



# City of Portage

## Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)

### 2026-2030



**Cover photos (L to R): Fishing at Silver Lake Park and Beach. Portage welcome sign at Pocket Park. Photos taken August 17, 2025 by Vierbicher staff.**

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# Acknowledgments

**We would like to thank the following individuals and entities for their roles in this Plan's Process!**

## City Residents

## City Staff

Toby Monogue, Park & Recreation Department Manager

## Common Council

Matt Fiene – Mayor

David Trantow – District 1 Alderperson

Shannon Dunahee – District 2 Alderperson

David Paull – District 3 Alderperson

Steven Rohrbeck – District 4 Alderperson

Tim Green – District 5 Alderperson

Kyle Bernander – District 6 Alderperson

Karyn Wetzel – District 7 Alderperson

Amy Schlinkert – District 8 Alderperson

Christopher Crawley – District 9 Alderperson

Plan Adopted by Common Council Jan 08, 2026

Portage Community School District – District Administrator Josh Sween

Ice Age Trail Alliance – Tiffany Stram (GIS Coordinator) & Kevin Thusius, Senior Director of Land Conservation

## City of Portage Parks and Recreation Board

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**RESOLUTION NO. 26-001**

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE CITY OF PORTAGE 2026-2030**

**COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (CORP)**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Portage has need for a continuing outdoor recreation planning program based on sound planning principles and long-range goals and objectives for the City's recreation development; and

**WHEREAS**, a draft of the outdoor recreation plan was prepared and thoroughly reviewed by City staff and the City of Portage Park and Recreation Board, and the necessary revisions were included in the final report; and

**WHEREAS**, the plan will serve as a guide for making future decision related to the expansion and development of needed recreation areas in the City of Portage;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Portage that it goes on record to adopt the City of Portage 2026-2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP); and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Common Council does hereby request the Department of Natural Resources to provide continued eligibility to City of Portage for participation in the various recreation cost sharing programs administered by the Department; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this Resolution shall be effective immediately upon its passage.

**ADOPTED** this 8<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026.

Matt Fiene  
Matt Fiene, Mayor

Attest:

Rebecca C Ness  
Rebecca C. Ness, WCMC, City Clerk

# Table of Contents

Content	Page Number(s)	Content	Page Number(s)
<b>Acknowledgments</b>	i	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>33-63</b>
<b>Authorizing Resolution</b>	ii	Appendix A – Community Information	34-37
<b>Table of Contents</b>	iii	Appendix B – State CORP (SCORP)	38
<b>Figures</b>	iii	Appendix C – Survey Results	39
<b>Timeframe for CORP Creation</b>	iv	Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!	40-63
<b>Maps</b>	v-vii	<b>FIGURES</b>	
<b>Location Context Map</b>	v	Figure 1: City of Portage Population Pyramid	5
<b>City of Portage Parks &amp; Walkability Map</b>	Vi	Figure 2: Industry by Occupation for Residents Sixteen Years and Older	6
<b>City of Portage Park Service Areas &amp; Barriers Map</b>	vii	Figure 3: Pauquette Park – Beasley Pavilion	8
<b>Chapter 1 Executive Summary</b>	1-2	Figure 4: Parks and Recreation Areas	15
<b>Chapter 2 Introduction</b>	3-8	Figure 5: List of Recreation Areas	16
Introduction	4	Figure 6: City of Portage Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory Chart	17
Demographics	5-6	Figure 7: Playground Equipment Inventory	18
CORP Process & City of Portage Geography	7	Figure 8: Bob Mael Field	20
Former 2019 CORP Summary	8	Figure 9: Sunset Park Boat Ramp	22
<b>Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies</b>	9-13	Figure 10: Woodridge Park Opportunity for Improved Access & Best Practice in Gunderson and Pauquette Parks	23
Implementation Matrix	11-13	Figure 11: Portage Parks & Recreation Fun	26
<b>Chapter 4 Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory</b>	14-27		
Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory	15-18		
NRPA Classifications	19		
School District's Amenities	20		
Current Conditions	21-22		
Accessibility for All	23		
Accessibility to Amenities	24		
How does City of Portage Compare?	25		
Programming & Opportunities	26		
Coordination with other Plans & Other Entities	27		
<b>Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment</b>	28-30		
Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment	29-30		
<b>Chapter 6 Looking Forward</b>	31-32		

# Timeline for CORP Creation

EXHIBIT A – Timeline for City of Portage CORP Update

CITY OF PORTAGE, COLUMBIA COUNTY, WI COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (CORP) UPDATE Anticipated Summary of Activities and Timetable (Subject to Revisions)		
Action	Party Responsible	Date Range
1. <b>Common Council Meeting #1:</b> Selection of Consultant, Authorization to proceed with plan update.	Common Council	June 26, 2025
2. <b>Internal Kick-Off Meeting</b>	Vierbicher	June 30, 2025
3. <b>Parks &amp; Recreation Board Meeting #1:</b> Project Kickoff: Agree upon objectives, activities, data sources, timeline, responsibilities, and deliverables. What has been completed since the last Plan was created? Consultant documents the City's suggestions for edits.	Parks & Recreation Board / Vierbicher	July 14, 2025
4. Staff/Vierbicher communication	City Staff/ Vierbicher	Throughout Process
5. Post / send out Public Survey – Open for ~four (4) weeks	Vierbicher	August 1 – August 31, 2025
6. Tabulate Survey information	Vierbicher	September 2-9, 2025
7. <b>Parks &amp; Recreation Board Meeting #2:</b> In-depth discussion on survey results and wants/needs for parks	Parks & Recreation Board / Vierbicher	October 27, 2025
8. Prepare the Plan document based on input and update any necessary data or maps.	Vierbicher	September – October 2025
9. Draft Version 1 of Plan sent to City for Parks & Recreation Board Packets	Vierbicher	NLT Nov 3, 2025
10. <b>Parks &amp; Recreation Board Meeting #3</b> Review Draft Version 1 of the Plan, suggest edits	Parks & Recreation Board / Vierbicher	November 10, 2025
11. Draft Version 2 of Plan sent to City for Parks & Recreation Board Packets	Vierbicher	NLT December 1, 2025
12. Public notice (Class 1) sent to eligible newspaper	City Clerk	NLT December 1, 2025
13. <b>Parks &amp; Recreation Board Meeting #4</b> Review Draft Version 2 of the Plan, suggest edits (if any); potential recommendation to Common Council	Parks & Recreation Board / Vierbicher	December 2025

EXHIBIT A – Timeline for City of Portage CORP Update

14. Public notice published in eligible newspaper (required 30 days before hearing) – and Draft Plan available for viewing on website and at City Hall.	Newspaper	NLT December 8, 2025 (thirty days before January 8, 2026)
15. <b>Common Council Meeting #2 – Potential Adoption:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Hearing</li> <li>Potential approval of Plan (by Resolution)</li> </ul>	Common Council / Vierbicher	January 8, 2026 (regular Common Council Mtg.)
16. Copy of adopted CORP sent to DNR	Vierbicher / City Staff	January 9, 2026

**Common Council** meets 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month @ 6:00 PM in City Hall

**Parks and Recreation Board** meets on Mondays in City Hall

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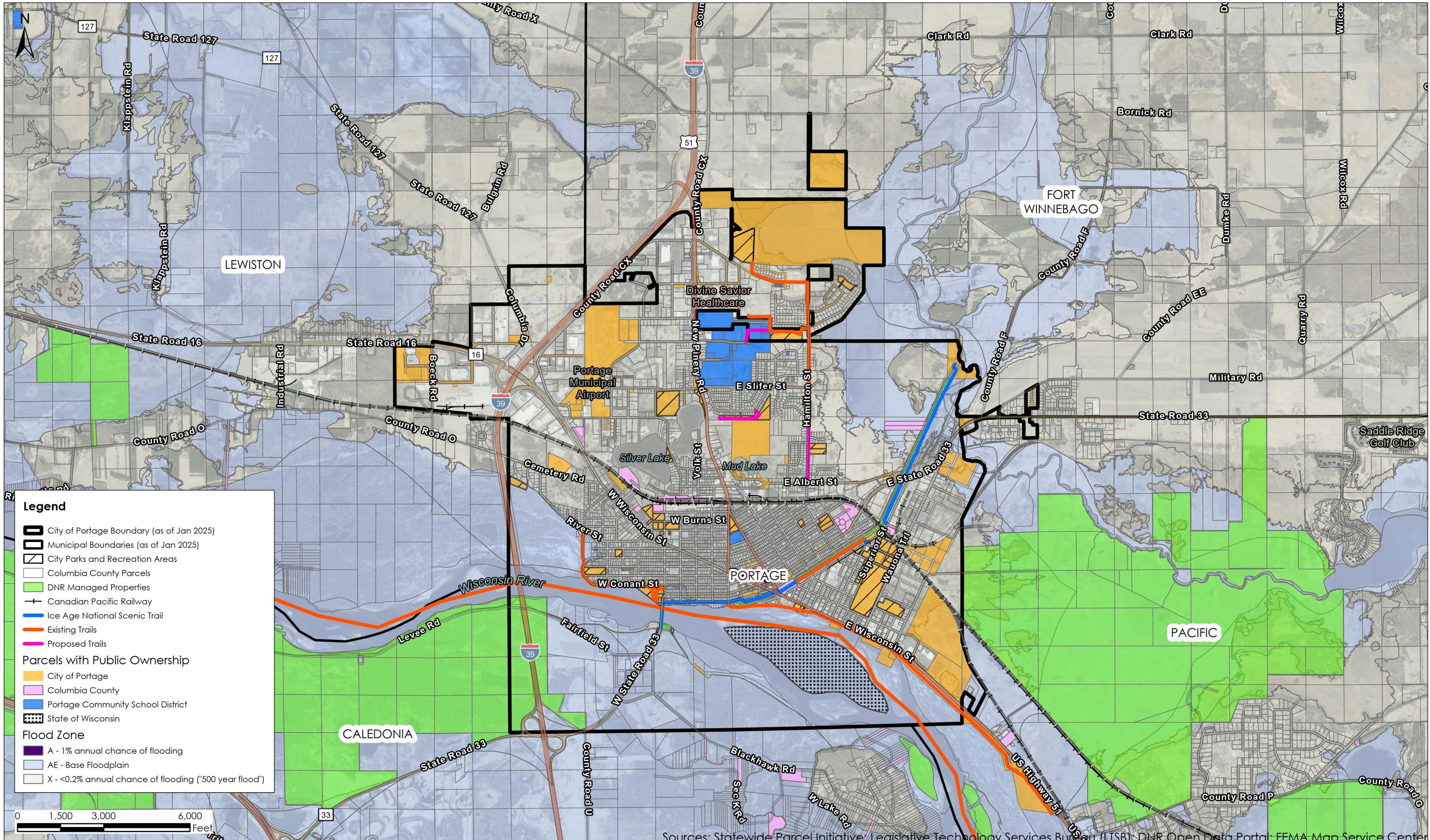
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Source: Vierbicher staff.



