
City of Mauston Outdoor Recreation Plan

2017-2021

Effective January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2021



North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

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Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

This Outdoor Recreation Plan (ORP) was prepared pursuant to Wisconsin Statute §23.30 Outdoor Recreation Program. This section serves "to promote, encourage, coordinate, and implement a comprehensive long-range plan to acquire, maintain, and develop for public use, those areas of the state best adapted to the development of a comprehensive system of state and local outdoor recreation facilities and services..."

Submission of this adopted ORP to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources establishes eligibility for the local unit of government to apply for a variety of Federal and State Aids for outdoor recreation (Chapter NR 50.06(4), Wisconsin administrative code).

A. PURPOSE

The primary purpose of this outdoor recreation plan is to provide continued direction toward meeting the current and future recreation needs of the City of Mauston.

Adoption of this plan by the Mauston City Council and subsequent acceptance by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) will continue the City's eligibility for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LAWCON), and Stewardship Fund money.

Non-profit groups, foundations, and the general public may also use this document to coordinate their own private efforts for developing outdoor recreation facilities.

B. PROVISIONS FOR UPDATING PLAN

Plan amendments are common and should be considered part of the planning process. They frequently represent good implementation or plan usage and should be acceptable for consideration by local decision makers.

Annual review of the plan recommendations and capital improvement list by the Mauston Board of Park Commissioners will keep this plan current. This review may also occur after a large turn over in elected officials after an election.

Process:

1. Mauston Board of Park Commissioners reviews plan and takes a vote on what changes to make.
2. Those changes and a copy of the meeting minutes are forwarded to the DNR's Community Financial Assistance staff in Eau Claire. Submission of the minutes and changes automatically constitutes DNR grant eligibility for those changes.

Establishing a **full plan update every five years** will assure that the plan reflects changes in the recreational needs of the county, and will extend the city's eligibility for grant programs for another 5 years.

Submission of 1) the revised plan, and 2) the City Council resolution approving the plan, to the DNR is the final step to extending the ORP for another 5 years. DNR approval of the ORP will come if the correct process was followed.

C. REFERENCE PLANS

Each plan listed below affects outdoor recreation near the City of Mauston:

City of Mauston Comprehensive Plan 2017-2037

The Mauston Comprehensive Plan was updated in 2016. This document covers all types of development that may occur throughout Mauston, and encourages the City to continue updating the City's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan to maintain park facilities that residents want.

State Trails Network Plan

This 2003 document clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) role and strategy in the provision of all types of trails. The plan identifies a series of potential trail corridors that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. This statewide network of interconnected trails would be owned and maintained by municipalities, private entities, and partnerships of the two. Preserving transportation corridors, such as old rail lines, is specifically discussed as a very important strategy in the creation of recreational and alternative transportation corridors.

One Segment affects Mauston:

Segment 53—Wyeville to Mauston to Adams County Hwy Z

This potential trail corridor is a combination of rail line and highway right-of-way that links via Juneau County's Omaha Trail to the Elroy-Sparta and 400 State Trails in Elroy. Rail line would provide the linkage from Wyeville to Mauston, and various roadways from Mauston would connect east to the Wisconsin River.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2011-2016

NOTE: This plan is being updated in 2016-2017.

Every five years, the Wisconsin DNR publishes a SCORP as required by the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. At its core, this SCORP is used to help allocate federal funds equitably among local communities, but the document also transcends many levels of outdoor recreation discussion and policy. At the national level, this SCORP recognizes the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) initiative, which is based on the idea that the protection of the country's natural heritage is a non-partisan objective shared by all Americans. The AGO encourages state and local communities to develop local conservation and recreation initiatives.

This document shows a clear vision of how preserving and improving recreation opportunities in Wisconsin fits within a broader national initiative of conservation and recreation.

Juneau County Outdoor Recreation Plan 2017-2021

The county outdoor recreation plan is primarily responsible for Juneau County Land, Forestry, and Parks Department managed facilities. Projects are also listed for some local governments within Juneau County, who may also adopt the plan as their own.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Bicycle Facilities Network Plan, 2004

NOTE: This plan is being updated in 2016-2017.

North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission created this document to guide the development of an interconnected bikeway system for the North Central Wisconsin Region at the county level. Potential trails are identified and an improvement description was created for each county that trails exist in to facilitate implementation.

Here is the Juneau County Plan Summary:

“The plan for Juneau County revolves around networking with the Omaha, Elroy-Sparta, Hillsboro, and “400” State trails. Segment 53, Wyeville to Adams County Highway Z, of the *State Trails Network Plan* is a combination of rail line and highway right-of-way that links at Camp Douglas. Rail line would provide the linkage from Wyeville in Monroe County to the City of Mauston, and the Highway 82 corridor from Mauston to Highway Z. CTH O with newly improved alignment and paved shoulders provides another link between Segment 53 at Mauston and the state trails. The Hillsboro Trail provides the link to Vernon County. CTH HH with its wide paved shoulders connects the network from STH 82 to Sauk County. In the northern half of the County, routes are being planned on town and County roads in and around the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge. These routes will link to the state trails and Buckhorn State Park. To complete a loop past Buckhorn, the route on CTH G would have to dump out on STH 58 where suitability is poor. This area is an area that will have to be carefully addressed to determine the best approach.”

Wisconsin Land Legacy Report 2006-2056

This report is a comprehensive inventory of the special places that will be critical to meet future conservation and outdoor recreation needs for the next fifty years. Some of the questions asked to guide creation of this report were: Which lands and waters remain unprotected that will be critical for conserving our plants and animals and their habitats? What gaps exist now (and will likely emerge in the future) in providing abundant and satisfying outdoor recreation? How can we most effectively build upon the state's existing investment in protected lands to fill conservation and recreation gaps? What special places will our children and grandchildren wish we had protected? The study focused on identifying what of our state or regionally significant green infrastructure remains to be protected.

