



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)  
FOR  
Public Park Design**

Issued by:  
Village/Town of Somers  
Sealed proposals must be submitted  
No later than 5 P.M. Nov. 10, 2023 to:

Village of Somers  
P.O. Box 197  
Somers, WI 60137

LATE RESPONSES WILL BE REJECTED

For further information regarding this  
RFP contact:  
Kevin Poirier  
262-859-2822  
[kpoirier@somers.org](mailto:kpoirier@somers.org)

Issued: Sept. 27, 2023

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Section 2.0 Project Description and Scope  
Section 3.0 Proposal Requirements

## **Section 1.0 General Information**

The Village of Somers is seeking proposals to design a community park on parcel 82-4-222-094-0201 (Exhibit A), an approximately 24-acre parcel.

The park design should combine a civic/gathering space for the community, open areas, sports and other activities on a 24-acre site located across the street from the Village Hall.

The design shall emphasize a durable, flexible community space that will be used for various events.

The design budget is \$20,000 to \$30,000.

### **Background**

The property was deeded to the municipality by a local farmer for the purpose of a park. It is located on the north side of Highway E, which is the main corridor to access the Village of Somers. It is approximately across the road from the Somers Village Hall. The property is currently farmed by the family who donated the land. Of the property, about half is wetland. The selected firm shall review the property's existing conditions, surrounding topography, neighborhood characteristics and existing plans to identify possible locations for construction of the proposed amenities and related costs.

The Root Pike Watershed Initiative Network, a local environmental non-profit, has created scrapes near existing wetlands on the north side of the property to alleviate flooding in the area. The Village also owns an almost 8-acre adjoining parcel (82-4-222-093-0596 Exhibit B, Neumiller Park) across the Canadian Pacific Railroad, and an abutting 1.5-acre parcel where the Town's sanitary plant was located (82-4-222-094-0210 Exhibit C).

The Root Pike Watershed Initiative Network has done some work on the Neumiller property and has plans for trails on the property (Exhibit F). Exhibits D, E, F and G shows the trails proposed on the Gitzlaff property. The proposal should consider the proposed trails fit and be complimentary to the native plant and animal species.

The Village feels that the right park design could be the catalyst for the creation of a downtown for our community and spur improvements and development to adjacent properties.

The selected firm will be required to seek the public engagement as described in section 2.3 A Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the whole municipality was done in 2009 and documents have been provided as Exhibits.

A few amenities and ideas currently under consideration for the site include but are not limited to:

- Walking trails
- Sledding hill
- Splash pad water park
- Accessible playground
- Pickleball court
- Curling

- Spaces for performance and gathering
- Archery range
- Soccer fields
- Park programming

The design may also include some potential retail components for, farmer’s market stalls or temporary food trucks that could be incorporated into the concept to complement the use of the park and become an anchor for a “downtown” Somers.

Site improvements shall include a stage and shelter, lawn area for approximately 750 people, access from Highway E, restrooms, small play/playground area, picnic grove, lighting, electrical service, hardscape, site amenities and signage, parking, sports activities and utilities run to the site for bathrooms and power for entertainment.

The Village’s plan may include moving the current park south of the Village Hall to the new location. That park is currently uses several times per week by a local Soccer Club. Should the Contractor want to contact them, please reach out to the Village.

The Village expects to pursue alternative funding opportunities for the Project including grants if they become available. Firms with success and expertise in securing alternative funding will be given additional consideration.

### **1.1 Delivery Method and Submittal Requirements**

Sealed proposals shall be delivered to the office of the Village/Town of Somers, 7511 12th Street, P.O. Box 197, Somers, WI 53171, no later than Friday, Nov. 10, 2023, at 5 p.m.

Proposals received prior to the time of opening will be securely kept and unopened. No proposal received thereafter shall be considered. No responsibility shall be attached to the Village/Town for the premature or non-opening of a proposal not properly addressed and identified, except as otherwise provided by law.

Proposals arriving after the specified time, whether sent by mail, courier, or in person, shall not be accepted. These proposals will either be refused or returned unopened. It is the Contractor’s responsibility for timely delivery regardless of the methods used. Mailed proposals which are delivered after Friday, Nov. 10, 2023, at 5 p.m. will not be accepted regardless of postmarked date or time on the envelope.

All proposals are to be enclosed in a sealed opaque envelope labeled “Proposal for Public Park Design,” clearly displaying the Contractor’s name and address. The project, date and time of opening must be located in the lower-left corner of the envelope. Submittal of one (1) digital PDF copy on USB thumb drive and one (1) bound copy marked original. Additionally, (1) ‘Fee Proposal’ in a separate sealed envelope. As described herein. Shall be sent to:

Village of Somers Assistant to Village Administrator Kevin Poirier  
P.O. Box 197  
Somers, WI 60137  
[kpoirier@somers.org](mailto:kpoirier@somers.org)

### **1.2 Questions and Clarifications**

Any explanation desired by a Contractor regarding the meaning or interpretation of the RFP shall be directed to Assistant to Village Administrator Kevin Poirier and must be requested via email by 2 p.m., Friday, Oct. 13, 2023.

Questions will be addressed in an addendum and issued via email unless advised otherwise by 4:30 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 19, 2023. Any addenda shall become part of the Proposal Documents and will be furnished to all prospective Contractor. All Contractors must acknowledge each addendum in the submittal.

**1.3 Site Access**

The site can be viewed from the public right of way along Highway E. Firms are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the property and existing conditions. A map showing approximate property lines is made part of this document. Anyone wanting to get on the actual property should make arrangement with the tenant as the property is leased and being farmed.

**1.4 Withdrawal of Proposals**

No proposal may be withdrawn after the submittal deadline. All proposals must be valid for a minimum of ninety (90) days after the opening.

**1.5 Responsibility for Timely Delivery of Proposals**

The Contractor is solely responsible for ensuring delivery to the submittal location no later than the date and time specified.

**1.6 Contractor’s Cost**

Each Contractor acknowledges and agrees that the preparation of all materials for submittal to the Village of Somers and all presentations, related costs and travel expenses are at the Contractor’s expense. The Village of Somers is not, under any circumstances, responsible for any cost or expense incurred by the Contractor. In addition, each Contractor acknowledges and agrees that all documentation and materials submitted with their RFP shall remain the property of the Village of Somers.

The Village of Somers is not subject to state or federal or tax.

**1.7 Estimated Partial Project Schedule**

This calendar is subject to change at the sole discretion of the Village of Somers. All attempts will be made to adhere to this calendar. However, due to circumstances beyond our control, it may be necessary to modify the events and/or dates and times.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Date</b>
RFP Issued	Sept. 27, 2023
Last Date for Questions	Oct. 13. 2023
Addendum Posted (estimated and if needed)	Oct. 19. 2023
Proposals Due	Nov. 19, 2023
Contract Award (estimated)	Dec. 12. 2023
Public Engagement period	To be determined
Presentation to Elected Officials	To be determined

# **Section 2.0 Project Description and Scope**

## **2.1 Project Description**

The Village of Somers is planning the design of a park combining a civic/gathering space for the community, open areas, sports and other activities on a 24-acre site located across the street from the Village Hall.

The design shall emphasize a durable, flexible community space that will be used for various events.

Site improvements shall include a stage and shelter, lawn area for approximately 750 people, access from Highway E, restrooms, small play/playground area, picnic grove, lighting, hardscape, site amenities and signage.

The design may include some potential retail components for small restaurants, farmer's market stalls or temporary food trucks that could be incorporated into the concept to complement the use of the park.

Enclosed please find the following Exhibits as reference materials for your use in preparation of your proposal:

- Exhibit A: GIS Map of the property
- Exhibit B: GIS Map of Neumiller Park
- Exhibit C: GIS Map of old sanitary plant
- Exhibit D: Root Pike WIN Gitzlaff site plan
- Exhibit E: Root Pike WIN Gitzlaff Trail Proposal
- Exhibit F: Root Pike WIN Neumiller and Gitzlaff Master Plan
- Exhibit G: Root Pike WIN Gitzlaff Elevation
- Exhibit H: Root Pike WIN Neumiller proposed trails
- Exhibit I: Proposal Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Exhibit J: 2009 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

## **2.2 Scope of Services**

The scope of work outlined below is to be used as a general guide and is not intended to be a complete list of all work necessary to complete the project. Proposing consultants may suggest a modified scope as part of their proposal.

- Inventory and site analysis, including identifying opportunities and constraints
- Identification of environmental conditions and required agency permitting
- Public engagement meeting (as described below) and presentations
- Meetings with Village Staff
- Master Plan development describing proposed features supported with site maps, site plans, graphics and written text (includes accessibility), natural and land resources and strategy for protection and management.
- Project cost estimation and implementation plan.
- Identify sources of funding if know and available
- The final work will be a document that can be used to obtain bids for the construction of a park.

These are the general requirements for the creation of a Project and are not intended to be a comprehensive list of tasks and deliverables. It is expected that the chosen consultant will provide the Village with more specific recommendations for approaches, tasks, and deliverables based on their experience and expertise from past work.

### **2.3 Public Engagement**

Public engagement is an important part of this project. The design(s) are to be presented to residents during a public engagement phase to seek input from the public and key stakeholders. Public engagement can be done throughout a public meeting to be advertised and promoted to residents in advance. Presentation materials are to be provided during the meeting. Alternatively, public engagement can be achieved through a resident survey. If the Contractor chooses that alternative, results showing a significant engagement by resident is to be provided. Following the meeting, analysis of feedback is expected as a written document to be provided to the Village.

### **2.4 Collaboration**

The Consultant shall work in collaboration and cooperation with Village Staff and Board of Trustees and others as determined by the Village.

