0.6 percent population increase. In contrast, the Town of Turtle experienced a small population decline while total population increased for the Town of Beloit and the City of South Beloit. Between 1980 and 2000, the City experienced a 1.6 percent increase.

Table 1: Population Trends and Historic Growth

	1970	1980	1990	2000	% Population Change 1980-2000	% Population Change 1990-2000
City of Beloit	35,729	35,207	35,573	35,775	1.6	0.6
Town of Turtle	2,532	2,703	2,458	2,444	-9.6	-0.6
Town of Beloit	9,182	8,382	6,778	7,038	-16.0	3.8
City of South Beloit	3,804	4,088	4,072	5,397	32.0	32.5
Rock County	131,970	139,420	139,510	152,307	9.2	9.1
State of Wisconsin	4,417,821	4,705,642	4,891,769	5,363,675	14.0	9.6

Source: U.S. Census 1970-2000

The City of Beloit's estimated 2005 population was 36,106 residents, according to the Department of Administration (DOA). Table 2 shows four different population projection scenarios in five-year increments through the year 2030. The 2030 forecasts range from 36,190, produced by the DOA, to 51,859, calculated from the 20-year trend in building permits. These projections were formulated in conjunction with the City's current comprehensive planning process.

As part of the City's 2001 park planning process, population projections were prepared using City staff input. While the DOA projected population loss for the City between 2000 and 2015, City planning staff believed that the City's population would experience a considerable increase by 2015 based on the number of new or planned residential subdivisions. City staff continues to consider new residential unit construction to be a more accurate method for forecasting future growth.

Table 2: Population Projection Scenarios

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
DOA Projections	35,775	36,106	35,927	36,029	36,100	36,190	NA
Population Trend Projection (1980-2005)	35,775	36,106	36,291	36,476	36,662	36,850	37,038
Building Permits: 20-year Average	35,775	36,106	37,247	38,375	39,489	40,599	41,710
Building Permits: 20 Year Trend	35,775	36,106	38,339	41,031	44,171	47,776	51,859

Source: Wisconsin DOA, Census, City of Beloit Community Development Department

For the purposes of this *Plan*, population projections will be based on population increases derived from the 20-year trend in building permits issued by the City, depicted in Table 3. These figures will ensure conservative estimates for park system planning.

Table 3: City of Beloit Population Projections

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
City of Beloit	35,775	36,106	38,339	41,031	44,171	47,776	51,859

D. Demographics

1. Age and Gender Distribution

The City of Beloit's demographic data from the year 2000 are presented in Table 4. This data suggests that the City's population is younger than the surrounding communities and the County. Furthermore demographic trends indicate that the City's median age has increased from 31.1 in 1990 to 32.7 in 2000. The proportion of residents over the age of 65 has decreased slightly from 13.4% in 1990 to 13.0% in 2000. The proportion of school-age children residing in the City is higher than that of surrounding communities and the County.

Table 4: Age and Gender Distribution, 2000

	Median Age	% Under 18	% Over 65	% Female
City of Beloit	32.7	27.7	13.0	52.1
Town of Turtle	42.2	25.7	13.4	49.3
Town of Beloit	42.3	23.3	16.8	50.5
City of South Beloit	33.3	26.5	12.9	50.5
Rock County	35.9	26.5	12.7	50.8

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

2. Race and Ethnicity

Beloit is a racially diverse city. Table 5 compares the City's racial and ethnic composition to neighboring communities and Rock County. Beloit's Black and Hispanic populations are nearly twice that of any of the surrounding communities. The City and other recreation providers should be sensitive to this rich ethnic mix which presents a challenge in providing culturally sensitive recreational programming and facilities.

Table 5: Race and Ethnicity, 2000

	% White	% Black	% Hispanic	% Asian
City of Beloit	71.9	15.2	9.1	1.2
Town of Turtle	97.3	1.5	1.0	0.2
Town of Beloit	88.8	6.7	2.6	0.6
City of South Beloit	86.3	4.0	5.8	0.8
Rock County	89.2	4.6	3.9	0.8

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

3. Household Characteristics

Tables 6 through 8 present household characteristics for the City of Beloit compared to neighboring communities and the County. In 2000, Beloit's household size was slightly higher than all jurisdictions except Rock County. The City had the lowest median home value and the second lowest median rent. The City also has the lowest percentage of owner occupied housing. Household forecasts, based on projected population associated with the 20-year trend in building permits issued by the City, suggest that there will be a 50.9 percent increase in the number of households in the City over the next 20 years.

Table 6: Housing Characteristics, 2000

	Total Housing Units	Total Households	Average Household Size	Median Value	Median Rent
City of Beloit	14,262	13,370	2.57	\$68,200	\$509
Town of Turtle	990	957	2.55	\$115,900	\$652
Town of Beloit	2,949	2,814	2.50	\$102,000	\$538
City of South Beloit	2,345	2,165	2.46	\$86,200	\$505
Rock County	62,187	58,617	3.03	\$98,200	\$543

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 7: Household Characteristics, 2000

	Single Person	Vacant	Owner Occupied	Single Family
City of Beloit	27.5%	6.3%	61.9%	73.7%
Town of Turtle	19.9%	3.3%	89.8%	95.8%
Town of Beloit	27.4%	4.6%	85.3%	89.3%
City of South Beloit	28.8%	7.7%	68.8%	70.9%
Rock County	25.1%	5.7%	71.1%	75.8%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 8: Household Projections

	Households							Change
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2005-2030
City of Beloit	13,370	13,575	14,689	15,903	17,322	18,809	20,498	50.9%

E. Labor Force and Employment

A community's labor force is the portion of the population that is employed or available for work. The labor force includes people who are in the armed forces, employed, unemployed, or actively seeking employment. According to the 2000 Census, 64.9 percent of City residents age 16 and older were included in the labor force. The percentage of the City's labor force employed by sector in 2000 is shown in Table 9. Nearly 35 percent of the labor force is employed in the manufacturing sector, reflective of a large "blue collar" workforce. The educational, health, and social services sector employs another 18.4 percent of the workforce.

Table 9: Labor Force Characteristics, 2000

Occupational Group	% of Labor Force
Manufacturing	34.9
Educational, health, and social services	18.4
Retail trade	11.1
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	8.5
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	5.2
Construction	4.9
Other services (except public administration)	3.9
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	3.4
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	3.3
Public Administration	2.4
Wholesale trade	2.0
Information	1.5
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	0.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000

F. Review of Existing Plans

Another critical step in the park planning process is an examination of relevant planning efforts undertaken by the City and regional agencies. A comprehensive understanding of how the City has evolved over time and how it has been planning for the future establishes guidelines for the recommendations presented in this *Plan*. Moreover, a review of existing plans helps identify ways that this *Plan* should be adapted to be consistent with the City's ongoing goals, objectives, and policies, and coordinated with regional planning efforts.

1. Rock County Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2003-2008

In 2003, the Rock County Board of Supervisors adopted this Plan, which contains detailed descriptions and site maps of all 18 County parks. A survey was conducted as part of the extensive public participation effort, the results of which were very similar to the survey conducted by the City of Beloit Division of Parks and Leisure Services described in Chapter III of this *Plan*. Most notably, respondents felt there was a need for hiking trails and natural areas. Overall, the highest priority over the planning period was to provide each County park with adequate infrastructure including restrooms, drinking water, parking, internal park signage, and vehicular and pedestrian access.

2. Stateline Area Bike and Pedestrian System Plan (2004)

In 2004, the Stateline Area Transportation Study (SLATS) Policy Committee updated the 1994 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for the Stateline Area, including the City of Beloit. The purpose of the Plan is to outline a strategy for designing and implementing a safe, convenient, and comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian circulation network in the Stateline Area. Recommendations for the City of Beloit include off- and on-street paths, bicycle lanes, and intersection and bridge improvements.

3. Beloit Township Parks and Recreation Plan (1997)

The Town of Beloit is the only Town in Rock County with a park system. All 11 Town parks are located near the City of Beloit. The Plan identifies deficiencies in the park system and makes recommendations for additional parkland. The Plan also discusses the potential expansion of Armstrong-Eddy Park through an agreement with the City of Beloit and the property's owner, Beloit College.

4. City of Beloit Comprehensive Plan (1996)

Adopted in 1997, the Beloit Comprehensive Plan is the City's primary statement of policy regarding future land use, long range capital improvements, growth boundaries and opportunities for redevelopment. The Plan examines several elements of the community including open space and natural features and presents general goals and objectives. The Comprehensive Plan will be updated in 2007.

5. City of Beloit 2001-2005 Parks and Open Space Plan

Adopted in 2000, the City of Beloit's most recent parks and open space plan presented recommendations for the enhancement and improvement of existing City parks and for the acquisition and development of new municipal active and passive recreational facilities. Specifically, the Plan recommends the construction of a new sports complex, the acquisition of land to complete the greenway from Krueger Park to the Rock River, and the improvement of several existing parks. This *2006 Parks and Open Space Plan* will function as an update to the 2000 Plan and will build upon the recommendations therein to reflect up-to-date and accurate recommendations for the City's current population.

6. Aquatic Facility Studies, 2002 & 2005

Two studies have been conducted that recommend renovation opportunities for the pool facilities at Krueger Recreation Center and creation of a new aquatics facility on the east side of Beloit. The 2002 report studied the potential of renovating the existing facility at Krueger Recreation Center, and a site selection and design for a proposed new aquatic facility. Telfer Park was chosen as the best location for a new facility. In 2004, a significant renovation to

the Kreuger pool was implemented which included the addition of a sprayground feature and improvements to the bathhouse and pools. A similar study was conducted in 2005 which explored the renovation of the existing pool and the creation of a new facility at Telfer Park.

7. Park Master Plans

The following existing City parks have Master Plans which serve as development and maintenance guides. Recommendations made by this *Plan* reflect Master Plan recommendations.

- Krueger Municipal Pool
- Big Hill Memorial Park
- Turtle Creek Park
- Riverside Park

G. Parks Tour

A survey of existing park sites and facilities was conducted on May 11th, 2006. Accompanied by City staff, this tour involved visiting the parks and open spaces, studying site conditions, learning park history, and evaluating the need for improvements. This tour defined many of the detailed site improvement recommendations that follow in this *Plan*.

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III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A. Visioning Workshop

As part of the planning process for this *2006 Parks and Open Space Plan*, a visioning workshop was held on June 7, 2006, to provide City residents with an opportunity to share their perspectives on the existing park system and its future, and to ask questions about the park planning process. About 40 people attended the workshop in which participants were asked to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats related to the parks system.

Participants brainstormed park system desires and prioritized them, and they voted on various types of parks and recreational facilities that they would like to see emphasized in the future.

A compilation of data received at the workshop indicated that the participants' top desires for future parks and facilities were more natural areas, bike and pedestrian recreation trails, trailheads, community gardens, and dog parks. Additionally, participants shared their views on the following topics: continued park maintenance, increased budget and creative fundraising for parks and increased park staff, increased stewardship opportunities and education in parks, and promotion of safety and security.

The results of this workshop contributed to the development of the goals, objectives, and policies described in Chapter V. A summary of results from the workshop is provided in Appendix B of this *Plan*.



B. Needs Assessment Survey

The Division of Parks and Leisure Services conducted a user assessment survey with the goal of learning how to improve its services and park programs and to inform this *Plan*. Questionnaires were mailed randomly to 700 residents on April 20th, 2006; 170 were returned to the Division. A copy of the survey questions is included in Appendix C and complete results are available through the Division of Parks and Leisure Services. Some noteworthy highlights of the results include:

- Residents repeatedly visited the major park facilities each year such as Big Hill Memorial Park, Leeson's Park, Riverside Park & Rotary Center, Krueger-Haskell Golf Course and Krueger Swimming Pool, Telfer Park, and Edwards Ice Arena.
- The most frequently used park facilities were running/walking trails, playgrounds, picnic shelters and ballfields.
- Trails were identified as a top priority.
- More than three-quarters of respondents thought undisturbed or natural areas should be set aside for new park lands.
- Approximately half of respondents would pay at least \$10 more per month in property taxes for new park land.
- Eighty percent identified safe and clean park facilities as a top priority.
- Over half of respondents rate non-traditional facilities such as dog parks, bike trails, and natural areas as top priorities.
- Nearly 70 percent responded positively to increased funding for the purchase of new parks and facilities from a variety of sources.
- Forty percent of respondents felt there was a need for a community recreation center. One-quarter of these would pay \$5 to \$10 more per month in property taxes for its development.

Map 1a: Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities - City

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Map 1b: Existing Parks and Recreational Facilities – Detail

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IV GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

In order to conduct a thorough and accurate planning process, it is important to establish a set of goals, objectives, and policies that will serve as the basis for the recommendations in this *Plan*.

As discussed in previous sections of this *Plan*, community input was invaluable in determining policies. A Needs Assessment Survey was conducted by the City's Parks and Leisure Services Division. Stakeholder interviews with park user groups and community leaders were conducted. A public Vision Workshop was held to solicit park use and open space priorities for the entire park system. The City's Parks and Leisure Services Division also contributed direct knowledge from their daily experiences of managing parks and recreation programs for inclusion into policy formulation.

These efforts are summarized into the following Goals, Objectives, and Policies, which are used to help guide detailed park and open space improvement recommendations

Goals are broad statements that express general public priorities. Goals are formulated based on the identification of key issues, opportunities, and problems that affect the park system.