The report recommends protection of these lands by using federal, state, and local funding opportunities; along with possibly creating new kinds of incentives for landowners, working to draft comprehensive plans, or offering different types of technical assistance.

Each Legacy Area near Mauston is summarized below with 5 stars representing the highest level for that category:

LL <u>Lower Lemonweir River</u>		GC <u>Greens and Cuestas</u>	
Size	Medium	Size	Medium
Protection Initiated	Limited	Protection Initiated	Limited
Protection Remaining	Substantial	Protection Remaining	Moderate
Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆	Conservation Significance	☆☆☆☆
Recreation Potential	☆☆	Recreation Potential	☆☆☆☆

The Lower Lemonweir River, from New Lisbon to its confluence at the Wisconsin River, flows through the flat, sandy soils that characterize the Central Sand Plains. Due primarily to a lack of topographic relief, the floodplain consists of a vast complex of swales, running sloughs, and oxbow lakes. Floodplain forests, occurring throughout the river corridor, are dominated by silver maple, green ash, river birch, hackberry, and swamp white oak. The surrounding uplands are also heavily wooded.

Sandstone cliffs border the south side of the river channel and provide habitat for a variety of unusual plants. Red and white pine relicts occur on some of the cliffs.

Although the waters of the Lemonweir run very dark (a result of the peat soils it flows through), it is one of the highest quality rivers in the area and supports an excellent warmwater fishery. Aquatic diversity within the river is very high. Due to the extensive forests and scenic cliffs, the Lower Lemonweir River offers high quality canoeing opportunities. Access points are limited which, particularly in the lower reaches near the Wisconsin River, provides a near-wilderness setting.

Cuestas are the sloping backside to an exposed escarpment. The Greensand Cuesta, forested with pines and oaks and also containing small prairie patches, is highly dissected along its eastern edge where the sandstone has eroded over time. The buttes to the east, which can be seen from the I-90/94 Interstate, are an extension of the cuesta and also harbor some rare plants.

Chapter 2 BACKGROUND OF MAUSTON

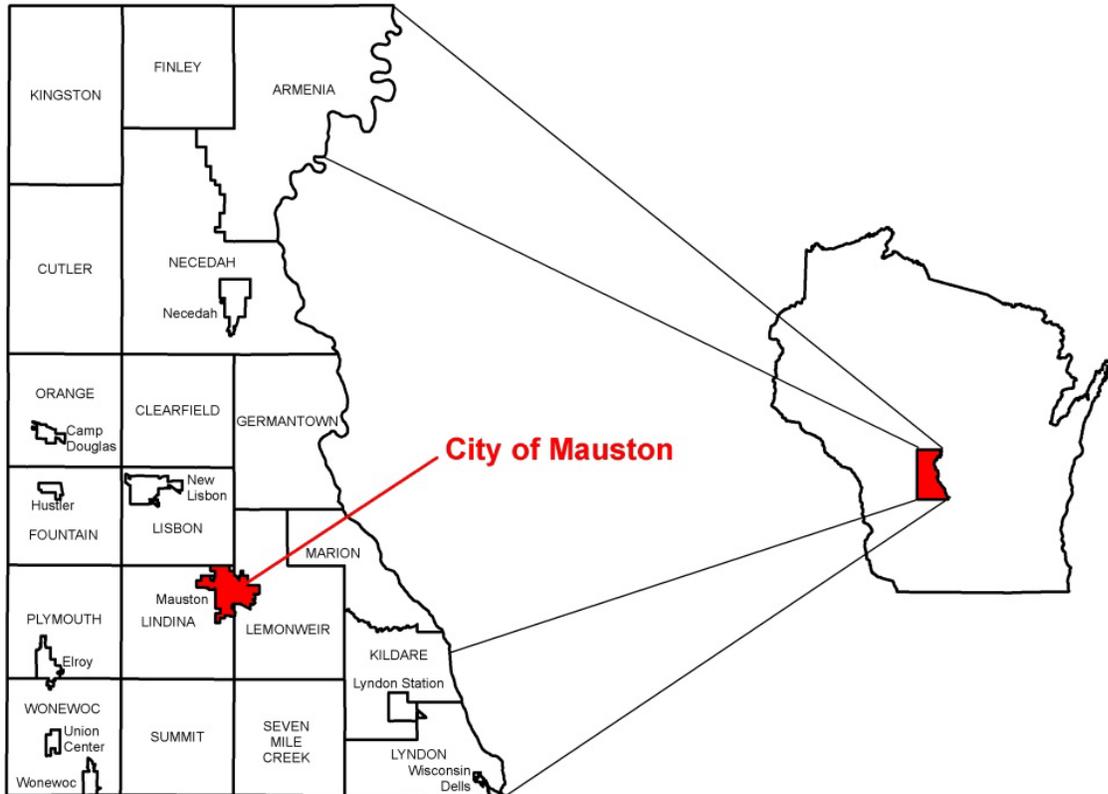
A. INTRODUCTION

This section provides a basic feel for what the City of Mauston looks like physically, demographically, and economically. Potential opportunities and limitations start with understanding an area.

B. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The City of Mauston is located on the eastern edge of the driftless area of Wisconsin, which is a region that was not affected by the glacial advances several thousand years ago. The city has developed on a relatively flat plain along the Lemonwier River, which empties into the Wisconsin River about ten miles south east of the city. The topography of the city is generally of low relief and gentle rolling hills, except for the isolated bluffs remaining from the pre glacial era. The most prominent bluff is One mile bluff which is located south of the city, however most bluffs in this area are located west of the city.

Figure 1 **Location of Mauston**



The city is classified in the continental climate type. Winters are cold, and summers are short and fairly warm. The short frost-free period in summer limits the production of crops to forage, small grain, and adapted vegetables. Precipitation is fairly well distributed throughout the year, reaching a peak in summer. Snow covers the ground during much of the period from late fall through early spring. The soils occasionally freeze to a depth of several feet when very cold temperatures occur before the ground is appreciably covered with snow. The soils usually freeze to a depth ranging from the top few inches to about a foot.

C. DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2015, about 4,499 people lived in the city, which is a 76 person increase in population since 2010. See Table 1.

According to WDOA’s Demographic Services Center Juneau County’s population growth was almost entirely due to a positive net in-migration. Juneau’s increase due to natural growth was nominal. Juneau County added a net total of 323 residents during the almost five year period ending January 1, 2015. (WDOA)

Low (or negative) natural growth typically indicates an older population and indeed the high migration rate is an indication that Juneau County continues to be an attractive destination for retiring individuals. As of June 2014, 19% of county residents were over the age of 65 compared to 15.2% for the state and 14.2% for the nation. (WDOA)

Two detention facilities were built and populated during the first decade of the 21st Century in Juneau County. New Lisbon Correctional Institution (NLCI) opened on April 5, 2004. The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) Sand Ridge Secure Treatment Center was opened in Mauston in 2001. (WDOA)

Note that both the inmates detained at NLCI and the patients housed at Sand Ridge are counted in the general population figure of 26,987 for the county but not included in the computation of the county's unemployment rate or the county’s labor force participation rate. (WDOA)

Table 1: Population				
Minor Civil Division	2010	2015	2010-2015 Net Change	2010-2015 Proportional Change
City of Mauston	4,423	4,499	76	1.7%
Juneau County	26,664	26,987	323	1.2%
Wisconsin	5,686,986	5,753,324	66,338	1.2%

Source: U.S. Census 2010; WDOA Demographic Services Center

The unemployment rate in Juneau County has historically been higher than the statewide rate, but the gap seems to be closing. The county's unemployment rate is substantially more seasonal than the state as a whole, which is indicative of Juneau County's employment mix: employment in Juneau is even more heavily influenced by hospitality, tourism, agriculture, and seasonally based manufacturing than the state as a whole. (WDOA)

In 2010, Mauston's Census population was 4,423. Projections in Table 2 from the Wisconsin Department of Administration's (WDOA) Demographic Services Center show Mauston gaining 700 people (15.2%) from 2015-2040.

Table 2: Mauston Population Projections

2010 Census	2015 Projections	2020 Projections	2025 Projections	2030 Projections	2035 Projections	2040 Projections
4,423	4,610	4,815	5,050	5,235	5,305	5,310

Source: U.S. Census, & WDOA Demographic Services Center

Mauston's 2015 population consists of 95% white, non-Hispanic, residents; 2.6% black residents; and 1.5% American Indian residents per the 2015 U.S. Census, American Community Survey.

Table 3 shows that Mauston has a lower percentage of residents under 17 years old than the state by 2 percentage points. Mauston's 65 and older population is not as high as Juneau County, but is 2 percentage points higher than the state.

Table 3: Age of Population, 2015

	City of Mauston	Juneau County	Wisconsin
17 and Younger	916 (20.7%)	5,459 (20.6%)	1,309,323 (22.8%)
18 to 65 years old	2,773 (62.5%)	16,057 (60.6%)	3,584,597 (62.4%)
65 and older	746 (16.8%)	4,978 (18.8%)	848,197 (14.8%)
Total Population	4,435	26,494	5,742,117
Median Age	41.5	44.4	39.0

Source: U.S. Census, 2015 ACS

D. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

In 2015, about 2,048 people were in the labor force, which represents a participation rate of 56 percent.

The City's median household income in 2015 was \$41,660, and the per capita income was \$21,035.

The average wage in 2015 for all workers in Juneau County, \$37,781, increased 4.1 percent from the 2013 average of \$36,307. While Juneau's annual wage rate of increase surpassed the statewide rate of change in 2014, wages paid in Juneau in 2014 were still only 86.1 percent of the statewide average. That being said, Juneau's wages have been increasing at a faster annual pace than the state for a number of years now as evidenced by the fact that in 2004, Juneau's wages were just 81% of the statewide average. (WDOA)

Of the 1,964 workers who lived in Mauston in 2015, 77.1 percent drove alone to work, 15.5 percent carpooled, 6.3 percent walked or took other means, and 1.1 percent worked at home. The average travel time to work was 20.9 minutes.

As of 2014, manufacturing jobs comprise 23.4 percent of all jobs in the county, a close second to the education and health services category, which comprises 28.8 percent of the total jobs in the county. In addition, manufacturing employers account for 30.6 percent of the total payroll in Juneau County, the highest share of any industry grouping in the county. The annual average wage can depend upon many factors such as location, seasonal activity, presence of workers under bargaining agreements, and more. But the most crucial overall component is an industry's occupational composition. Some industries employ higher than average shares of skilled/educated workers typically pay salaries on the higher end of the scale. Other industries employ more entry-level, part-time or seasonal workers. Leisure and hospitality employment represents 8.6 percent of Juneau County's employment, yet it pays a disproportionately low 2.8 percent of the county's total annual wages; evidence of its seasonal and part-time occupational employment characteristics. (WDOA)

These projections use information from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, including unpublished data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as well as data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) from the Census Bureau. While these projections take into account anticipated changes in Wisconsin's economy, please note that unanticipated events may affect the accuracy of the projections. (WDOA)

The share of total jobs by industry sector is projected to change little through 2022. The Manufacturing sector is projected to have the largest decline in share of jobs even with an increase in employment. From 2012 to 2022, the share of jobs in the Manufacturing sector is projected to decrease from 16.4 percent to 14.9 percent. Readers should note that while manufacturing employment as a whole will decline there will be many an opportunity for young workers in manufacturing because retirements in the sector are going to outpace declines due to economic shifts for the foreseeable future. (WDOA)

Chapter 3 **EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES**

The City of Mauston maintains a park system that consists of about 50 acres. Public and private schools also have playgrounds that are generally open to the public after school hours. All parks and playgrounds are shown on Map 1.