### **2.5 Submittal of Work**

Final submittal documents for the proposed improvements shall include:

- One bound color copy, including site plans, drawings and text of final plans of every stage of the project
- Presentation boards
- All documents in a digital PDF format on (2) identical USB Thumb Drives

## **Section 3.0 Proposal Requirements**

Submissions should be submitted as hard copy and electronically PDF (USB thumb drive) and should include the following:

### **3.1 Letter of Interest**

Provide a cover letter indicating your firm's understanding of the requirements of this specific job proposal. The letter should be a brief formal letter from the prospective consultant that provides information regarding the firm's interest in and ability to perform the requirements of this RFP. A person who is authorized to commit the Contractor's organization to perform the work included in the proposal must sign the letter. The cover letter should be on letterhead and state the legal name of the firm, phone number, fax number, mailing address and e-mail address. The letter should identify the primary contact person(s) for the project and include a resume for each, and their contact information.

### **3.2 Acceptance of Conditions**

Indicate any exceptions to the terms and conditions of the RFP, including the Scope of Services. Include a copy of all addendums issued to the RFP.

*Note:* Any prospective consultant's listing of exceptions in its proposal in no way obligates the Village at any time to change the conditions of its RFP. Exceptions may be unacceptable to the Village and be cause for rejection of a prospective consultant's proposal.

### **3.3 Qualifications and Selection**

All proposals will be evaluated by a review panel consisting of Village staff and others as determined. The panel will select a maximum of three submitting firms that may be invited to present their proposals during the interview stage. The panel will select the proposal which best meets the Village's requirements.

The Village of Somers may award Proposals in its best interest, reject proposals or any part of them, award contracts in whole or in part, waive what it concludes in its discretion are minor problems with proposals, including but not limited to formalities and technicalities. The Village may consider any alternative proposals which meet it needs.

The Village of Somers will evaluate proposals on various criteria including, but not limited to, the following:

- Overall qualifications of the firm relative to this particular project
- Technical competency of the personnel assigned to the project
- Samples of similar work projects
- Past records of performance as determined from all available information to include contacting former clients
- The ability to complete to work within the proposed project schedule
- Capability and experience in engaging the public in the planning process
- Demonstrated history of creativity in the planning process
- Communication skills with staff and boards
- Quality of the proposal
- Overall costs and fees to be charged

### **3.4 Firm Profile**

- Professional history of the firm and other team members and principals including their professional resumes.
- Include additional firm information to support your qualifications.
- List and provide examples of specific projects that are similar in size and scope.
- Identify the personnel, including the principal in charge, from your firm who will be performing this project and their responsibilities.

### **3.6 References**

Provide a minimum of three (3) references, including appropriate contact person, for whom the firm have completed similar projects. Include at a minimum the following:

- A project description in summary form showing key data for each project submitted.

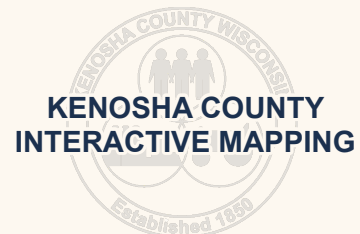
- A narrative project description and include the processes that were used.

### **3.7 Fee Proposal**

Proposal prices must be in US dollars, complete and inclusive of all charges at the time of submission.

Contractor certifies that prices, terms and conditions in the proposal will be firm for a period of (90) days from the date of submission unless otherwise stated. Proposals may not be withdrawn before the expiration of (90) days.

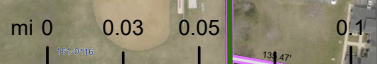




# Exhibit A



1:4,009  
1" = 334'



**DISCLAIMER** This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, data and information located in various state, county and municipal offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. Kenosha County is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. If discrepancies are found, please contact Kenosha County.

Date Printed: 8/8/2023



# Exhibit B



1:2,784  
1" = 232'



**DISCLAIMER** This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, data and information located in various state, county and municipal offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. Kenosha County is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. If discrepancies are found, please contact Kenosha County.

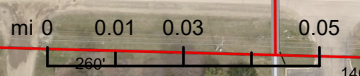
Date Printed: 8/7/2023



# Exhibit C



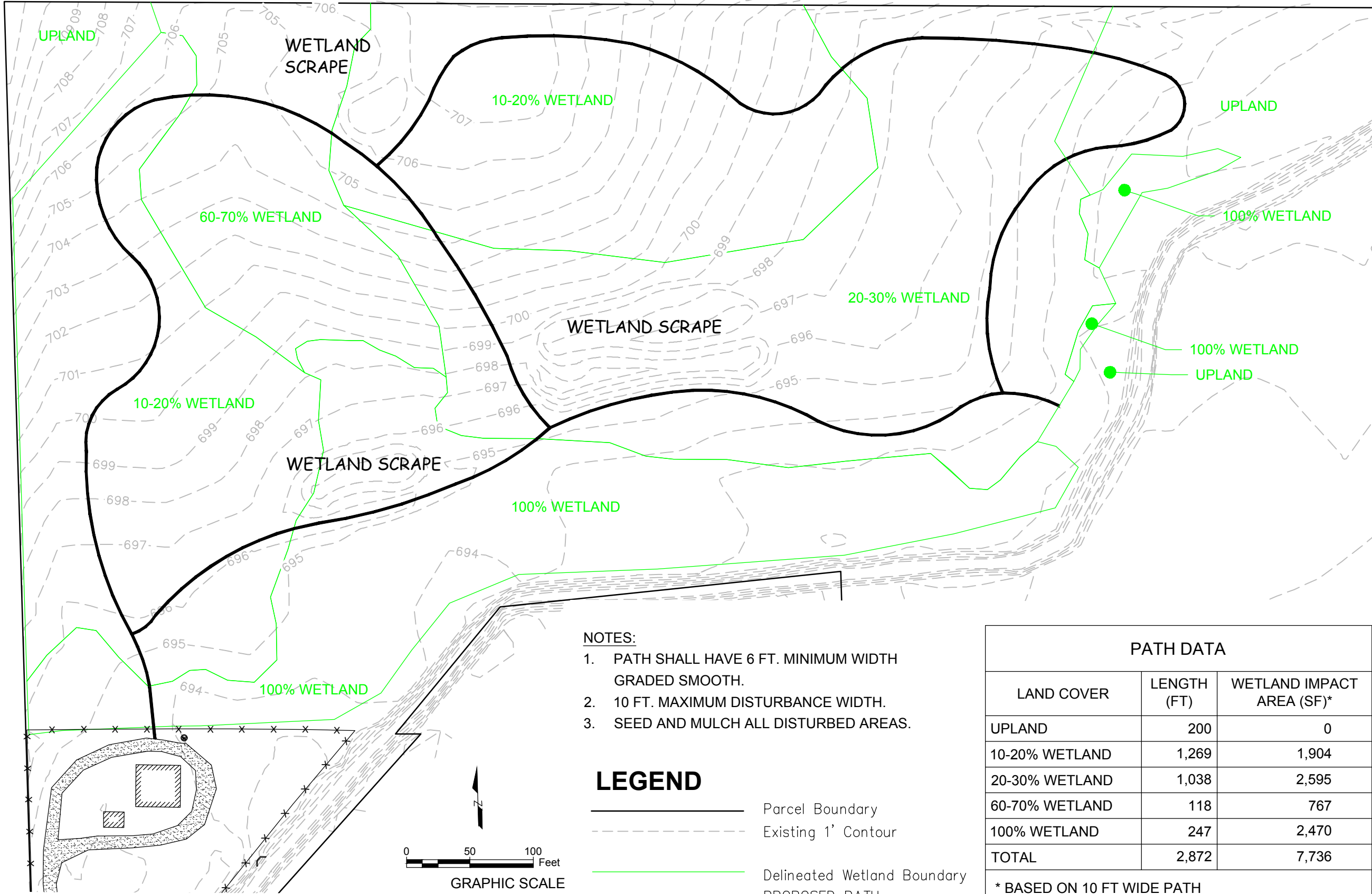
1:2,237  
1" = 186'



**DISCLAIMER** This map is neither a legally recorded map nor a survey and is not intended to be used as one. This drawing is a compilation of records, data and information located in various state, county and municipal offices and other sources affecting the area shown and is to be used for reference purposes only. Kenosha County is not responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. If discrepancies are found, please contact Kenosha County.

Date Printed: 8/7/2023

# Exhibit D



- NOTES:**
1. PATH SHALL HAVE 6 FT. MINIMUM WIDTH GRADED SMOOTH.
  2. 10 FT. MAXIMUM DISTURBANCE WIDTH.
  3. SEED AND MULCH ALL DISTURBED AREAS.