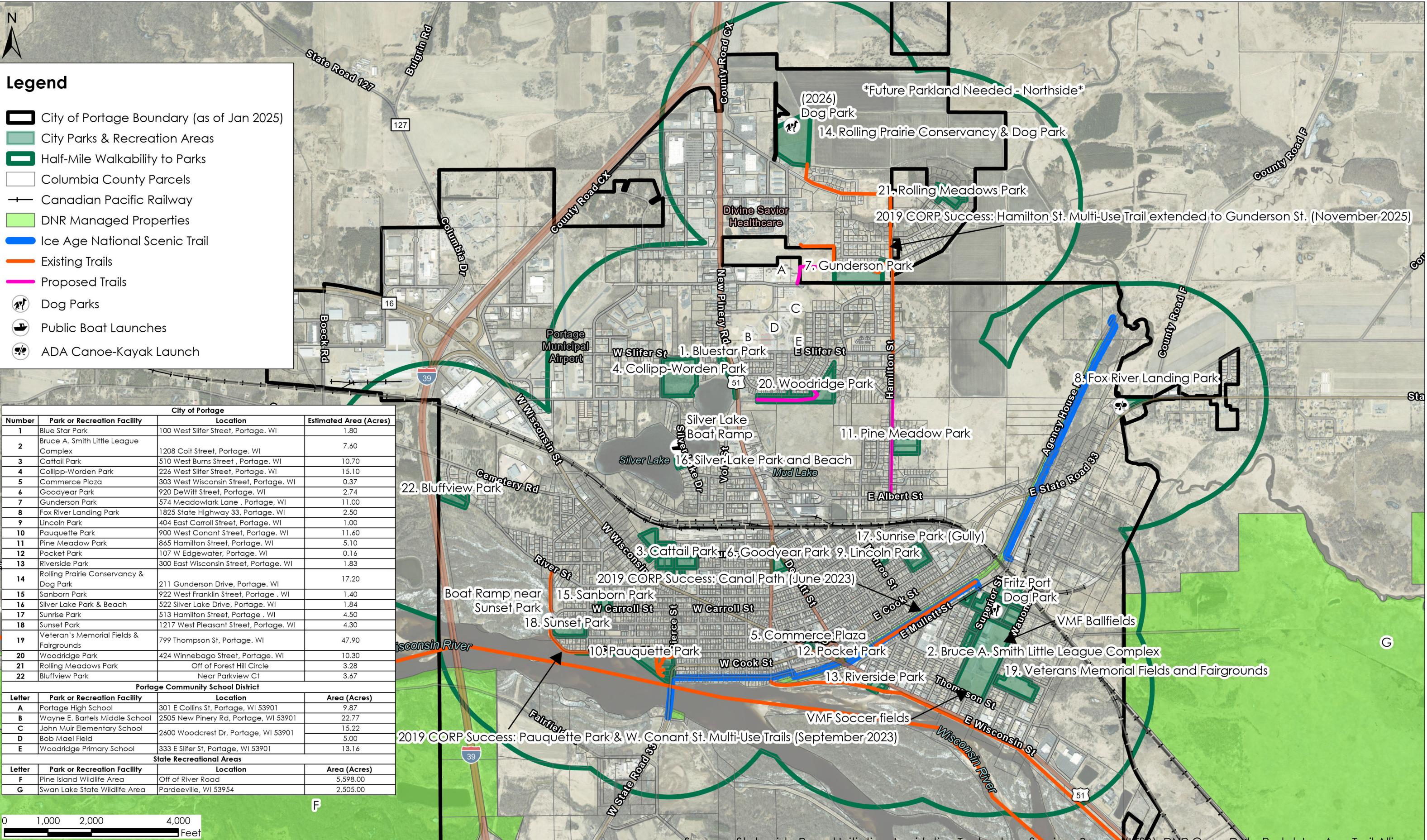
## Location Context Map

City of Portage, Columbia County, WI

11/23/2025

**vierbicher**  
planners | engineers | advisors

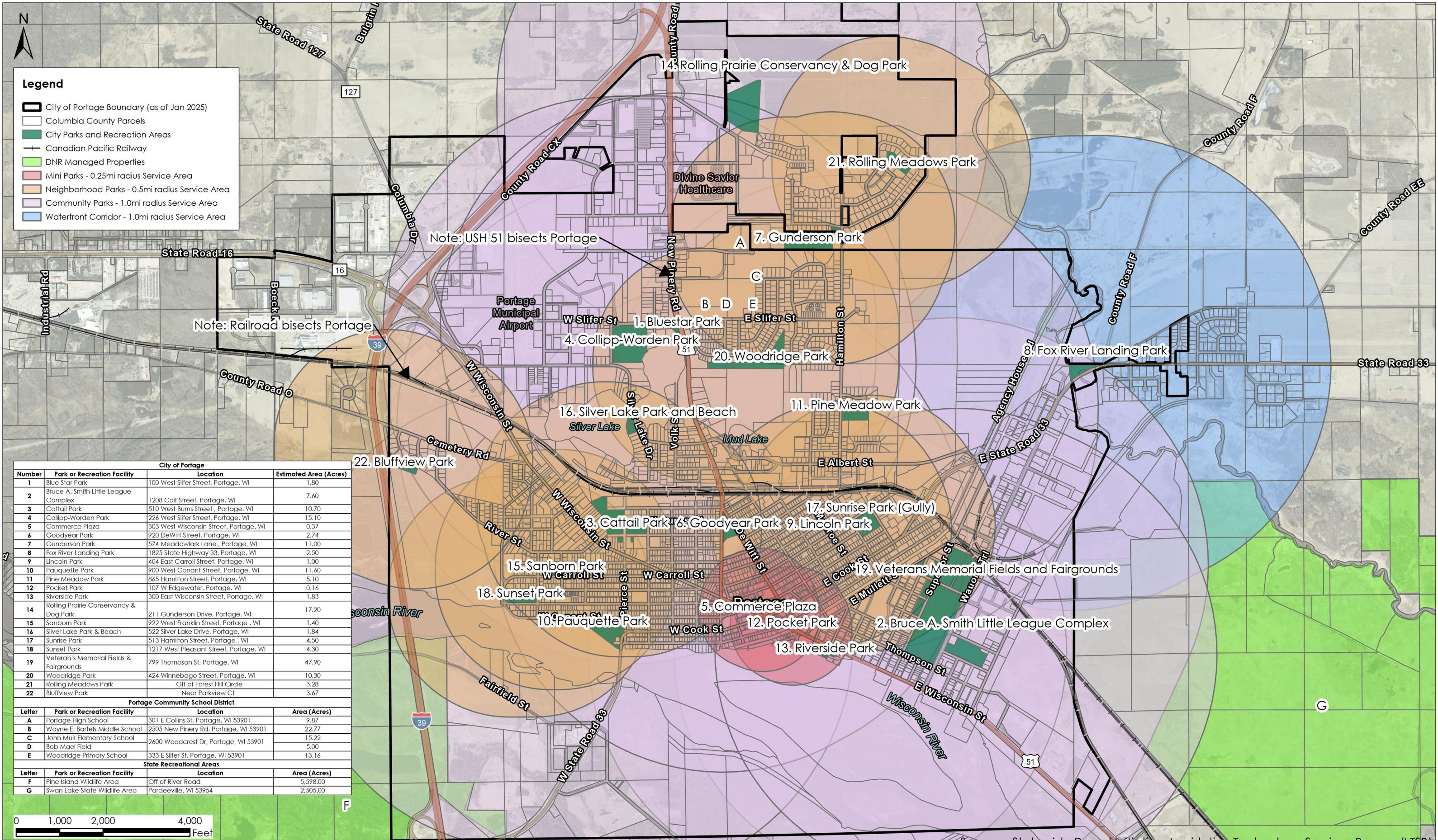




## City of Portage Parks & Walkability Map

City of Portage, Columbia County, WI

01/09/2026



## City of Portage Park Service Areas and Barriers Map

City of Portage, Columbia County, WI

01/09/2026



# Chapter 1 Executive Summary

Photo: Pauquette Park. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Executive Summary

This 2026-2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the City of Portage intends to guide the prioritization of park and recreation facility maintenance, upgrades, and improvements through 2030 and beyond.

This effort is the result of leadership between the Park and Recreation Board plus City of Portage Park and Recreation Department staff, as well as resident insights within the August 2025 community survey.

The following represents a brief overview of this Plan, and the path it wishes to chart forward for the City of Portage.

**Chapter 2 Introduction** covers demographics, the CORP Process, City Geography, and a brief overview of the preceding 2019 CORP. The Wisconsin Department of Administration ([DOA](#)) estimates the City of Portage has 10,036 residents in 2024, while the [2020 U.S. Census](#) estimated 10,581 people live in the City of Portage. Located near the confluence of the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers, from which the city receives its name, the city has twenty-two (22) parks and recreation facilities which have seen continuous maintenance and upgrades over time.

**Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies** charts a path forward through the next several years. This chapter is informed by the parks inventory conducted in **Chapter 4**, and the parks assessment in **Chapter 5** reflecting Park and Recreation Board, City of Portage Park and Recreation Department staff, and resident insights. At the same time, this chapter realizes that so many efforts cannot be accomplished alone, so the **City of Portage welcomes government, business, and nonprofits across all scales and levels to assist in producing great park spaces and health outcomes for city residents and visitors alike.**

**Chapter 4 Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory** reports on the August 2025 walking inventory of park facilities. By reporting on current conditions, school district facilities, accessibility and proximity, programming, coordination, and the City compared to peer communities, strengths and deficiencies in parks and recreational facilities were determined. The city has fewer residents per park and fewer full-time employees than comparable communities.

**It is estimated that 44 percent of the City is within a quarter-mile of a park, and 74.7 percent of the City is within a half-mile of a park. Please view the maps for more information.**

**Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment** compiles a high-level overview of Park and Recreation Board, City of Portage Park and Recreation Department staff, and resident insights on the state of existing park and recreational facilities and desired improvements for the future. **One of the most prominent talking points was maintenance – adequately maintaining existing service levels / facility quality ensures long(er) equipment lifespan, which then makes it more palatable to discuss desired additional amenities or recreation facilities.** Other topics ranged from funding to the duration of facility planning to accessibility and connectivity across the whole city with improved trails and sidewalks.

**Chapter 6 Looking Forward** emphasizes the importance of following this Plan, while planning for amendments based on favorable funding or shifting strategies in the future.

The **Appendices** contain community information, a brief outline of the 2025-2030 State CORP (SCORP), an overview of the August 2025 community survey results, and a “Meet Our Parks!” section with name, amenity, aerial photos, and desired improvements reported by park facility.

# Chapter 2 Introduction

Photo: Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Introduction

The City of Portage Wisconsin exists in Columbia County, Wisconsin along the banks of the Wisconsin River surrounded by the Towns of Lewiston, Fort Winnebago, Pacific, and Caledonia, respectively. To serve its estimated 10,581 residents per the [2020 U.S. Census](#), the City of Portage Parks and Recreation Department oversees twenty (20) developed parks and conservancy areas with passive and active uses in addition to two (2) undeveloped park properties (Rolling Meadows Park & Bluffview Park). The facilities offer a wide variety of recreational opportunities to residents, guests, and folks visiting from elsewhere.

The parks system reflects community pride while preserving scenic and natural areas. Given the vital roles recreational spaces play in a community, the City of Portage pursues proper park planning to meet residents' recreational needs and desires while providing beautiful natural areas. To accomplish this, understanding trends in the community's social and physical characteristics plus existing conditions compared to facility standards is essential.

This document is the 2026-2030 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the City of Portage, Columbia County, Wisconsin.

This introduction:

- Covers social and physical characteristics of the City,
- Summarizes the preceding CORP's successes and dreams yet to be realized, and
- Outlines how this Plan was prepared

**Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies** contains the "Implementation Matrix," which recommends projects that fulfill residents' needs while outlining budget, timeframes, and potential partners in addition to "Capital Expenditure," reporting the potential budgeting implications. These attributes were informed by **Chapter 4 Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory** evaluating current and planned facilities, and **Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment** reporting the needs and desires of residents and staff for certain facilities. This Plan concludes with **Chapter 6 Looking Forward** clarifying how Plan edits might be incorporated and noting how the city wishes to move into the future. Expanded information on the community, such as demographics, may be viewed within the **Appendices**.

# City of Portage - Demographics

The Wisconsin Department of Administration ([DOA](#)) estimates the City of Portage has 10,036 residents in 2024, while the [2020 U.S. Census](#) estimated 10,581 people live in the City of Portage, a 2.43 percent population increase from the 2010 U.S. Census count of 10,324. For comparison, Columbia County had an estimated 2024 population of 58,360, with a 2.83 percent population growth during the 2010-2020 timeframe from 56,833 to 58,490 residents ([Appendix A](#)).

Ninety-five percent of city residents are one race, with 'White' (85.2 percent of City pop.) and 'Black or African American alone' (5.55 percent of City pop.) being the largest cohorts, while five (5) percent of City residents were two or more races. The [Portage Community School District](#) has a 2025-2026 enrollment of 1,914 students from Kindergarten to 12<sup>th</sup> grade ([Appendix A](#)). Total population growth, or growth within certain age cohorts, necessitates sufficient recreation space for the number of residents plus the amenities that serve certain age groups.

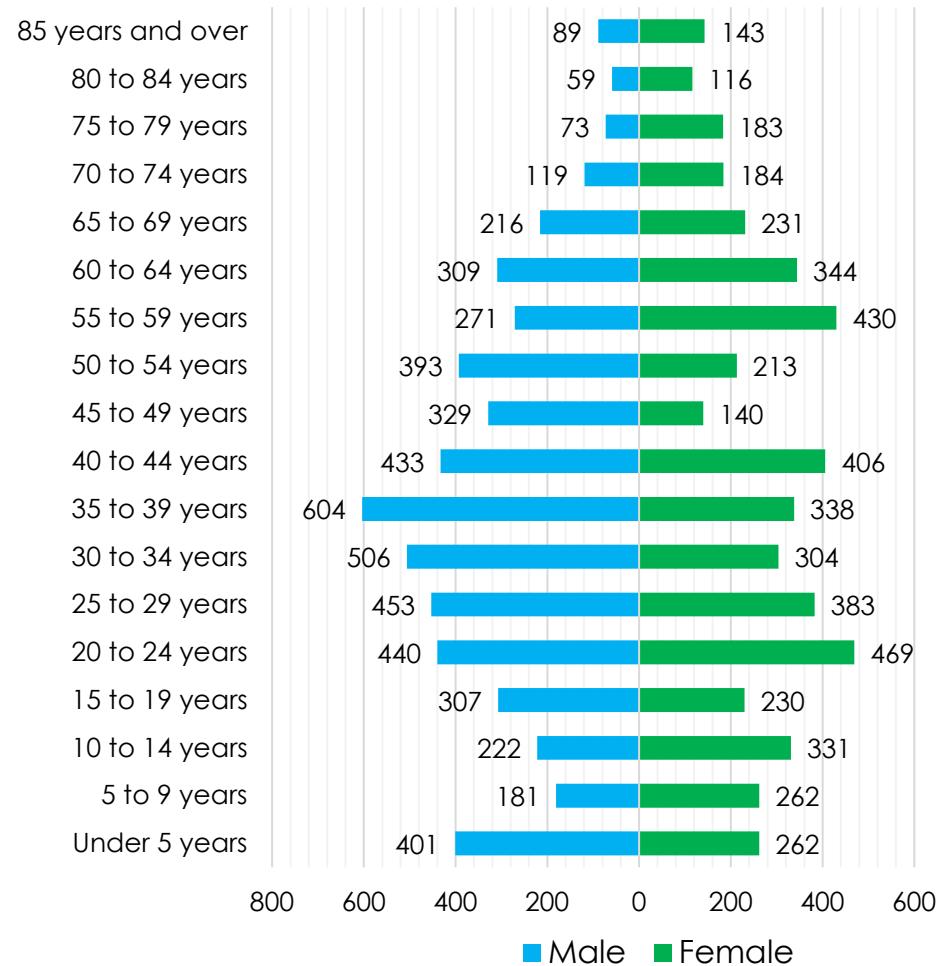
To determine population trends, U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates were used ([Appendix A](#)). The City of Portage has a median age of 36.8 years old per the [2023 ACS](#).

Cohort needs change and influence park infrastructure and decision-making through time, and an aging population has implications for provisioning park facilities and their amenities, among other things. For example, the City's 35- to 39-year-old population cohort (the City's largest population group) represents 942 residents, while the 45-to-49-year-old cohort represents 469 residents in 2023 (**Figure 1**). As the 35- to 39-year-old population cohort ages ten years, the cohort will be nearly twice the size of the current 45-to-49-year-old age cohort currently in the City. As a result, recreation spaces and programming may need to adapt to welcome people of all ages and physical abilities. Workout equipment in parks plus adequate benches or provisioning restrooms are infrastructure examples, while an adult yoga class is a programming example of adapting to population trends.

In a similar vein, the current 5- to 9-year-old cohort has an estimated 443 residents in 2023, and the current under-5-years-old cohort has an estimated 663 residents, nearly fifty (50) percent larger. This means youth sports over the next 5-10 years may have a 50 percent larger resident pool to support with activities such as youth baseball/softball.

This may also represent a cautionary tale about changing park infrastructure to support an age group with many people, which may be followed by cohorts whose sizes do not use expanded facilities to their maximum potential.

**Figure 1: City of Portage Population Pyramid**



Source: "[S0101 Age and Sex](#)." 2023 5-yr ACS. Accessed July 11, 2025 by Vierbicher staff

# City of Portage - Demographics

## Population Projections:

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) tracks population trends and periodically issues updated projections. The following are a couple key facts:

- DOA estimates in 2013 noted a 2010 Census population count of 10,324, growing to 11,680 in 2040 (13.1 percent increase from 2010).
- DOA estimates in 2024 noted a 2020 Census population count of 10,581, shrinking to 5,845 in 2050 (44.7 percent decrease from 2020).
- As of November 13, 2025, the Rolling Prairie subdivision has an estimated 64 residential lots available. Additionally, 100+ multifamily units are in the planning pipeline. With an average city household size of 2.24, this could be 368 new residents.

## Employment Fast Facts from the American Community Survey (2023 ACS):

- The City of Portage has an estimated 8,685 residents aged sixteen (16) or older: 5,353 residents are in the labor force, while 3,332 residents are not in the labor force.
- The unemployment rate is an estimated 5.3 percent
- The City's employment rate is around 61.6 percent.
- Median household income is \$62,785.
- An estimated 17.7 percent of city residents possess a bachelor's degree or higher education.

## Notable local employers:

- Cardinal Glass Industries, Inc.
- Portage Plastic
- AMPI
- Saint Gobain
- City of Portage
- Portage Community School District

- Dawn Foods
- Walmart
- Columbia County
- Columbia Correctional Institution (CCI)
- Kruger Family Industries

**Figure 2: Industry by Occupation for Residents Sixteen Years and Older**

Employment Category	Quantity
<b>Civilian employed population 16 years and over</b>	<b>5071</b>
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	0
Construction	205
Manufacturing	1020
Wholesale trade	112
Retail trade	720
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	204
Information	62
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	249
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	425
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	1087
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	424
Other services, except public administration	302
Public administration	261

Source: "[S2405 Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Older](#)." 2023 5-yr ACS. Accessed October 31, 2025 by Vierbicher staff

# CORP Process & City of Portage Geography

## Planning Process

Recreational facilities planning is essential to a community's health, happiness, desirability, and pride. The City of Portage collaborated with Vierbicher to complete this CORP update, working alongside Park and Recreation Director Toby Mongue plus the Park and Recreation Board (chair Chuck Sulik) to gather citizen feedback on future priorities for the next five years for the City of Portage.

The process involved one (1) kick-off meeting, one (1) virtual staff meeting, four (1) Park and Recreation Board Meetings, one (1) public hearing held prior to plan adoption, and one (1) Common Council meeting for approval ([Appendix A](#)).

A Maptionnaire-hosted online survey in August 2025 was used to gather resident feedback and prioritize future action. The survey had 637 visitors, with 245 submitting a complete survey, 256 partially completing the survey, and 136 entering the survey, but not answering any questions. Data collection used the U.S. Census Bureau, residents' survey responses, discussions with City staff, and discussions with the Park and Recreation Board.

This CORP was developed following the [Guidelines for Development of Local Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans](#) created by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

## Amending the Plan

The Park and Recreation Board does not need to wait five years before amending the CORP. Plan amendments are common and prolong the effectiveness of the original plan. As such, amendments should be considered part of the planning process, following the same process as when the original plan was prepared. There should be opportunity for public input in the planning process with a full and open discussion of the need for the amendment by the Park and Recreation Board, a draft amendment that is reviewed and acted on by the Park and Recreation Board at an official public meeting, a referral to the Common Council, a public hearing held by the Park and Recreation Board or Common Council and finally, the adoption of the plan amendment by the Common Council.

## Geography

The City of Portage experiences a Warm Summer Continental Climate per the Köppen Climate Classification with hot, humid summers and cold winters ([Appendix A](#)).

The City of Portage lies east of the Baraboo Range, whose extents mark some of the farthest glaciation during the last Ice Age. Going further southwest, one enters the Driftless Area, which did not experience glaciation during the Last Ice Age.