Objectives are more specific than goals and are usually attainable through strategic planning and implementation activities. Implementation of an objective contributes to the fulfillment of a goal.

Policies are rules and courses of action used to ensure plan implementation. Policies often accomplish a number of objectives.

The following list of goals, objectives, and policies is based on the information that has been presented in previous chapters of this *Plan*, including citizen input and discussions amongst City staff and Park and Recreation Commission members.

Goals

1. Ensure the provision of a sufficient number of parks, recreational facilities, and natural areas to enhance the health and welfare of City residents and visitors. Such facilities should accommodate special groups such as minorities, the elderly, and teenagers.
2. Preserve the City's natural resources and amenities for the benefit of current and future residents and visitors.

Objectives

1. Balance the need to acquire and develop new park and recreational facilities with the need to maintain and upgrade existing park sites and facilities.
2. Provide quality natural areas serving the entire community.
3. Provide pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access to all parks and recreational facilities.

Policies

1. All citizens should be provided with an opportunity for engaging in recreational activities, and recreational facilities should be equitably situated to serve the entire City.
2. The preservation of primary and secondary environmental corridors, isolated natural resource areas, steep slopes, woodlands, streams, floodplains, riparian habitats, and wetlands should receive special attention to ensure their maintenance as vegetative, wildlife and fish habitats, as areas for passive and active outdoor recreation, and as stormwater and flood management areas, where appropriate.

3. The City should continue to maintain and upgrade existing parks and recreational facilities for the safety and convenience of the age groups that use them.
4. The City should continue to develop a diversity of park sizes and types based on the characteristics and needs of individual neighborhoods, and the surrounding land use and natural resource features.
5. The provision of safe and convenient bike connections between parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities should be emphasized in on-going City planning and acquisition efforts.
6. The City should encourage volunteer participation and stewardship in maintaining existing and future parks.
7. The City should ensure that existing park facilities are upgraded to comply with American with Disabilities Act design guidelines. Future parks should be designed to be barrier-free and accessible to persons with disabilities.
8. The City should provide diverse recreational opportunities to adequately serve different age groups, including teenagers and senior citizens, as well as ethnic and minority groups.
9. The City should explore alternative means of reserving lands required for open space to ensure that lands are obtained at the lowest cost to the public (e.g. non-profit organizations, conservation easements, purchase of developments rights).
10. Parks and recreational facilities should be combined with school facilities where appropriate and feasible with joint planning and maintenance agreements. The City and the School District should continue to work together to provide accessible park and recreational facilities.
11. The City should carefully consider municipal recreational programming to balance that of private recreation providers.
12. All new development should meet the park and open space standards and recommendations as outlined in this *Plan* and implemented by the City of Beloit Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Platting Ordinance.

V EXISTING PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

The following is a summary of the existing park and recreational facilities within the City of Beloit, including park-specific recommendations for improvements. Facilities are depicted on Map 1a and 1b and a complete list of facilities within each park is provided in Appendix A. Please refer to Chapter VIII: Recommendations for a complete prioritized list of recommendations.

A. Regional Parks

1. Big Hill Memorial Park:

A scenic community asset with wooded hills and river views, this park sits atop a high point on the north edge of Beloit along the west bank of the Rock River. The park has 197.2-acres and is a destination for group and individual picnicking, hiking, and natural interpretation. The historic site is graced with 1930's Civilian Conservation Corp stone fireplaces and log cabin picnic structures, and is home to the first ski jump in Wisconsin.

Primarily used for nature interpretation, the site contains walking and cross country ski trails, group picnic shelter sites, a historic stone amphitheater, a scenic river overlook, a sand volleyball court, an informal ball field with backstop, and playgrounds. The site also is home to the Girl Scout of Badger Council Program Service Center, which has a long-term lease on land within the park.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Complete retaining wall along woodland trail
- Extend hiking trails/trail head into the Kopplin addition
- Determine use for the open area in the upper level adjacent to Big Hill Road (i.e. dog park, arboretum, camping grounds, reforest)
- Renovate historic council ring amphitheater
- Remove/restore log cabins
- Define parking areas



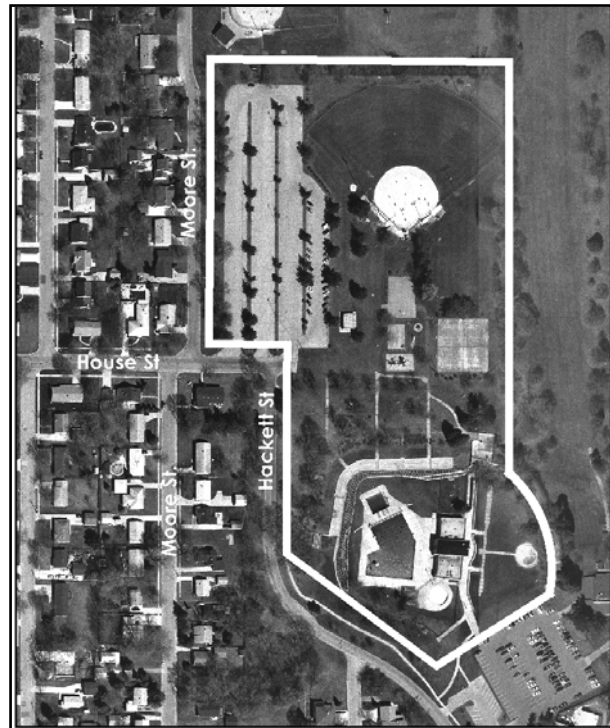
- Improve roads
- Create interpretive trail signage program
- Extend proposed Janesville-Beloit Trail into the park
- Improved signage for hiking trails

B. Community Parks

1. Krueger Recreation Area:

This 15.7-acre special use community park is uniquely located in an old stone quarry. It contains the City's only municipal pool, which charges user fees. Other facilities include play equipment, a softball field, tennis courts, a basketball court, restrooms, and a picnic shelter. The aging pool facility has inherent maintenance problems, which merit long term consideration of either complete renovation or phasing out of the pool entirely. The following is a list of alternatives:

- Continue with enhancements, infrastructure improvements, and maintenance of the Krueger Municipal Pool to retain it as a pool facility
- A supplemental aquatic facility at Summit Park
- A supplemental aquatic facility at Telfer Park



Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Stabilize limestone wall between pool grounds and golf course
- Restore historic lighthouse
- Renovate tennis courts
- Install sand volleyball courts within lower section
- Additional playground equipment within lower section

2. Leeson's Park:

This 41.5-acre community park contains two lighted baseball fields, concessions, restrooms, play equipment, picnic shelters, a sledding hill, and open space. Located on the east side of the City, Springbrook Creek winds through the park before entering the Springbrook Creek Greenway natural area.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Purchase small private wooded parcel at park entrance
- Determine viability of baseball use

- Determine new use for the former community garden area (i.e. dog park)
- Tuck pointing of both bridges
- Address Springbrook Creek bank erosion
- Remove unnecessary fencing throughout the park
- Create a trail connection to the Department of Public Works property along Springbrook Creek
- Consider adapting the cemetery pump house as a bell tower or carillon



3. Riverside Park:

This 24.9-acre riverfront park is a centerpiece for Beloit. Its scenic location on the Rock River and dramatic sequence of inviting park spaces and amenities make it ideal for a variety of civic events and daily active park use. The Riverwalk meanders through the site, linking a number of cultural amenities such as the Turtle Island play area, the Harry Moore Pavilion, Rotary River Center, Jones Pavilion, and picnic shelters. The Riverside Lagoon is a special feature of the park with decorative fountains. Small gazebos highlight scenic overlooks of the river. Riverside Park is also the site of Riverfest and hosts a number of free, outdoor concerts as well as private events. This park is home to the City's best tennis facility, a complex of four lighted courts. Public art is prominently located throughout the park.



Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Renovate two existing shelters
- Construct plaza
- Create signage system
- Update Moore pavilion with banners, awnings, and landscape updates
- Enhance Turtle Island by repairing play equipment, improving landscaping, rip-raping shoreline
- Improve landscape and shoreline at Adams Family Fountain & Plaza
- Create new tot lot within mid-lawn area
- Plant trees
- Rip-rap selected shoreline areas
- Create sculpture promenade
- Refurbish tennis courts

- Construct a park maintenance building
- Consider construction of a boathouse for non-motorized boats
- Expand park - Ace Hardware site development, 2008
- Enhance the lagoon for winter ice skating

4. Telfer Park:

This 28.8-acre site is a special use community park on the northeast side of the City. The site is home to Harry C. Pohlman Field and the Beloit Snappers, a class A minor league baseball farm team for the Minnesota Twins. The Pohlman baseball complex includes a ball field, grandstands, concessions, and offices. The park also houses the Edwards Sports and Activity Center which has indoor and outdoor ice rinks, locker rooms, and offices. In summer the rink is transformed into the Edwards Pavilion, available for reservation. Telfer Park also has one lighted softball field, a sand volleyball court, new play equipment, and extensive parking.



Recommendations for future improvements include:



- Construct planned skate park
- Study creation and siting of splash park
- Create storage area for hockey boards between the Edwards Sports and Activity Center and the existing outdoor rink
- Determine use for the former tennis courts (i.e. outdoor ice rink, in-line hockey)
- Determine use for the large tract of land north and east of Pohlman Field
- Continue with improvements o Pohlman Field
- Reserve sufficient land for possible future aquatic center

C. Neighborhood Parks

1. Christilla Park:

Located on the west side, this 3.8-acre neighborhood park offers unstructured lawn space, an informal ball field with backstop, and play equipment.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Replace play equipment
- Construct picnic shelter



2. Eagles Ridge Park:

This 4.4-acre park is located in the new Eagles Ridge subdivision and is currently undeveloped.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install play equipment
- Install picnic shelter
- Create open space play area
- Officially name the park

3. Freeman Park:

This 10-acre park is located adjacent to Turtle Creek Greenway and is undeveloped.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install play equipment
- Install picnic shelter
- Create open space play area

4. Dr. George Hilliard Park:

This 6.6-acre park on the southeast side of Beloit contains some of the largest trees in the City. It includes a unique, but aging, picnic shelter with fireplace, an informal ball field with backstop, new play equipment, restrooms, and a well-developed disc golf course.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Renovate ball field
- Replace disc golf equipment
- Replace benches
- Replace fence along the residential border
- Improve ball field
- Construct new picnic shelter/restroom

5. Hinckley Park:

This 3.4-acre park is a grassy open space on the west side of Beloit. Improvements include an informal ball field with backstop and play equipment.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Construct a picnic shelter
- Improve ball field and backstop

6. **Horace White Park:**

This 8-acre historic downtown park has a Victorian period feel. A classic city square, with crossing stone pathways, a Victorian gazebo, a canopy of mature trees, and floral displays, this gracious civic space is an asset to downtown Beloit. Other amenities include a play lot, picnic shelter, and restrooms. This park is home to the Village on the Green art show, and improvements are desired to further enhance its ambiance relative to the Downtown.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install period lighting and furnishings
- Expand perennial beds
- Install interpretive signage
- Renovate/widen walkways
- Re-landscape the Horace White Monument



7. **Mechanics Green:**

This 3-acre green space is bisected by Broad Street. The northern area, also known as Rhodes Arboretum, contains a collection of over 50 species of mature trees. The park is named for workers at a nearby manufacturing plant who lunched and relaxed there.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install missing identification plaques for tree species
- Install interpretive signage
- Install new walkways in the north side of the park
- Install new furnishings and period lighting
- Install screening from other uses north of parking lot
- Pave the parking area

8. **Reverend U.S. Pride Park:**

This 2.9-acre park is located on the west side of the Rock River on the north side of Beloit adjacent to the 'Fairbanks Flats'. This historic worker housing complex symbolizes local African American workers' heritage of struggle. Existing facilities include a small picnic shelter, restrooms, a basketball court, and play equipment.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Create trail along water's edge

- Investigate acquisition of land south of park to connect to Riverwalk and extend greenway along the Rock River
- Construct fishing pier
- Repair erosion along the river bank

9. **Roosevelt Park:**

Located adjacent to the Turtle Creek Greenway and the Kolak Education Center, this 3.5-acre park includes a lighted softball field and bleachers.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Replace restroom



10. **Strong Park:**

This 3.1 acre grassy site is a linear open space along Milwaukee Road on the east side of the City. Four previously unrecognized totem mounds, called the Oakwood Cemetery Group, are located near the park's fence. There are no recommendations for future improvements.