**LEGEND**

- Parcel Boundary
- Existing 1' Contour
- Delineated Wetland Boundary
- PROPOSED PATH

PATH DATA		
LAND COVER	LENGTH (FT)	WETLAND IMPACT AREA (SF)*
UPLAND	200	0
10-20% WETLAND	1,269	1,904
20-30% WETLAND	1,038	2,595
60-70% WETLAND	118	767
100% WETLAND	247	2,470
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,872</b>	<b>7,736</b>
* BASED ON 10 FT WIDE PATH		

DESCRIPTION

16745 W. Bluemound Road  
 Brookfield, WI 53005-5938  
 (262) 781-1000  
 rasmith.com

**raSmith**  
 CREATIVITY BEYOND ENGINEERING

Brookfield, WI | Milwaukee, WI | Appleton, WI | Madison, WI | Cedarburg, WI  
 Mount Pleasant, WI | Naperville, IL | Irvine, CA

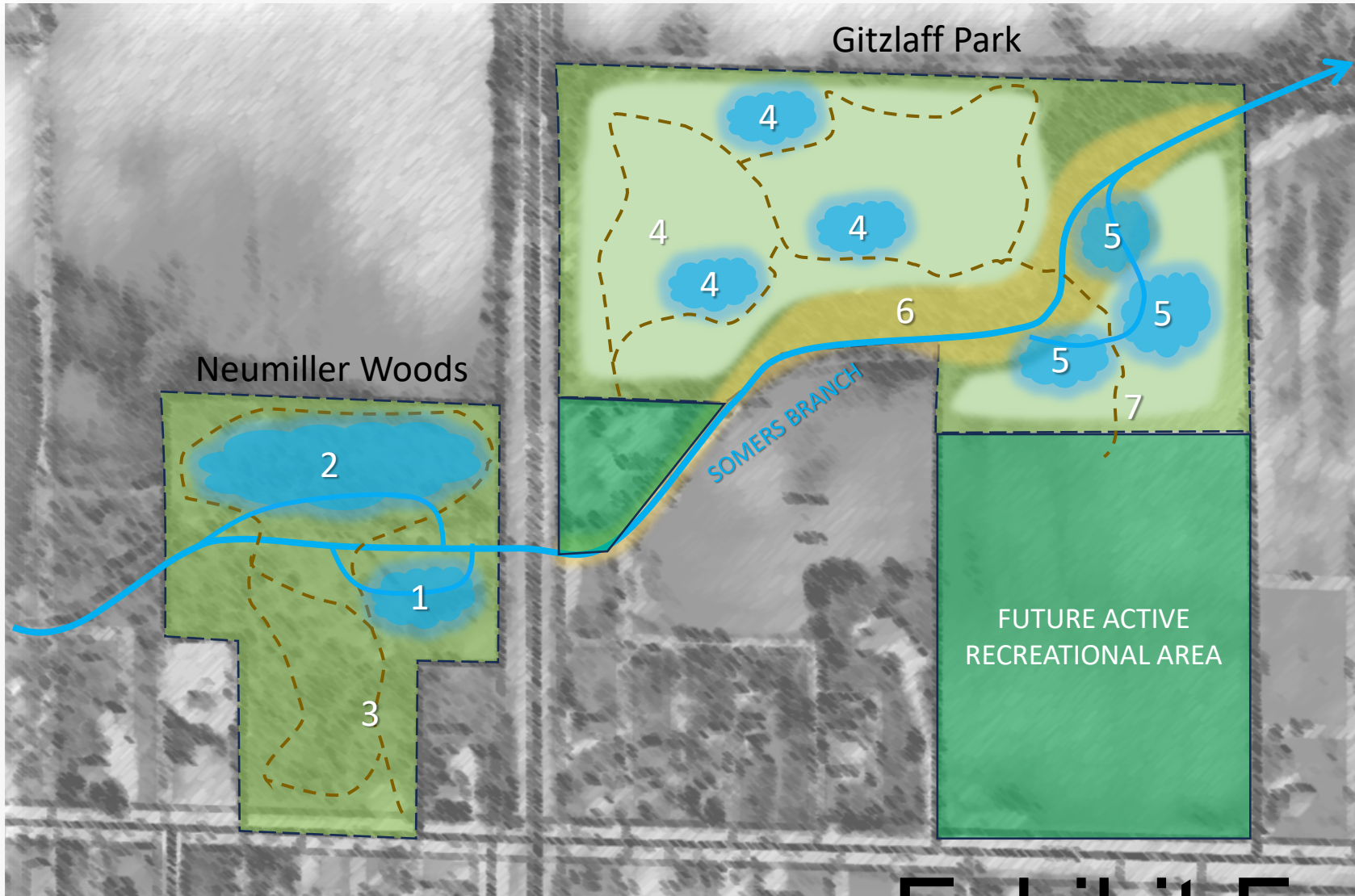
GITZLAFF PARK NORTH PATH  
 VILLAGE OF SOMERS

SITE PLAN

© COPYRIGHT 2020  
 R.A. Smith National, Inc.  
 DATE: 11/20/2020  
 SCALE: 1" = 80'  
 JOB NO. 1190823  
 PROJECT MANAGER:  
 GARY E. RAASCH, P.E.  
 DESIGNED BY: GER  
 CHECKED BY: ALT  
**SHEET NUMBER**  
 2



# Neumiller Woods and Gitzlaff Park Master Plan



## SUMMARY

### Neumiller Woods

1. **2019:** Created 1-acre wetland scrape / and overflow channel for stormwater capacity / water quality / native habitat
2. **Now:** Creating 3-acre wetland scrape/ channel for stormwater capacity / water quality / native habitat
3. **Future:** Create trail system and signage for passive recreational activities

### Gitzlaff Park

4. **2020:** Created three wetland scrapes and 10-acre prairie for stormwater capacity / water quality / native habitat
5. **Now:** Creating three wetland ponds, overflow channel native uplands for stormwater capacity / water quality / native habitat
6. **Future:** Restore stream corridor
7. **Future:** Connect trail system with North parcel and South end for passive recreational activities

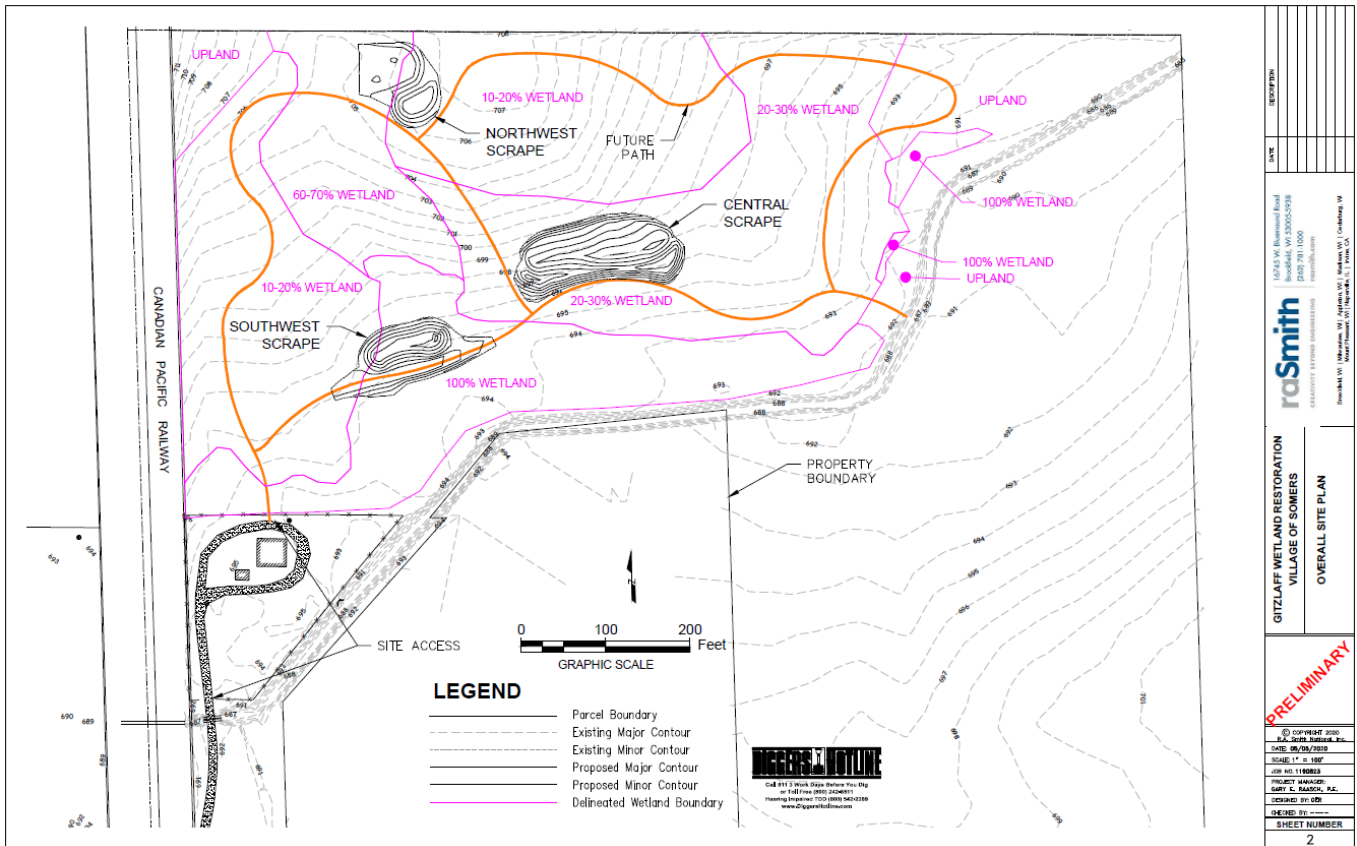
# Exhibit F

# Exhibit G

## LOCATION



## TRAIL SYSTEM



# Exhibit H

## ECO-HYDROLOGICAL ANALYSIS & RESTORATION PLANNING



### **SOMERS BRANCH OF THE PIKE RIVER**

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Report Prepared for:

Fund for Lake Michigan  
c/o Greater Milwaukee Foundation  
101 W. Pleasant Street, Suite 210  
Milwaukee, WI 53212