Silver Lake, Mud Lake, and the Wisconsin River are the most prominent water bodies within or near the City of Portage. The Wisconsin River flows south through the Prairie du Sac dam before flowing west to the Mississippi River. Additional recreation lands within the City of Portage include Portage Community School District property and the Ice Age Trail.

Several City facilities, such as the Silver Lake Beach & Park, Sunset Park, Riverside Park and two (2) boat launches enjoy water access. This affords Portage residents ample access to water and its recreational opportunities. At the same time, it represents a challenge to park maintenance and planning. Given the future potential for higher variance weather events, current and future recreational areas or facilities near water must balance accessibility with maintenance and survivability.

Please view the [Location Context Map](#), or visit partner organizations such as the [Ice Age Trail Alliance](#) for more information.

# Former 2019 CORP Summary

The 2019 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) adopted July 25, 2019 served as a guide for park planning and maintenance in addition to outlining future paths forward for amenities.

## Accomplishments

Several objectives or recommendations in the former CORP were partially or wholly fulfilled. For example, the objective “*Maintain and improve Pauquette Park*” was fulfilled through renovations including the construction of the Beasley Pavilion (**Figure 3**) and wayfinding signage improvements along Conant St. The Capital Improvements Program has been routinely updated to reflect expected park and recreation needs. Finally, several connectivity improvements have been realized:

- New segment of Canal multi-use path from Thompson St. to Morgan St. (completed June 2023).
- New multi-use trail through Pauquette Park to connect W. Conant St. multi-use trail to existing Ice Age Trail and new multi-use Beasley Pavilion (completed September 2023).
- Multi-use path on Hamilton St. extended to Gunderson St., including the Rolling Prairie Conservancy & Dog Park (completed November 2025).

## Opportunities Yet to be Fulfilled

City staff, the Park and Recreation Board, and volunteers have done a great job maintaining and updating existing recreation facilities while also bringing new public lands under their management. Of course, it is impossible to do everything, and so some objectives and policies from the former CORP plan were not completed due to time and/or monetary constraints. It is the intention that these important progress markers are not cast aside; their brief reference here is done to help inform the goals, objectives, and action items for this new CORP.

There is still opportunity for signage and wayfinding improvements to assist folks with getting to certain recreation areas. Similarly, resident and visitors' ability to safely access City recreation areas as pedestrians and bicyclists can be improved with construction of new on or off-street walking and biking facilities. Future Master Planning for the Columbia County Fairgrounds is also needed.

The parks have seen updates, such as new equipment and plantings, through time. As equipment reaches end-of-life or becomes unsafe, the City aims to provide new equipment while improving accessibility for all ages and abilities. One improvement the City wishes over the next five (5) years and beyond is one park receiving new playground equipment every other year until all existing playgrounds have been replaced.

**Figure 3: Pauquette Park – Beasley Pavilion**



Source: Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# **Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies**

Photo: Maass Field at Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The Implementation Matrix is a table summarizing the recommended goals, objectives, and policies (action items) that the City of Portage has established to guide the implementation of the 2026 - 2030 City of Portage Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP). As a quick aside, the following definitions for goals, objectives, and policies are used here:

**Goals** – Something to strive for. They are idealized, meaning the goal itself may or not be *physically* possible.

**Objectives** – *How* a goal will be fulfilled.

**Policies (Action Items)** – *What* will be done to ensure objectives fulfill their corresponding goals.

The Implementation Matrix is a tool for decision-making and for monitoring progress, as implementation occurs over the next 5 years and beyond, by providing the following information on the potential locations, prioritization, anticipated costs, and funding sources necessary to accomplish each action:

**Responsible Entities** – who is most likely to be responsible for seeing that the action is pursued, and assist, oversee, or advise during implementation

**Timeframe** – Short-Term (<2 years), Medium-Term (2-5 years), Long-Term (>5 years). Some actions may also be classified as “Ongoing.”

**Priority** – Higher, Medium, and Lower. These frequently correspond to the respective timeframes above (for example, higher priority → <2 years)

**Estimated Cost(s)** – 2025 estimate based on industry practice, or to be determined (TBD) once estimates and bids are assembled by City staff.

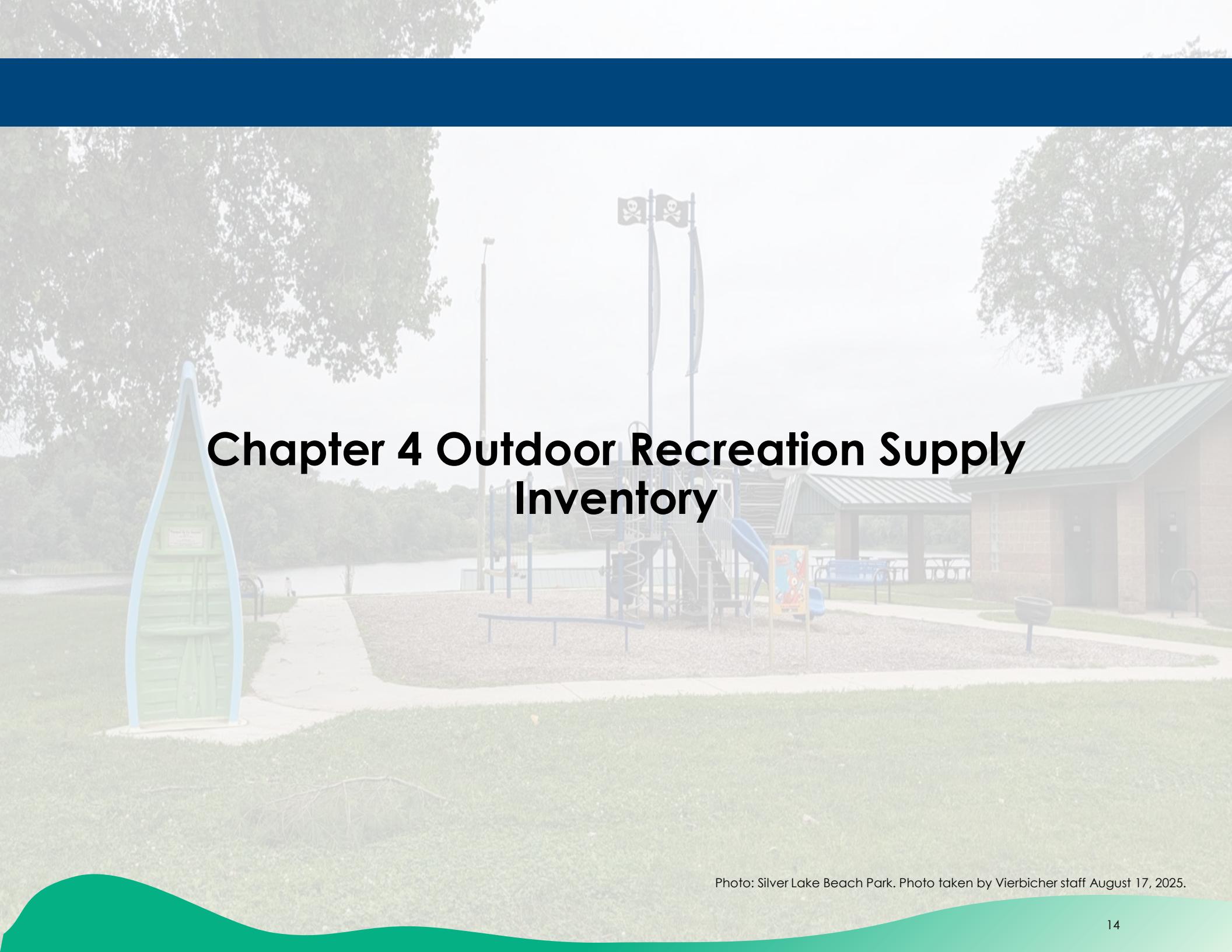
**Potential Funding Sources** – Private and/or public funds which may support the desired action(s).

The Implementation Matrix should be updated as part of the regular review of the Plan. Please view the following three (3) pages for the Implementation Matrix. To see items for a specific park as referenced in the Implementation Matrix, please read **Appendix D: Meet Our Parks!**

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX p. 1/3						
Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<b>Goal 1 - Adequately maintain existing park and recreation facilities, and their amenities, at current service levels</b>						
<b>Objective 1.1 - Procure necessary equipment for maintenance functions</b>						
Action Item 1.1.1: Budget for new weed harvester	16. Silver Lake Park & Beach	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; WDNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant
Action Item 1.1.2: Budget for one (1) Toolcat to replace one of existing two (2) Bobcat machines	All parks and recreation facilities	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
<b>Objective 1.2 - Continue existing maintenance functions</b>						
Action Item 1.2.1: Budget appropriately for staffing needs	All parks and recreation facilities	City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 1.2.2: Repair splash pad	6. Goodear Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; National Park Service (NPS)' Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)
<b>Goal 2 - Improve accessibility and connectivity to parks and recreation facilities</b>						
<b>Objective 2.1 - Expand the existing trail/path network in the City</b>						
Action Item 2.1.1: Pave existing walk path and provide lighting	7. Gunderson Park	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	NPS' LWCF; Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
Action Item 2.1.2: Once Portage High School (PHS) Aquatic Center is closer to completion, coordinate with school district to extend paved trail west from Gunderson Park towards/to PHS.	7. Gunderson Park	City; Portage Community School District	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	
Action Item 2.1.3: Extend path on west side of Hamilton Street south, from Evergreen Trail to East Albert Street.	Hamilton Street	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant
Action item 2.1.4: Consider possible future trail.	20. Woodridge Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	NPS' LWCF; RTP
<b>Objective 2.2 - Increase Pedestrian and Bicyclist safety</b>						
Action Item 2.2.1: Coordinate installation of appropriate traffic safety devices	6. Goodyear Park; 13. Riverside Park	City; WisDOT	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action item 2.2.2: Consider creating a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan with the Portage Community School District	City-wide	City; Portage Community School District; Safe Routes to School	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; SRTS; Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant
Action item 2.2.3: Curb and crosswalk to safely get to soccer complex across Thompson St.	19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget
<b>Goal 3 - Improve Signage: its consistency and usefulness in wayfinding</b>						
<b>Objective 3.1 - Complete rebranding signage</b>						
Action item 3.1.1: Replace signage which does not follow newer park standard	3. Cattail Park; 20. Woodridge Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
<b>Objective 3.2 - increase signage for wayfinding</b>						
Action Item 3.2.1: Install signage at appropriate city locations	Near major intersections; 5. Commerce Plaza	City; Chamber of Commerce	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; potentially RTP if concurrent with trail project

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX p. 2/3						
Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<b>Goal 4 - Emphasize partnerships to achieve desired CORP activities</b>						
<b>Objective 4.1 – Strengthen existing collaborations with government, business, and nonprofits</b>						
Action Item 4.1.1: Contact current/past collaborators with City Park and Recreation Department, such as DOT; DNR; Portage Community School District; Columbia County; Chamber of Commerce; State of Wisconsin; federal entities; Ice Age Trail Alliance; and any supporting entity listed in the Activity Guide	All parks and recreation facilities	City	<2 years	Higher	Minimal - Staff Time	City budget
<b>Objective 4.2 – Explore new collaborations</b>						
Action Item 4.2.1: Collaborate with Cub/Boy/Girl Scouts on simple(r) beautification and maintenance projects, such as mulching, tree-planting, installing benches, or trailbuilding	All parks and recreation facilities	City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project, for example)
<b>Goal 5 - Keep park and recreation facilities up-to-date, with amenities benefitting city residents</b>						
<b>Objective 5.1 – Update/Expand/Create new amenities at existing park and recreation facilities</b>						
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters	1. Blue Star Park; 3. Cattail Park; 6. Goodyear Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park; 15. Sanborn Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.2: Upgrade parking area (Prioritize 16. Silver Lake Beach and Park; add for 11. Pine Meadow Park)	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex; 8. Fox River Landing Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park; 16. Silver Lake Park and Beach	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.3: Re-do concession and restroom building	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex	City; Sports Clubs	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Club fundraising
Action Item 5.1.4: Update playgrounds during this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan.	6. Goodyear Park (2027); 2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex (2029);	City	Ongoing	Lower	\$80,000 apiece (2025 \$)	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds beyond this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	9. Lincoln Park (2031); 20. Woodridge Park (2033); 10. Pauquette Park (2035); 15. Sanborn Park (2037); 16. Silver Lake Park and Beach (2039); 18. Sunset Park (2041); 7. Gunderson Park (2043); 4. Collipp-Worden Park (2045); 11. Pine Meadow Park (2047)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.6: Investigate, fund, and construct one (1) all-abilities playground	TBD	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget;
Action Item 5.1.7: Remove Rockers; consider installing an Archery Range	3. Cattail Park	City; Archery Club(s)	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget;
Action Item 5.1.8: Upgrade bathroom for ADA accessibility	4. Collipp-Worden Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.9: Resurface/ paint basketball courts		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.10: Resurface tennis courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.11: Install new fencing for tennis courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.12: Install shade structure off playground		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX p. 3/3						
Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
<b>Goal 5 - Keep park and recreation facilities up-to-date, with amenities benefitting city residents (repeated)</b>						
<b>Objective 5.1 – Update/Expand/Create new amenities at existing park and recreation facilities (repeated)</b>						
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter (prioritize 13. Riverside Park)	8. Fox River Landing Park; 10. Pauquette Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park; 13. Riverside Park; 14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;
Action Item 5.1.14: Planning for future facilities in future northside development(s)	TBD	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.15: Purchase adjacent property for off-street parking	10. Pauquette Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.16: Pond shoreline restoration	10. Pauquette Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.17: Add three (3) pickleball courts	11. Pine Meadow Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); NPS' LWCF
Action Item 5.1.18: Add shade around pickleball courts	11. Pine Meadow Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project or "Memorial Tree")
Action Item 5.1.19: Plant shade trees/vegetation to lessen road noise	12. Pocket Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project or "Memorial Tree")
Action Item 5.1.20: Add bus/van parking to facilitate Charters of Freedom & Levee Path visitors.	13. Riverside Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.21: Follow Yearly Maintenance Plan.	14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park	City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.22: Add water (to dog park)	14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park; Fritz Port Dog Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.23: Install new steps & rails	16. Silver Lake Park and Beach	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.24: Replace shelter	18. Sunset Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.25: Investigate potential amenities at undeveloped park sites	21. Rolling Meadows Park; 22. Bluffview Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.26: VMF Ballfield improvements - concession-restroom facility	19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.27: VMF Ballfield improvements - Lights on Siegel Field		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.28: VMF Soccer Fields improvement - install irrigation on club fields		City; Columbia County; Soccer Clubs	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); Soccer Club donations / fees
Action Item 5.1.29: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - Replace Building #7		City; Columbia County	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); Columbia County budget
Action Item 5.1.30: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - Update electrical		City; Columbia County	2-5 years	Higher	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.31: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - repave fair boulevard		City; Columbia County	5+ years	Lower	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.32 Add cameras at the following parks: (NOTE: 4. Collipp-Worden Park; 6. Goodyear Park; 13. Riverside Park; 16. Silver Lake Beach and Park already have cameras)	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex; 5. Commerce Plaza; 10. Pauquette Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park; 18. Sunset Park; 19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds;	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)



# Chapter 4 Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory

Photo: Silver Lake Beach Park. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory

## Did You Know?

The City has twenty-two (22) parks and recreational facilities and two (2) public boat landings within the City.

This Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory section contains:

- A list of available City of Portage and Portage Community School District park and recreation locations.
- An amenities inventory for City of Portage parks and recreation facilities.
- Accessibility efforts at parks.
- A comparison between City of Portage and peer communities across the country.
- Programming and Opportunities.
- Coordination with other Plans/Entities.
- Maps are located after the Table of Contents, which include:
  - Location Context Map
  - The City of Portage Parks & Walkability Map
  - City of Portage Park Service Areas and Barriers Map

If interested in seeing more park photos and information, please read **Appendix D: Meet Our Parks!**

**Figure 4: Parks and Recreation Areas**



# Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory

There are numerous opportunities for recreation in and around the City of Portage (**Figure 5**). Residents visit City parks and recreation facilities, Portage Community School District sites, private open space, and even state recreation areas to relax and explore the outdoors.