11. **Summit Park:**

This 7-acre park is a popular destination along Henry Avenue. The park features basketball courts, an informal soccer field, an informal ball field with backstop, a picnic shelter, and restrooms

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Resurface tennis courts and provide equipment for joint tennis / basketball use
- Develop a soccer field
- Improve lighting
- Expand parking area
- Consider as a possible site for a spray ground

12. **Townview Park:**

The 10-acre park is primarily open space with play equipment.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install picnic shelter
- Construct an informal ball field with backstop
- Consider long-term redesign when residential growth occurs north of the park

13. **Turtle Creek Park:**

Turtle Creek bisects this 11-acre park on the southeast edge of the City. A vacant bath house and a filled-in pool are located at the entrance of the park. New play equipment and a practice baseball field occupy the northern portion of the park. A bicycle trail will be constructed through the park in 2007.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Determine future use or demolition of the pool house (i.e. picnic shelter)
- Improve access and views of Turtle Creek from within the park
- Install fencing along Turtle Creek near the playground
- Consider a new park entrance
- Determine use of parkland on the south side of Turtle Creek
- Connect the park with a greenway system

14. Vernon Park:

This 4-acre park is located on the City's southwest side. It contains two informal ball fields with backstops, play equipment, and a picnic shelter/restroom building.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Determine alternate uses for former tennis courts
- Remove tall area-lights from former ice rink
- Create pedestrian access points through the existing fence at mid-block locations

D. Mini-Parks

1. Brooks Street Vest Pocket Park:

An abandoned home was removed in the 1990's to make way for this half-acre mini-park. Also known as Vest Pocket Park, it has play equipment and open lawn space. The site is fenced and there is security lighting.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Consider disposal of unused land at the rear of the park

2. Brown-Hanchett Park:

This is a small 0.2-acre mini-park on the east side of the City, with play equipment and minimal grass space.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Remove fence along Porter Avenue

3. Field Park:

This 1.2 acre park provides open space and a playground in the downtown area.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Create public floral display at sunken garden
- Replace play equipment

4. Hope Park:

Play equipment, selected by neighborhood residents, is the main feature in this 0.3-acre mini-park in east central Beloit.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Remove chain link fence along Bellevue Place and Wisconsin Avenue

5. Lee Lane Park:

This 0.7 acre park on the east side of Beloit includes an informal ball field with backstop.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install play equipment
- Officially name the park

6. Merrill Park:

At the corner of Merrill and Fifth Street, along the 5th Street Trail, this 0.5 acre mini-park is an open grass area.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install play equipment
- Enhance the community garden project
- Provide water access
- Officially name the park

7. Ritsher Park:

This 0.8-acre park is located on the far west side of the City. The park was acquired through annexation of property formerly in the Town of Beloit. Facilities include an informal ball field with backstop.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install play equipment
- Officially name the park

8. Schellenger Park:

Located on the west bank of the Rock River, this 1.5-acre strip park provides open space along Bluff Street. Offering nice views to downtown this open space adds nice ambiance and flexible picnic space to the neighborhood. A historic stone staircase that leads down the bluff has fallen into disrepair, and does not really connect to any useful location.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Demolish and remove limestone stairs
- Create open vistas to the Rock River
- Install park identification sign

9. Tremont Park:

This 0.3-acre park includes play equipment and open space.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Remove existing fencing

10. Water Tower Park:

This 1.5-acre site is located near the intersection of Riverside Drive and White Avenue. The stone water tower in the park was constructed in 1885 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install signage highlighting the presence of native wild Petunia
- Improve landscaping
- Provide pedestrian access from Visit Beloit parking lot

11. Zonta Memorial Park:

This 0.08-acre triangle park is located at the southeast corner of the Municipal Offices site.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Replace existing sign with standard City entrance sign

E. Special Use Parks

1. The Landing:

This 0.3-acre site is located downtown along the Rock River. It features a dramatic metal sculpture commemorating the location where the original inhabitants landed and founded Beloit. A nice river edge urban park, it has decorative floral beds and plaza space.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Construct plaza at bridge level with appropriate furnishings
- Improve sculpture lighting
- Officially name the park



2. Riverwalk:

This 5 kilometer multi-use paved trail is a popular attraction connecting the east and west sides of the Rock River with downtown Beloit. The Riverwalk travels the length of Riverside Park on the east side of the river, across the Wood Family Fishing Bridge and up to Portland Avenue. It includes a section behind Beloit Memorial High School and Wootten Park.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Enhance pathway landscaping
- Add lane striping for two-way traffic along pathway
- Install distance markers along the Riverwalk
- Install destination signage for places of interest along the Riverwalk (i.e. The Landing)

3. Fifth Street Bike Path:

Created using federal funding, this trail is located in a reclaimed railroad right-of-way from Shirland Avenue to the Beloit Memorial High School.



Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Reconstruct roadway

4. **Krueger-Haskell Municipal Golf Course:**

This 18-hole municipal golf course is situated on 117 acres adjacent to the Krueger Recreation Area. Facilities include a recently remodeled clubhouse, maintenance garage, golf cart shed, and several small shelters.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install a shelter/restroom building in the northern section of the golf course
- Rebuild bunkers
- Replace bridges
- Replace fence along Burton Street
- Install screening between the maintenance area and the golf course

5. **Wood Family Fishing Bridge:**

Built over an old railroad trestle at the southern end of the Riverwalk, the bridge comprises eight rectangular platforms connected by a continuous pathway. At each end, a metal gate frames a tree and a boulder. At the west end of the bridge, a reproduction of a diesel locomotive is raised upon a girder bridge, commemorating the engines once built by local manufacturer Fairbanks Morse.



Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install lighting that dissuades vandalism

6. **Wootton Park:**

This 3-acre park is located on the west side of the river north of the Beloit Memorial High School and includes a boat launch and 5 lighted tennis courts.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Determine future for tennis court area – either renovation or expansion for marina parking
- Construct picnic shelter
- Install new lighting for tennis courts

F. Natural Areas

1. Springbrook Creek Greenway:

Located adjacent to Leeson's Park, this 6.4-acre natural area provides flood relief and open space.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Create trail connecting industrial park to Leeson's Park and Eastlawn Cemetery

2. Turtle Creek Greenway:

In addition to flood relief, this 278.6-acre natural area provides a mowed grass path used for walking and jogging and cross country skiing. A trailhead on Milwaukee Road and easements in the adjacent neighborhoods also provide access to the trail. There are issues concerning public versus private space in residential areas. While boundaries and trail limits are difficult to distinguish, the Parks & Leisure Services Division is



attempting to delineate space by leaving an un-mowed 10-foot buffer between adjacent residential properties and the natural area. Parking and public access to the Creek is available at the southern end of the Greenway, off Milwaukee Road.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Establish planting treatment and mow line to buffer trail from residences
- Monitor private use of public areas for non-conforming uses (i.e. gardens)
- Create small parking lots and signage along the floodplain trail to improve access and visibility
- Pave the parking area in the Milwaukee Road trailhead
- Install benches along the trail
- Extend floodplain conservancy and trail to the north to freeway, and south to Turtle Creek Park
- Connect the trail segments

3. Lenigan Creek Greenway:

Located north of Krueger Golf Course, this 6.3-acre natural area provides flood relief and open space.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Create small parking lot and signage along the greenway to improve access and visibility

4. Westside Detention Pond:

This 19.7-acre natural area is located on the City's west side on Madison Road across from McNeel Middle School, providing opportunities for environmental curriculum. The site includes a packed limestone path surrounding the pond, which also serves stormwater management purposes.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Continue Master Plan improvements for parking, an area for scientific experiment, a shelter, and a picnic area
- Officially name the park Harper's Little Farm Arboretum



5. Leuty Park:

This 1.1-acre green space is located along the railroad spur at Prairie Avenue from Copeland Avenue to Switchtrack Alley. There are no recommendations for future improvements.

6. Totem Mound:

This 1.1-acre park is adjacent to the Turtle Creek Greenway containing two Native American effigy mounds.

Recommendations for future improvements include:

- Install interpretive signage

G. Public School Open Space Areas

For the purposes of this *Plan*, elementary public school recreational facilities serve as neighborhood parks. Secondary schools recreational areas receive minimal usage by City residents due to the nature of their facilities. A complete listing of Beloit School District facilities can be found in Appendix A. The School District maintains all school open space areas and manages improvements.

H. Cemeteries

The City owns two cemeteries in the City, both on the east side, managed by the Division of Parks and Leisure Services. These are Eastlawn on Milwaukee Street, adjacent to Leeson's Park, and Oakwood, adjacent to Strong Park. These are self-supported facilities that generate their own revenue for operation. There are no recommendations for future improvements as part of the Parks and Open Space Plan. Completion of a cemetery improvement plan is recommended.

I. Roadway Medians, Entryways, and Parking Lots

The Division of Parks and Leisure Services has maintenance responsibilities for high visibility thoroughfares with planted boulevards running through Beloit. These are maintained with trees, turf, and decorative seasonal plantings. Small parcels at City gateways are similarly maintained with signage and accent planting features. Recently, the Division was also given the task of beautifying several downtown parking lots, and will be responsible for their continued maintenance.



J. Accessibility-Universal Design and ADA Compliance

Park and recreational facilities should be made barrier-free and accessible to disabled park users to meet the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodation should be provided where feasible, such that the majority of park facilities and outdoor features are accessible to as many visitors as possible. Furthermore, universal design standards should be followed to comply with federal ADA regulations as a requirement for most grant-in-aid programs.

VI PARK AND RECREATION STANDARDS

In order to help guide the park planning process, it is important to identify a set of minimum standards for park and recreational facilities that can serve as a benchmark for evaluating the adequacy of the park system. Such standards enable a community to quantitatively measure how well its existing facilities are meeting the needs of residents as compared with other communities, and to plan for future facilities based on projected population growth. As such, park and recreation standards are commonly expressed as a ratio of the number of minimum acres recommended per 1,000 residents. For example, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommends that for every 1,000 residents, a community should provide 1 to 2 acres of neighborhood parks.

It should be noted that while such national standards provide acceptable target guidelines for the provision of parks and open spaces, a more thorough and accurate analysis of Beloit's park system must emphasize the *local* demand and historic expectation for recreational resources. That said, the City should consider the following guidelines when developing new recreational facilities:

A. Mini-Parks

General Description: These parks offer specialized facilities that serve a centralized or limited population or specific group such as young children or senior citizens.

Service Area: Less than ¼ mile in residential areas

Desirable Size: 2,500 square feet to 2 acres

Acres per 1,000 Population:

- NRPA Standard: 0.25-0.5 acres
- Local Standard: 0.20-0.25 acres

Basic Facilities and Activities:

- Coordinated play equipment and structures for pre-school and elementary school age children
- Conversation and sitting areas arranged to permit easy surveillance by parents
- Landscaped areas that provide buffering and shade
- Lighting for security at night (direct cut-off)
- Parking typically not required

Desirable Site Characteristics:

- Suited for intense development
- Easily accessible to the neighborhood population
- Located in close proximity to residential development
- Accessible by walking or biking
- Well buffered by open space and/or landscape plantings and separated from roadways by physical barriers, such as fences

B. Neighborhood Parks

General Description: These parks are designed specifically to accommodate residents living within the immediately surrounding area. They are often characterized by active recreational

facilities such as play equipment and basketball courts, but should also incorporate some passive recreational areas for picnicking and nature observation.

Service Area: ¼ to ½-mile radius uninterrupted by non-residential roads and other physical barriers

Desirable Size: 4 acres minimum; a minimum of 4-10 acres is optimal

Acres per 1,000 Population (not including school sites):

- NRPA Standard: 1.0-2.0 acres
- Local Standard: 1.5-2.5 acres

Basic Facilities & Activities:

- Active recreational facilities such as playfields, informal ball fields with backstops, basketball courts, tennis courts, and playgrounds
- Passive recreational facilities such as picnic/sitting areas
- Picnic shelters
- Lighting for security at night
- Parking typically not required
- Not intended to be used for activities that result in overuse, noise, and increased traffic

Desirable Site Characteristics:

- Easily accessible to the neighborhood population
- Accessible by walking or biking

C. Community Parks

General Description: Community parks are intermediate in size and are able to accommodate visitors from the surrounding community and multiple neighborhoods. These sites focus on both the developed aspects of the park, such as play equipment and tennis courts, as well as the natural-resource amenities.

Service Area: 2 to 3 miles

Desirable Size: As needed to accommodate desired uses; 30-50 acres is optimal

Acres per 1,000 Population:

- NRPA Standard: 5-8 acres
- Local Standard: 4-6 acres

Basic Facilities & Activities:

- Active recreational facilities such as areas for swimming and boating, biking/walking/skiing trails, playfields, playgrounds, tennis courts, basketball courts, and softball and baseball fields
- Passive recreational facilities such as walking trails, picnic/sitting areas, and nature study areas
- Service buildings for shelter, storage, and restrooms
- Facilities for cultural activities, such as plays and concerts in the park
- Community Center building with multi-use rooms for crafts, theater, restrooms, social activities, and senior adult use
- Lighting for security at night

- Adequate off-street parking spaces, where the size of the park and the neighborhood context allow

Desirable Site Characteristics:

- May include natural areas, such water bodies or wooded areas
- Accessible by population within 2-3 miles of the park

D. Regional Parks

General Description: Regional parks are large areas of natural or ornamental quality for outdoor recreation and are able to accommodate visitors from the region. These sites focus on both the developed aspects of the park, such as camping, picnicking, hiking, and playfields, as well as the natural-resource amenities.

Service Area: Variable – depends on function

Desirable Size: As needed to accommodate desired uses; 200+ acres is optimal

Acres per 1,000 Population:

- NRPA Standard: 5-10 acres
- Local Standard: 4-6 acres

Basic Facilities & Activities:

- Active recreational facilities such as areas for swimming and boating, biking/walking/skiing trails, playfields, playgrounds, tennis courts, and basketball courts
- Passive recreational facilities such as walking trails, picnic/sitting areas, and nature study areas
- Service buildings for shelter, storage, and restrooms
- Facilities for cultural activities, such as plays and concerts in the park
- Lighting for security at night
- Adequate off-street parking spaces, where the size of the park and the neighborhood context allow

Desirable Site Characteristics:

- May include natural areas, such water bodies or wooded areas
- Easily accessible to regional population

E. School Open Space Areas

General Description: School open space areas have many of the same characteristics as neighborhood or community parks, depending on their size. As such, school open space areas primarily serve as locations for active recreational facilities associated with school functions; however, these sites can and do benefit the surrounding community during off-school hours. These lands may be owned and maintained by the City or the school district, but are open to all neighborhood residents.