March, 2014



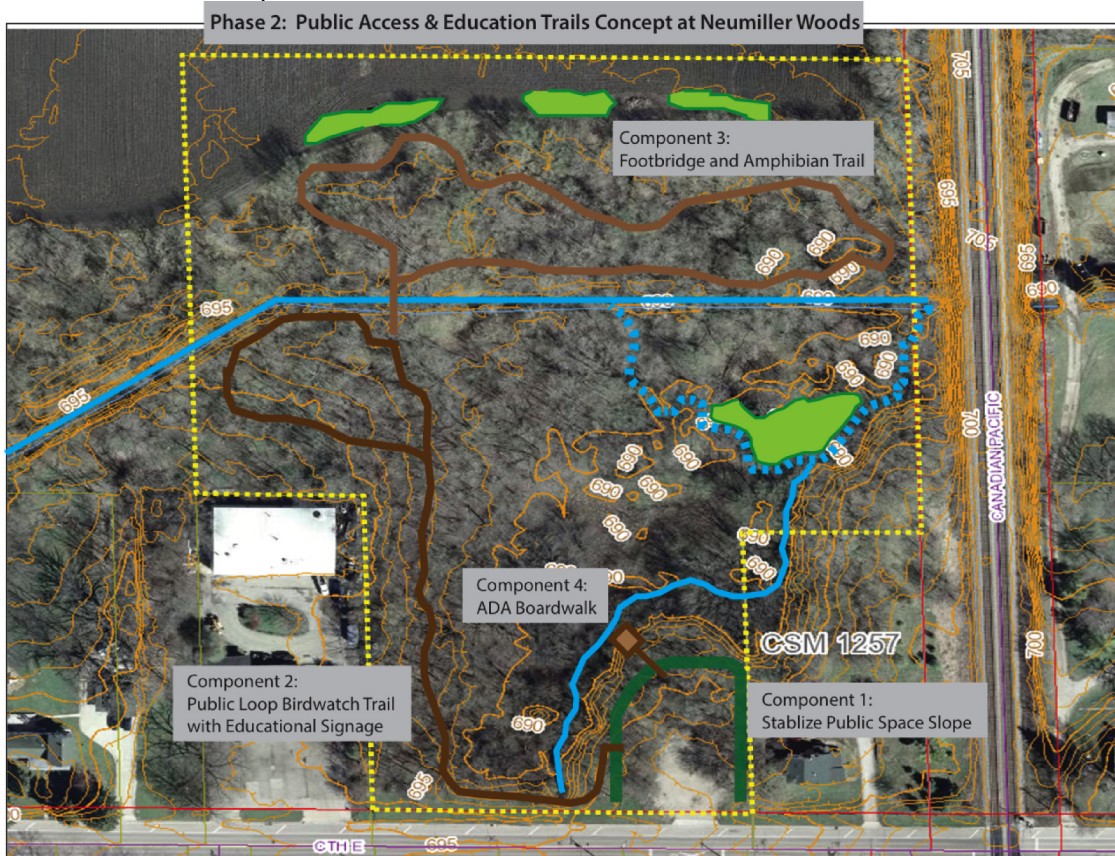


**viii) Enhancement of public access**

Neumiller Woods has 5.1 acres of wetland within the 8-acre park, so the public spaces available for picnic, parking and passive use are located in the uplands adjacent the wetland. The small upland knob on the south end of the site has a parking area and mowed picnic area.

Access to the woods for the public may be gained initially by means of a meandering firm and stable trail with an ADA compliant slope and width considerations. Figure 32 depicts a proposed loop design that would follow the topographic contour lines as well as the woods natural corridor and will avoid the wetlands delineated by Thompson and Associates in 2012. The west side of the loop and the area that connects to the east side are at higher elevations so at least this part of the trail can be easily accessible for longer periods during the year. As shown in Figure 32, the trail follows the stream, which is a major point of interest, a good place for informational signage and a potentially wider observational area with benches (Phase III). It curves to the northwest area of the property, which is less susceptible to human noise pollution and would allow for observation of wildlife.

In Wisconsin, trails within delineated wetland areas must be a boardwalk, which may be installed with a permit. A wooden boardwalk through the southern wetland portion of Neumiller could allow public access for better vision of native flora, fauna, and landscape features. Use of Scout projects or other community volunteer opportunities could provide a low cost boardwalk option.



**Figure 32—Concept Plan for Restoration of Neumiller Woods  
Phase 2 - Public Access (Source: ERP)**

PROPOSAL

Exhibit I

# Town of Somers

Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan





February 6, 2009

Mr. William A. Morris  
Administrator  
Town of Somers  
7511 12<sup>th</sup> Street  
Somers, WI 53171

Dear Mr. Morris:

Ruekert/Mielke is pleased to submit this proposal to complete a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) for the Town of Somers. In keeping with the RFP, as requested, we are providing the attached information for your review, and we will be happy to meet with you to discuss any questions or concerns that you may have before the project gets underway.

Hiring Ruekert/Mielke will result in a well-planned park system that will contribute to the physical fitness of your residents, positive social interaction, environmental quality, and overall attractiveness of the Town of Somers. Our multi-disciplinary project team includes a landscape architect, a planner, and an economic consultant, all of whom have experience working with communities to plan for, design, fund, and implement park projects. We have used this experience to successfully collaborate on the development of CORP's with numerous communities in southeastern Wisconsin where development pressure and potential park and open space deficiencies are very similar to those faced by Somers. The final plans provided the communities with direction and a long-term vision for their park systems, and also served as the basis for numerous successful grant applications to the State Stewardship program. We will work with the Town of Somers to prepare a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that can be used to define realistic goals to be accomplished within the next five years, as well as a vision for the future of your park and open space system. Together with Town of Somers staff, the Park Commission, and residents, we will coordinate a successful Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that is consistent and compliant with WDNR guidelines, and instrumental as a guide for the future of Somers' park and open space system.

We look forward to presenting our approach to you in detail. If you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Very truly yours,

RUEKERT/MIELKE

*Steven Brunner*<sup>MP</sup>

Steven A. Brunner, ASLA  
Senior Landscape Architect

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## Town of Somers—Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Prepared by Ruekert/Mielke for submittal on February 6, 2009

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	• Noncollusion Affidavit
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# Executive Summary

Ruekert/Mielke is excited about the opportunity to work with the Town of Somers to create a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP). Parks and open space areas are key components of high quality living environments. From mini-parks that provide small green oases in urban settings all the way up to regional parks serving people from near and far, a well-designed park system adds immeasurable value to any community. Parks and open spaces serve a broad range of key community functions, including:

- Meeting human needs for recreation and aesthetics
- Protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- Shaping the extent and patterns of development

Proper recreation-based planning requires a broad-based, fiscally responsible approach that is rooted in specific local needs and interests. We will help you evaluate your park system against the diverse needs of your residents, assess the geographic distribution of those facilities in relation to the people who will use them, generate realistic cost estimates for planned improvements and acquisitions, and evaluate all available funding opportunities. Public participation in the planning process and a pertinent review of all local and regional plans and applicable park-related data will ensure that your park planning is coordinated with anticipated future growth and land use in the area. The final CORP can point the community in the direction towards achieving an interconnected community network of parks that are also linked to parks and open space areas of adjacent communities by a system of recreational trails.

The ultimate result of creating and implementing your Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan will be a well planned park and open space system that will benefit the community in many ways. Somers can use the plan to guide future planning and enhance the following community-wide benefits:

## Individual/Personal

People benefit in health and physical fitness when they participate in outdoor activities, and the general quality of life is improved by experiencing the natural environment.

## Social

Visiting a park promotes social interaction between families and the community.

## Environmental

Environmentally sensitive design and the preservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat, and recreation spaces help to protect diversity and water quality.

## Economic

A well-planned and implemented park system will attract people and business to a community.

# Firm Information

## History

Ruekert/Mielke was founded in 1946 in Waukesha by John H. Mielke and Frank J. Ruekert, Sr., both registered professional engineers and land surveyors. Ruekert/Mielke was incorporated in 1956. We have grown along with the municipalities of southeastern Wisconsin, and we now employ 135 skilled people. Through the years, many municipalities have relied on our firm to provide them with the most current ideas and techniques with personal attention to detail. Today, Ruekert/Mielke is a multi-disciplinary firm offering a wide range of consulting, design and engineering services.

## Services

Ruekert/Mielke currently provides the following municipal engineering services: Civil and Electrical Engineering, GIS Mapping Services, SCADA, Water and Ground Water Supply, Hydrogeology, Wastewater, Construction Administration, Financial Services and Cost of Service Studies, TIF District Creation and Management, Storm Water Management, Street and Highway Design, Surveying, Business and Industrial Park Design, Municipal Building Design, Municipal Planning, Park and Open Space Design and Planning, and Landscape Architecture.

## Why Hire Ruekert/Mielke?

Since the design of Wagner Park in the City of Pewaukee in 1996, Ruekert/Mielke has provided park planning and design services to many communities across Wisconsin. Somers can expect the same attention to detail with the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as with our first park planning project. We believe strongly in creating solutions that meet the recreational needs of our clients in a sustainable manner because even the smallest natural resource elements are valuable components of much larger ecosystems, and negative impacts to special natural resources can inflict irreversible damage to the environment as a whole.

### Key Contact Person

Steven A. Brunner, ASLA  
sbrunner@ruekert-mielke.com

### Type of Organization

Ruekert/Mielke is wholly owned by our employees.

### Total Personnel

135

### Locations

#### Waukesha

W233 N2080 Ridgeview  
Parkway  
Waukesha, WI 53188-1020  
262.542.5733  
262.542.5631 (fax)

#### Kenosha

6905 Green Bay Road  
Suite 204  
Kenosha, WI 53142  
262.953.2650  
262.953.2655 (fax)

## *Familiarity with the Town of Somers*

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Ruekert/ Mielke and the town of Somers have created a successful relationship over the past several years. This relationship has allowed Ruekert/Mielke to become familiar with Town staff, Town residents, and the needs of the community. In addition to this Ruekert/ Mielke has also become familiar with other nearby communities in Kenosha County. Because of our background and knowledge of the local area, it allows us to have the insight into your needs while also listening to your goals. This knowledge will help us to hit the ground running on the development of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the Town.

Starting in 2007, our professionals successfully collaborated with the Town of Somers on the development of the fifteen neighborhood plans listed in this RFP. A portion of our Comprehensive Outdoor recreation Plan project team was extensively involved in these projects, and they gained an understanding of the needs of Town residents through the plan development process. We have also collaborated with other Kenosha County communities, Randall and Twin Lakes most recently, on the development of Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans similar to that requested by Somers. Our current involvement with Kenosha County in an engineering support capacity has provided us with a firm grasp of the existing infrastructure and development trends in Somers and other nearby communities. This experience will be beneficial during the future park planning phase of this project.