The National Recreation and Park Association ([NRPA](#)) provides guidance on recreation facilities and amenities. The NRPA historically categorized park and recreation facilities into several categories, whose definitions may be viewed on the page XX. Though some methodology has changed, the categories remain a good comparison tool.

Parks and recreation facilities are reported in **Figure 5** to the right. Please see “How Does City of Portage Compare?” on page 25 to see how Portage compares with municipalities < 20,000 population on several key metrics!

The City has twenty-two (22) recreation locations number-coded in the **City of Portage Parks & Walkability Map**. At present, 21. Rolling Meadows Park & 22. Bluffview Park are undeveloped.

**Figure 5: List of Recreation Areas**

City of Portage			
Number	Park or Recreation Facility	Location	Estimated Area (Acres)
1	Blue Star Park	100 West Slifer Street, Portage, WI	1.80
2	Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex	1208 Coit Street, Portage, WI	7.60
3	Cattail Park	510 West Burns Street, Portage, WI	10.70
4	Collipp-Worden Park	226 West Slifer Street, Portage, WI	15.10
5	Commerce Plaza	303 West Wisconsin Street, Portage, WI	0.37
6	Goodyear Park	920 DeWitt Street, Portage, WI	2.74
7	Gunderson Park	574 Meadowlark Lane, Portage, WI	11.00
8	Fox River Landing Park	1825 State Highway 33, Portage, WI	2.50
9	Lincoln Park	404 East Carroll Street, Portage, WI	1.00
10	Pauquette Park	900 West Conant Street, Portage, WI	11.60
11	Pine Meadow Park	865 Hamilton Street, Portage, WI	5.10
12	Pocket Park	107 W Edgewater, Portage, WI	0.16
13	Riverside Park	300 East Wisconsin Street, Portage, WI	1.83
14	Rolling Prairie Conservancy & Dog Park	211 Gunderson Drive, Portage, WI	17.20
15	Sanborn Park	922 West Franklin Street, Portage, WI	1.40
16	Silver Lake Park & Beach	522 Silver Lake Drive, Portage, WI	1.84
17	Sunrise Park	513 Hamilton Street, Portage, WI	4.50
18	Sunset Park	1217 West Pleasant Street, Portage, WI	4.30
19	Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds	799 Thompson St, Portage, WI	47.90
20	Woodridge Park	424 Winnebago Street, Portage, WI	10.30
21	Rolling Meadows Park	Off of Forest Hill Circle	3.28
22	Bluffview Park	Near Parkview Ct	3.67
Portage Community School District			
Letter	Park or Recreation Facility	Location	Area (Acres)
A	Portage High School	301 E Collins St, Portage, WI 53901	9.87
B	Wayne E. Bartels Middle School	2505 New Pinery Rd, Portage, WI 53901	22.77
C	John Muir Elementary School	2600 Woodcrest Dr, Portage, WI 53901	15.22
D	Bob Mael Field		5.00
E	Woodridge Primary School	333 E Slifer St, Portage, WI 53901	13.16
State Recreational Areas			
Letter	Park or Recreation Facility	Location	Area (Acres)
F	Pine Island Wildlife Area	Off of River Road	5,598.00
G	Swan Lake State Wildlife Area	Pardeeville, WI 53954	2,505.00

## Figure 6: City of Portage Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory Chart

Number	Park or Recreation Facility	Indoor Space	Bathrooms*	Baseball/Softball Fields	Basketball Court	Fishing	Picnic Grills	Picnic Tables	Playground	Pickleball	Tennis	Shelter/Gazebo	Walking Trails	Little Free Library	Charters of Freedom	Disc Golf Course	Large Green space for play	Splashpad	Skatepark	ADA Canoe/kayak Launch	Dog Park	Horseshoe pits	Soccer Fields	Sledding Hill
1	Blue Star Park	🏠	🚻	🏏	🏀	🎣	✖️	✖️	🏠	🏸	🏸	🏠	🚶	📖	📜	🎯	✳️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	
2	Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex	🚻	🏏				✖️	✖️	🏠									✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️	✖️
3	Cattail Park											🏠						✳️						
4	Collipp-Worden Park	🚻		🏀		🔥	✖️	🏠		🏸	🏠					🎯	✳️							
5	Commerce Plaza	🚻																						
6	Goodyear Park	🚻					🔥	✖️	🏠			🏠			📖			✳️	✖️					
7	Gunderson Park								🏠				🚶					✳️						
8	Fox River Landing Park																		✳️					
9	Lincoln Park				🏀		✖️	✖️	🏠			🏠						✳️						
10	Pauquette Park	🚻		🏀	➡️		✖️	✖️	🏠			🏠												
11	Pine Meadow Park	🚻					✖️	✖️	🏠	🏸		🏠						✳️					✖️	
12	Pocket Park						✖️	✖️																
13	Riverside Park	🚻									✳️			🚶	📜									
14	Rolling Prairie Conservancy & Dog Park																				🐶			
15	Sanborn Park				🏀		➡️	✖️	🏠			🏠						✳️						
16	Silver Lake Park & Beach	🚻			➡️		✖️	✖️	🏠			🏠												
17	Sunrise Park																							✖️
18	Sunset Park	🚻					🔥	✖️	🏠			🏠										🐶	✳️	
19	Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds	🏠	🚻	🏏			✖️	✖️										✳️			🐶	✖️	✖️	
20	Woodridge Park						✖️	✖️	🏠			🏠												
21	Rolling Meadows Park																							
22	Bluffview Park																							

\*Please note bathrooms are open May through September. Commerce Plaza bathrooms are open year-round.

\*\* 13. Riverside Park only has swings, no other playground equipment is available as of Winter 2025.

## Figure 7: City of Portage Playground Equipment Inventory

The City of Portage has thirteen (13) of its twenty-two (22) parks and recreation areas equipped with playgrounds (and 13. Riverside Park has swings). The chart below details playground amenities by recreational facility.

Number	Park or Recreation Facility	Slide(s)	Swing(s)	Climbing	Benches	Digger	Spring Rider
2	Bruce A. Smith Little League	x	x	x	x		
3	Cattail Park					x	
4	Collipp-Worden Park	x	x	x	x		
5	Commerce Plaza				x		
6	Goodyear Park	x	x				
7	Gunderson Park	x	x	x	x		
9	Lincoln Park	x	x	x			
10	Pauquette Park	x	x	x	x		
11	Pine Meadow Park	x	x	x	x		x
12	Pocket Park				x		
13	Riverside Park		x				
15	Sanborn Park		x		x		
16	Silver Lake Park & Beach	x	x	x	x		
18	Sunset Park	x	x	x	x		
20	Woodridge Park	x	x		x		

# NRPA Classifications

## Play/Tot Lot

The play lot is the smallest unit of the park system in terms of size and area that it would serve and is generally considered a substitute for a backyard. The primary function of a play lot is intended to serve preschool children and usually in areas of high-density housing as well as areas with a high concentration of multiple family housing.

## Neighborhood Playground

A neighborhood playground/park is a “walk to” park serving the people of a residential area with a service radius of one-half mile. The playground often coincides with an elementary school and may often adjoin and complement the school facility if it is intended to serve the same age group. The age of the user group ranges from 6-11 years old. These parks should be placed away from busy streets and should have easy access.

## Neighborhood Park

A neighborhood park is a “walk to” park serving the people of a residential area with a service radius of approximately one-half mile. The park is to provide recreational activities for all age groups. Some things you may see at a neighborhood park are picnic tables, benches, walkways, play equipment, plaques, statues, and special plantings. The most important function of the neighborhood park is to meet the distinctive recreation needs of the neighborhood it serves. Since recreation needs vary from one neighborhood to another, depending upon age, income, and preferences of its residents, the facilities and programs of a neighborhood should not be rigidly standardized, but should be designed to meet the particular requirements of each individual neighborhood. Neighborhood parks should not be located on arterial streets in order that people using the facility can walk or ride bikes to the park more safely.

## Street Islands

Street Islands are generally located in proximity to a street intersection and separate lanes of traffic. These areas can be as large as 6,500 sq. feet and some features may include benches and plantings.

## Community Park

A community park is a facility designed to provide a combination of passive and active recreational activities for the entire community. A community park is larger and contains more facilities than a neighborhood park and may provide community playfield facilities for organized leagues and teams in which are not provided at neighborhood parks.

Community parks should be dispersed throughout the community; however, their location is highly dependent on securing a site of large enough size, which provides a variety of natural amenities and physical features. Community parks, including both land-based and water-based activities is preferable.

Community parks should be located on collector or arterial streets to provide easy access by residents of the community. In addition, since these parks attract a large number of people, they should be well buffered from adjacent residential areas.

## Special Area Facilities

Special area facilities play an important role in fulfilling the community's needs for special outdoor recreation activities. These activities are provided for the benefit of the entire community, but for various reasons have not been incorporated into the community park setting. Rather, these facilities have been designed to provide one major activity on site with secondary activities provided only if the area is of sufficient size. Although these facilities may operate separately from the other parks in the city, they are a valuable component of the entire park system.

## Waterfront Corridors

A waterfront corridor is land which abuts either a lake or a river which may or may not be part of any specific park. The width of these corridors ranges from 10 feet to over 100 feet and provide the opportunity for public access to waterways.

# School District – Recreational Amenities

In addition to City parks and recreational facilities, the Portage Community School District has several schools – **Portage High School**, **Wayne E. Bartels Middle School**, **John Muir Elementary School**, and **Woodridge Primary School** – on nearly 80 acres within City extents whose outdoor recreational amenities are outlined below:

- Bob Mael field – hosts football, track & field, and soccer
- Playgrounds, foursquare, and outside basketball courts (at John Muir Elementary and Woodridge Primary)
- Five (5) baseball/softball fields of varying sizes
- Eight (8) outdoor tennis courts.

If interested in seeing Portage Community School District land ownership within the City, please view the **Location Context Map**.

In 2024, voters passed a \$53,000,000 school district referendum which included improvements to Portage High School and Wayne E. Bartels Middle School. The funds also cover the cost of a new aquatics facility, replacing the Llewellyn Breese Memorial Pool (Rusch Pool) which closed at the conclusion of the 2023-2024 school year.

The new aquatic facility represents a potential opportunity for school district collaboration with other entities (City of Portage, club teams, nonprofits, etc.) to ensure aquatic facilities and amenities are not needlessly duplicated.

Discussion at one of the Park and Recreation Board meetings noted that city-owned and school district-owned lands abut near Gunderson Park. When the aquatic center is nearing completion, trail planning could connect areas near Gunderson Park (along Hamilton Street) to the aquatic facility on the school campus to spur resident health benefits and connectivity within Portage.

**Figure 8: Bob Mael Field**



Source: Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025

# Current Conditions

It is the City of Portage's desire to have parks and recreational facilities well maintained and kept in a good state of repair. The August 2025 walking inventory noted several potential improvements for the parks below as the parks are numbered on the **City of Portage Parks & Walkability Map**. Please note this walking inventory was not exhaustive – additional observations and desires by residents and city staff are reported in **Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment**, which informed **Chapter 3 Goals, Objectives, and Policies**.

**1. Bluestar Park** – Pavement and sidewalks, concrete or brick, were in good condition. Some cosmetic paint on the wooden shelter as well as one of the four concrete cinderblock supports on the other shelter could use some touch-up.

**2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex** – The three (3) ball fields (including Maass Field & Lenz Field) surface, dugouts, and fences were in good condition. On the wet day the walking inventory was conducted, the gravel driveways and sidewalks made mobility for an able-bodied adult male more difficult. Improvements such as lighting, paved and stripped parking lots, paved walkways, and paved pads for bleachers could improve the accessibility and desirability for tournaments, providing economic benefits. When the existing playground east of Lenz Field (closer to Wauona Trail) reaches its end-of-life, a replacement playground near concessions in the heart of the complex could be considered.

**3. Cattail Park** – The shelter and playground equipment (merry-go-round, spring riders) were in good condition. The park sign is older, thought could be given to an updated sign matching the other park facilities. This park is in an older, denser part of the city. With a considerable amount of residential nearby and its location south of the railroad tracks and east of US-51 (almost like an island) there is opportunity for more amenities at this location.

**4. Collipp-Worden Park** – The park was well-utilized during the 2025 fall inventory, with groups making use of the different shelters. Crack repairs in the basketball court as well as bathroom upgrades (referenced later) would be welcomed.

**5. Commerce Plaza** – Pavement and benches were in good shape and well-utilized. With the information stand there, there is an opportunity to lean on the centralized location and provide additional wayfinding signage and fun facts for residents and visitors alike.

**6. Goodyear Park** – Pavement and benches were in good shape. Given the park is an island sandwiched between two (2) one-way streets, ensuring accessibility and connectivity in a safe manner is crucial. Additionally, when the current playground reaches end-of-life, a relocation closer to the splashpad and skate park could be considered.

**7. Gunderson Park** – Playground equipment and other amenities were in good shape. Portage refuse containers were available, straddling pavement and grass. Future concrete work in parks could gameplan for dedicated pads for refuse receptacles. The sidewalk apron around the playground should be considered at other parks when their playground facilities near end-of-life.

**8. Fox River Landing Park** – The ADA canoe/kayak launch and its sidewalk are in great shape. Weed-wacking the sidewalk's origin could benefit some users. Additionally, the signage (for City, for the park's history, how to use the equipment) is excellent; signage elsewhere needs to guide folks to this park.

**9. Lincoln Park** – The playground, basketball court, and shelter facilities were in good shape. A simple accessibility improvement could be sidewalk from the existing E. Carroll St. sidewalk to the shelter. The Portage Food Pantry is on the same block, so park users may extend beyond neighborhood extents.

**10. Pauquette Park** – Park facilities were in excellent shape. A concrete sidewalk apron around the playground adjacent to the walking trail bolsters accessibility. The ponds and bridges near Beasley Pavilion are whimsical – the city should leverage the space for events.

# Current Conditions

**11. Pine Meadow Park** – Facilities were in good condition. As referenced before, the sidewalk around the playground is a welcome accessibility benefit. The pickleball courts were well utilized on the day of the visit. Thought should be given towards pickleball expansion and parking improvements which could open the door for the city to schedule tournaments.

**12. Pocket Park** – Pavement and benches were in excellent condition. Given proximity to the US-51 and DeWitt St., some additional plantings for beautification and noise reduction could be desirable. The improvement would also provide comfort to those walking/jogging from downtown (Commerce Plaza) through this space on their way to Riverside Park.

**13. Riverside Park** – Pavement is in good condition and there is clear, consistent signage for the Levee Trail. The proximity to US-51 means safe access is crucial and worth further discussions. With the Charters of Freedom present, there is desire for park improvements such as bathrooms and playgrounds, which are referenced in the next chapter.

**14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park** – The gravel parking lot is in good shape, and the dog park opens calendar year 2026. Given its location on the growing northeast side, additional recreation amenities shall be planned in the future.

**15. Sanborn Park** – The playground equipment and shelter are in good shape. The basketball court was in good shape, however, when the equipment reaches its end-of-life, the new hoops could be adjustable like the ones in Collipp-Worden Park.

**16. Silver Lake Beach Park** – Playground equipment and bathrooms were in good shape. Repaving and restriping the parking lot is a desired improvement noted in the next chapter.

**17. Sunrise Park (Gully)** – The park is well known for its wintertime sledding. Though trails and other amenities could be considered in the park, low elevations and the proximity to Lincoln Park could make some offerings redundant.

**18. Sunset Park** – The playground equipment, shelter, and bathroom facilities are in good shape. The elevated location of the park means a Wisconsin River overlook in the park's southwestern extents could be desirable.

**19. Veteran Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds** – The Fritz Port dogpark was well-utilized on the day of the visit. Wayfinding, accessibility, and other upgrades (such as to the ball field) could increase the desirability for tournaments and other events.

**20. Woodridge Park** – Shelter and playground equipment are in good shape, though tucked back from Winnebago Avenue. When equipment reaches its end-of-life, more accessible locations near the road could be considered. Additionally, signage matching other park signage could be introduced. The park is almost linear, with open prairie space near powerlines which could be an opportunity for trail connectivity.

**21 & 22. Rolling Meadows Park & Bluffview Park** – These are undeveloped park spaces with unique, varied topography which could offer unique amenities in the future. Wayfinding and access should be further clarified.