Service Area: Variable – depends on function

Desirable Size: Variable – depends on function

Acres per 1,000 Population: Variable – depends on function

Basic Facilities & Activities:

- Active recreational facilities such as playfields, informal ball fields with backstops, tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, and soccer fields
- Passive recreational facilities such as sitting areas and nature study areas
- Lighting for security at night
- Adequate on-street and off-street parking spaces

Desirable Site Characteristics:

- Easily accessible to the neighborhood population
- Elementary schools accessible by walking or biking
- Facilities open to the public during non-school times

F. Special Use Parks & Natural Areas

General Description: Areas of open space that can not be measured by a quantifiable standard because of their unique and diverse contributions to the community. Special Use Parks and Natural Areas enhance an overall park and open space system by maintaining and improving the community's natural resource base, accommodating special activities that aren't included in other parks, and providing interconnections between isolated parks and recreation areas.

Examples of Special Use Parks and Natural Areas are varied but can include those lands that accommodate passive or special recreational activities, such as golf courses, sledding/skiing hills, marinas, beaches, display gardens, arboreta, and outdoor amphitheaters, as well as lands that have been protected for their environmental significance or sensitivity and provide limited opportunity for recreational use. Examples of the latter may include water bodies, floodplains, wetlands, shorelands and shoreland setback areas, drainageways, stormwater management basins, conveyance routes, environmental corridors, wildlife habitats, areas of rare or endangered plant or animal species, prairie remnants, and restoration areas.

Service Area: Variable—depends on function

Desirable Size: Variable—depends on function

Acres Per 1,000 Population: Variable- most Special Use Parks and Natural Areas are not included in the overall community calculation of park and recreation space per 1,000 persons. Their value extends beyond the City's boundaries and contributes significantly to overall quality of life.

Basic Facilities and Activities: Variable, but some may include:

- Active recreational facilities such as areas for swimming and boating, skiing hills, biking/walking/skiing trails, skating rinks, and golf courses
- Passive recreational facilities such as walking trails, picnic/sitting areas, and natural study areas
- Service buildings for shelter, equipment storage/rental, concessions, and restrooms
- Signage, trail markers, trash receptacles, information booths
- Lighting for security at night
- Off-street parking spaces if appropriate to the area

G. Recreation Trails

General Description: Recreation Trails accommodate various outdoor activities, such as biking, hiking, walking, jogging, horseback riding, nature study, and cross-country skiing. A well-designed park system provides connections between parks and open space lands and effectively integrates urban and suburban areas with the surrounding natural environment by linking off-street trail segments with on-street bike routes. Recreation trails can be designed to serve different functions and to accommodate various, and sometimes conflicting, activities. Therefore, this section provides descriptions of the different types of recreation trails that this *Plan* will address and how recommendations will be formulated for each type of trail.

1. On-Street Bicycle Facilities

General Description: There are two primary types of on-street bicycle facilities: bicycle lanes and paved shoulders.

Bicycle lanes are areas of the road striped off for exclusive use by bicyclists. They are the preferred bicycle facility for urban arterial and higher volume collector streets (generally more than 2,000 vehicles per day). Striping bicycle lanes establishes designated traffic channels that promote an orderly flow by both bicyclists and motorists. Typically, bicycle lanes are established on roadways that are 32 feet or wider with no on-street parking. Shared bicycle/parking lanes generally function well where sufficient space is provided and the parking turnover rate is not too high.

Paved shoulders are not a bicycle facility per se, but rather a roadway condition that improves bicycle travel and bicyclist safety. They function much like a bicycle lane by separating the motor vehicle travel from bikes. Paved shoulders are ideal for higher volume streets or highways (more than 1,000 cars per day) with rural cross sections (i.e. no curb and gutter).

Treatment in this *Plan*: This *Plan* presents recommendations regarding locations for future on-street bike facilities as proposed in the *2004 Stateline Area Bike and Pedestrian System Plan*, which includes a detailed explanation of design standards.

Desirable Design Criteria for Bicycle Lanes:

- Minimum width of 4 feet, or 5 feet along an arterial street
- Minimum width of 5 feet and located to the traffic side of the parking lane when used along side a parking lane
- Minimum combined width of 11 feet (13 feet where there is substantial parking or turnover of parked cars is high) where bike lanes and on-street parking is provided
- Lanes painted with a bicycle pavement symbol or the words “bike lane” according to American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards
- Street signs to identify bicycle lanes

Desirable Design Criteria for Paved Shoulders:

- Minimum width of 4 feet, or 5 feet where traffic speeds exceed 50 miles per hour
- Stripe separating shoulder from roadway
- Generally not marked as an exclusive bike facility

Linear Miles Per 1,000 Population: N/A

2. Off-Street Recreation Trails

General Description: There are two primary types of off-street recreation trails: multi-use paths and rural walking/hiking trails.

Multi-use paths are designed to accommodate bicyclists, walkers, runners, and in-line skaters. Such facilities are often located along railroad and street rights-of-way, rivers and lakeshores, and through parks and environmental corridors.

Rural trails provide connections between urbanized areas and access to parks and open space areas. Walkways may be restricted to pedestrian use because of environmental conditions. In certain locations, they may also be suitable for equestrian and/or bicycle use. Rural walkways are often sited along creeks, streams, rivers, field boundaries, and other natural linear systems.

Treatment in this Plan: This *Plan* presents recommendations regarding locations for future on-street bike facilities as proposed in the *2004 Stateline Area Bike and Pedestrian System Plan*, which includes a detailed explanation of design standards.

Desirable Design Criteria for Multi-Use Paths:

- In urban areas, a minimum of 10 feet to accommodate two-way bicycle traffic, and recommended paved surfacing to facilitate bike, walking, running, and skating
- In rural areas, a minimum of 8 feet wide, surfaced with limestone screenings or similar material
- Avoid placement alongside roadways where multiple cross-streets and driveways are or will be present
- Minimum 20 mph design speed

Desirable Design Criteria for Rural Walking/Hiking Trails: Because these trail facilities often travel through sensitive environmental areas, they are generally not paved. Rather, they are surfaced with crushed limestone, wood chips, hard packed earth, or mowed grass.

Linear Miles Per 1,000 Population: The provision of trails is best related to an analysis of supply versus demand and the size of the community, rather than a single quantitative standard.

3. Trailheads

General Description: Trailheads can provide visible access points to major off-street paths in the community's system. They generally provide a parking area, locational and directional maps, or other information about the trail system. Some might contain restroom facilities, picnic tables, or benches for snacks or breaks. Such facilities should be sited with easy and direct access to the trail system.

Treatment in this Plan: While this *Plan* does not make recommendations regarding the future location of trailheads, the City should consider creating trailheads along the Turtle Creek Greenway and on along future trails such as the Janesville-Beloit Trail.

Desirable Design Criteria: N/A

Number of Facilities Per 1,000 Population: N/A

VII ANALYSIS OF EXISTING PARK AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

This chapter presents an analysis of how well the City of Beloit's existing park and recreational facilities satisfy current needs in the community. The adequacy of the City's existing park and recreation system will be evaluated in the following ways:

- An application of quantitative park and recreational facility service standards to reliable population projections for the City;
- A qualitative analysis of the City's park system;
- An analysis of the geographic distribution and accessibility of park open space areas;
- A consideration of public input regarding the future of the City's park and open space system; and
- A review of Wisconsin's *State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

The results of this analysis will serve as the basis for the recommendations presented in the next chapter of this *Plan*.

A. Quantitative Analysis

The following table presents a comparison of the local standards (acres per 1,000 persons) to the City's existing park system. As indicated in Table 10, the City currently has 13.4 acres of developed mini, neighborhood, community, regional, and school parks and open space areas per 1,000 residents. Additionally, the inclusion of special use parks and natural areas increases the total to 25.3 acres per 1,000 residents. It should be noted that for the purposes of this analysis all school parklands were classified as neighborhood parks. Based upon these calculations, the City has a sufficient amount of mini, neighborhood, and regional parkland; however, it is deficient in terms of community park acreage.

In general, NRPA standards recommend a minimum of approximately ten acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. It should be noted, however, that national standards do not factor in characteristics of individual communities. Therefore, it is appropriate and necessary for each community to develop their own local park standard. Local standards have been applied in the analysis in this plan.

Table 10: Park Acreage Analysis, 2006

Park Type	Local Standard Acres Per 1,000 persons	Recommended Acreage based on Local Standard*	Existing City Park Acreage	
			2006 Total Acres	2006 Acres per 1,000 persons
Mini-Parks	0.20 - 0.25	7.2 - 9.0	7.6	0.21
Neighborhood Parks**	4.5 - 5.0	162.5 - 184.1	178.5	4.9
Community Parks	4.0 - 6.0	144.4 - 216.6	110.9	3.1
Regional Parks	4.0 - 6.0	144.4 - 216.6	187.7	5.2
Total Developed Parks	12.7 - 17.25	458.5 - 523.5	484.7	13.4
Special Use Parks	N/A	N/A	127.4	3.5
Natural Areas	N/A	N/A	316.9	8.8
Total	N/A	N/A	914.6	25.3

* Based on 2005 population estimate (36,106)

** For the purposes of this analysis, all Beloit School District parks are considered neighborhood parks

Table 11 presents an inventory of the total number of existing recreational facilities in the City. The number of existing facilities includes both municipal and school facilities. Because the demand for such amenities varies substantially between communities, national standards will not be used in this *Plan* to analyze the adequacy of existing facilities. However, this component of the park system will be discussed in more detail in the qualitative analysis section of this chapter. A comprehensive inventory of the facilities in each of the City's parks is located in Appendix A.

Table 11: Existing Recreational Facilities

Facility	# of Existing Facilities in the City
Baseball fields (lighted)	2
Baseball fields (unlighted)	1
Baseball fields (youth/lighted)	1
Baseball fields (youth/unlighted)	0
Baseball fields (regulation/lighted)	2
Baseball fields (regulation/unlighted)	1
Basketball courts	4
Boat launch	1
Disc golf	1
Golf course (18 hole)	1
Ice rinks (indoor)	1
Informal ball field with backstop	22
Picnic shelters/Pavilions	17
Playgrounds	30
Running tracks	1
Skate park	1
Soccer fields	1
Softball fields (lighted)	3
Softball fields (unlighted)	2
Swimming pools (outdoor)	1
Swimming pools (indoor)	2
Tennis courts	17
Volleyball courts	2

B. Qualitative Analysis

Although national quantitative standards provide a good basis for formulating the recommendations in this *Plan*, a thorough assessment of the City's existing facilities must include a more subjective analysis that takes into consideration those characteristics that make Beloit unique from other communities.

Furthermore, the qualitative analysis will produce the following results:

- Identify those park system deficiencies and strengths that are not captured by universal standards;
- Ensure that future parks and recreational facilities are tailored to meet the needs of the City's residents; and

- Allow for the establishment of a more reasonable and specialized level-of-service standard by which the City can plan its future park system.

Important factors to consider include the following:

- The quantitative analysis presented earlier in this chapter considers school open space and outdoor recreational facilities as neighborhood parks. There are no set standards or guidelines for classifying school open space areas; however, in the City of Beloit, school facilities serve many of the recreational needs of the residential neighborhoods that immediately surround them. It should be recognized that school facilities are not consistently open to the public, and school sponsored activities are given first priority when it comes to the scheduling and use of these facilities. For this reason, it is important for the City to provide and maintain an adequate number of its own facilities and parklands to accommodate programming needs and to meet local demand.
- The City of Beloit is fortunate to have a variety of recreational facility providers. While private facilities like the Stateline YMCA serve residents with such activities as organized leagues and fitness programs, the City should continue to provide special activities and facilities like annual festivals and a municipal swimming pool.
- According to the results of the planning process, the City's existing park system falls short in the following general areas:
 - Natural areas
 - Bike and pedestrian recreation trails and trailheads
 - Special recreational facilities (i.e. dog park, community gardens, nature study areas)
 - Connectivity of parks, trails, and greenways
 - Budget for ongoing infrastructure maintenance

C. Geographic Analysis

The location and distribution of parks and recreational facilities provides a good indication of how well the existing park system is meeting the needs of the City's residents. To illustrate this distribution, Maps 2a and 2b depict the service areas of the City's parks. These service areas are based on the NRPA standards identified in Chapter VII of this *Plan*.

An analysis of Map 2a suggests that several areas are deficient in parkland:

<u>Geographic Area</u>	<u>Type of Park</u>
Lathers Woods	Neighborhood Park
Turtle Creek Development	Neighborhood Park
Gateway and Lathers Woods	Community Park

Furthermore, it should be noted that the largest natural area, the Turtle Creek Greenway, is located on the east side of the City while Big Hill Memorial Park, Westside Detention Pond, and Lenigan Creek Greenway are on the west side of the City.

Finally, while not graphically illustrated due to its large area, Big Hill Memorial Park is classified as a regional park and serves residents within a ten-mile radius.

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Map 2a: Existing Park Service Areas: Mini-Parks & Neighborhood Parks

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Map 2b: Existing Park Service Areas: Community and Regional Parks

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D. Review of the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

The last component of this needs assessment involves a review of the State of Wisconsin's *Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*, prepared by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Statewide surveys conducted between the years 1990 and 2000 were designed to collect information regarding the types of recreational activities that people engaged in most frequently, as well as residents' level of satisfaction with the state's existing facilities. Please refer to the 2000-2005 SCORP for a detailed discussion of survey methodology.