Each park classification description (in each text box) is from the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), 2011-2016, and is in Attachment A.

Linear Parks

Linear Parks are trails that may have various lengths. (See Attachment A.)

Motorized and water trails are accessible from points within the City.

Riverwalk – Mauston has a concrete paved trail or boardwalk trail along the north and south sides of the Lemonweir River, east of the dam near Union Street. Total length of this trail, including sidewalk over the Union Street/STH 82 bridge and the pedestrian bridge across the Lemonweir River, is about 1.3 miles long (by the end of 2017).

Gateway Ave Multi-use Path – In an effort to provide pedestrian access from the Mauston Hotel Corridor to the Riverwalk and Downtown, the City constructed or designated a pathway 1 mile in length, under Interstate 90/94 along the south side of Gateway Avenue and McEvoy Street. The future desire is to extend this path along State Highway 82 to Woodside Ranch.

Snowmobile Trails – Juneau County has approximately 240-miles of designated snowmobile trails that are part of the State snowmobile aid program, along with about 65-miles of club trails. There are no winter designated ATV trails.

ATV Trails – Juneau County has about 400 miles of on-road ATV routes, but no ATV trails.

Mini Parks

Mini Parks: Generally less than 5 acres, these parks are special areas that serve a concentrated or limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. One prominent feature or recreation facility like a playground may be present as the purpose of this park. The service area for this park if a playground exists generally is a ½ mile radius, and a population of 2,000-3,000 people. (See Attachment A.)

Marachowsky's Park – This 2-acre park is located west of Liberty Street. It contains a picnic shelter, playground equipment, a softball field with bleachers and dugout benches, a basketball hoop, open space, benches, and parking.

Jones Park – This 2.5 acre park is located on the southeast corner of Maughs Street and Prairie Street. The park contains a lighted softball field with bleachers and dugouts, parking, restrooms, playground, picnic shelter, open space, basketball hoop, horseshoe pits, and a lighted ice skating rink with warming house.

Murphy Park – This 0.8 acre park is located just west of the bridge on Monroe Street, along Decorah Lake. A bench overlooking the lake exists, along with open space.

The following **public school** has outdoor recreation facilities that are available to the public outside of school hours:

West Side Elementary School – The school has 3 acres of open space with playground equipment, and two basketball hoops and various painted games on pavement.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood Parks: Centrally located spaces of 5 to 25 acres that serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood are good neighborhood parks. Active and passive recreational activities in this park classification include field, court, and ball games; skating; crafts; and picnicking. Facilities may also include a playground, wading pool, ball field, multi-activity field, ball diamond, tennis courts, skatepark, and shelter. Trees, open fields, and undeveloped natural areas are also desirable components of neighborhood parks. The service area for this park generally is a 1 mile radius, and a population of 2,000-5,000 people. (See Attachment A.)

Lions Park – This 7 acre park is located on Grayside Avenue, northeast of the roundabout. It contains lighted tennis courts, two parking areas, two picnic pavilions with restrooms, BBQ shelter, picnic tables, grills, benches, playground equipment with bike racks, two basketball hoops, and open space.

Oakridge Park – This 7.4 acre park is located at the southwest corner of CTH G and Tremel Drive. The park contains a playground, parking, picnic tables, and open space.

Mile Bluff Kiwanis Park – This 20.5 acre park is directly south of the hospital on a wooded butte that rises from the surrounding terrain. The park, which is a small part of the butte, contains a basketball hoop, a parking lot, picnic tables & grills, a disk

golf course, open space, a sledding hill, and a hiking trail with bluff lookouts that are available to the public.

Community Parks

Community Parks: Usually more than 25 acres in size, these parks serve entire communities, and are located adjacent to a collector street to provide community-wide vehicular access. The purposes of this park are to meet the recreational needs of several neighborhoods, as well as to preserve unique landscapes and open spaces. These parks allow for group activities not feasible at the neighborhood level. All of the facilities of a neighborhood park may exist. Appropriate program elements include community water feature, amphitheater, various picnic opportunities, and other elements per Attachment A.

Riverside Park – This 3.8 acre park is between Mansion Street and Decorah Lake. A lighted concrete path and benches exist along the full length of Decorah Lake within the park. The riverwalk also goes behind City Hall, Police, & Fire building to connect to another picnic pavilion, and continue further behind the church to connect to Union Street. The park hosts numerous community events during the summer. Facilities within the park include a performance pavilion (band shell) for concerts or picnicking, a picnic pavilion and bike rack near the two lane boat launch, basketball hoop, a fishing and scenic viewing pier, picnic tables, playground, picnic gazebo near the playground, restrooms, parking lots, and open space.

Note: Riverside Park is classified as a community park, because of its community wide program elements, direct access to Decorah Lake, amphitheater structure, many picnic pavilions, and the Riverwalk which provides additional access to the Lemonweir River outside of the park boundaries.

Gordon Olson Middle School, Grayside Elementary School, and Mauston High School – The combined schools account for about 47 acres of outdoor recreation. There is a lighted football and track stadium, a baseball field with bleachers dugouts and batting cages, playground equipment, parking, restrooms, two soccer fields, two softball fields with dugouts, and open space where 3 more soccer fields could exist.

Special Use Areas

Special Use Areas: *A special use park is often designed as a revenue-generating enterprise created to satisfy demand for a particular sport, recreational activity, or special event. A special use park may also be a sports park combined with enterprise activities and administered as a community recreation resource. Various functions include special events, fairs, festivals, expositions, symposiums, sport, community gatherings, and numerous other recreational programs and activities. (See Attachment A.)*

Veterans Memorial Park – This 56.5 acre park is located on Division Street, west of the hospital. In 2013, 35.9 acres were transferred between Juneau County and JC-AIRS to expand Veterans Memorial to its current size. The county fair is held here annually, and the park is jointly managed by the City of Mauston and JC-AIRS. This park contains the county fairground’s buildings and grandstand. Two lighted softball fields exist with bleachers, dugouts, concession stand, restrooms, and parking areas.