**Boat Landings (Sunset Park & Silver Lake Beach Park)** – Improved signage, parking, or physical infrastructure would be welcomed at either boat landing location. Better parking near the Sunset Park ramp could make it more orderly and present a more desirable amenity

**Figure 9: Sunset Park Boat Ramp**



Source: Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025

# Accessibility for All

The City of Portage aims to improve its parks and recreation facilities to be inclusive and accessible to all.

Accessibility refers to:

- the ability for people of all ages and abilities to access recreational spaces, plus
- the proximity of certain amenities close to residents, regardless of where they live within the City of Portage.

**Chapter 2 Introduction**'s review of the former 2019 CORP noted that park access could use some improvement. Woodridge Park has access concerns due to the distance from Winnebago Avenue to the shelter and playground, respectively (**Figure 10**). In a similar way, a small sidewalk addition could connect Lincoln Park's shelter to existing sidewalk.

Improved access would open these and other spaces to varying ages and abilities.

As City of Portage implements new park and recreation areas, or adds amenities to existing locations, many could benefit from sidewalk or walking paths to make visits easier for a resident in a wheelchair, or a visitor pushing a baby stroller. Good examples exist already in Gunderson, Pauquette, and Sanborn Parks (**Figure 10**). These parks have well-maintained concrete sidewalks (aprongs) around their playgrounds.

Moving forward, proximity and accessibility becomes even more important if Portage includes park shelters (pavilions) and/or bathrooms at each existing or new facility. Planning access to the shelters should include accessible pathways, and avoid a long distance from sidewalk and /or where vehicles are parked to the maximum extent possible.

Finally, while easy and safe access to facilities *within* a park is important, it is equally important to improve access to park spaces across the City of Portage. As a result, the successes of the previous 2019 CORP shall be continued, with plans for a path and trail system across the city affording safe, convenient access to recreational facilities and places of interest such as businesses, residences, and medical facilities.

**Figure 10: Woodridge Park Opportunity for Improved Access & Best Practice in Gunderson and Pauquette Parks**



Source: Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025

# Accessibility to Amenities

As mentioned earlier, accessibility may also refer to the proximity of certain amenities close to residents, regardless of where they live within Portage. Across the City of Portage, numerous amenities occur at different parks or recreation facilities, such as playgrounds or walking trails.

There are amenities, however, which currently only exist in one location. While a Portage resident or their guests are free to travel to that amenity, some amenities may warrant additional locations. In the coming years, Portage should consider neighborhood surveys asking residents what amenities are desirable in more locations. Some examples include:

1. Pickleball courts. Pine Meadow Park has three (3) pickleball courts. While this location is good for reaching a fair amount of city residents, especially those east of US-51, this amenity is concentrated, and future discussion on whether the use warrants additional facilities in the same or alternate park locations should occur.
2. Splash pad. The sole splash pad is in Goodyear Park which, while in the heart of the community, may not be as easy to get to given the one-way flow of streets. Future population changes, in the entirety or a certain part of the city, could lead to considering an additional splash pad facility.
3. Some activities represent a relatively low barrier-to-entry, such as horseshoe pits (Sunset Park) or sledding (Sunrise Park), so additional facilities could be established in existing developed parks, or undeveloped parks such as Rolling Meadows Park & Bluffview Park at little cost.
4. The City in the future may decide that additional locations of a similar amenity, such as soccer fields or baseball/softball fields, are economically beneficial in courting sports tournaments and other events.
5. As stated on the previous page, it is the City of Portage's intent to continue to pursue an expanded, cohesive network of additional walking trails in the City (read the next chapter for other resident, city staff, and Park and Recreation Board thoughts!)
6. Additional amenities, such as mountain biking, may be considered where land and budgetary considerations allow.

# How Does City of Portage Compare?

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) prepares an annual report on recreational spaces and programming. The [2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review](#) serves as a comparison tool: municipalities nationwide and municipalities under 20,000 residents may be compared to City of Portage, and vice-versa.

A comparison amongst City of Portage, other municipalities under 20,000 residents, and the national median reveals that the City of Portage:

- **Has fewer residents per park than comparable municipalities under 20,000 residents or the national median.**
- Has less acreage per 1,000 residents than comparable communities. It should be noted that **44 percent of the City is within a quarter-mile of a park, and 74.7 percent of the City is within a half-mile of a park.**
- **Has fewer full-time employees (FTEs) than comparably-sized municipalities or the national median.** This reflects the efficiency of City's Parks and Recreation team while also suggesting that, when new recreational facilities are provisioned, the staffing to care and curate those recreational resources can be efficient if equipped with the needed funding and tools.

## Residents per Park (Recreation Area)

National Median: 2,386

Municipalities less than 20,000 residents: 1,172

**City of Portage: 481 (10,581 residents/22 total parks)**

## Acres of Parkland per 1,000 residents

National Median: 10.6 acres

Municipalities less than 20,000 residents: 12.6 acres

**City of Portage: 5.87 [62.20 acres / (10,581/1,000)]**

## Full-Time Employees (FTEs) per 10,000 residents

National Median: 8.9 FTEs

Municipalities less than 20,000 residents: 13.7 FTEs

**City of Portage: 5\***

\*Plus 1 part-time (<30hrs/week); 6 summer seasonal; 50 part-time staff. Source: October 31, 2025 email with Parks and Recreation Director.

# Programming & Opportunities

The [City of Portage Park and Recreation Department](#) coordinates varied recreational activity programming, in addition to coordinating park shelter reservations and maintaining parks. Visiting the website and clicking on ["Register for Programs"](#) offers residents the chance to sort by category, age, location, and days of the week. There is something for everyone to get up and moving (**Figure 11**)!

Though it is a snapshot in time, residents are encouraged to peruse all the fun activities reported in the [2025/26 Fall/Winter Activity Guide](#) and successive Activity Guides, or call the Park and Recreation Department (401 Cemetery Road, Portage, WI) at 608-742-2178 for more information!

## Youth Programs –

- Dance (ages 6+, various genres offered)
- Tumbling
- Karate (ages 6+, various levels offered)
- Flag football (K-2; 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Discover Drums
- PHS Cheer Camp (ages 5-14)
- PHS Curling Camp
- Youth Basketball (Portage Girls Basketball Club; Portage Boys Youth Club)
- Youth Hockey (Thunderbird Youth Hockey)
- Ice skating
- And more!

## Adult Programs –

- Tai Chi Prime
- Adult Basketball Open Gym
- Pickleball Lessons
- Adult Volleyball
- And more! (Portage Public Library has other programming available)

Activities or timeframes may change due to weather conditions or space considerations across different seasons.

If you interested in a new recreational opportunity being provided in Portage and/or have the training and desire to share your knowledge with residents, please reach out to the City Parks and Recreation Department. The City is open to new ideas/partnerships/activities and the volunteers who would help make it happen!

## Figure 11: Portage Parks & Recreation Fun



Source: Portage Park & Recreation Department

# Coordination with Other Plans & Other Entities

This new Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the City of Portage works alongside City of Portage Comprehensive Plan to plan for the City's future by leveraging resident feedback to inform this Plan's goals, objectives, and policies in **Chapter 3**'s Implementation Matrix.

Additionally, plans such as the:

## [Wisconsin Statewide 2025-2030 CORP \(Appendix B\)](#)

were evaluated to ensure consistency with recreation goals at higher levels of government. At the same time, the information in these plans serves as a valuable benchmark for the City and its own goals.

The [Wisconsin Statewide CORP \(SCORP\)](#) touches upon similar desires and concerns as this plan for the City of Portage, albeit at a larger scale. Demographic investigations on an aging state population highlight the importance of access, just as the condition of recreation facilities shows that a facility or amenity's condition matters for its usefulness to residents.

The new SCORP states that:

***The focus of this SCORP is to ensure that all our residents have opportunities for enjoyable outdoor experiences in the future.***

There are deficiencies at the state level that City residents have noted on a local scale, such as access and accessibility concerns to parks and recreational facilities. As a result, the City should continue to keep an eye on opportunities for collaboration with Columbia County, the Portage Community School District, and/or the State of Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources to investigate, plan, and implement recreational possibilities.

The following is a brief list of partners and their potential activities that could strengthen the City's recreational spaces and available programming with mutually-beneficial relationships. **The City of Portage welcomes government, business, and nonprofits across all scales and levels to produce great park spaces and health outcomes for city residents and visitors alike.**

Girls Scouts and Boy Scouts – Tree planting; trail maintenance; mulching; installing benches or picnic tables

Portage Community School District – leverage shared resources; collaborate on trails, Safe Routes to School ([SRTS](#)), and more.

Columbia County Aging & Disability Resource Center ([ADRC](#)) – Senior exercise best practices

Healthcare Providers (UW Health Portage Clinic; Aspirus Divine Savior Hospital; SSM Health Dean Medical Group Specialty Services) – Health studies and outreach

[Portage Chamber of Commerce](#) – Showcasing the benefits to business of recreation

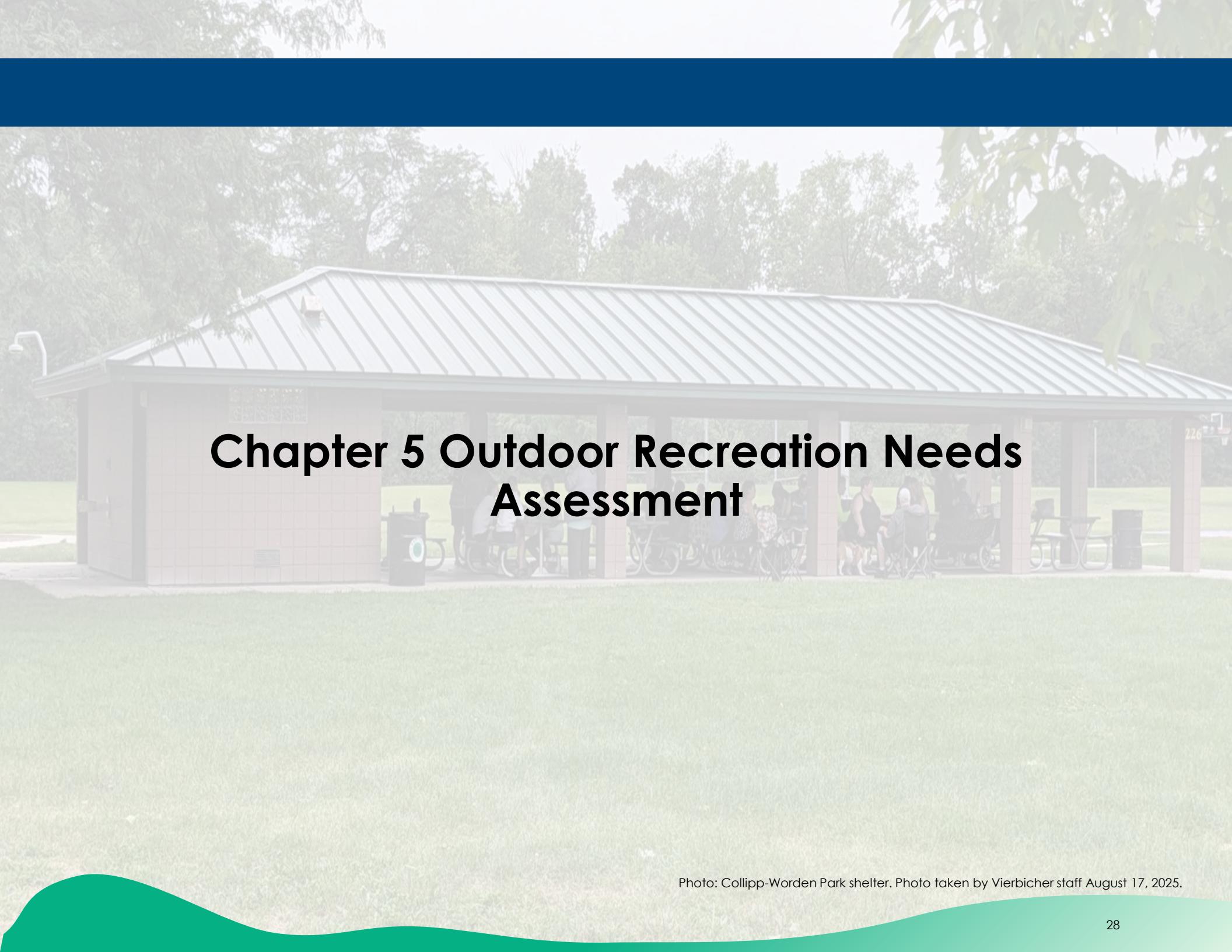
Realtors Association of South-Central Wisconsin – Highlight recreation amenities to new residents

[Ice Age Trail Alliance Volunteer Chapters](#), such as the [Baraboo Hills/Heritage Chapter](#) – Showcase trail maintenance best-practices; hikes and social events

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Opportunities for education, collaboration, research, and funding.

Civic Groups, such as VFW Post 1707, the Women's Civic League of Portage, the Portage Kiwanis Club, the Portage Community Center, the Rotary Club, etc.

AND MORE (such as the sponsors listed in the Activity Guides)



# **Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment**

Photo: Collipp-Worden Park shelter. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment

To support this plan, the inventory in **Chapter 4** details the outdoor recreation facilities and takes stock of existing conditions. Simultaneously, this chapter, the Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment, is based on the lived experience and testimony from City Staff, the Park and Recreation Board, and resident insights learned from August 2025 survey (**Appendix C**). Some of the major findings from City staff and the Park and Recreation Board are below, with resident survey feedback on the following page.

## City Staff Insights

The City has interest in partnering with NGOs, nonprofits, and government partners to further existing recreation resources or develop new recreational amenities for the benefit of City residents, their guests, and visitors to the community.

Parks and Recreation Director Toby Monogue noted some of the following, pressing needs for specific parks:

- **4. Collipp-Worden Park** – Restroom upgrade for ADA accessibility and resurface/repaint basketball courts.
- **6. Goodyear Park** – Repair/update splash pad.
- **7. Gunderson Park** – Pave existing walking path and provision lights. Collaborate with school district to have path connect west towards/to the high school, especially once new aquatic center is built.
- **11. Pine Meadow Park** – Add small restroom; add off-street parking area.
- **13. Riverside Park** – Add shelter and restrooms.
- **14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park** – Establish Yearly Maintenance Plan.
- **16. Silver Lake Park and Beach** – Repave and restripe the parking lot.

Vierbicher staff also chatted with Toby about accessibility, connectivity, and whether certain types of facilities such as pickleball courts and ball fields, warranted further expansion. Please read **Chapter 3** to see how insights from this chapter informed the direction of this Plan.

## Park and Recreation Board Insights

Vierbicher staff chatted with Chuck Sulik, Park and Recreation Board Chair and the Park and Recreation Board on some issues and opportunities they've seen within the City's recreational areas.

One of the most prominent talking points was maintenance – adequately maintaining existing service levels / facility quality to ensure long(er) equipment lifespan, then making it easier to discuss desired additional amenities or recreation facilities. A maintenance example is the need for updated electrical, such as at the fairgrounds, to avoid blowing fuses. It leads to repair and manpower costs, while impairing the safe function of recreational spaces in the community. Additionally, there was support for allocating monies towards a new weed harvester in the budget, as it serves a real need and would have community support.

For funding, the \$600/lot fee in lieu of parkland dedication, city budget, user fees, and grant funding represent opportunities to support existing and new desired projects. One example where funding could be put to use is a more robust trail system that eventually spans the entire city, fostering safe connectivity and accessibility for the most vulnerable (the young and old, bicyclists and pedestrians).

Regarding accessibility and connectivity, there was focus on keeping positive momentum on path and trail projects. Since the 2019 CORP there have been several successes, as noted in **Chapter 2**, and there remains ample opportunity for better bicycle/pedestrian connectivity to parks and across the entire city. Portage is willing to partner with government, business, and/or nonprofits in pursuit of funding and implementing an expanded city trail network.

Finally, there were discussions on short- and long-term planning, balancing needs versus aspirations. Discussion in a couple meetings talked about City population. While the total population may go up or down, what about population increases in certain areas, such as the newly-platted residential on the northeast side? There might be logic in some parks, such as Pine Meadow Park, having an expansion to relieve pressure on other parks, such as Collipp-Worden Park.

# Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment

## Q8 Do you believe the City should look at adding new parks in growth areas, such as the north side?

### Resident Insights from August 2025 Survey

The survey asked nineteen (19) total questions, thirteen (13) questions asked about frequently visited recreational spaces and what amenities, if any, should the City improve or create. Around 637 people visited the survey website: 245 submitted a completed survey; 256 partially completed the survey; and 136 visited the website, but did not answer a question.

A broad summary of the survey results follows, and **Appendix C** contains more information on the survey responses.

## Q9 Do you believe the City should look at adding new parks in growth areas, such as the north side?

### Survey responses whose items are referenced in this Plan:

- Improved permanent (or temporary) bathrooms
- Emphasize maintenance; update existing facilities
- Expanded programming, where possible
- Pickleball

## Parks Dog Park improvements

- Improved water access

## Trail & Pathways Updated playgrounds

- Increased collaboration (with various entities)

Open feedback was quite positive, noting the City parks are beautiful, well-maintained, and that volunteerism has greatly contributed to their being cherished community assets.

## Survey responses which reflect new desires or opportunities:

The Park and Recreation Board and Common Council may consider pursuing these ideas, or funding for these ideas, in the future. This is not an exhaustive list. If an amendment to this CORP would facilitate funding opportunities, the CORP would be amended according to the process on page 7.

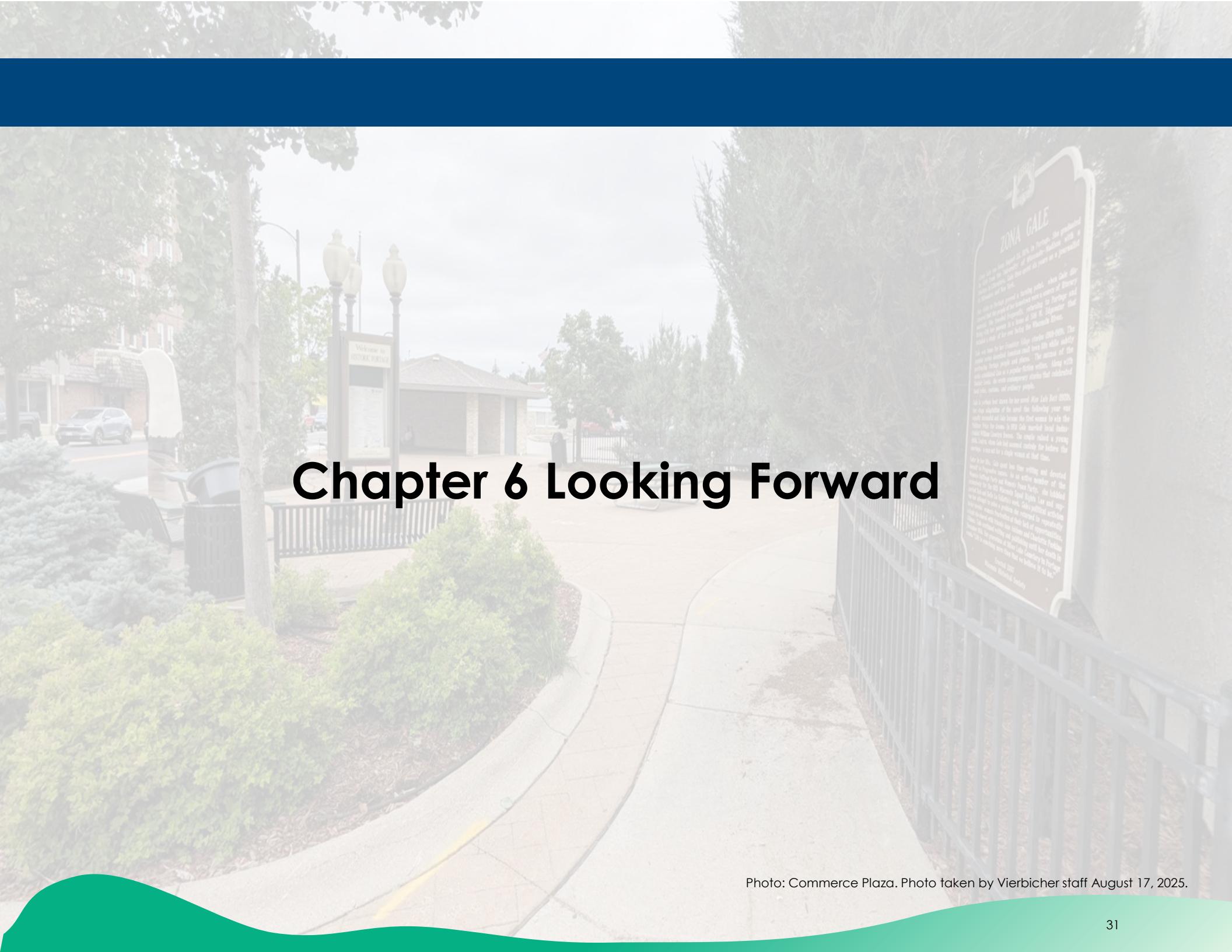
- Improved aquatics, such as expanded or new splash pad and/or an outdoor pool
  - Swimming lessons
- Lifeguard(s) at Silver Lake Beach Park

## Q10 What recreational amenity would you like to see that the City of Portage does not currently have?

### i.e. "All-abilities playground"

- Indoor recreation center / playground
- Updated or new playgrounds
  - One new all-abilities playground (akin to Poynette or Reedsburg)
  - "Add a playground in the new rolling prairie subdivision."
- Improved/increased amenities, such as:
  - Disc golf
  - Equipment rental
  - Lighting for court sports
- Improved programming
  - Fitness classes
  - "More group classes through park and rec new facility like Zumba, line dancing, club sports."
- Residents noted that improved/expanded connectivity for walking and hiking trails/paths plus biking trails/lanes/paths is important to consider for future planning. Some response examples follow:
  - "Expand walking paths on Hamilton St"
  - "Path from Blackhawk rd to Wisconsin River bridge so kids from neighborhood can bike or walk safely to town."
  - "Nice walking/bike path along New Pinery past Silver Lake"
  - "A walking/bike path under/over the train tracks would bring more traffic from the north side to downtown businesses."
  - "Trying to connect walking/biking trails from Gunderson Park/Hamilton street to the high school would be great. Making more walking/hiking accessible areas in the north side would help the Gumz subdivision connect with the rest of the city and grocery stores."

To see the full survey responses, please visit the Portage Parks and Recreation Department website.



# Chapter 6 Looking Forward

Photo: Commerce Plaza. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Looking Forward

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the City of Portage intends to be a living document, taking the plans, lessons, and successes of the past to better prepare the City's future parks and recreational facilities.

This Plan has outlined Portage's social and physical characteristics, the former CORP's successes alongside desires yet-to-be achieved, and current recreational facility conditions. **Chapter 4 Outdoor Recreation Supply Inventory** and **Chapter 5 Outdoor Recreation Needs Assessment** investigated parks and recreational facilities as they currently are to chart a path forward for maintenance and potential new amenities.

Over the life of this Plan, changes may – and should – be welcomed for actions that lead to amenities or programs that strengthen the City of Portage and its residents' joy playing outdoors. This is especially important for picking and prioritizing projects, as funding and capacity may vary.

If amendments to this Plan occur, it will use the "CORP Process" on page 7, and the new material will follow this page, being placed before the Appendices.



Photo: Levee Path. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Appendices

Photo: View of Wisconsin River from Sunset Park. Photo taken by Vierbicher staff August 17, 2025.

# Appendix A – Community Information

**Figure A-1 Growth Rates, City of Portage versus Columbia County**

Source	City of Portage	Columbia County
2010 Census	10,324	56,833
2020 Census	10,581	58,490
2024 WI DOA est.	10,036	58,360
2010 to 2020 % change	2.43%	2.83%

Source: "P1 Race." U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed by Vierbicher staff July 11, 2025

**Figure A-2 City of Portage Population and Race**

<b>Total:</b>	<b>10,581</b>
<b>Population of one race:</b>	<b>10,050</b>
White alone	9,016
Black or African American alone	587
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	112
Asian alone	124
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	2
Some Other Race alone	209
<b>Population of two or more races:</b>	<b>531</b>
Population of two races:	515
White; Black or African American	130
White; American Indian and Alaska Native	125
White; Asian	36
White; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	9
White; Some Other Race	206
Black or African American; American Indian and Alaska Native	0
Black or African American; Asian	0
Black or African American; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0
Black or African American; Some Other Race	8
American Indian and Alaska Native; Asian	0
American Indian and Alaska Native; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0
American Indian and Alaska Native; Some Other Race	0
Asian; Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0
Asian; Some Other Race	0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander; Some Other Race	1

Source: "P1 Race." U.S. Census Bureau. Accessed by Vierbicher staff July 11, 2025

# Appendix A – Community Information

**Figure A-3 City of Portage 2023 ACS 5-yr Population Cohort Estimates**

Label	Portage city, Wisconsin											
	Total	Percent	Male	Percent Male	Female	Percent Female						
							Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error	Estimate	Margin of Error
Total population	10,374	±19	(X)	(X)	5,405	±203	(X)	(X)	4,969	±204	(X)	(X)
AGE												
Under 5 years	663	±147	6.40%	±1.4	401	±99	7.40%	±1.8	262	±101	5.30%	±2.0
5 to 9 years	443	±122	4.30%	±1.2	181	±77	3.30%	±1.4	262	±99	5.30%	±1.9
10 to 14 years	553	±169	5.30%	±1.6	222	±73	4.10%	±1.3	331	±135	6.70%	±2.7
15 to 19 years	537	±144	5.20%	±1.4	307	±104	5.70%	±1.9	230	±89	4.60%	±1.8
20 to 24 years	909	±177	8.80%	±1.7	440	±117	8.10%	±2.1	469	±121	9.40%	±2.5
25 to 29 years	836	±177	8.10%	±1.7	453	±116	8.40%	±2.1	383	±107	7.70%	±2.1
30 to 34 years	810	±211	7.80%	±2.0	506	±130	9.40%	±2.4	304	±104	6.10%	±2.1
35 to 39 years	942	±214	9.10%	±2.1	604	±174	11.20%	±3.1	338	±115	6.80%	±2.3
40 to 44 years	839	±169	8.10%	±1.6	433	±115	8.00%	±2.1	406	±113	8.20%	±2.3
45 to 49 years	469	±135	4.50%	±1.3	329	±123	6.10%	±2.3	140	±65	2.80%	±1.3
50 to 54 years	606	±145	5.80%	±1.4	393	±108	7.30%	±2.0	213	±79	4.30%	±1.5
55 to 59 years	701	±155	6.80%	±1.5	271	±110	5.00%	±2.1	430	±109	8.70%	±2.2
60 to 64 years	653	±177	6.30%	±1.7	309	±123	5.70%	±2.3	344	±98	6.90%	±2.0
65 to 69 years	447	±134	4.30%	±1.3	216	±100	4.00%	±1.8	231	±80	4.60%	±1.6
70 to 74 years	303	±106	2.90%	±1.0	119	±52	2.20%	±0.9	184	±70	3.70%	±1.4
75 to 79 years	256	±89	2.50%	±0.9	73	±44	1.40%	±0.8	183	±76	3.70%	±1.5
80 to 84 years	175	±62	1.70%	±0.6	59	±45	1.10%	±0.8	116	±55	2.30%	±1.1
85 years and over	232	±76	2.20%	±0.7	89	±53	1.60%	±1.0	143	±58	2.90%	±1.2

Source: "[S0101 Age and Sex](#)." 2023 5-yr ACS. Accessed July 11, 2025 by Vierbicher staff

# Appendix A – Community Information

Figure A-4 Portage Community School District Fall 2025 Enrollment as of September 2025

School	Grade	Student Population
Elementary Schools*	4K	112
	K	109
	1	122
	2	128
	3	122
	4	147
	5	128
Wayne E. Bartels Middle School	6	133
	7	130
	8	121
Portage High School	9	176
	10	145
	11	141
	12	162
Portage Academy of Achievement		22
Kiel Virtual School		16
<b>TOTAL</b>	-	<b>1914</b>

\*Includes:

Endeavor Elementary School (K-5)

John Muir Elementary School (2-5)

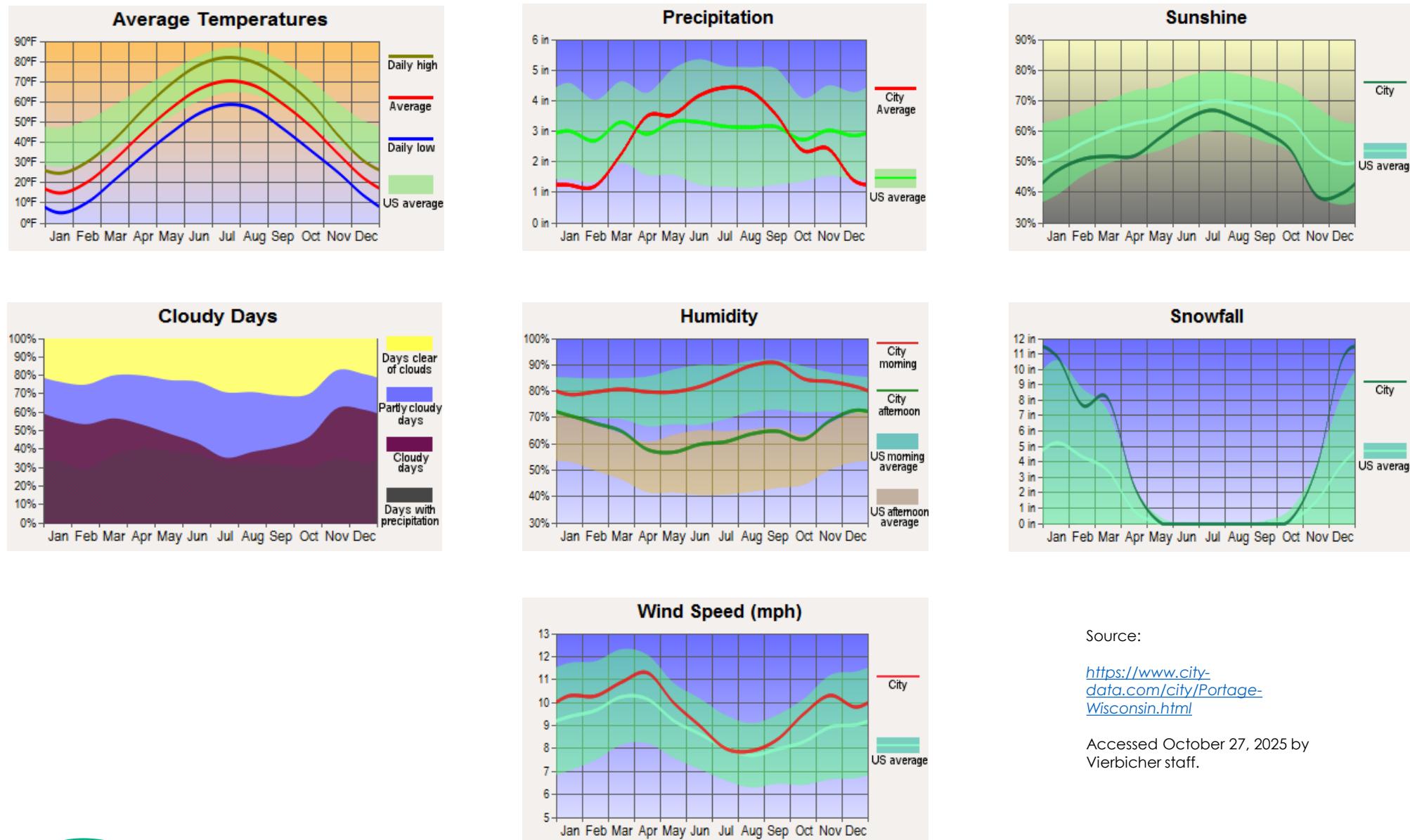
Lewiston Elementary School (K-5)

Woodridge Primary School (K-1)

Source: District Administrator Josh Sween November 5, 2025 email to Vierbicher staff.