Based upon the results of this research, the DNR categorized recreation participation levels into three groups. *Tier one* activities had between a 50 and 90 percent participation rate. These activities included walking and driving for pleasure, swimming, viewing wildlife, and picnicking. *Tier two* activities have participation rates that are between 30 and 50 percent. These include fishing, hiking, bicycling, nature study, motor boating, and nature photography. *Tier three* activities have participation rates up to 30 percent, and include activities such as scuba diving, skiing, and ice hockey. Participation in these activities generally requires specialized equipment and some degree of training or skill.

A separate survey measured participants' satisfaction with the State's existing park and recreational facilities. Satisfaction is generally a factor of the availability and quality of places to recreate, which can help identify deficiencies in the supply of certain facilities. Results of this survey indicated that golfers, joggers, walkers, and skiers were the most satisfied with the available facilities. Off-road truck enthusiasts, ATV riders, and motor boaters were among the least satisfied.

Recommendations presented in this *Plan* will generally reflect residents' needs for facilities that accommodate tier one and tier two activities.

E. Future Park and Open Space Needs

Based upon the analyses provided in this Chapter, the City's local minimum standard for park acreage is **13 acres per 1,000 persons** for mini-parks, neighborhood parks, and school outdoor recreation area. Broken down by park type, the minimum standards per 1,000 persons are 0.20 acres for mini-parks, 4.5 acres for neighborhood parks and school outdoor recreation areas, 4.0 acres for community parks, and 4.0 acres for regional parks.

Tables 12 and 13 define the additional park and open space acreage needed to accommodate the City's projected population through the planning period (2010) and long-term (2030).

Minimal additional parkland is recommended by 2010. No additional mini- or regional parks are recommended. As growth occurs, the City will need to create additional neighborhood parks and a community park to meet the needs of new and existing residents. Most notably, there is a demand for community park facilities. This is a result of several factors. First, while community parks serve the City spatially, existing community park acreages per 1,000 people is below national standards because current facilities are small in size. Second, this *Plan* classifies Big Hill Memorial Park as a regional park so its area and facilities do not contribute to community park acreages. While it is large, it is not providing recreational opportunities proportional to its size; neither is it ideally located in relation to the planned growth areas on the east side of the City. Based on these factors, this *Plan* recommends increasing the number of acres per 1,000 persons for community parks to meet local standards.

**Table 12: Park Acreage Needs: Mini, Neighborhood,
and Community Parks, 2010**

Park Type	City Standard Acres Per 1,000 persons	Recommended Acreage based on Acres per 1,000 persons*	2006 Total Acres	Minimum Additional Acres Needed by 2010
Mini-Parks	0.20	7.7	7.6	0.1
Neighborhood Parks	4.8	191.5	178.5	13.0
Community Parks	4.0	153.2	110.9	42.3
Total	9.0	352.4	297.0	55.4

* Based on 2010 population estimate (38,339)

**Table 13: Park Acreage Needs: Mini, Neighborhood,
and Community Parks, 2030**

Park Type	City Standard Acres Per 1,000 persons	Recommended Acreage based on Acres per 1,000 persons*	2006 Total Acres	Minimum Additional Acres Needed by 2030
Mini-Parks	0.2	10.4	7.6	2.8
Neighborhood Parks	4.8	249.1	178.5	70.6
Community Parks	4.0	207.6	110.9	96.7
Total	9.0	467.1	297.0	170.1

* Based on 2030 population estimate (51,859)

VIII RECOMMENDED PARK AND OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

The following recommendations are based on projected growth rates and distributional deficiencies identified in the preceding chapters of this *Plan*. By 2010, it is recommended the City acquire and/or develop an additional 55 acres of parkland and make improvements to many of its existing parks. Based upon 2010 population projections, these recommendations would satisfy the City's local park standards, as defined in Chapter VII of this *Plan*. The timing of parkland acquisitions and development should coincide with the actual demand for recreational facilities in the City.

Map 3 shows approximate locations for future recreational facilities in the City. More precise park boundaries will be determined during formulation of specific neighborhood plans, or in the preliminary stages of detailed site development plans, or when lands are acquired or platted. Proactive identification of lands suitable for active parks, or natural areas worthy of conservation, is recommended early in the development process. Following are general descriptions of the park recommendations.

A. Recommended Additional Parkland

1. Community Parks

It is recommended that the City develop a community park facility in the future to serve new and existing residents.

Based on future growth areas and Map 2b: Park Service Areas – Community Parks, this *Plan* recommends siting a new community park within the Gateway Area east of Interstate 39/90 and south of Interstate 43.

2. Neighborhood Parks

It is recommended that the City develop existing undeveloped parks at Freeman Park and Eagles Ridge Park. Additional acquisition of 13 acres of neighborhood parks is recommended as the City's population increases by 2010.

Recommended locations for future neighborhood parks are identified on Map 3. However, the precise boundaries of these sites may not be decided upon until development occurs and/or land is acquired or platted.

3. Mini-Parks

Mini-parks tend to be maintenance intensive and receive minimal use. The acquisition of additional mini-parks is not recommended, with the following exceptions:

- High need is defined within a neighborhood which is not served by a neighborhood park and open space is not sufficient for a neighborhood park.
- As development occurs, the City should incorporate mini-parks into the design of office, commercial, and mixed-use districts. Mini-parks located in these areas should be oriented more towards adults than children, providing open areas to eat lunch, read the newspaper, and take a break from working or shopping. These parks may include paved areas, but should also accommodate some green space. Trees, landscaping, and water features should be incorporated into these park spaces wherever possible.

4. Special Use Parks

Dog Park. In recent years, dog parks have become a popular and common component of community park systems. These fenced-off areas provide no-leash zones where community residents can take their dogs to run and socialize with other dogs in a safe and appropriate environment. It is recommended that the City explore opportunities to provide dog park facilities. Ideally, parks should be centrally located and should be at least one-acre in size. It is recommended that the City engage local dog owners in the planning and development of these facilities. Encouraging a community group to sponsor dog parks and to take a major role in the on-going maintenance of these facilities will help ensure the long-term success of the park. Charging a nominal annual fee is a common way for municipalities to fund the on-going maintenance of dog parks. Potential sites include the former Kopplin Farm at Big Hill Memorial Park and the former community garden area at Leeson's Park.

Splash Park. Splash parks are becoming popular alternatives to community swimming pools because they are far less expensive to build and maintain, and because they are safer and do not require constant lifeguard supervision (there is no standing water at a splash park). Splash parks also function as interesting features of community civic spaces. It is recommended that the City develop a splash park in Telfer Park or Summit Park. The Krueger Municipal Pool has a popular spray ground facility.

5. Trails

Map 3 depicts future on- and off-street trails as proposed in the *2004 Stateline Bike and Pedestrian Plan*, and updated with some minor recent additions. Planning is currently underway for a Rock River Parkway Master Plan and early concepts indicate additional trail and bike routes in the downtown area that should also be added when the plan is completed. The City should continue to implement these recommendations. Additionally, this *Plan* recommends trail connections through the planned recreational facilities described above.

Janesville-Beloit Trail. As previously mentioned, plans are currently underway for development of a multi-use path from the City of Janesville to Big Hill Memorial Park in Beloit. The City should pursue a southern connection with the Riverwalk system. Map 3 depicts the current route plan.

6. Natural Areas

Through the Vision Workshop and the community survey, Beloit residents have expressed a desire for more natural recreation areas. The Turtle Creek Greenway is an excellent candidate given its central location and the inability to develop commercial uses or housing within it. The City should pursue continued acquisition and preservation of the Turtle Creek Greenway both to the north and south of the existing floodplain corridor. To the north, the floodplain curves northeastward through the Town of Turtle. To the south, the floodplain is located in an isolated portion of land in the Town of Turtle, completely surrounded by the City of Beloit. Acquisition of this southern section of the floodplain also provides an opportunity to connect the potential trail extension to the eastern side of Turtle Creek Park.

Furthermore, it is recommended that the City increase visibility of and access to the existing Turtle Creek Greenway. One opportunity to increase access would be through a collaboration with the City of Beloit Water Resources Division. The Division is proposing to construct a sewer service access road through the Greenway behind the Turtle Creek Subdivision. This road could be suitable for dual use as a recreation trail, with funding assistance from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Map 3: Planned Parks and Recreational Facilities

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B. Improvements to Existing Parks

In addition to parkland acquisition and new special facilities, Beloit's extensive existing parks and open space system requires updating. Specific enhancements have been identified. Tables 14 through 19 form a comprehensive list of tasks identified through discussions with City staff, park visits, public input, and interaction with the Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Advisory Commission. City staff and the Commission prioritized the tasks into three tiers of importance. These tasks are intended to demonstrate the need for specific projects that merit budget considerations. This list is not intended as the sole determination of how projects will be scheduled, but rather it should serve as a guide when developing yearly project schedules over the next five years. Please refer to Chapter V: Existing Park and Recreational Facilities and Recommended Improvements for a list of recommended improvements by park.

It should be noted that routine park maintenance tasks such as mowing, shrub and tree care, and general cleaning and upkeep of facilities are not listed, and have been accounted for through the creation of a prioritized maintenance plan within the Parks & Leisure Services Division.

1. System-Wide Improvements

Table 14 identifies system-wide improvements that will be undertaken each year. These are enhancements that cover many existing or proposed parks, and that require additional programming or design consideration. Following is a description of each program.

Restroom Improvements

Renovation or construction of restroom facilities was identified as a priority in general for the whole park system. Some facilities are in need of general renovation to improve appearance or functionality, others may have accessibility issues.

Park Master Plans

There is a need to determine future uses for areas of several City parks. Developing new Master Plans, or updating existing plans, would present an opportunity for residents, especially those close to the parks, to provide input on the desired facilities. Parks in need of master planning include Leeson's Park, Telfer Park, Horace White Park, and Townview Park among others.

Signage Program

Park signage is needed at all parks to create a unified system that is easily identified by park users. Minimally, signs should include the name of the park and a telephone number for emergency situations. Parks in need of signage include Townview Park, Wootton Park, Brooks Street Park, Lee Lane Park, Schellenger Park, and the Fifth Street Trail. Another system of signs is needed for natural feature interpretation and for cultural or historic feature story telling. Both systems should be graphically similar with a hierarchy of sizes to communicate importance. Parks in need of this type of signage are listed in the Improvement Tables by park type and priority ranking.

Shelter Improvements

Various park shelters were identified as needing renovation or replacement including those located in Riverside Park and Hilliard Park.

Furnishings & Lighting

Park furnishings include amenities such as park benches, trash receptacles, or planted pots. Some parks require only standard park system benches. Other parks, such as Horace White Park and Mechanics Green, should be furnished according to a higher standard of urban design given their prominent locations.

Waterfowl Mitigation

Waterfowl waste, particularly from Canadian Geese, is presenting a problem in water front parklands. Waterfowl have been documented to shy away from edges of water bodies that are protected by plant cover over 36 inches tall. In this effort, maintenance crews are currently leaving an un-mowed buffer along waterfronts. If this is not a sufficient deterrent, it is recommended that naturalized plantings of moisture-tolerant grasses, sedges, or aquatic plants be planted and maintained at the water's edge in various locations. Where natural plantings are not feasible, the City should consider installing rip-rap. Specific locations where new edge treatments are needed include Riverside Park, the Riverwalk, and the Westside Detention Pond.

Table 14: System Wide Annual Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Description
1	1	Restroom improvements	Renovate or construct new restroom facilities annually in various parks to be determined
2	1	Park Master Plans	Create new or update existing master plans annually in various parks to be determined
3	1	Signage program	Create new signage for park identification, natural & cultural interpretation, and safety annually in various parks to be determined
4	1	Shelter improvements	Renovate or construct new picnic shelters in various parks annually to be determined
5	1	Furnishings & lighting	Provide new seating, trash, and planter furniture elements, and decorative lighting annually in various parks to be determined
6	1	Accessibility improvements	Revisit City's accessibility plan and identify implementation plan
7	1	Tennis court improvements	Resurface or replace all existing City tennis courts
8	2	Waterfowl nuisance mitigation	Naturalizing water body edges to deter goose congregation
9	2	Play equipment improvements	Install or replace play equipment where needed
10	2	Horticulture improvements	Renovate existing landscape areas
11	3	Park name	Officially rename selected parks

2. Community Parks

Table 15 identifies recommended improvements to community parks. Each task is assigned a priority from 1 to 3. The table also includes the park to which the task applies and a brief description of the task.