Our Kenosha office is located a short 10-minute drive from the Somer's Town Hall. Ruekert/ Mielke's main office in Waukesha, Wisconsin is a very manageable 45-minute drive to the Somers Town Hall. This short distance, and the fact that our project team members consistently are involved in planning projects in both offices, will help to ensure that we can provide the Town with fast response times and efficient communication, and that we can set up face to face meetings in a timely manner. Steve Brunner, Project Manager, also has his own familiarity with the Town of Somers, having spent eight years of his childhood living in the Town. Steve attended Somers Elementary School and frequented the parks near the Town Hall.

# Scope of Services

Ruekert/Mielke will complete a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan that will meet the specifications of the RFP as well as Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources guidelines for development of a CORP. Our project team anticipates a four phase work program to be necessary for the development of the Town of Somers CORP, to be carried out as follows:

## Phase I

Phase I of this project is the information gathering and analysis stage that will lay the groundwork for a recommended Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the Town of Somers. There are seven components to this stage:

- 1) Initial Project Meeting
- 2) Community Profile
- 3) Review of Pertinent Planning Documents, Policies, and Ordinances
- 4) Formulation of CORP Goals, Objectives, and Policies
- 5) Inventory of Existing Park and Open Space Lands and Facilities
- 6) Needs Assessment—Public Input
- 7) Needs Assessment—Recreation Standards

*Ruekert/Mielke's approach to each of these seven components is outlined below:*

### 1. Initial Project Meeting

Our project team anticipates an initial project meeting to be held with Town staff and the Somers Park Commission to identify the CORP development process and to finalize schedule, project milestones, meeting and deliverable dates, lines of communication and methods for public involvement, and progress notification and billing procedures. We will also identify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the process, and define clear expectations and intended project outcomes. At this meeting our project team will lead a discussion to obtain feedback and initial insights from staff and the Park Commission regarding each Town park and open space property. We will take this opportunity to coordinate the provision by the Town and Kenosha County of all necessary maps, aerial photos, and CAD/GIS base map data for use in development of the CORP.



# Scope of Services

## 2. Community Profile

Ruekert/Mielke will research and compile information specific to the planning region. This will include Town of Somers climatological data, geography, soils, environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas, watershed and lake data, demographics, and population projections.

## 3. Coordination with Pertinent Planning Documents, Policies, and Ordinances

We will review and coordinate with the Town of Somers adopted neighborhood plans, The 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, and other local, regional, and state planning documents, policies, and ordinances for their application to CORP recommendations.

## 4. Formulation of CORP Goals, Objectives, and Policies

Somers' intended direction for the future of the Town park and open space system will be identified and documented. Establishment of goals, objectives, and policies represents the basic values and needs of the community, and therefore forms the basis for subsequent development of park and open space standards. We will assist the Town with the creation of goals, objectives, and policies that best meet the outdoor recreational needs of Somers residents.

## 5. Inventory of Existing Park and Open Space Lands and Facilities

Ruekert/Mielke's team will visit each of Somers' public parks, open spaces, and trails to inventory the existing facilities and their relative condition. We will evaluate site access, pedestrian and vehicle circulation, connection to adjacent properties, ADA compliance and site utilities and infrastructure. We will also identify developed vs. undeveloped acreage ratios, to include an inventory of environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas. This information will be incorporated into map exhibits to be included in the final document. Properties under the jurisdiction of Kenosha County, the State of Wisconsin, local school districts, and adjacent communities will be included in this inventory where shared park facilities contribute to the provision of parkland and recreational opportunities to Somers.

At this point in the process we will begin to formulate base maps for each of the Town's park and open space properties, using the GIS data provided by the Town and Kenosha County. These base maps will be used later in the creation of graphic representations of each of the Town's existing and proposed parklands.

## Scope of Services

### 6. Needs Assessment—Public Input

The initial needs assessment of the Somers park and open space system will involve public meetings. In the Town of Somers, as in many communities, the Park Commission serves as an ongoing citizens group (albeit vested with a much greater level of responsibility than any ad hoc group would bear), with park-related opinions that are generally reflective of the Town residents. We anticipate the visioning process to mainly take the form of interaction between our project team and the Park Commission at publicly advertised meetings, with other interested residents welcome to attend and participate as well. In the completion of CORP's for other communities, our professionals have successfully and efficiently incorporated public visioning workshops as part of the plan development process. We strive to analyze and use the information obtained from these workshops as thoroughly as possible because we realize that public sentiment is an extremely important planning tool, and one of the most critical elements in the development of a community planning document. The wealth of information that can be obtained through the process can provide a consensus that predicates a direction for the project. Ruekert/Mielke will attend and conduct public visioning workshops at four (4) Park Commission meetings. Development of a community mail survey can be substituted for one of the meetings, at the discretion of the Park Commission.

### 7. Needs Assessment—Recreation Standards

The Somers park and open space system will be evaluated against a system of guidelines and standards for the provision of different types of park facilities and access to those facilities. The National Recreation and Park Association will be used as a resource for development of standards specific to the Town of Somers. These standards will include park service area guidelines, projected service populations, parkland allocation recommendations, and areas identified to be park-deficient or under served. Recommendations that are formulated as a result of this needs assessment will address issues related to access, circulation, pedestrian barriers, and safety, and will be modified as necessary to relate specifically to the Town of Somers. Included in this section will be an overall evaluation of disabled accessibility based on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines. The park system will also be analyzed against Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) goals and objectives to identify deficiencies in opportunities for "mainstream" recreational activities.

# Scope of Services

## Phase II

Phase II is comprised of the development of recommendations for improvements and additions to the Town of Somers park and open space system, based on information from Phase I. There are four components to this phase:

- 1) Recommended Park and Open Space Improvements
- 2) Parkland Acquisition
- 3) Management and Operation Practices
- 4) Capital Improvement Plan

*Ruekert/Mielke's approach to each of these four components is outlined below:*

### 1. Recommended Park and Open Space Improvements

Based on the information obtained in Phase I, Ruekert/Mielke will formulate recommendations for improvements to the existing Town of Somers park and open space system. Improved accessibility, upgrades to equipment and facilities, energy and maintenance efficiency upgrades, natural resource enhancement, and general cleanup are some of the issues that will be addressed for individual sites.

### 2. Parkland Acquisition

Ruekert/Mielke will work with the Town to evaluate any existing deficiencies in the provision of parks and open space land, and any needs for additional park land to serve anticipated future population growth, as identified in the needs assessments. We will identify the type and size of park that will satisfy deficiencies for specific area and individual neighborhoods. We will also recommend a policy that establishes criteria for parkland acquisition. The intent of this policy will be to define acquisition priorities, satisfy long-range maintenance objectives, and accomplish the overall goals of the CORP.

### 3. Management and Operation Practices

Our staff will review current Town park management and operations practices. We will evaluate maintenance procedures and staffing and recommend future upgrades to coincide with expansions and upgrades to park and open space lands and facilities.



# Scope of Services

## 4. Capital Improvement Plan

After the recommended improvements and acquisitions are completed, we will collaborate with Town staff and the Somers Park Commission to prioritize the future improvements to existing parks, development of currently undeveloped parks, and acquisition and development of future park and open space sites and facilities. Budget projections will be developed and used to create an implementation schedule for the immediate five-year period of grant funding eligibility coinciding with the adoption of the CORP. Ruekert/Mielke's Municipal Economics & Planning division will identify available funding mechanisms and how each can be applied to Somers's park system. These will include grants, user fees, impact fees and parkland dedication ordinances.

### Phase III

Phase III consists of the creation of the map exhibits that will accompany the main CORP text. Ruekert/Mielke's GIS Department will utilize base map information obtained from the City and Kenosha County to develop graphics that clearly illustrate various components of Phases I and II. There are two components to this phase:

- 1) Creation of overall park system maps
- 2) Development of graphic representations for each of the Town's existing and proposed park sites

*Ruekert/Mielke's approach to each of these two components is outlined below:*

1. Creation of overall park system maps

Ruekert/Mielke's project team will produce graphic maps illustrating the location of each of the Town parkland sites, the location of environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas in the Town, park service areas for each type of park classification, and general areas recommended for the development of new parkland sites.

2. Development of graphic representations for each of the Town's existing and proposed parkland sites

Our project team will prepare graphic representations of each of the Town's existing and proposed parkland sites, for Somers to use as exhibits for display purposes, and for possible inclusion with WDNR Stewardship grant applications.

## Scope of Services

The graphics for the existing parkland sites will consist of labeled 22" x 34" exhibits created with aerial photography and topographical data available from Kenosha County. Each exhibit will depict and identify the existing recreational facilities on the site.

The graphics for the proposed parks will consist of conceptual two-dimensional master plan graphics will be created for each of the proposed parks. These graphics will depict a proposed facility layout as formulated from input received at the public informational meetings listed in Phase 1. The final conceptual master plan graphics for each proposed park will be 22" x 34" exhibits with the proposed facility layout superimposed on top of a base map for each property. The base maps will be created with aerial photography and topographical and cadastral data provided by the Town and Kenosha County. It is anticipated that the exhibits produced under the scope of this project are to be preliminary in nature, to be used primarily for public education and fund raising, and that further refinement will be necessary before individual exhibit plans will be adopted as master plans for these proposed projects in the future. The following parkland sites will be included in this effort:

- 1) 20 acres adjacent to Town Hall (7511 12th Street)
- 2) 27 acres directly north of the Town Hall on Hwy "E"
- 3) 3 acres at Fabiano Park (812 12th Street)
- 4) 4 acres in the Country Charm subdivision at the end of 94th Avenue
- 5) 35 acres on Hwy "EA," approximately 1/4 mile south of Hwy "E," on the west side of the road
- 6) 1.65 acres on 64th Avenue, at the end of 45th Street in Valley View subdivision

### Phase IV

*Finalization of the Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Plan will occur in Phase IV. There are two components to this phase:*

- 1) Draft presentation
- 2) Formal approval

*Ruekert/Mielke's approach to each of these two components is outlined below:*

1. Draft presentation

Ruekert/Mielke's project team will conduct a meeting with Town staff and the Park Commission to present a preliminary draft of the CORP and the graphic exhibits

# Scope of Services

for the existing and proposed parks for review and discussion at least three weeks prior to presentation of the final CORP. Any necessary revisions will be made in the three weeks following the meeting, and the revised draft and exhibits will be provided to Town Board members for their review before the formal adoption meeting.