Hwy 12/16 Boat Launch – This 0.3 acre park is a paved boat launch where several vehicles with boat trailers can park. A picnic table and park marker also exist.

Chapter 4

OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A. INTRODUCTION

Recreational needs within the city were identified by collecting public input, reviewing past plans (page 2), creating a park Level Of Service assessment, and using the Parks, Commission and City Staff's local knowledge of current park conditions.

B. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Informal Public Input

In the regular course of business Mauston's staff receive public input about the parks. That input and their professional experience will also shape what changes are implemented.

Summary of Survey Responses

*Below is an overview of the outdoor recreation survey that was created for this ORP. See **Attachment C** for a more detailed survey response summary.*

The City of Mauston advertised the survey link on their Facebook page, which is where most of the responses came from, and the City's website.

We received 176 responses to the Survey. Respondents were allowed to skip questions, so several questions had slightly smaller response groups. Also, if a question did not apply to a respondent, then the survey skipped them ahead to the next relevant question, which also provided smaller responses to some questions.

There were 103 respondents who shared the intersection that was closest to their house. A map of these respondent's intersections shows that all neighborhoods in Mauston were represented.

Through an IP address analysis of who took the survey it appears that only about a dozen people took the survey twice (could be husband and wife). Nobody appears to have "stuffed the ballot box."

About 3/4ths of the respondents were female (73% female, 27% male), and they were from a variety of age groups.

Key Findings of the ORP Survey:

- The top recreational activities, in order, from respondents are:
 1. Walking/hiking 76%
 2. Events / Festivals / Fairs 73%
 3. Swimming 58%
 4. Playground Usage 54%
 5. Fishing 48%
- The top potential outdoor recreation opportunities in Mauston that should be developed:
 - Create a splash pad.
 - Establish a dog park.
 - Improved play equipment.
 - Create new trails.
- Respondents want Decorah Lake dredged, if that will clean up the lake (~65%). Comments show that people want more information, and wish the lake could be cleaned up for less than the \$2-4 million to dredge it.
- Riverside Park, Riverside Trail, and Lions Park are by far the most used parks in Mauston.
- Satisfaction of parks in Mauston is “good” among respondents, regardless of which park it is.

C. NEEDS DRIVEN PARK PLANNING

Since the 1960's, an accepted practice has been to adopt a uniform national land standard, such as 10 acres per 1000 population, for park planning. A standard amount of land for parks and recreation nationwide is no longer recognized as universal for a park. A standard land measure is still used to determine how much land is needed for a specific use like a baseball diamond. Facility standards are used for this purpose. The number of baseball diamonds and other facilities are not the same among similar sized communities nationally; therefore a Level of Service needs to be created locally.

Park and Recreation Designs **Attachments A & B**

The various attributes (e.g. acreage, location, and amenities) of each park classification are described in these attachments. Use these designs as one part of determining if community-wide needs are being met in the parks.

Besides creating a Level of Service for each park classification, other measures such as geographic distribution of each park type and universal accessibility of facilities are also used to determine the adequacy of a community's parks.

Universal accessibility is making facilities (e.g. tables, drinking fountains, and restrooms) accessible to people with limited mobility. Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards are followed when purchasing or modifying facilities for universal accessibility. Each park description starting on page 10 lists specific park facilities. If changes to park facilities are necessary to make them ADA compliant, then they will be listed as recommended improvements in Chapter 6 under "Capital Improvements."

1. Level of Service

A Level Of Service (LOS) approach is used to identifying if enough park land exists for a community's needs. This revised approach is defined by the community's needs rather than an arbitrary acreage-per-1000-people standard. The LOS is generated locally for each park classification (i.e. mini, neighborhood, or community). Public input is collected, and the needs for a particular park, or whole park classification, are determined. If the public is content with the existing parks within a park classification, then the LOS is applied to the whole population. If the public determines that individual parks need more facilities in them, then a particular park needing additional land may become reclassified into the next larger classification. When the community grows in population the LOS is used to calculate how many additional parks are needed.

Park Acreage

The size of a park is determined by three criteria:

1. Physical geography. Does the site have steep hills, woodlands, or wetlands? Such natural features are useful for exploration, conservation, aesthetic buffers, and unprogrammed lands.
2. Park facilities. What activities are allowed or will be allowed? How much land is needed for each use? This is determined by applying the park Level of Service (LOS) to lands where the village is growing. If a community is not growing in population,

then the LOS does not change, but different uses may become desired over time, so facilities will need replacement.

3. Unprogrammed buffers. How much land within the park is needed to separate different uses or future expansion? The amount of land needed to separate uses varies by what combination of uses exist, and recreation professionals can provide the best review per each park. Future expansion, if any, is shown where the community may have placed future parks on the *Official Map* [developed under Sec 62.23(6)(b) Wis. Stats.] and on the *Future Land Use Map* in the *Mauston Comprehensive Plan*.

Park acreage in TABLE 4 shows how Mauston's park system compares with state standards for the size of each park as grouped by classification. The average park sizes for Mauston follow in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) recommendations for each classification, but some parks in each classification are smaller than SCORP recommendations.

Table 4 Park Sizes, 2015		
Classification	SCORP Recommendation	Mauston average park size
Mini	0.5 – 5* acres	1.76 acres
Neighborhood	5 – 25 acres	11.63 acres
Community	25+ acres	25.4 acres
Special Use	Various based upon facility	Various based upon facility

Source: WDNR, & NCWRPC

*SCORP states that a mini park is 0.5-1.5 acres, but a gap from 1.5-5 acres exists, so that gap was added to the mini park size.

In Table 4, school facilities were also used as part of Mauston’s Level Of Service. Parks are listed by classification starting on page 10 of this plan.