Table 15: Community Park Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
12	1	Retaining wall	Big Hill	Renovate retaining wall along woodland trail
13	1	Log cabins	Big Hill	Renovate or remove historic log cabins
14	1	Road & parking area	Big Hill	Improve paved roads and create street pull-off parking to improve automobile organization
15	1	Determine future use	Big Hill	Determine future use for the open area in the upper level adjacent to Big Hill Road
16	1	Retaining wall	Krueger Recreation Area	Construct retaining wall between the pool grounds and golf course
17	1	Shelters	Riverside	Two shelters to be renovated per 2005 Master Plan
18	1	Moore Pavilion	Riverside	Add awnings and banners, and enhance landscape per 2005 Master Plan
19	1	Turtle Island	Riverside	Repair play equipment, improve landscape and shoreline per 2005 Master Plan
20	1	Tennis courts	Riverside	Renovate tennis courts
21	1	Skate park	Telfer	Construct skate park
22	2	Amphitheater	Big Hill	Renovate existing historic council ring amphitheater
23	2	Hiking Trails	Big Hill	Create trailhead and new trail extension into the Kopplin addition
24	2	Janesville-Beloit Trail	Big Hill	Extend proposed Janesville-Beloit Trail into Big Hill Park
25	2	Tennis courts	Krueger Recreation Area	Renovate existing tennis courts
26	2	Trail	Leeson's	Create a trail connection from Willowbrook Road to Leeson's Park along Springbrook Creek
27	2	Dog park	Leeson's	Create dog park with fencing and amenities in former upper level garden area
28	2	Baseball fields	Leeson's	Determine alternate uses for existing baseball fields
29	2	Adams Family fountain & plaza	Riverside	Improve landscape and shoreline per 2005 Master Plan
30	2	Tree plantings	Riverside	Supplement park with new tree plantings per 2005 Master Plan

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
31	2	Storage	Telfer	Create storage area for hockey boards between the Edwards Sports and Activity Center and the existing outdoor rink
32	3	Interpretive signage	Big Hill	Create interpretive trail signage program
33	3	Splash park	Telfer	Consider creation of splash park
34	3	Bell tower	Leeson's	Consider adaptation of existing historic pump house for use as a bell tower or carillon
35	3	Entrance parcel	Leeson's	Acquire parcel east of entrance road to enhance the entrance
36	3	Bank erosion	Leeson's	Address Springbrook Creek bank erosion
37	3	Fencing	Leeson's	Remove unnecessary fencing throughout the park
38	3	Tot lot	Riverside	Create new tot lot per 2005 Master Plan
39	3	Sculpture promenade	Riverside	Create sculpture walk features per 2005 Master Plan
40	3	Maintenance building	Riverside	Construct a maintenance building
41	3	Boathouse	Riverside	Consider the construction of a boathouse for non-motorized boats near the Portland Avenue Bridge
42	3	Lighthouse	Krueger Recreation Area	Renovate historic lighthouse feature
43	3	Volleyball courts	Krueger Recreation Area	Install sand volleyball courts
44	3	Outdoor skating rink	Telfer	Construct outdoor skating rink within former tennis court area
45	3	Tennis courts	Telfer	Determine use for the former tennis courts
46	3	Future use	Telfer	Determine use for the large tract of land north and east of Pohlman Field
47	3	Aquatic facility	Telfer	Reserve sufficient land for possible future aquatic facility
48	3	Ice rink	Riverside	Enhance the lagoon area for ice skating

3. Neighborhood Parks

Table 16 identifies recommended improvements to neighborhood parks. Each task is assigned a priority from 1 to 3. The table also includes the park to which the task applies and a brief description of the task.

Table 16: Neighborhood Park Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
49	1	Play equipment	Christilla	Install play equipment
50	1	New shelter construction	Hilliard	Coordinate with Beloit College to determine location and type of new shelter; determine long range plan for existing shelter
51	1	Monument area	Horace White	Install flower beds to improve monument area and brick walkways
52	1	Parking area	Mechanics Green	Renovate existing gravel parking area in south parcel with asphalt paving
53	1	Tennis courts	Summit	Resurface courts and add basketball field goals for joint tennis & basketball use
54	1	Access	Vernon	Create pedestrian access points through fencing
55	2	Ball field	Hinckley	Replace backstop and improve field
56	2	Lighting and furnishings	Horace White	Replace existing lights with Victorian fixtures, and furnishings
57	2	Floral gardens	Horace White	Expand existing and add new perennial plantings with Victorian garden theme
58	2	Walkways	Mechanics Green	Construct new walkways in the northern side of the park
59	2	Identification plaques	Mechanics Green	Install missing identification plaques for tree species
60	2	Trail	Pride	Construct paved trail along waters edge; investigate acquisition of land south of park to create a connection to Riverwalk
61	2	Soccer field	Summit	Develop soccer field
62	2	Lighting	Summit	Improve lighting
63	2	Tennis courts	Vernon	Consider alternate uses for existing tennis courts
64	2	Park name	Eagles Ridge	Officially name the park
65	3	Picnic shelter	Christilla	Construct new picnic shelter
66	3	Future use	Eagles Ridge	Install play equipment and picnic shelter; create open space play area
67	3	Future use	Freeman	Install play equipment and picnic shelter; create open space play area
68	3	Ball field renovation	Hilliard	Skin infield and re-grade field

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
69	3	Fencing	Hilliard	Replace fence along residential side
70	3	Picnic shelter	Hinckley	Construct a picnic shelter
71	3	Interpretive signage	Horace White	Install interpretive signage
72	3	Furnishings and lighting	Mechanics Green	Install new furnishings and period lighting
73	3	Interpretive signage	Mechanics Green	Install interpretive signage
74	3	Fishing pier	Pride	Construct fishing pier
75	3	Restroom	Roosevelt	Replace or remove restroom
76	3	Splash park	Summit	Consider creation of a splash park
77	3	Parking	Summit	Expand parking area
78	3	Picnic shelter	Townview	Construct new picnic shelter
79	3	Informal ball field	Townview	Construct informal ball field with backstop
80	3	Future use	Townview	Consider long-term redesign when residential growth occurs north of the park
81	3	Fencing	Turtle Creek	Install fencing along Turtle Creek near the playground for safety reasons
82	3	Future use	Turtle Creek	Determine future use of demolition of the pool house (i.e. picnic shelter)
83	3	Future use	Turtle Creek	Determine future use of parkland on the south side of Turtle Creek
84	3	Entrance	Turtle Creek	Consider new park entrance
85	3	Picnic Shelter	Turtle Creek	Construct new picnic shelter
86	3	Area lights	Vernon	Remove existing tall unused area lights at former ice hockey rink

4. Mini-Parks

Table 17 identifies recommended improvements to mini-parks. Each task is assigned a priority from 1 to 3. The table also includes the park to which the task applies and a brief description of the task.

Table 17: Mini-Park Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
87	1	Staircase	Schellenger	Demolish and remove stone stairs
88	1	Interpretive signage	Water Tower	Create signage highlighting native wild Petunia plants
89	2	Community gardens	Merrill Street	Enhance the community garden project; provide water access
90	2	Park name	Lee Lane	Officially name the park
91	3	Future use	Brooks Street	Consider disposal of unused land in the rear of park
92	3	Fence	Brown-Hanchett	Remove fence along Porter Avenue
93	3	Perennial gardens	Field	Create public floral display at sunken garden
94	3	Fence	Hope	Remove existing chain-link fence
95	3	Play equipment	Lee Lane	Install play equipment
96	3	Play equipment	Merrill Street	Install play equipment
97	3	Park name	Merrill Street	Officially name the park
98	3	Play equipment	Ritsher Street	Install play equipment
99	3	Park name	Ritsher Street	Officially name the park
100	3	Vistas	Schellenger	Create open vistas to the Rock River
101	3	Fencing	Tremont	Remove existing fencing
102	3	Walkway	Water Tower	Construct walkway connecting Visit Beloit parking area to park
103	3	Landscaping	Water Tower	Improve landscaping

5. Special Use Parks

Table 18 identifies recommended improvements to special use parks. Each task is assigned a priority from 1 to 3. The table also includes the park to which the task applies and a brief description of the task.

Table 18: Special Use Park Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
104	1	Tennis courts	Wootton	Refurbish tennis courts or expand marina parking depending on determination
105	2	Upper level patio	The Landing	Construct patio with in upper level
106	2	Lighting	The Landing	Improve sculpture lighting
107	2	Stripe lane separation	Riverwalk	Add lane separation striping for two-way traffic safety
108	2	Landscape beautification	Riverwalk	Enhance pathway landscaping, various segments
109	2	Distance markers	Riverwalk	Install distance markers along the Riverwalk
110	2	Destination signage	Riverwalk	Install destination signage for places of interest along the Riverwalk
111	2	Picnic shelter	Wootton	Construct picnic shelter
112	2	Tennis court lighting	Wootton	Install new tennis court lighting system
113	3	Fencing	Krueger Golf Course	Replace fence along Burton Street
114	3	Shelter/restroom	Krueger Golf Course	Install a shelter/restroom building in the northern section of the golf course
115	3	Screening	Krueger Golf Course	Install screening between the maintenance area and the golf course
116	3	Lighting	Wood Family Fishing Bridge	Install lighting that dissuades vandalism
117	3	Park name	The Landing	Officially name the park

6. Natural Areas

Table 19 identifies recommended improvements to natural areas. Each task is assigned a priority from 1 to 3. The table also includes the park to which the task applies and a brief description of the task.

Table 19: Natural Areas Improvements

No.	Priority	Task	Park	Description
118	1	Landscape buffer	Turtle Creek Greenway	Establish planting treatment and mow line to buffer trail from residential areas
119	1	Parking area	Turtle Creek Greenway	Pave parking area in the Milwaukee Road trailhead
120	1	Access	Turtle Creek Greenway	Create small parking lots and signage along floodplain trail to enhance access and visibility
121	2	Signage	Totem Mound	Design and construct signage highlighting archaeological history of mounds
122	3	Access	Lenigan Creek Greenway	Create small parking lot and signage along greenway to enhance access and visibility
123	3	Benches	Turtle Creek Greenway	Install benches along the trail
124	3	Miscellaneous	West Side Detention Pond	Continue Master Plan improvements for parking, an area for scientific experiment, a shelter, and a picnic area
125	3	Trailhead	West Side Detention Pond	Install trailhead
126	3	Rename	West Side Detention Pond	Rename park Harper's Farm Arboretum

C. Park Impact Fees

Beloit currently charges lower park impact fees for residential development than communities of similar size in the region. Also the laws governing impact fees have recently changed. Chapter 66.0617 of the Wisconsin Statutes requires that impact fees must be spent within seven years of when they are collected. Therefore, it is recommended that Beloit reevaluate parkland acquisition impact fees, park improvement fees, and parkland dedication requirements based upon new state laws and recommendations in this *Plan*.

D. Rock River Parkway Master Plan CORP Recommendations

1. Create bicycle path through Iron Works Building along the Rock River

A trail along the Iron Works Building will connect the Wood Family Bridge trail connection and Ironworks Park and Downtown. The trail could be within the outside wall of the Iron Works Building but separated from the remainder of the building, creating a type of portico.

Timeline: 2006

Lead Responsible Party: Hendricks Development Group

Partners: City of Beloit (design and funding), Downtown Beloit Association (funding and community support), Beloit Box Board, GBEDC (funding as part of the renovation of the building), WI DNR

Beloit 2020 Role: Help with design process and maintain communication between all organizations working within downtown

Funding Sources: WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program, City Taxes, Private Fundraising

2. Create a Riverwalk trail node at the corner of State St. and Public Ave

The trail node will provide information about the center city's complete trail network, as well as connect it with the area's attractions and history

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: WisDOT (design assistance and funding opportunities), Property owners, Downtown Beloit Association (Fundraising), Beloit Inn, First National Bank, Kerry

Beloit 2020 Role: Assist the City with design concepts and fundraising

Funding Sources: WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, City taxes, Private Fundraising

3. Prepare Design Plans for Henry Ave Bridge Enhancements

The reconstruction of the bridge should include:

Designing the Henry Ave Bridge

Redesigning the Utility Structure at Henry Ave and Riverside Dr

Create bicycle trail access to Henry Ave Bridge from both sides of the road

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: WisDOT (bridge design),

Beloit 2020 Role: Be active participants throughout the design of the bridge; assist City application for enhancement dollars

Funding Sources: Federal, State, and Local Taxes, WisDOT Safe Routes to School (K-8), WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program, City of Beloit CIP

4. Construct a Park Facilities Maintenance Building behind wall on Alliant Energy Property

Due to the increasing needs of the Beloit Park Department, the City Parks Maintenance Department needs a site accessible to Riverside Park for a maintenance building. The first phase of this project, to be completed in 2007, would be the creation of an outdoor storage location. Further projects could include the constructions of a facility that could be constructed behind the wall near the Wood Family Bridge.

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: Alliant Energy (landowners), Friends of Riverfront

Beloit 2020 Role: Support negotiations between the City and Alliant Energy

Funding Sources: City taxes, Alliant Energy

5. Amend and Implement the Riverside Park Master Plan

To respond to the relocation of the Ace Hardware, the following amendments should be made:

Expand existing parking in Riverside Park, adjacent to the proposed Boat House

Expand Rotary Center current parking lot by approximately 20 spaces

Create an enhanced corner feature for Riverside Park at the corner of Portland Ave and Riverside Dr.

Continue pedestrian promenade through the Park

Bury power lines that currently border Riverside Drive east of Riverside Park

Create a bicycle connection from Henry Ave Bridge to Celebration Sculpture to Riverside Dr

Timeline: Design-2007, Construction-2008

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: Greater Beloit Chamber of Commerce (funding), Beloit Business Community (funding), Visit Beloit, WI DNR (funding), Friends of Riverfront, Beloit College, Alliant Energy, Rotary (signage)

Beloit 2020 Role: Help coordinate partners during design, assist with fundraising, help facilitate individual projects, Assist in enhancement grants application

Funding Sources: City taxes, Park user fees, Private fundraising, WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program

6. Obtain an easement to construct a bicycle path through private pavilion between US Pride Park and The Rock Restaurant

Prior to trying to acquire the entire parcel between these two critical sites, one possible interim solution would be to acquire an easement along the Rock River to connect these sites and continue the riverfront bicycle path.