## 2. Formal approval

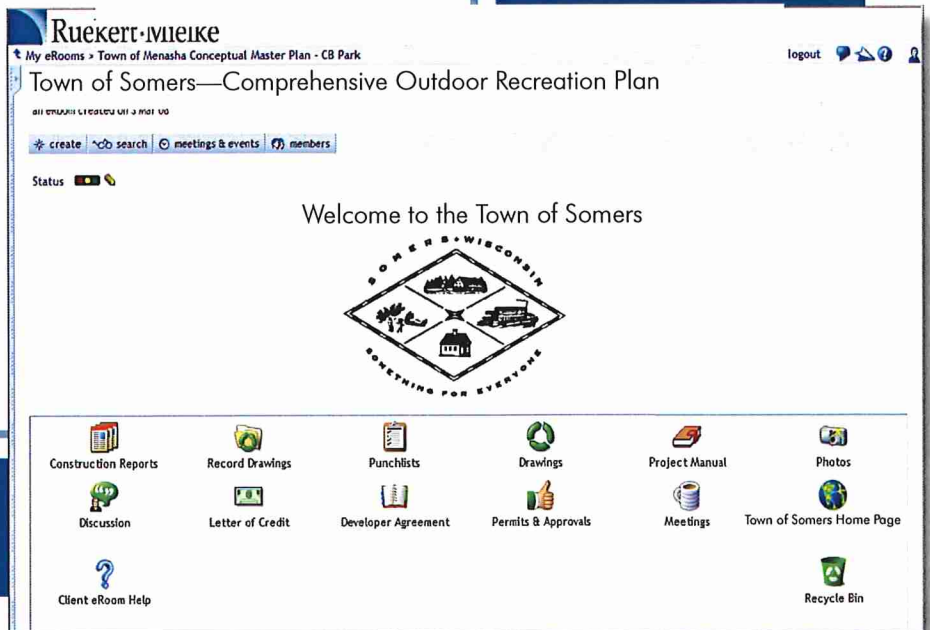
The Town will schedule a final meeting with the Town Board at which time the formal approval or adoption of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan will take place. As a follow-up to this meeting, Ruekert/Mielke will submit to the Town fifteen (15) bound copies of the final CORP document, a 22" x 34" graphic exhibit of each of the existing and proposed Town Parks, and a CD containing the CORP, all exhibits, and all support materials, data files, maps, and significant project records and documentation in digital PDF format.

## Project Communication

We have very effective and cost efficient ways to shrink the distance between our offices. In many respects, this project will proceed as if we are sitting in an office down the hall.

Ruekert/Mielke has an intranet application called "eRooms." All documents applicable to a project are stored in a unique location accessible to our clients. By simply logging onto eRooms through our website, project stakeholders will have 24 hour per day, 7 day per week access to project files. This includes PDF files of documents, plans, correspondence, telephone logs and other information. You will have instant access to information, and be able to print out hard copies at your discretion.

In addition, our teleconferencing capabilities are state-of-the-art. We can work together with you on a very personal basis using this technology.



# Project Experience

## Town of Norway Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) Update

Ruekert/Mielke is currently working with the Town of Norway, in Racine County, to complete an update to the Town's 1990 Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan.

Norway is currently deficient in the provision of parkland to its residents. The Town's park system consists largely of one sizable community park, where most recreational events currently take place. The majority of the Town's residential neighborhoods do not have safe pedestrian access to this park. A large portion of our project team's work to develop the CORP has been to identify areas of the Town where the recreational needs of the residents are currently not being satisfied. In concert with this evaluation we are also working to identify privately-owned land in these areas with potential for future parkland development to help satisfy the deficiency.

Many of the main roadways in the Town have a very rural and open cross section, and large properties with open rights-of-way facilitate the development of off-road trails. Because of the parkland deficiencies in the Town, trails have become one of the main focuses of the Norway CORP, and we are currently evaluating opportunities to implement trails that would provide neighborhoods that are currently underserved in terms of access to parks with safe connections to both other Town trails and other existing regional trails.

## Village of Saukville Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) Update

Ruekert/Mielke recently completed work on a CORP update for the Village of Saukville, in Ozaukee County. The update replaces the Village's outdated previous plan, which was prepared in 1996.

Saukville is a rapidly growing community because of its small town character and charm and still manageable commute to downtown Milwaukee. The Village's existing park system provides ample park facilities in terms of park acreage, but it was determined through the plan development process that access to the recreational facilities from Saukville's residential neighborhoods was deficient. A major component of the Village's CORP was therefore to identify opportunities for new park sites to better serve the population. The final plan also identified potential trail routes to connect Saukville's residents to the existing park system and parks and destination points in neighboring communities, and ultimately to provide them access to a regional trail system.

## Town of Randall Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) update

Randall, with a population of about 3,000 people, is a rapidly growing community. According to the Wisconsin State Demographic Services Center, Randall's population is estimated to have grown 4.88% since the year 2000 census. This is the second highest

## Project Experience

rate in the County and well above the overall county growth rate of 2.29%. Much of the Town's land is agricultural use, yet the population density is nearly 200 residents per square mile. Community leaders recognize the importance of planning for future outdoor recreation needs in light of current development pressures.

Ruekert/Mielke worked with Randall in 2003 to create the Town's first ever CORP, and our project team again collaborated with the Town in 2008 to create an update to the plan to maintain eligibility for grant funding through the Wisconsin Stewardship program. The CORP development process was characterized by active citizen involvement, and input from Town residents was instrumental in defining a direction for future development of the local park system. Ruekert/Mielke evaluated the status of each of the Town's parks and open spaces in terms of general functionality, ease and quality of maintenance, and accessibility to the physically disabled. We determined the need for additional or different facilities. Our planners and landscape architects worked closely with the Park Commission to establish goals, objectives and policies to help guide the future of area parks and open spaces. Randall has already benefited from the five-year grant eligibility afforded to the Town by the WDNR's approval of the CORP through the receipt of a Stewardship Grant in 2003 for the development of a new lakeshore park, and a 2005 grant for the development of a multi-use trail. Ruekert/Mielke also completed the design and engineering plans for the development of the park project and the trail.

### City of Oconomowoc Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)

In 2008, Ruekert/Mielke completed an update to the City of Oconomowoc Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan using a process that was specifically tailored to meet their needs. Ruekert/Mielke had also assisted the City with the development of their previous CORP, and our background with the project and the City's park system helped to facilitate the update. One of the main challenges in developing the update was to integrate a large parcel that had recently been annexed into the City—the 1,600 acre Pabst Farms Tax Incremental Finance District.

The City has a Parks and Recreation Board and an extensive schedule of activities managed by the Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department so the City needed a firm that would work well with these departments. Our staff worked with the City to establish a process that would be tailored to fit their specific local requirements concerning the timeline, level of staff involvement and degree of public participation.

With new development proceeding at a brisk pace, it was important that Ruekert/Mielke design a planning process that would allow for full local involvement without adding any additional strain to municipal staff. Our planners and landscape architects compiled all



## Project Experience

existing City records pertaining to the CORP, and reviewed them for completeness against the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource requirements for CORP's. Ruekert/Mielke formatted all of the materials that would become part of the finished document so that municipal staff could easily review them for accuracy. Straightforward questionnaires and tables were also assembled to simplify the additional data gathering that City staff would be undertaking.

Ruekert/Mielke's planners and landscape architects understood that maintaining a close and responsive working relationship with the City of Oconomowoc was the key to creating a plan reflective of local needs and desires. Therefore, we maintained open communication with City staff throughout the entire process via e-mail, fax and phone. The public was formally invited to comment in the initial and final stages of the process and their attendance was welcomed at Park Board meetings. We also assisted City staff in responding to questions from members of the public, as well as elected and appointed officials. Our strategy was very successful. The relationship forged between the City and Ruekert/Mielke produced a high quality document that will meet the community's needs for years to come.

### Village of Twin Lakes Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) Update

Ruekert/Mielke assisted the Village of Twin Lakes, in Kenosha County, with an update of the Village's CORP.

Twin Lakes is a popular vacation destination and the residential population swells in the summertime because of the many recreational opportunities that are provided by lakes Mary and Elizabeth, two bodies of water that are completely surrounded by the Village, and also the community's namesake. This seasonal influx of people to the Village, along with heavy development pressure, creates an inflated demand for public parks, especially ones that provides access to the water.

The Twin Lakes Board of Park Commissioners hired Ruekert/Mielke to help them create a plan that will provide direction for the future maintenance and upkeep of the Village's existing park system, and also recommendations for additions of new park facilities to keep up with demand. After an initial evaluation of the Twin Lakes park system, Ruekert/Mielke conducted a series of public meetings to receive input from Village residents. Preliminary draft recommendations were developed and approved by the Board, and our project team worked with the Village to develop a capital improvement schedule for the next five years, and to investigate funding opportunities. Twin Lakes was granted interim eligibility in May of 2005 for their in-progress work on the CORP, and were subsequently able to apply for funding through the State Stewardship program for the re-development

## Project Experience

of their largest lakefront park, Lance Park. The application was successful and Twin Lakes was awarded \$207,500 for improvements to the park.