# Appendix A – Community Information

Figure A-5 City of Portage Geography & Climate



# Appendix B – State CORP (SCORP)

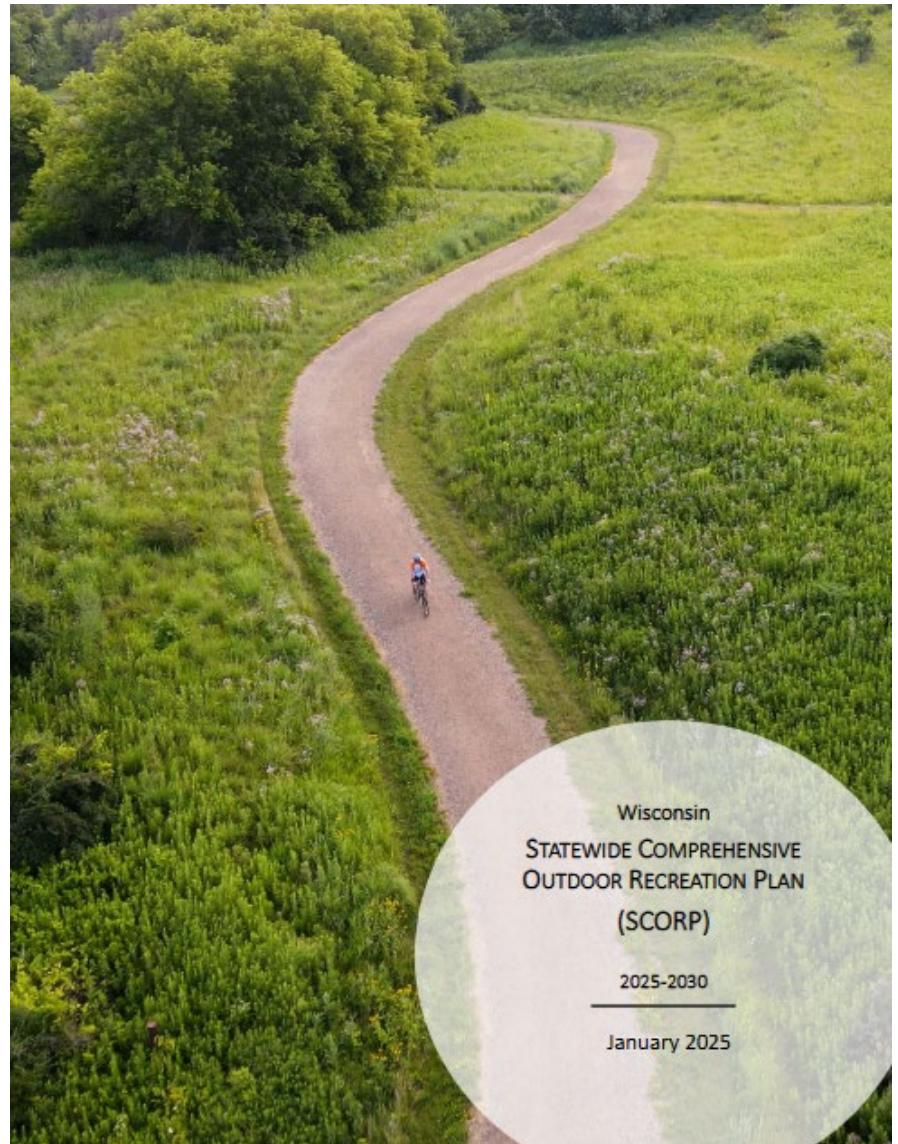
The [Wisconsin Statewide 2025-2030 CORP](#) laid out five overarching goals for outdoor recreation:

1. Ensure that all Wisconsinites have equitable opportunities to participate in outdoor recreation, regardless of where they live or their ethnicity, gender, income, abilities, or age.
2. Maintain and expand the sustainability of recreational opportunities in our state, ensuring that existing opportunities are well funded and have the support to grow and expand where needed.
3. Grow the collaborative partnership approach across federal, state, regional and local agencies and private non-profit organizations and businesses to provide high-quality outdoor experiences for all Wisconsinites.

## Did You Know?

- SCORP survey respondents reported 39 outdoor recreation activities
- In the previous twelve (12) months (from when survey was conducted), 88 percent of Wisconsin residents participated in some form of the 39 outdoor recreation activities
- Wisconsin has 2.5 million acres of County Forests
- Wisconsin residents' top 5 nature-based outdoor activities are walking/hiking/running; swimming; wildlife watching and Nature photography; picnicking; and fishing.

**Figure B-1 Wisconsin Statewide CORP Cover**



Source: [Wisconsin State CORP](#), hosted by Wisconsin DNR, accessed by Vierbicher staff July 11, 2025.

# Appendix C – August 2025 Survey Results

This page contains an overview of the August 2025 Survey responses from City residents regarding maintenance and future desired actions or activities related to City parks and recreational amenities. The following fast facts provide a broad picture of the survey responses:

- Around 637 people visited the survey website (245 submitted a completed survey; 256 partially completed the survey; 136 visited the website, but did not answer a question)
- Question 3: top-three responses for the parks visited once a week were Collip-Worden Park (25); Pauquette Park (20); Silver Lake Beach and Park (18).
- Question 4: top three recreational amenities in the past year were Levee/Canal Paths (262); Benches (258); Fairgrounds (252); please note 4<sup>th</sup> place finisher Playgrounds had 249 responses.
- Question 6: walking/hiking, use of playground equipment, and field sports were top-three recreation activities in the past year.
- Question 7: top three desired improvements were swimming, walking/hiking, and use of playground equipment.
- Question 9: people ranked *maintenance and improvements of existing facilities* first.
- Questions 10-12 were short answer. Frequently seen responses included (in no particular order): aquatics (swimming pool, expanded/new splash pad); existing facilities & their maintenance; (new) trails; playgrounds ↔ accessibility interactions; programming (classes); dog park improvements.
- Questions 13-19 were demographic questions (age; gender; employment status; household annual gross income; ethnicity; language; children under 18 in home). The highest-responses to each of the respective demographics questions were: Age 35-44; female; full-time; \$100,000-\$124,999 annual gross income; white; English-speaking.

If you wish to view the full survey responses, please visit the Portage Park and Recreation Department webpage.

Photos in **Appendix D**. were provided by the City of Portage Police Department drone.

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 1. Blue Star Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 1.8 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Picnic Tables
- Shelter



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters	1. Blue Star Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 7.6 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Baseball/softball fields
- Playground
- Concessions



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.2: Upgrade parking area	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.3: Re-do concession and restroom building	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex	City; Sports Clubs	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Club fundraising
Action Item 5.1.4: Update playgrounds during this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan.	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex (2029)	City	Ongoing	Lower	\$80,000 apiece (2025 \$)	City budget; Equipment provider grants

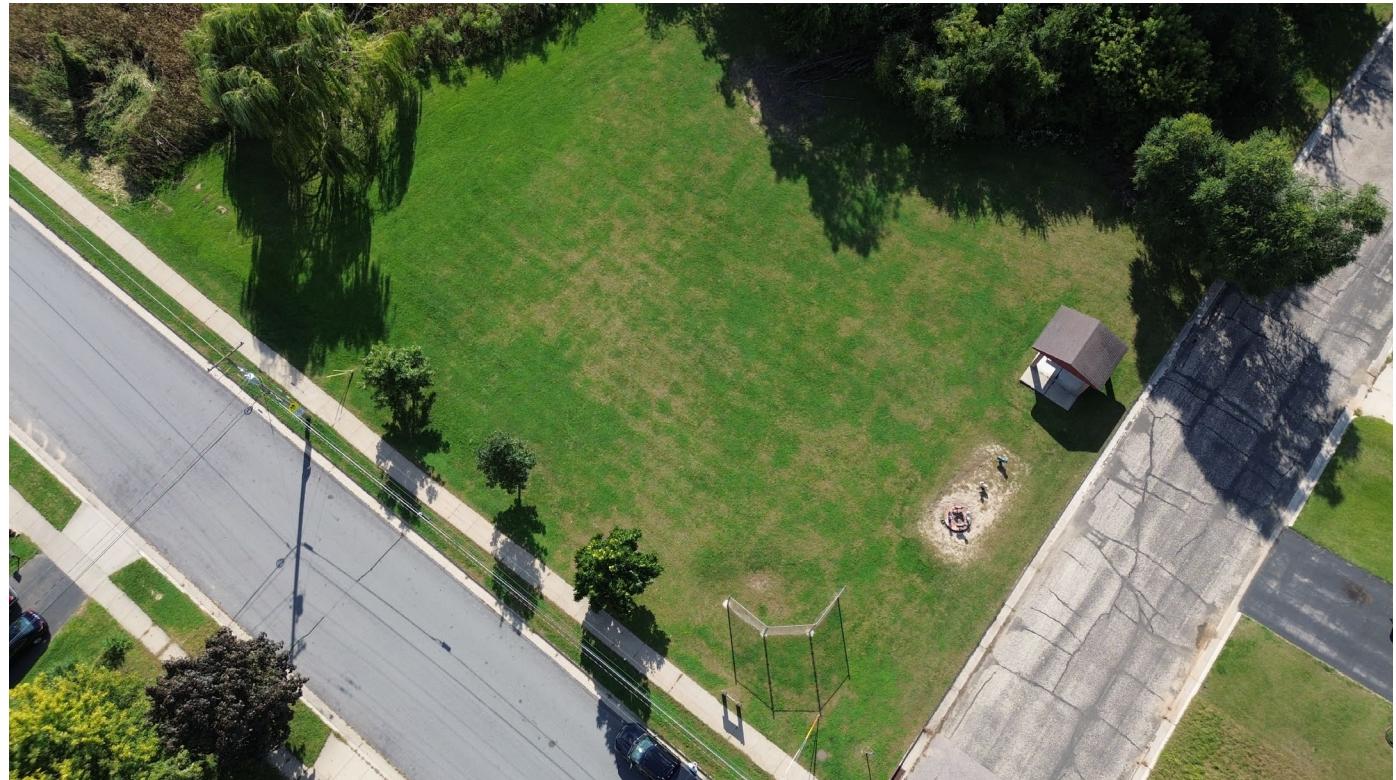
# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 3. Cattail Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 10.7 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Playground
- Shelter
- Large open field(s) for play



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action item 3.1.1: Replace signage which does not follow newer park standard	3. Cattail Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.7: Remove Rockers; consider installing an Archery Range		City; Archery Club(s)	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 4. Collipp-Worden Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 15.1 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Basketball court
- Picnic grills

### Desired Improvements:

#### Existing Amenities continued:

- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Tennis
- Shelter
- Disc golf course
- Large open field(s) for play

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds beyond this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	4. Collipp-Worden Park (2045)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.8: Upgrade bathroom for ADA accessibility	4. Collipp-Worden Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.9: Resurface/ paint basketball courts		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.10: Resurface tennis courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.11: Install new fencing for tennis courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.12. Install shade structure off playground		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	



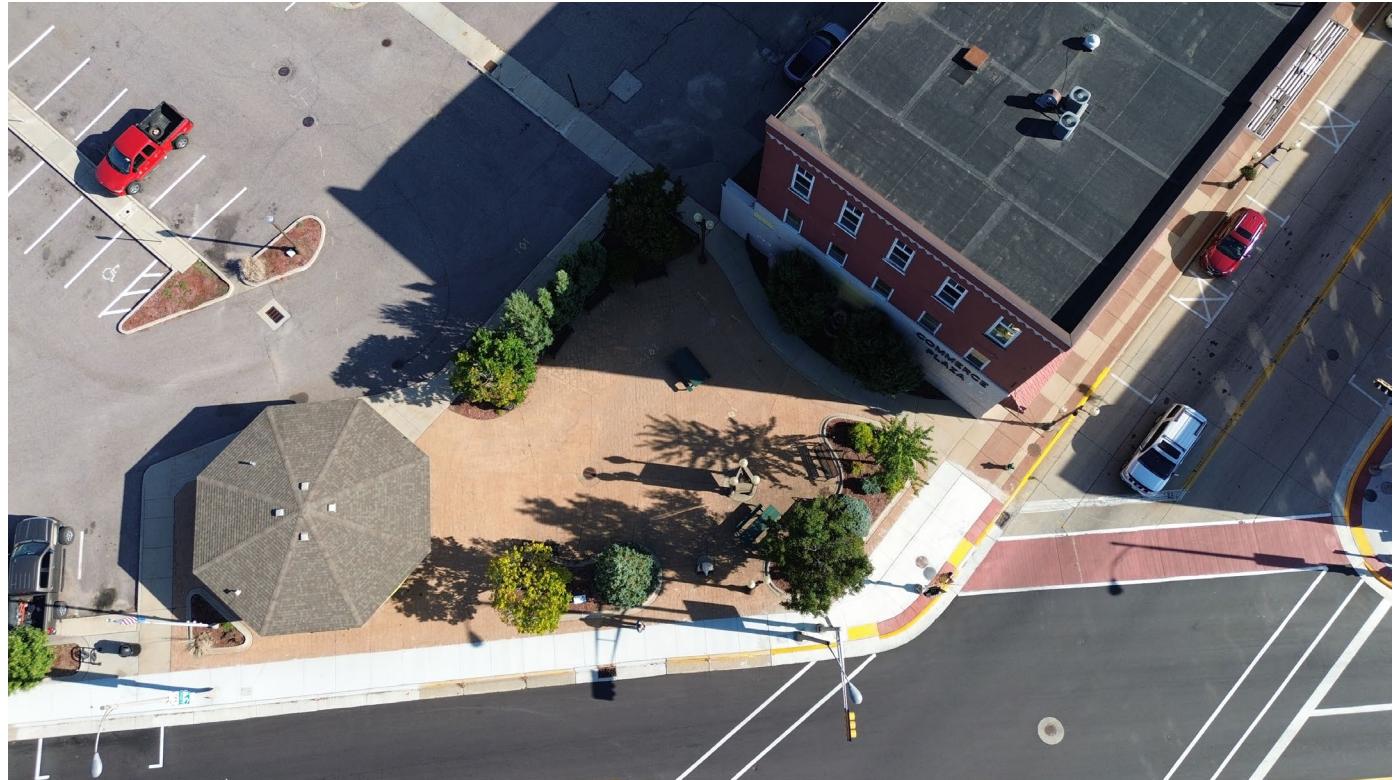
# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 5. Commerce Plaza

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 0.37 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Benches



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 3.2.1: Install signage at appropriate city locations	5. Commerce Plaza	City; Chamber of Commerce	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; potentially RTP if concurrent with trail project

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 6. Goodyear Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 2.74 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Basketball court
- Picnic grills

### Desired Improvements:

#### Existing Amenities continued:

- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Little Free Library
- Splashpad
- Skatepark

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 2.2.1: Coordinate installation of appropriate traffic safety devices	6. Goodyear Park	City; WisDOT	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.4: Update playgrounds during this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan.	6. Goodyear Park (2027)	City	Ongoing	Lower	\$80,000 apiece (2025 \$)	City budget; Equipment provider grants



# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 7. Gunderson Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 11.0 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Playground
- Walking Trail
- Large open field(s) for play



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 2.1.1: Pave existing walk path and provide lighting	7. Gunderson Park	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	NPS' LWCF; Federal Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
Action Item 2.1.2: Once Portage High School (PHS) Aquatic Center is closer to completion, coordinate with school district to extend paved trail west from Gunderson Park towards/to PHS.		City; Portage Community School District	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond</u> this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	7. Gunderson Park (2043)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 8. Fox River Landing Park\*

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 2.5 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- ADA Canoe/kayak launch



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.2: Upgrade parking area	8. Fox River Landing Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;

**\*Note: at time of CORP creation (Winter 2025), this facility was previously known as Highway 33 Wayside**

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 9. Lincoln Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 1.0 acre

### Existing Amenities:

- Basketball court
- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Large open field(s) for play



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds beyond this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	9. Lincoln Park (2031)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 10. Pauquette Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 11.6 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Basketball court
- Fishing
- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Walking trail



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond</u> this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	10. Pauquette Park (2035)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter	10. Pauquette Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;
Action Item 5.1.15: Purchase adjacent property for off-street parking		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.16: Pond shoreline restoration		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 11. Pine Meadow Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 5.1 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Playground