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: Beloit 2020

Partners: Private property owner (need to sell property), WI DNR (improvements along the River), the Rock Restaurant (coordinate trail use and extension), City of Beloit

Beloit 2020 Role: Encourage sale and pursue acquisition dollars as needed

Funding Sources: City taxes, private donations, WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program

7. Negotiate agreement to acquire private parcel with picnic pavilion between US Pride Park and The Rock Restaurant

The connection will continue the riverfront bicycle path along Rock River north to US Pride Park.

Timeline: 2008

Lead Responsible Party: Beloit 2020

Partners: Private property owner (need to sell property), WI DNR (improvements along the River), the Rock Restaurant (coordinate trail use and extension), Steel Worker's Hall, City of Beloit

Beloit 2020 Role: Encourage sale and pursue acquisition dollars as needed

Funding Sources: City taxes, private donations, WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program

Alternative Implementation Step: Seek a 30' easement along river in order to continue the bicycle path.

8. Amend and Implement the Maple Avenue Redevelopment Plan

The Redevelopment Plan amendments should include:

Constructing a building on the site on the southwest corner of Henry Ave and Fourth St.

Relocating the Tennis Courts to expand Wootton Park

Redeveloping the northern portion of Wootton Park with residential development facing the Rock River and Henry Ave

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: Private Developer (to construct buildings), EDC (recruit developers, help with financing), WI DNR (permits), School District of Beloit (relocate courts to another part of the high school property), GBEDC, Beloit Foundation (property owner)

Beloit 2020 Role: Help facilitate the redevelopment process as a liaison between the developer and the City

Funding Sources: Private Dollars, City of Beloit Revolving Load Fund, BEDC Multi Bank Loan Pool, State and Federal Brownfield dollars, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grants, City taxes, School District

9. Construct a Boat House within Riverside Park near Portland Ave Bridge

The City of Beloit and Beloit College should collaborate to construct and operate a public boathouse that could benefit both organizations. The boathouse could house equipment for the College's rowing team, offer public boat rental, and include a concession stand.

Timeline: 2009

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Beloit 2020 Role: Coordinate activities between the City of Beloit, Beloit College, and the State.

Partners: Beloit College (Design and fundraising), WI DNR (approval and fundraising), Friends of Riverfront, Visit Beloit, Concessionaire

Funding Sources: WI DNR ADLP Grant, Beloit College, City Taxes, Private Donations

10. Construct bicycle trail between Fifth St Trail and Shirland Avenue along western edge of the Rock River and Bluff Street

Task will extend trail system into Hackett neighborhood and connect with planned South Bluff Street trail in South Beloit.

Timeline: 2012-2017

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: WisDOT (design assistance and funding opportunities), WI DNR (funding), Property owners, Near West Side Neighborhood (City sub-area plan), South Beloit Family Services

Beloit 2020 Role: Provide the City with design concepts for the trail extension

Funding Sources: CDBG Grants, WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Urban Rivers Grant, WI DNR Trails Program, City Taxes, Private Fundraising

11. Create a bicycle route along Bluff St from Grand Avenue to Shirland Avenue and into South Beloit

Create a viable bicycle connection between downtown and the State line. This task could be an interim solution until the River Bend development is completed. The route should consist of signage and striping bicycle lanes on the street.

Timeline: 2010

Lead Responsible Party: City of Beloit

Partners: Beloit MPO

Beloit 2020 Role: Encourage the development of more alternative transportation connections throughout the downtown and along the Rock River Parkway

Funding Sources: WisDOT Transportation Enhancement Grants, WisDOT Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities Program, WI DNR Trails Program, City Taxes, Private Fundraising

12. Rehabilitate Wheeler Avenue Bridge for Multi--Use Trail

Restore Wheeler Ave Bridge to carry pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Create multi-use trail between Broad Street and Gardner Street (Hwy 75).

Timeline: 2009

Lead Responsible Party: City of South Beloit

Partners: City of Beloit, IDOT

Beloit 2020 Role: Assist in design of bridge, coordination of fundraising

Funding Sources: IL DOT Transportation Enhancement Program, IL DNR Bike Path Grant Program, IL DNR Osland Grants, Behr Metals. (Estimated cost in 2003: \$134,000)

13. Create the South Beloit Blackhawk/Gardner Redevelopment Plan

The plan should encompass:

Plans for a large park along the confluence of the Rock River and Turtle Creek

Redevelop commercial properties along Blackhawk Blvd between Clark St. and the State Line

Restore grid street network throughout downtown South Beloit, primarily south of Gardner St

Acquire Behr Site and convert to a park with a stormwater demonstration area

Extend Fifth Street Rails-to-Trails Conversion

Create Bike Path Parallel to Tracks east of Blackhawk

Timeline: 2007

Lead Responsible Party: City of South Beloit

Partners: IL DNR, IDOT, Property owners, Paper Sheen, Behr Metals, North American Tool, DMN, Rail line operators

Beloit 2020 Role: Assist with educating citizens and property owners about the benefits of redevelopment, Help to design what the park could look like and raise funds to aid in its construction; Work as a liaison between the City, current property owners, and prospective developers to ensure a process is used that benefits everyone; assist in applying for grants

Funding Sources: IDOT, IL DNR Urban and Community Forestry Assistance or Osland Grants, Private fundraising, City taxes, State Funding

IX IMPLEMENTATION

The recommendations presented in this *Plan* will be phased over time. This phasing will be dictated by several factors, including community priorities for park facilities, the economy, and funding available to the City to make necessary acquisitions or improvements.

The park and open space improvements recommended in this *Plan* should also be incorporated into the City's Capital Improvement Projects annual schedule.

There are a number of potential funding sources available to help finance implementation including state and federal grant programs (listed in Appendix D). It should be noted that funds from many of these programs are subject to change due to fluctuations in federal, state, and local budgets.

The City should coordinate efforts with other units of government (e.g. Towns of Beloit and Turtle, Rock County), governmental departments and public agencies (e.g. school districts, Wisconsin Department of Transportation, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) and private and non-profit agencies (e.g. The Nature Conservancy) to help fund and implement the recommendations presented in this *Plan*.

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APPENDIX A: PARK FACILITIES MATRIX

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APPENDIX B: WORKSHOP RESULTS

A. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

This exercise was intended to obtain perspective on the key issues and trends relating to the parks and open space system in the City.

1. Table 1

Strengths

- Rock River and Creeks
- Existing park locations
- Ample parking
- Good facilities and equipment
- Accessible parks
- Safe parks

Weaknesses

- Jurisdictional problems (state line, towns)
- Financial restraints
- Limited development due to flood plains
- Geese
- Marketing/usage
- Vandalism
- Maintenance issues

Opportunities

- Abundant land available
- Public-private involvement
- Regional cooperation
- Turtle Creek corridor
- Upgrade facilities
- Grants and other sources of funding

Threats

- Funding shortage
- Gangs/Vandals
- Lack of public awareness
- Lack of volunteer support

2. Table 2

Strengths

- Natural assets/resources
- Community support
- Variety of parks

- Continuity/corridors
- Administration
- High quality of life
- Four seasons

Weaknesses

- Conversion of open spaces
- Funding for ongoing operations
- Maintenance
- Training and educating staff
- Lack of bike paths
- ADA access

Opportunities

- Improved continuity and connections
- Public interest/forums
- Public outreach
- Better management of natural lands

Threats

- Apathy
- Invasive species
- Pollution
- Vandalism
- Change of priorities
- Natural disasters

3. Table 3

Strengths

- Staff
- Parks and programs
- Different organizations involved (Rotary Club, Beloit 2020)
- Multiple physical locations
- Riverfront
- Big Hill Memorial Park
- Improvement of golf course operations

Weaknesses

- Lack of community input
- Budget limitations
- Trail development (multiuse)

Opportunities

- Skate park
- Programs (dance lessons, etc.)
- Development of trails and greenways
- Family activities
- Removal of parking deck
- Community Center
- Riverfront development

Threats

- Lack of interest
- Funding
- Lack of riverfront
- Vandalism
- Environmental problems
- Plans stalling out

4. Table 5

Strengths

- Appearances
- Lots of parkland
- Good management
- Big Hill Memorial Park
- Diversity of uses
- River

Weaknesses

- Not enough staff; poor maintenance
- Poor maintenance of tennis courts, poor lights
- Lack of security/ordinance enforcement
- Crime/vandalism keeps people away
- Size of park system; poor maintenance
- Insufficient public relations
- Loss of play equipment at Strong and Riverside Parks
- Lack of signage

Opportunities

- More public relations
- Ease of accessibility
- More leasing of space to private parties
- Area wide tennis tourneys if courts are improved

Threats

- Development impinging on park land
- Vandalism
- Other crime
- Ducks and geese along river
- Tennis courts: people want to use courts for other purposes
- Dogs not cleaned up after

5. Table 6

Strengths

- Acres per thousand persons
- Variety of recreational opportunities
- River frontage
- Natural amenities
- Four-season activities
- Opportunities for social gatherings

Weaknesses

- Lack of recycling facilities
- Lack of bike racks
- Vandalism/lack of security
- Linkages between local destinations
- Abandoned facilities

Opportunities

- Expand facilities with city growth
- Grant opportunities
- Citizen input
- Water resources
- Business interest in the environment
- Growth of recreational programs
- Riverfront modifications

Threats

- Invasive plant species

- Competition with other agencies and institutions

6. Table 7

Strengths

- Natural beauty
- Undeveloped land
- Variety and diversity of population
- Recreational activities (i.e. water, hiking, etc.)
- Seasonal opportunities
- Access to the waterfront

Weaknesses

- Lack of maintenance; lower level of Big Hill Memorial Park
- Availability of land

- Lack of resources; funding and staff
- Regional connections

Opportunities

- Clean slate; better planning
- Variety of activities offered
- No more land needed
- Commitment by city to plan
- River Corridor

Threats

- Vandalism
- Budget constraints
- Invasive species
- Lack of public interest
- Lack of ownership
- Conflicting management policies

B. Goals and Directions

This exercise was intended to get perspective on the key goals/directions that relate to the parks and open space system in the City.

1. Goals/Directions by Table:

Table 1

- Maintain and sustain existing facilities
- Pursue regional coordination of parks
- Seek creative funding for parks
- Increase safety/security and awareness
- Create opportunities for public and volunteer participation

Table 2

- Create bike trails corridors
- Increase organized activities
- Increase safety
- Set up natural parks restoration management

Table 3

- Create more public awareness of parks
- Maintain quality staff
- Maintain and increase funding
- Identify new funding sources
- Renew riverfront development commitment

Table 5

- Establish safe, well maintained, diverse use parks
- Improve maintenance of all parks
- Increase personnel for maintenance and security

- Train more accessible and responsive staff
- Increase natural areas

Table 6

- Increase family friendly initiatives
 - Install safe playground equipment
 - Minimize goose mess
 - Limit vandalism and dangerous litter
- Increase natural environment preservation
 - Plant long grasses to deter geese
 - Incorporate native plantings to minimize maintenance
 - Minimize invasive species
- Thinking 'green'
 - Add bike racks at parks and events
 - Require recycle bins at parks and events
- Update and maintain outdated facilities
 - Enhance grilling at Big Hill Memorial
 - Increase lighting
 - Use modern security; signage and cell phones
- Increase citizen ownership/awareness of parks

Table 7

- Create sense of public ownership, responsibility
- Maintain current facilities by adding more staff and budget
- Keep large areas natural; no development

C. Voting

This voting exercise was intended to show which unique park facilities residents would like to see incorporated into the park system. Participants also voted on their top Goals/Priorities.

Facility	Votes
Amphitheater	13
Bandshell	13
Baseball Fields (lighted)	1
Baseball/Softball Fields (unlighted)	2
Basketball Courts	3
Boating Facilities	2
Community Center	7
Community Gardens	21
Dog Park	22
Fitness Center	3
Football Field	3
Horse Trails	17
Ice Skating Rink	11
Large Community Park	2
Little League Baseball	0

Facility	Votes
Multi-Use Paths	28
Natural Parks	39
Nature Study Area	30
Neighborhood Park	16
Open Play Area	2
Picnic Areas	10
Playgrounds	12
Rural Walking Trails	26
Skate Park	24
Sledding Hill	8
Small Boats	14
Soccer Fields	7
Splash Park	8
Swimming Pool/Aquatic Center	13
Tennis Courts	22
Trailheads	25
Volleyball Courts	8

Goal/Direction/Priority	Votes
Preserve natural environmental areas	31
Maintain/Sustain existing facilities	25
Create corridors/linkages/bike paths	22
Stress safety/security for parks	19
Maintain or increase budget	14
Update equipment/facilities	14
Increase citizen stewardship/awareness	11
Add more natural parks (restore/manage)	9
Increase staff – especially in the summer	9
Think ‘Green’ at parks events	8
Create funding for parks; use grants	7
Establish regional cooperation w/parks	6
Increase volunteer opportunities/participation	6
Increase education of the value of the parks system	4
Maintain quality staff	4
Incorporate family friendly areas in parks	3
Schedule more organized activities	3
Increase public awareness	3
Increase staff responsiveness	1

D. Recommendations and Strategies

This brainstorming exercise was intended to develop a list of specific actions or strategies to address each of the top key goals/directions/priorities identified during the workshop.