### Village of Mukwonago Outdoor Recreation Plan

The Village of Mukwonago retained Ruekert/Mielke to update the Village Outdoor Recreation Plan to current standards, with the goal of restoring eligibility to the Village for State and Federal park-related funding opportunities. Our project team updated the existing decade old plan to include a current inventory of existing park and open space lands and facilities, a needs assessment to identify park system deficiencies for the present and the future, and recommendations for future improvements and acquisitions of new park properties. The Village was awarded a combined total of \$146,675 for improvements to Minor Park and Miniwaukan Park.

### Town of Oconomowoc Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)

Ruekert/Mielke collaborated with the Town of Oconomowoc to complete a CORP. The Town of Oconomowoc is facing intense pressure from development, as well as loss of land through annexation by the rapidly growing City of Oconomowoc. Town residents are extremely concerned about preserving the area's wealth of environmental corridors and water features while providing ample recreational opportunities for residents and tourists alike.

The Town of Oconomowoc remains very rural in character. However, the densely populated areas exist mainly around the two large lakes, and the transportation links to main highways are gradually consuming more and more open space. With an extensive amount of agricultural land and natural open space as of yet undeveloped, an integral component of the CORP development was to identify opportunities for future parks and protected natural areas before they are "swallowed up" by development. Results of the CORP study indicated a future need for both additional active and passive recreational opportunities. Through the identification of potentially suitable park lands, the Town now has a direction to work toward, and can precede development and acquire the identified areas as they become available.

The Town provided extensive input into the development of the CORP, and numerous Town representatives worked integrally with our project team to create a truly comprehensive plan. The Town of Oconomowoc acted rapidly before the completion and adoption of the CORP. They acquired a key 66-acre parcel that Ruekert/Mielke had proposed for acquisition as a future community park in a preliminary draft of the plan.

With development pressure as high as it has been in the Town of Oconomowoc, a key

## Project Experience

recommendation of our project team identified in the CORP was to take full advantage of all available opportunities for park funding and land acquisition, which included land dedication policies imposed on developers. Ruekert/Mielke's financial analysts were instrumental in this process that has already produced several suitable park and open space areas as the result of developer dedication.

### Village of Thiensville Park and Open Space Plan

Ruekert/Mielke teamed with the Village of Thiensville to update a five year-old Park and Open Space Plan that was originally developed by the Southeast Regional Planning Commission. The original plan was never formally adopted and the Village was looking to create an upgrade that more closely met the current park-related vision of the study area, which includes the entire Village of Thiensville and the central portion of the City of Mequon. The Ruekert/Mielke Plan was adopted in 2001, granting the Village five years of eligibility for State and Federal funding for park and open space improvements and acquisitions. The Village has subsequently applied for and received several grants for acquisition and development of new park lands.

### Village of Hartland Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) Update

Ruekert/Mielke updated the Village of Hartland's CORP. This planning project included interconnected bicycle and pedestrian paths to provide residents access to the Bark River green space corridor and the Ice Age Trail.

## Ruekert/Mielke Park Design Experience

### Town of Menasha – CB Park Master Plan

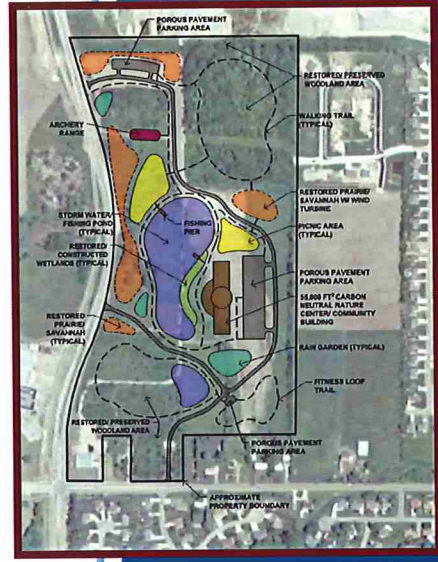
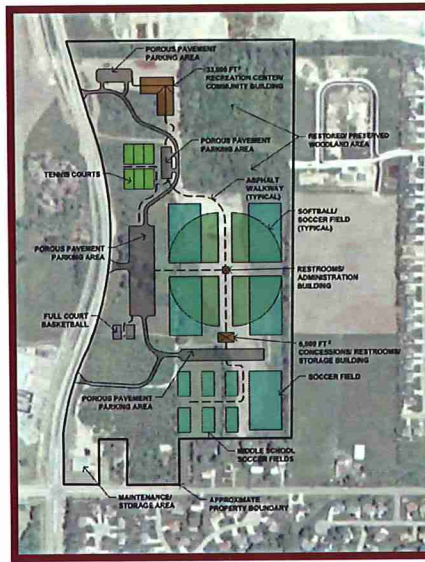
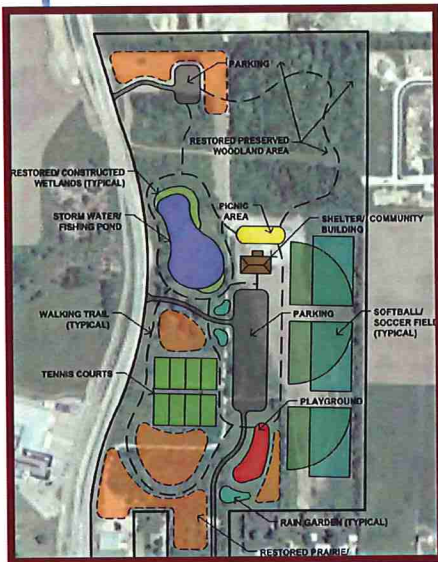
Ruekert/Mielke recently completed work on a park master plan for a 63-acre tract of land in the Town of Menasha, in Winnebago County. The Town has owned the vacant parcel for several years, and it is affectionately referred to as "CB Park." The existing site conditions present opportunities to create a large mixed-use park that can offer recreational opportunities for a variety of potential user groups. A large component of Ruekert/Mielke's project efforts involved working with Menasha to create a plan that meets the recreational facility needs of the community, and that also appropriately preserves the many significant natural resources on the site. Ruekert/Mielke designed the master plan based on information gathered at two public listening sessions, and input from the Town's Park and Recreation Commission.

Our project team also recommended the incorporation of sustainable or "green" design concepts to the maximum extent possible, so that the final CB Park design was one that

# Project Experience

minimizes the impact of any facility development on the existing landscape, and that insures the preservation of the special site resources.

Ruekert/Mielke produced *three concept alternatives* for CB Park.



## City of Oconomowoc—Wood Creek Park Master Plan

Ruekert/Mielke created a master plan for the development of this 4.6-acre site into a neighborhood park. The design process included a series of public meetings to obtain feedback from residents of the adjacent neighborhood. Ruekert/Mielke used this feedback efficiently to streamline the design process and ultimately reach consensus in a manner that fit into the City of Oconomowoc's tight time frame. Park design elements included a multi-purpose playfield, a basketball court, an ADA-accessible playground, two picnic areas, a restroom/concession building with attached shelter, a hard-surface walking trail and off-street parking.

## Kenosha County—West End Park

Ruekert/Mielke is currently working with Kenosha County on the first phase of development for a new County Park. The 234-acre site is located in the southwestern corner of the County in the Towns of Randall and Wheatland. A large portion of the site was once operated as a private gravel pit, and it was purchased by the County eight years ago for future park development. The site encompasses large tracts of woodlands

Our project team recommended the *incorporation of sustainable or green design* concepts at CB Park.

## Project Experience

and wetlands, as well as a 40-acre spring-fed lake. Initial project work has included topographical survey, master plan development, and soil and water testing. Because the site was an operational gravel pit for many years, it was necessary to analyze the soils, groundwater, and lake water for bacteria, heavy metals, and other pollutants so that any necessary remediation can take place before the final plans are developed. The master plan for the park includes a large swimming beach, a main pavilion and beach house, several smaller pavilions and shelters, a non-motorized boat launch, picnic areas, and hiking trails. The next phase of the project work includes a grading plan, a storm water management plan, WDNR permit submittals, and final design of a main park entrance to provide safe access from Hwy KD. The storm water design will place an emphasis on sustainable design elements such as bioretention areas in the parking lots and bioswales to help water infiltrate into the ground as naturally as possible. Extensive areas of native plants will also be incorporated into these drainage systems to help filter pollutants and to facilitate the natural infiltration of storm water. These planned storm water systems will help to insure that the water quality of the existing lake is not compromised.

### Village of Mukwonago—Miniwaukan Park

Our firm created a conceptual design plan for improvements to this existing 300+ acre park on the Mukwonago River. Design elements included disabled accessible walking trails to connect existing facilities and a primitive canoe launch. The concept plan was included as part of a successful Stewardship Grant application that awarded Mukwonago 50% matching funds for the improvements. Ruekert/Mielke also completed construction documents for the first implementation phase, an internal park walking trail, that was installed in the fall of 2007. This trail was integrated with an existing disc golf course in a way that would provide a pleasant experience for trail users without disrupting users of the course.

### Village of North Prairie—Broadlands Park

In 2006, Ruekert/Mielke created site development plans for this 25-acre community park. Steep topography and dense wooded areas presented design challenges. Our project team designed a plan that incorporated baseball fields, tennis courts, soccer fields, volleyball courts, a playground area, a picnic area and two parking lots, while simultaneously preserving the site's natural features as amenities. Walking trails were designed to connect the park facilities and to take advantage of the natural areas.

### Town of Oconomowoc—Mapleton Community Center

Ruekert/Mielke designed a master plan for this 21-acre site on the Ashippun River. The plan effectively created both active and passive recreational opportunities on the site with a design approach that was sensitive to the extensive natural amenities and resources



**Broadlands  
Park**

# Project Experience

on the property. Design elements included multiple picnic area and fishing access points, an ADA-accessible playground area, large native prairie planting areas, and walking trails to provide access to the site features. Ruekert/Mielke also assisted the Town of Oconomowoc with a successful stewardship application that afforded the town \$110,000 for the construction of the site improvements.