Mauston’s Census populations were 4,423 in 2010, and 4,610 in 2015. The Wisconsin Department of Administration is projecting that Mauston’s population will increase to 4,815 by 2020, and a projected increase to 5,050 by 2025.

$$\text{LOS by classification} = \frac{\text{Park acres per classification}}{(\text{City Population} \div 1,000 \text{ population served})}$$

Table 5		Level Of Service				
Park Classification	2010		2015		Projected 2020	
	Total Acres	Acres per 1,000 people	Total Acres	Acres per 1,000 people	Total Acres	Acres per 1,000 people
Mini	8.3	1.88	8.3	1.80	8.3	1.72
Neighborhood	30.1	6.81	34.9	7.57	34.9	7.25
Community	50.5	11.42	50.8	11.02	50.8	10.55
Special Use	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	88.9	20.11	94.0	20.39	94.0	19.52

Source: NCWRPC

Mauston had a citywide Level Of Service (LOS) of 20.39 in 2015. The LOS increased from 2010 to 2015 due to Oakridge Park's acreage increasing from 2.6 to 7.4 acres.

TABLE 5, Projected 2020, shows a decrease in LOS to 19.52 from 20.39 in 2015, assuming that population will increase and the park acreage will remain constant.

The LOS calculated in TABLE 5 is only adequate if public comment proves that more park land is not needed. School facilities were also included as part of Mauston's Level Of Service. The Special Use classification was not used in calculating LOS. Public comment may state that different uses are desired within specific parks, but that may not affect LOS if the land area for those new uses replaces the old uses, or if unused land within existing parks is used. Chapter 6 will show what projects are planned to improve the parks.

2. Park Service Areas

Parks must be close to where residents live for people to consider a park useful. **Map 2** illustrates how well the City of Mauston's parks (and school playgrounds) serve the various areas of the City.

All neighborhood parks include a playground which exists in mini parks, so neighborhood parks are identified on Map 2 with both mini park and neighborhood park service areas.

Map 2 shows:

- **Mini park service area:** ½-mile radius;
 - Any park or school with a playground fits this category.
- **Neighborhood park service area:** 1 mile radius;
 - The combined middle school and high school recreational area serves as a neighborhood park, but also serves the whole community.
- Community parks and special use parks serve all of Mauston; therefore no specific community park service area is shown on Map 2.

Results

Residential areas that are not served by mini parks:

- About 25 houses along Murphy Drive & Monroe St, on the island, are just outside of Riverside Park's service area.

Recommendation: No change, because these people will just need to walk a little farther. *If a playground was added in Murphy's Park, then this area would be served.*

- About a dozen houses along Hess and May Streets are just outside of the Lions Park service area.

Recommendation: Add a sidewalk, or multi-use path, along the east side of Division Street from Hess St north to the roundabout by Lions Park. This sidewalk/path would also provide safe pedestrian and possibly bicycle (if the path is created) access to Mile Bluff Park for everyone.

- Most of the trailer park (about 35 units) southeast of the Sherman St and Lincoln St intersection is just outside of the Oakridge Park service area.

Recommendation: Add a sidewalk, or multi-use path, along the south side of Sherman Street from Herriot Dr to Trem1 Dr. Also add a path through Oakridge Park off of the new sidewalk so handicapped kids can access the playground.

Insert Map 1 – Recreation Facilities in Mauston

Insert Map 2 – Park Service Areas in Mauston

Chapter 5

OUTDOOR RECREATION GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The development of an efficient outdoor recreation plan depends upon establishing specific recreation and open-space goals and objectives from public participation. These goals and objectives will provide general direction to the Parks, Buildings, and Grounds Department for outdoor recreation purposes over the next 5 years.

Goal 1 – Provide ongoing maintenance and new facilities.

Objectives

1. Possibly refurbish one park at a time by inviting neighborhood members to volunteer on a working weekend to help spruce it up.
2. Continue upgrading facilities to reasonably accommodate the elderly and disabled.
3. Establish an annual funding mechanism for future maintenance of the parks and provide the Park Board with necessary oversight.
4. Determine how to satisfy Mauston resident's strong desire for outdoor aquatic facilities.
5. Provide a dog park.
6. Upgrade existing features in each park; starting with the playgrounds.
7. Expand Riverside Park as properties become available.

Goal 2 – Improve aquatic recreation access within the City.

Objective

1. Determine how to improve Decorah Lake for recreation through creation of a lake management plan.
2. Increase canoe and kayak access.

Goal 3 – Become a more walkable and bicycle friendly community.

Objectives

1. Improve major road crossings where too many conflicts occur.
2. Consider adding off-street paths as a scenic way to access major destinations.
3. Review all main streets for their ability to accommodate bikes.
4. Consider requiring bike parking at all destinations; including at city parks.
5. Connect Mauston to Elroy by off-road path.

Goal 4 – Strengthen existing partnerships and establish new community partnerships to improve park access and recreation.

Objectives

1. Establish a friends of the parks organization.
2. Work with Juneau County and surrounding communities to establish a countywide trail system.
3. Coordinate with the Mauston School District and improve sharing and maintenance of recreational facilities.

Chapter 6

RECOMMENDATIONS & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendations and Capital Improvements are strategies for satisfying issues identified. Although it is unlikely that all recommendations presented in this plan will be undertaken in the next five years, they should be recognized as causes for action if the opportunity or need arises.

A. RECOMMENDATIONS

Solving Park Service Area Deficiencies

Parks must be close to where residents live for people to consider a park useful. Map 2 illustrates how well the City of Mauston's parks serve the various areas of the city. Several residential areas of Mauston are not served by parks with playgrounds (mini parks) because they are farther than ½ mile away from the nearest playground. See more analysis under **Park Service Areas** on page 19.

Recommendation: Consider making the recommended changes on page 19 under the "Results" heading.

Bicycle Friendly Parking

Installing bike racks in each park would provide secure parking for residents and visitors. A set of bicycle parking recommendations from the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP) is included in **Attachment E**. The amount of space needed for a bike rack, and how to determine good bike rack designs are included in those guidelines.