1. Goal/Direction #1: Corridor and Bike Path Linkages

1. Connect Existing Parks
2. Use 51 and Rail Corridors as connections linking Beloit North and South
3. Develop mountain biking at Big Hill Memorial and West-Kopplin Park; non-motorized vehicles; ski trail in the winter; possibility for horses as well
4. Enhance Turtle Creek corridor
5. Create canoe access on Turtle Creek
6. Link Freeman Parkway and Inman
7. Include walking trail along water at Turtle Creek
8. Incorporate Lenigan Creek walking trail
9. Create bike trail on Henry Bridge

2. Goal/Direction #2: Preserve Natural Areas

1. Convert vacant lots into community gardens for vegetables or green space as determined by local neighborhoods
2. Require developers to build natural landscape areas
3. Create corporate and private stewardship opportunities to preserve natural areas
4. Create partnerships with Beloit schools to encourage environmental sensibility in children
5. Create community workdays
6. Train park staff in natural restoration and management techniques
7. Create a position for a “volunteer coordinator”
8. Seek partnerships with agencies and organizations to promote the preservation and expansion of natural areas
9. Create an allotment system and designate spaces for community vegetable gardens
10. Create information boards on natural features in the parks (i.e. flora, fauna, birds, animals, geological features, etc.)

3. Goal/Direction #3: Increase Safety and Security

1. Address the problem of unleashed pets in the parks
2. Place signage in each park to identify a response number for problems that occur
3. Improve maintenance of lighting (i.e. Horace White Park)
4. Increase parks patrol in evenings
5. Restrict traffic to playground area on lower level park (Big Hill Memorial); watch traffic per given assigned park

4. Goal/Direction #4: Maintenance of Wootton and Riverside Parks

1. Resurface courts at Wootton Park – 11 years old, \$17,000
2. Resurface courts at Riverside Park –\$48,000
3. Rebuild courts and enable for basketball use at Summit Park
4. Encourage Parks & Leisure Services to provide tennis, basketball, etc.
5. Improve maintenance of parks

5. Goal/Direction #5: Update Facilities

1. Improve lighting at Wootton Park
2. Update Horace White Park bathroom facilities
3. Improve Riverside Park bathroom facilities

4. Restore playground equipment at Wootton Park and Riverside Park
 5. Display park names at entrances
 6. Enhance restrooms in parks
 7. Include playground equipment by tennis courts
- 6. Goal/Direction #6: Skate Park**
1. Locate in Telfer Park
 2. Use existing funding
- 7. Goal/Direction #7: Dog Park**
1. Locate on west side in Big Lawn at Leeson's Park
 2. Fund with a user fee from dog licenses and/or day passes for travelers staying at local motels
- 8. Goal/Direction #8: Amphitheater**
1. Locate in Krueger Park, reutilize existing facilities
- 9. Goal/Direction #9: Bandshell**
1. Locate in a downtown venue near the river area; should tie in with Riverfest
 2. Fund through a major contributor

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APPENDIX C: NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

City of Beloit Parks and Leisure Services Needs Assessment Survey

The Beloit Parks and Leisure Services Division is in the process of improving its services. You were selected to participate in a survey to assist in identifying these important community needs. Please take a few minutes to answer these questions and return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. Your contribution to the Beloit Parks and Leisure Services Division is essential to its success and greatly appreciated.

1. Are you familiar with the Beloit Parks and Leisure Services Division? Please circle the best answer.

Yes No Somewhat

2. If you are familiar or somewhat familiar, please circle any of the choices below about how you have heard about the Beloit Parks and Leisure Services Division that might apply.

Its Brochure Its Website Newspaper articles Word of Mouth

3. Do you currently live within the City of Beloit?

Yes No Don't know

4. How long have you lived in the City of Beloit? ____ years.

5. What is the name of the park closest to your home _____?

6. About how many times have you or other family members used each of the following facilities over the past 12 months. Please check the box to the left of the correct answer.

A. Big Hill Memorial Park

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

B. Leeson Park

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

C. Riverside Park/Rotary Center

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

D. Krueger-Haskell Golf Course

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

E. Krueger-Haskell Swimming Pool

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

F. Edwards Pavilion

- 1-3 Times
 4-6 Times
 7-10 Times
 more than 10

G. Telfer Park

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times

H. Edwards Ice Arena

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times

7. About how many times have you or other family members used the following facilities or activity areas over the past 12 months? Please check the box of the correct answers.

A. Basketball Courts

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

B. Baseball/Softball Diamonds

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

C. Running/Walking Trails

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

D. Fields and Practice Areas

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

E. Playgrounds

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

F. Tennis Courts

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

G. Picnic Shelters

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

H. Senior Center

- 1-3 Times
- 4-6 Times
- 7-10 Times
- more than 10

8. How well do you feel Beloit Park and Leisure Services Division meets your family's recreation needs? Please circle the best answer.

Not at all Somewhat Well Extremely well

9. Please list any other facilities or activity areas that you think should be top priorities for your Parks and Leisure Services Division.

10. Should Beloit continue to set aside a portion of new park lands for undisturbed natural areas.

Yes No Don't know

11. If you answered yes, how much per month would you be willing to pay in property taxes to support such initiatives? Please circle the best answer.

Nothing \$5-10/month \$10-15/month More than \$15/month

12. Do you believe people who live outside the City limits should be required to pay additional fees to use the City's park facilities and programs.

Yes No Don't know

13. Based on your experience, please rate the Division's job performance in each of the following areas. Please circle the best answer.

A. Maintenance and cleanliness of outdoor park facilities, ballfields, restrooms, etc.

Excellent Good Fair Poor

B. Maintenance and cleanliness of indoor City recreation facilities.

Excellent Good Fair Poor

14. Which of the following items would be your top priorities? Please check as many as you think would be appropriate.

A. Providing new non-athletic programs and services for kids.

B. Providing new parks and play areas.

C. Providing a new indoor recreation center

D. Providing new non-traditional park facilities such as bike trails, dog parks, natural areas, walking trails, wildlife sanctuaries.

E. Ensuring that existing parks, facilities and programs are safe, clean and well Monitored.

F. Providing additional athletic fields league play.

G. Providing new public family aquatic center.

H. Other, please list _____

15. Which of the following methods should the city use to purchase and build new parks? Please check all that apply.

A. I don't think we need any new parks.

B. Purchase and build new parks through city tax dollars.

C. Require new residential commercial development to fund parks through a "parks tax"

D. Require new subdivisions to set aside park areas and provide playground equipment for their own neighborhood.

E. Purchase and build new parks through joint ventures with private corporations.

F. Purchase and build new parks by increasing program dues and or league fees for existing users.

16. Do you feel there is a need for a City community recreation center?

Yes No Don't know

17. If yes, how much would you be willing to pay in property taxes to fund a new community center?

Nothing \$5-10/month \$10-15/month More than \$15/month

18. Do you feel there is a need for an outdoor pool/water park?

Yes No Don't know

19. If yes, how much would you be willing to pay in property taxes to fund a new outdoor pool/water park?

Nothing \$5-10/month \$10-15/month More than \$15/month

20. Are you a registered voter in Beloit?

Yes No

21. Did you vote in the spring of 2006 municipal elections?

Yes No

22. How many people live in your household? _____

23. What are their ages?

_____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____, _____

24. What is your gender?

Male Female

Thank you very much for you time. Please return this questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. Survey results will be posted on the Beloit Park and Leisure Services in June.

APPENDIX D: GRANT PROGRAMS

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Deadline	Notes	Administrative Agency	Contact
Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program						
Aids for the Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)	To acquire or develop public, nature-based recreation areas and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$4 million avail. per yr. ▪ 50% local match per project 	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required ▪ Priority for land acquisition ▪ Projects must comply with ADA 	WDNR	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Urban Green Space Program (UGS)	To acquire land to provide natural space within or near urban areas, or to protect scenic or ecological features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$1.6 millions avail. per yr. ▪ 50% local match per project 	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required ▪ Projects must comply with ADA 	WDNR	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Acquisition of Development Rights	To acquire development rights for nature-based outdoor recreation areas and facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$1.6 millions avail. per yr. ▪ 50% local match per project 	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funds available to acquire development rights in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial, or commercial developments are in place. ▪ May include enhancements of outdoor recreation. 	WDNR	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Urban Rivers Grant Program (URGP)	To acquire lands, or rights in lands, adjacent to urban rivers for the purpose of preserving or restoring them for economic revitalization or nature-based outdoor recreation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$800,000 avail. per yr. ▪ 50% local match per project 	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required ▪ Projects must comply with ADA 	WDNR	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Federal Programs						
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON)	To acquire or develop public outdoor recreation areas and facilities	50% local match per project	May 1	A comprehensive outdoor recreation plan is required	WDNR with TEA-21 Funds	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Deadline	Notes	Administrative Agency	Contact
Recreational Trails Act	To provide funds for maintenance, development, rehabilitation, and acquisition of land for motorized, non-motorized, and diversified trails	50% local match per project	May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funds may only be used on trails which have been identified in, or which further a specific goal of a local, county, or state trail plan. ▪ Funds may be used on trails that are referenced in a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan 	WDNR with TEA-21 Funds	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Statewide Multi-Modal Improvement Program (SMIP)						
Transportation Enhancements Program	Providing facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. This program provides funding for rehabilitating and operating historic transportation buildings and structures, restoring railway depots, as well as streetscaping "Main Streets" and landscaping near transportation facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funded through TEA-21 ▪ 20% required match 	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not a grant program. 80% of funds are reimbursed if all federal guidelines are met ▪ Project must relate to surface transportation ▪ Construction projects must be over \$100,000 ▪ Non-construction projects must be over \$25,000 	WisDOT	David McCosh 608-246-5445
Surface Discretionary Grant Program (STP-D)	Provides flexible funds, which can be spent on a wide variety of projects, including roadway projects through the Federal-aid highway system, bridges, transit facilities, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funded through TEA-21 ▪ 20% required match 	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any project that fosters alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle trips ▪ Facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists ▪ System-wide bicycle planning ▪ Construction projects must be over \$100,000 ▪ Non-construction projects must be over \$25,000 	WisDOT	David McCosh 608-246-5445

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Deadline	Notes	Administrative Agency	Contact
Federal Transit Administration Grants						
Section 5309 (old Section 3 discretionary funds)	Transit capital projects; includes intermodal facilities such as bicycle racks on buses and bicycle parking at transit stations; most funds are to be directed toward transit itself.	20% local match per project	Early Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding for this program is allocated on a discretionary basis Congress/Administration can pick the projects; however, the authorization bill contains a list of specific criteria 	WisDOT Bureau of Transit	David Vickman 608-264-9532
Section 402-Highway Safety Funds						
Community Programs Empowerment Program Enforcement Program	For bicycle and pedestrian safety education and training projects, including helmet promotion and purchases, sponsorship of rodeos, classes, and development of brochures	20% local match per project	October – December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering and maintenance work not eligible for funding 	WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety	Tom Knoop Regional Program Manager 608-267-3297
Highway Safety Program (Section 403)	Available for bicycle/pedestrian education. May also be used to develop safety classes for bicycle/pedestrian offenders	20%-50% local match per project	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For communities that can document bicycle crashes related to motor vehicle violations Funds new enforcement programs up to \$1000 	WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety	Tom Knoop Regional Program Manager 608-267-3297
Research Projects	Funds the research needed to substantiate unique local needs for additional safety funding	20% local match per project	February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study of transit needs on public lands to assess the feasibility of alternative transportation modes (Section 3039) 	WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety	Tom Knoop Regional Program Manager 608-267-3297
Other Programs						
Wisconsin Main Street Community Program	Comprehensive downtown revitalization program, which includes streetscape improvements		No Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General downtown program May benefit trail enhancements through streetscaping 	National Main Street Center	Wisconsin Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Downtown Development 608-266-7531

Program	Purpose	Funding Details	Deadline	Notes	Administrative Agency	Contact
Surface Transportation - Environment Cooperative Research Program	Evaluate transportation control measures. Improve understanding of transportation demand factors. Develop performance indicators that will facilitate the analysis of transportation alternatives	20% local match per project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$ available for the development of national bicycle safety education curriculum ▪ \$ available for grants to a national not-for-profit organization engages in promoting bicycle and pedestrian safety ▪ \$ available for a study of the safety issues attendant to the transportation of school children to and from school and school-related activities by various transportation modes 	FHWA	U.S. Dept. of Transportation 202-366-4000
Urban Forestry Grants	Assistance for tree maintenance, planting, and public awareness	\$1,000 to \$25,000 grants awarded with a 50% local match	October 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding is prioritized for communities needing to develop an urban forestry plan, needing worker training, and needing to conduct a street tree inventory 	WDNR Urban Forestry	Jeff Roe South Central Regional Urban Forestry Coordinator 608-275-3256
Recreational Boating and Facilities (RBF)	Encourage the development of recreational motorized boating facilities	50% local match per project	No Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$ available for initial dredging and construction of bulkheads and breakwaters 	Wisconsin Waterways Commission	Larry Freidig 608-266-5897
Sport Fishing Restoration Act (SFR)	Encourage the restoration of sport fishing habitat and to provide facilities for public access to sport fishing areas, including piers and boat landings	75% local match per project	No Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$ available for land acquisition, habitat restoration and development, aquatic education, public fishing piers and shore fishing, fish propagation and stocking, and research 	WDNR	Stefanie Brouwer South Central Region 608-275-3218
Home Depot Community Improvement (Environmental) Grants	Assistance for forestry and ecology projects, clean-up beautification projects, recycling programs				Home Depot Community Affairs	Local Home Depot Store Manager
Local private foundations	Various					Parks and Leisure Services Division