### Existing Amenities continued:

- Pickleball courts
- Shelter
- Large open field(s) for play
- Soccer fields

### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters	11. Pine Meadow Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.2: Upgrade parking area		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds beyond this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	11. Pine Meadow Park (2047)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter	11. Pine Meadow Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;
Action Item 5.1.15: Purchase adjacent property for off-street parking		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.17: Add three (3) pickleball courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); NPS' LWCF
Action Item 5.1.18: Add shade around pickleball courts		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project or "Memorial Tree")

11. Pine Meadow Park photos on next page.

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 11. Pine Meadow Park continued



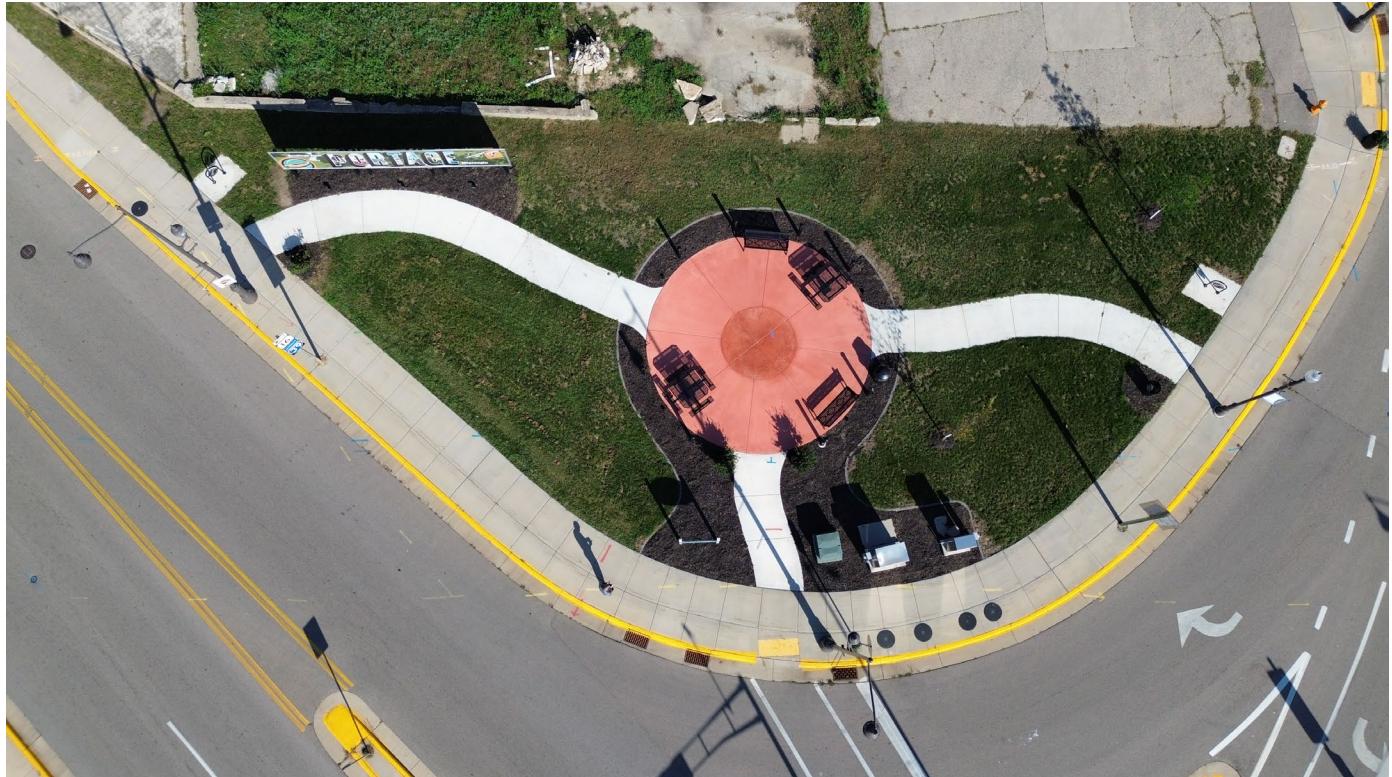
# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 12. Pocket Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 0.16 acre

### Existing Amenities:

- Picnic Tables



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.19: Plant shade trees/vegetation to lessen road noise	12. Pocket Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project or "Memorial Tree")

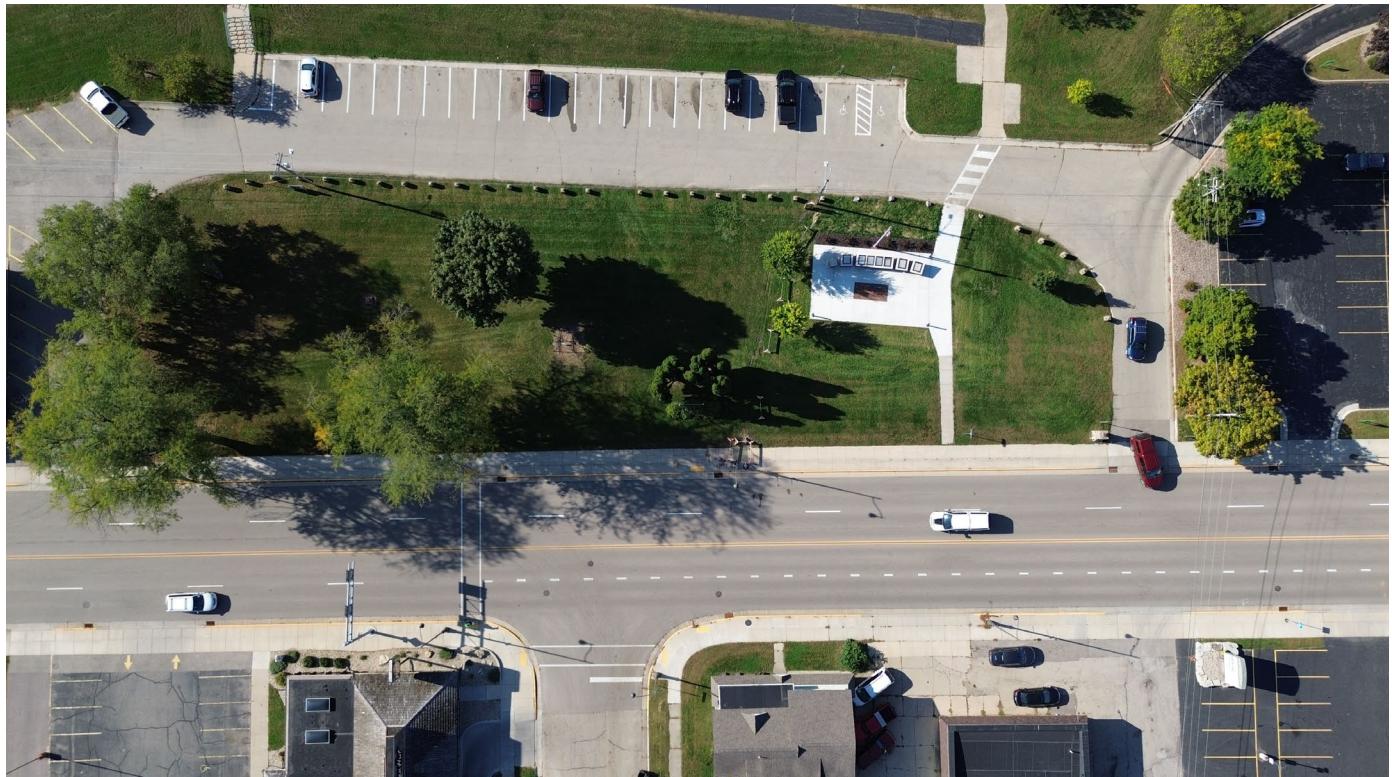
# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 13. Riverside Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 1.83 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Swings
- Walking Trail
- Charters of Freedom Display



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 2.2.1: Coordinate installation of appropriate traffic safety devices	13. Riverside Park	City; WisDOT	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;
Action Item 5.1.20: Add bus/van parking to facilitate Charters of Freedom & Levee Path visitors.		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park

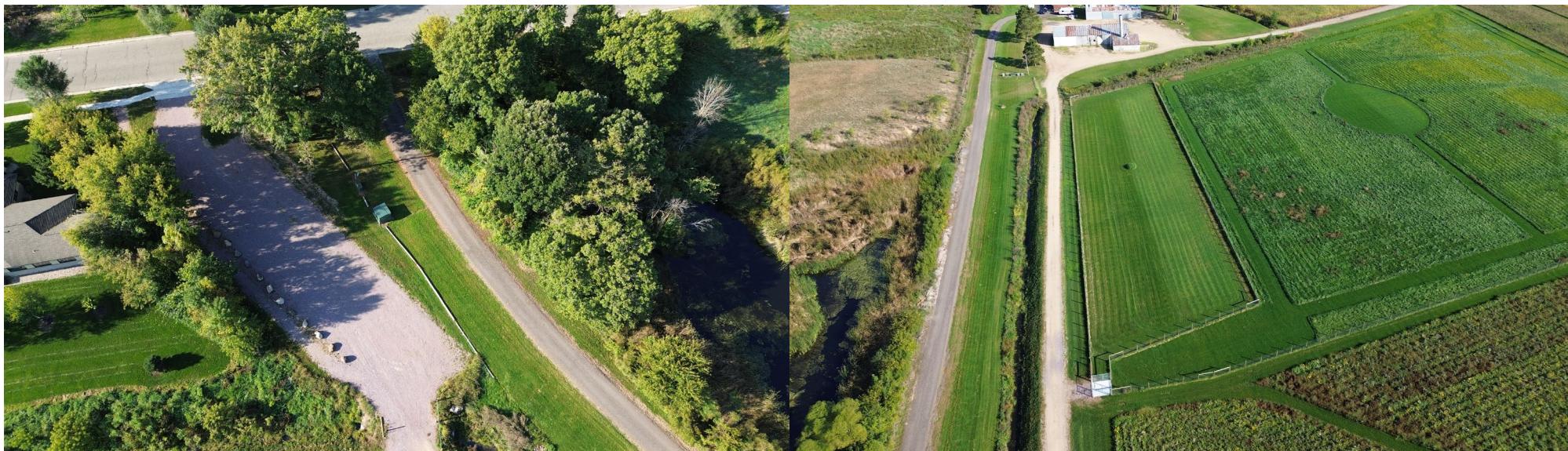
**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 17.2 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Walking Trails
- Dog Park (in 2026)

### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.13: Add restroom and shelter (prioritize 13. Riverside Park)	14. Rolling Prairie Conservancy and Dog Park	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	WDNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Grant (KNSG); City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); WEDC Vibrant Spaces Grant (for ONE park); NPS' LWCF;
Action Item 5.1.21: Follow Yearly Maintenance Plan.		City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.22: Add water (to dog park)		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)



# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 15. Sanborn Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 1.4 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Basketball court
- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Large open field(s) for play



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.1: Install metal roofs on shelters	15. Sanborn Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan</u>	15. Sanborn Park (2037)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 16. Silver Lake Park & Beach

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 1.84 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Fishing

### Desired Improvements:

#### Existing Amenities continued:

- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Boat launch

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 1.1.1: Budget for new weed harvester	16. Silver Lake Park and Beach	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget; WDNR Recreational Boating Facilities Grant
Action Item 5.1.2: Upgrade parking area (Prioritize 16. Silver Lake Beach and Park; add for 11. Pine Meadow Park)		City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond</u> this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	16. Silver Lake Park and Beach (2039)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.23: Install new steps & rails	16. Silver Lake Park and Beach	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)



# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 17. Sunrise Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 4.5 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Sledding hill

### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 1.1.2: Budget for one (1) Toolcat to replace one of existing two (2) Bobcat machines	17. Sunrise Park (both actions applicable to all parks)	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 1.2.1: Budget appropriately for staffing needs		City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	City budget



# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 18. Sunset Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 4.3 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Bathrooms
- Picnic grills
- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter
- Horseshoe pits



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond</u> this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan	18. Sunset Park (2041)	City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants
Action Item 5.1.24: Replace shelter	18. Sunset Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 47.9 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Indoor space
- Bathrooms
- Baseball/softball fields
- Picnic tables

### Existing Amenities continued:

- Playground
- Shelter
- Large open field(s) for play
- Fritz Port Dog Park
- Soccer Fields

### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action item 2.2.3: Curb and crosswalk to safely get to soccer complex across Thompson St.	19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.26: VMF Ballfield improvements - concession-restroom facility		City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.27: VMF Ballfield improvements - Lights on Siegel Field		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action Item 5.1.28: VMF Soccer Fields improvement - install irrigation on club fields		City; Columbia County; Soccer Clubs	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); Soccer Club donations / fees
Action Item 5.1.29: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - Replace Building #7		City; Columbia County	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP); Columbia County budget
Action Item 5.1.30: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - Update electrical		City; Columbia County	2-5 years	Higher	TBD	
Action Item 5.1.31: VMF Fairgrounds improvements - repave fair boulevard		City; Columbia County	5+ years	Lower	TBD	

19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds photos on next page.

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds continued



# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 20. Woodridge Park

**Size (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 10.3 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- Picnic tables
- Playground
- Shelter



### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action item 2.1.4: Consider possible future trail.	20. Woodridge Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	NPS' LWCF; RTP
Action item 3.1.1: Replace signage which does not follow newer park standard		City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget
Action Item 5.1.5: Update playgrounds <u>beyond</u> this Plan's 2026-2030 lifespan		City	Ongoing	Lower	TBD	City budget; Equipment provider grants

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

## 21. Rolling Meadows Park & 22. Bluffview Park

**Sizes (Acres, estimated with GIS):** 3.28 acres & 3.67 acres

### Existing Amenities:

- None – undeveloped parkland

### Desired Improvements:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 5.1.25: Investigate potential amenities at undeveloped park sites	21. Rolling Meadows Park; 22. Bluffview Park	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

# Appendix D – Meet Our Parks!

The following represent desired improvements that cannot be neatly organized under an individual park and recreation facility:

Action	Location	Responsible Entities	Timeframe	Priority	Estimated Cost	Potential Funding Sources
Action Item 1.1.2: Budget for one (1) Toolcat to replace one of existing two (2) Bobcat machines	All parks and recreation facilities	City	<2 years	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 1.2.1: Budget appropriately for staffing needs		City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	City budget
Action Item 2.1.3: Extend path on west side of Hamilton Street south, from Evergreen Trail to East Albert Street.	Hamilton Street	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant
Action item 2.2.2: Consider creating a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Plan with the Portage Community School District	City-wide	City; Portage Community School District; Safe Routes to School	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; SRTS; Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant
Action Item 3.2.1: Install signage at appropriate city locations	Near major intersections	City; Chamber of Commerce	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; potentially RTP if concurrent with trail project
Action Item 4.1.1: Contact current/past collaborators with City Park and Recreation Department, such as DOT; DNR; Portage Community School District; Columbia County; Chamber of Commerce; State of Wisconsin; federal entities; Ice Age Trail Alliance; and any supporting entity listed in the Activity Guide	All parks and recreation facilities	City	<2 years	Higher	Minimal - Staff Time	City budget
Action Item 4.2.1: Collaborate with Cub/Boy/Girl Scouts on simple(r) beautification and maintenance projects, such as mulching, tree-planting, installing benches, or trailbuilding		City	Ongoing	Higher	TBD	Donated time/talent/treasure (Eagle Scout project, for example)
Action Item 5.1.6: Investigate, fund, and construct one (1) all-abilities playground	TBD	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget;
Action Item 5.1.14: Plan for future facilities in future northside development(s)	TBD	City	5+ years	Lower	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
Action item 5.1.32 Add cameras at the following parks: (NOTE: 4. Collipp-Worden Park; 6. Goodyear Park; 13. Riverside Park; 16. Silver Lake Beach and Park already have cameras)	2. Bruce A. Smith Little League Complex; 5. Commerce Plaza; 10. Pauquette Park; 11. Pine Meadow Park; 18. Sunset Park; 19. Veteran's Memorial Fields & Fairgrounds;	City	2-5 years	Medium	TBD	City budget; Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)