Recommendations:

1. Use the *Bike Parking Guidelines* in Attachment E when purchasing a bike rack that complies with national standards.
2. Consider installing bicycle friendly parking (Attachment E) in all parks.
 - a. Install bike parking by each parking lot.
 - b. Install bike parking by ball diamonds where parking lots don't exist.

Decorah Lake Plan

A majority of residents who responded to the outdoor recreation survey, want Decorah Lake dredged. Many benefits will come from a cleaned up lake, but the City may not need to resort to dredging. A comprehensive lake management plan will determine what actions to take to clean up the lake.

This recommendation is to create a Comprehensive Lake Management Plan for Decorah Lake.

Expand Riverside Park

Survey respondents use Riverside Park and Riverside Trail by far more than any other park (149 points), with Lions Park the next most used park (90 points), and most other parks coming in with 30-40 points.

Recommendations:

1. Buy land from willing sellers to expand the park.
2. Expand the amount of programming within this park.
 - a. Some survey comments mentioned a summer Monday night concert series that would bring people to downtown and the park.
 - b. Public or for-profit groups could rent the park for outdoor classroom space (e.g. yoga, golf, or band classes under the band shell)

Refresh Parks Through Volunteerism

Mauston residents love their parks. They said so on the online ORP survey. Some parks could use a fresh coat of paint along with other minor maintenance jobs.

This recommendation is to organize individual park renewal days. The Park Commission decides what tasks they want accomplished in each park and then authorizes a clean up budget. Part of that budget could be a “thank you” lunch for volunteers.

Officially Map Park Expansions

The county fairground at Veterans Memorial Park looks like the facilities are cramped due to land constraints and the inclusion of softball fields.

This recommendation is to **officially map** [Wis. Stats 62.23(6)] where Veterans Memorial Park and possibly where the school district could expand. Currently the land is agricultural land. Officially mapping this land for future parks restricts development on it while the City and school district wait for the land to become available or when the land is needed for park expansion.

Continue Supporting Veterans Memorial Park’s Phasing Plan

Events/festivals/fairs was a high online ORP survey result (73%), and camping was also strongly supported. A Phasing Plan has been created to show where improvements could occur in JC-AIRS Veterans Memorial Park. One planned improvement is a camping (tent & RV) area with bath house and dump station. Most of the other improvements will strengthen the viability of the county fair for decades into the future.

Recommendations:

1. Continue supporting the growth and re-development of Veterans Memorial Park, see **Attachment F** for the *Phasing Plan* map.
2. Create a bike & pedestrian path through Veterans Memorial Park that connects Mile Bluff Park with the high school.

Increase Sidewalk Connections in Mauston

Sidewalks exist throughout Mauston, but some connections are missing.

Examples: - Neither sidewalk on Grove St crosses the railroad tracks.
- The trailer park at Attewell St and Martin St does not have sidewalk access to Marchowski Park. Sidewalk missing from trailer park to about Highview Street.

Recommendation: Review citywide where sidewalks are missing and to prioritize installing those missing sidewalks.

B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2017-2021

Capital improvements to parks are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Routine maintenance is considered the normal cycle of repair and upkeep for existing facilities and is traditionally funded through the Park and Recreation Department's operations budget. For example, upgrading an outdoor restroom facility for universal access would qualify as a capital improvement, while repainting an outdoor restroom is considered routine maintenance.

Projects listed below are subject to receiving City budgetary approval, or private group fundraising. All listed projects may not be completed. Short term and permanent fixes to make each park ADA accessible are identified among other improvements listed below with **high priorities** noted after the high priority identified items:

Create a new dog park. (**High priority**)

Construct a new splash pad. (**High priority**)

Install new playground in Jones Park (**High priority**)

Install sledding hill lighting and picnic shelter.

Lions Park

- Install new play equipment.

Riverside Park

- Upgrade basketball hoop to a full basketball court.

Mile Bluff Park

- Improve trails.

Veterans Memorial Park

- Create campground.

Develop Attewell Pond trails.

Build Maughs Creek trail.

Chapter 7

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

There are a variety of strategies available for implementing this plan. These strategies include using land use tools and government programs to realize attainment of this plan's goals and objectives.

Public Access to Waterways

State regulations for subdivisions require dedication of public access when the land along waterways is platted.

LAKE AND STREAM SHORE PLATS [236.16(3) WISCONSIN STATUTES]

- (a) All subdivisions abutting on a navigable lake or stream shall provide public access at least 60 feet wide providing access to the low watermark so that there will be public access, which is connected to existing public roads, at not more than one-half mile intervals as measured along the lake or stream shore except where greater intervals and wider access is agreed upon by the department of natural resources, and excluding shore areas where public parks or open-space streets or roads on either side of a stream are provided.

NR 1.93 Access in platted subdivisions. Under s.236.16 (3), Wis. Stats., the DNR has authority to recommend wider access at less frequent intervals than are prescribed in the statutes. The DNR shall consider waiver of the 60-foot access requirement only where the DNR determines:

- (1) It will be advantageous to public interests in navigable water;
- (2) Adequate space for access users and adequate buffering for private property is assured by access wider than 60 feet where possible; and
- (3) The access that would result provides an equal or greater opportunity for public access than would be provided by dedication at statutorily prescribed intervals and the 60-foot width.

Park Dedication

Subdivision regulations can be used to require residential land subdividers to dedicate a portion of subdivided land for permanent park and open space use. Neighborhood parks may be acquired in this manner in newly developing residential areas. Local landowners should also be encouraged to dedicate land to their communities for recreational uses. Numerous small town memorial parks have been acquired through the generosity of local citizens. If citizens are made aware of community needs, this form of private action may continue to enrich the public resources of some communities.

Conservation Subdivisions

Conservation subdivisions are characterized by common open space and clustered compact lots. A variety of housing types or the same type of housing may be allowed. The purpose of a conservation subdivision is to protect farmland or natural resource open spaces while allowing for the maximum number of residences under current community zoning and subdivision regulations. In some cases a greater density

(density bonus) may be offered in the local ordinance to encourage this approach. Generally, this tool is used for parcels 40 acres and larger, or where the community maps natural resource corridors or natural features that they want to preserve. A conservation subdivision maintains the same level of overall density as a conventional subdivision, but individual lot sizes are smaller, and the community receives open space.

Use of Easements

Open space and public recreation use of private land may be acquired by easement. With an easement, certain rights are granted to the public for a specific period of time and the private owner is compensated for that public use. In purchasing an easement, the public body acquires a right either to use the land in a specific manner or to restrict the use to which an owner may put their land. For example, the rights to establish public hiking or fishing access to a waterway may be purchased through an easement.

Leases

Leases may be used as measures to use or protect land until more permanent measures may be found. By leasing parcels of land, the land remains on the community's tax rolls and can be renegotiated or non-renewed by the property owner if the monetary prospects for another use proves overpowering.

Another leasing method involves outright purchase of land by the community. The community then leases the land to a private party or organization with use restrictions placed on the land. Under this method, the community receives some monetary return on its investment and retains control over the use of the land.

Program Costs

A community should carefully watch operations and maintenance costs when setting up a parks program. A too ambitious acquisition and/or development program can easily lead to annual costs larger than the community can afford to meet. Recreation facilities like golf courses and swimming pools, for example, require large annual maintenance investments to continue.

Capital Improvements

Community officials should develop five year capital improvements programs for recreation that reflect implementation of proposals made in their plans and the priorities they place on them. To be functional, the program must be flexible and be subjected to annual review.

In developing a recreation program, care should be taken that the annual cost of maintenance does not exceed an amount the community can afford to pay. Too often, an ambitious program can lose community support as a result of prohibitive maintenance costs.

Monetary Aid Programs

State and federal financial and technical aid programs are designed to assist communities with meeting recreational needs. A list of these programs exists in

Attachment D.

The Stewardship Fund is a state provided comprehensive aid program for the promotion of resource conservation and outdoor recreation opportunities. It consists of several state and federal aid programs such as Local Park Aids and LAWCON, combined with new programs, such as the Urban Rivers Program. For additional information go online to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

A requirement for application to the Stewardship Fund is for the local community to have a DNR approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan. The City of Mauston Outdoor Recreation Plan is designed to meet that requirement. For additional information contact:

Community Financial Assistance
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
West Central Region office in Eau Claire, WI

Besides state and federal aid programs, there are other sources of funding such as private foundations, trust funds, and civic and recreation organizations.

Lifetime Activities

Community and school officials responsible for recreation should place greater emphasis on land areas and facilities that can support "lifetime" recreational activities. Falling into this category are activities like golf, tennis, all target sports, horseshoes, cross country skiing, skating, running, volleyball, handball, badminton, back packing, and canoeing. Many schools have programs aimed at teaching recreational activities that people can participate in for a lifetime.

Winter Activities

All communities should provide winter outdoor recreation facilities. Skating and sliding sports (sledding, tobogganing, and skiing) can generally be provided without large investments. Skating, for example, can be as involved as providing rinks for ice hockey or as simple as flooding a small area of a school playground. Likewise, merely blocking off a lightly traveled street with a suitable slope can frequently provide a sliding area.

Specialized Facilities

Encourage development of specialized facilities by the private sector. Specialized facilities such as golf clubs, intensive use ATV areas, and ski resorts can be an important adjunct to public recreational facilities. Quality and availability for public use should be emphasized.

Municipal and School District Cooperation

Promote cooperation between municipalities and school districts in meeting recreational needs. With good planning, cooperation may take the form of joint land acquisition and/or facilities development cost sharing. Increased municipal use of existing school facilities during non-school hours should also be encouraged.

Senior Citizen Involvement

Involve senior citizens in community park development and beautification, and provide recreational facilities for their use. Although senior citizens often compose a significant proportion of the total community's population, they are often neglected in

recreational planning. Benches placed near neighborhood parks and play areas and non-intensive sports facilities such as horseshoe pits located in community parks help to provide a place for the senior citizens. Small, passive use parks and gardens located near nursing and retirement homes should also be encouraged. In addition, senior citizens can provide invaluable assistance in beautifying parks and open spaces and can thereby become more involved in community group life.

Service Group Involvement

Involve organized service groups in park and recreation development, including development of competitive sports areas and neighborhood parks. Traditionally, service groups and recreation organizations, such as Lions Club, V.F.W., softball leagues, and snowmobile clubs have played an active role in the development of such facilities. Continued volunteerism of this type should be encouraged. In addition, service groups could help to meet the need for neighborhood facilities by supplementing municipal financial resources by providing organization and volunteer labor.

Community Beautification

All communities should recognize that community appearance is an important component of a recreation program. Maintained streets and sidewalks, attractive trees and shrubs, well cared for homes and commercial buildings, and neatly landscaped home lawns, public open space, and parks are principal contributors to community beautification. Such a program is most rewarding to persons engaged in passive recreation.

Adopt-A-Park Program

A program which encourages local groups to adopt-a-park or segment of trail or stream could be organized similar to the very successful *Adopt a Highway* program. The groups could volunteer their time to maintain and beautify the county's recreational system, allowing more county funds to provide major improvements.

ATTACHMENT A

Park Design and Location Criteria

From: Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) 2011-2016

ATTACHMENT B

Facility Development Standards

From: National Recreation and Park Association

ATTACHMENT C

Outdoor Recreation Online Survey Results

Compiled by: NCWRPC

ATTACHMENT D

Federal and State Outdoor Recreation Funding Programs

Compiled by: NCWRPC

ATTACHMENT E

Bike Parking Guidelines

From: Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP)
One page summary sheet.

ATTACHMENT F

Veterans Memorial Park's Phasing Plan

From: City of Mauston