## Village of Twin Lakes—Lance Park

Ruekert/Mielke worked with Twin Lakes to develop a concept plan for a redesign of this existing 8-acre park. One of the key design elements was the stabilization and restoration of approximately 700 feet of shoreline on Lake Mary. Years of intense wave action from a ski show held off the shore of the park had caused heavy erosion along almost the entire park shoreline. Ruekert/Mielke's design called for the use of bioengineering techniques including the placement of bio-logs and high-strength erosion blankets, and the planting of native water tolerant vegetative plugs. Other design elements included walking trails, seating and picnic areas, an elevated boardwalk and ADA accessible fishing pier, educational kiosks, and a redesigned parking lot with improved circulation and the use of bio-filtration techniques to create more efficient and environmentally friendly storm water drainage.

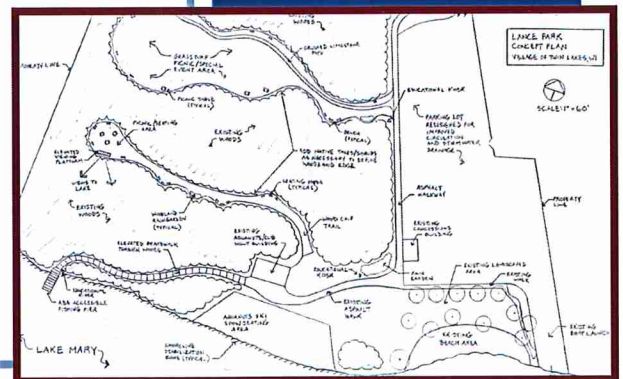
The concept plan was incorporated as part of a successful WDNR Stewardship Grant application that awarded Twin Lakes \$207,000 for the improvements.

## Village of Thiensville—Molyneux Park

Ruekert/Mielke developed design and engineering plans for this vacant parcel of land along the Milwaukee River, and the Financial Services Department assisted the Village in obtaining Stewardship funding for the project. The park design provides pedestrian access from downtown Thiensville to a variety of recreational activities. Incorporated in the plans is a pedestrian access ramp that leads down to a canoe launch. Ruekert/Mielke worked with the Village to develop phasing options for the park construction to accommodate available funding.

## Village of Thiensville—Village Park

Ruekert/Mielke was hired by the Village of Thiensville to develop a concept plan and grant applications for a land addition and circulation improvements to Village Park.



**Molyneux Park**  
River Overlook

**Lance Park**  
Concept Plan

## Project Experience

A concept was created for a loop trail that would be seamlessly integrated amongst the existing facilities. The focus was to create a pedestrian path that would be functional, maximizing access to the park amenities and recreational opportunities, as well as safe and aesthetically complimentary to the existing park. Years of erosion by the flowing Milwaukee River had eaten away the shoreline of the park. Ruekert/Mielke designed and managed the construction of a 1000' long gabion basket bank stabilization project. DNR approvals and permits were acquired prior to construction. Two separate grants were awarded to the Village as a result of Ruekert/Mielke's efforts.

### Town of Randall—Fox Park

Ruekert/Mielke created the Master Plan and engineering plans for a 0.57-acre passive recreation park on the shores of Benedict Lake. The design provides for public access to a swimming beach, native landscaping, and areas for seating and picnicking. Special design consideration was taken to ensure the provision of disabled accessibility, while simultaneously preserving the natural character of the site. Ruekert/Mielke also prepared a successful Stewardship Grant application to obtain 50 percent matching funds for development of the park.

### Town of Ottawa—Town Park

The project scope included master planning and construction documents for erosion control, site grading, and storm water management for a 40-acre site. Park facilities included softball fields, soccer fields, outdoor volleyball courts and a playground area.

Ruekert/Mielke also completed a conceptual Master Plan for a 10-acre addition to the Town Park. The plan includes a multi-use athletic field, a redesigned parking area, picnic areas, a walking trail and wildlife viewing areas.

### Town of Oconomowoc—McMahon Road Park

Our firm collaborated with the Town and a local soccer association to create a conceptual design plan for development of this 66-acre site into a park, offering opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Ruekert/Mielke's design focused on developing opportunities for interaction with the natural amenities of the site in conjunction with the soccer association's plans for numerous play fields. Design elements included a fishing/ice skating pond, seating/wildlife viewing areas, wetland educational signage, native vegetation plantings and trail connections between all of the park's elements.

### City of Pewaukee—Wagner Park

This 40-acre park site includes two softball fields, two soccer fields, parking and access

# Project Experience

facilities, and a storm water management pond. Ruekert/Mielke assisted the City in the master plan development and prepared the engineering plans and construction documents for the grading, drainage, and parking facilities.

## Village of Sussex—Armory Park

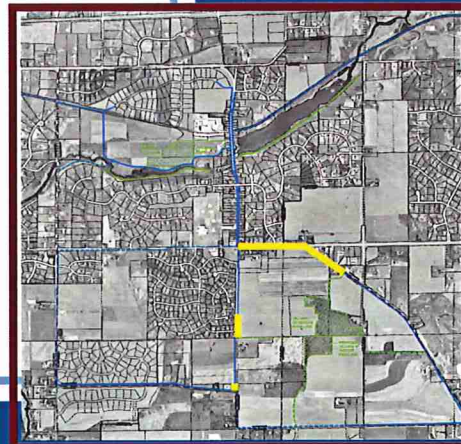
This 25-acre active park site includes a softball complex, four soccer fields, basketball, tennis, and volleyball courts, an ice skating area, parking and access and utility infrastructure. Ruekert/Mielke facilitated the public planning process, created the preliminary and final master plan, prepared the construction plans and documents and provided construction administration services.

## Ruekert/Mielke Trail Design and Planning Experience

Ruekert/Mielke has been instrumental in providing many communities practical links between bike and pedestrian path planning and actual implementation. In addition to planning and construction administration services for bike and pedestrian paths, Ruekert/Mielke provides needs assessment and grant acquisition services for communities seeking federal and state moneys to acquire and improve bike paths. Please review the following partial listing of bicycle route planning efforts:

## Village of Merton—Trail Connections

Ruekert/Mielke worked with the Village of Merton on three trail connections within the Village to connect to the existing Bugline trail. The size of the project is approximately one mile of trail in three different locations. The trails are being designed as 8-foot wide asphalt paths within road right of ways and through easements. These trails will connect to Merton's developing local trail system, and ultimately link the subdivision to the downtown area, the Bugline Recreational Trail and the new Village Park. The trail size is reaching in excess of four miles, built in segments. The average cost of each section has been approximately \$75,000-\$100,000. Easement acquisition has been a large part of the project. Signage for the trail system consists of naturally weather-tolerant cedar post and board with recessed routed lettering. The construction was completed in May of 2008. Natural hardwood walking trails have been coordinated through isolated natural resource areas to the centrally located passive parkland. Ruekert/Mielke is assisting the Village with the acquisition of this large wooded tract of isolated natural resource area. 51 acres of this land was scheduled for acquisition. 40.2 acres have been successfully acquired to date, with the remaining 10.8 acres to be acquired in the future.





# Project Experience

## Village of Twin Lakes and Town of Randall—Icehouse Historic Multi-Use Trail

Ruekert/Mielke worked with the Village of Twin Lakes and the Town of Randall, in Kenosha County, to implement a 1.2-mile multi-use trail between the two communities. The trail consists of a 10-foot wide asphalt trail next to a 10-foot wide clear area that is used by snowmobiles. The trail follows an abandoned rail corridor, and crosses a navigable stream at several points. In early 2004, Ruekert/Mielke developed a concept plan for the project and prepared a successful stewardship grant application that netted the communities \$95,000 in matching funding from the State of Wisconsin. Our project team collaborated on the project with the park commissions from the communities, area residents and local officials and developed a trail that is disabled accessible and clearly marked with signage to ensure safety amongst the various trail uses. Ruekert/Mielke also worked closely with the DNR and Kenosha County to obtain all of the necessary grading permits for the trail construction. The trail was constructed in 2005.

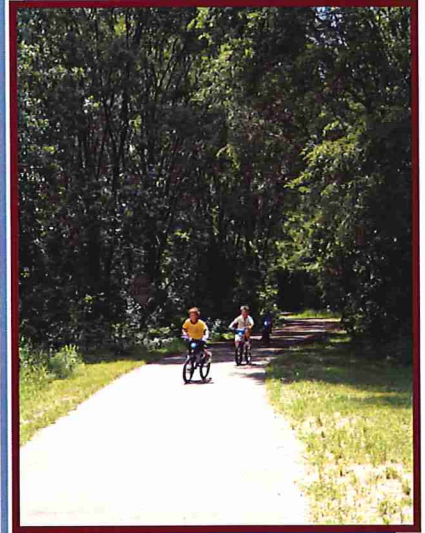
## Village of Thiensville—Rotary Riverwalk

The Rotary Riverwalk project trailhead at Cedarburg Road consists of a recycled plastic boardwalk that was implemented to provide access to the trail for the disabled. The plastic components provide the appearance of a wood structure, but are made from 100% recycled milk cartons. The Riverwalk winds through a wooded area adjacent to the river and ultimately connects to an existing trail in Settler's Park.

Ruekert/Mielke's project team of Steve Brunner, Landscape Architect, and Tom Koepp, Civil Engineer, have been working with the joint rotary committee since 2003 to plan for and design various segments of the project. Ruekert/Mielke also assisted with the development of a Riverwalk Master Plan which outlines the details of each proposed segment from the Riverwalk's ultimate proposed trailhead of Village Park in Thiensville on the Northern end to Mequon Road in Mequon on the Southern end.

## Village of Elm Grove—Legion Drive/Pedestrian/Bike Path

The Village of Elm Grove needed a pedestrian walkway/bike trail to connect the Tonda Wonda School to the existing path to the Village Park. The path needed to adhere to many design restraints, such as existing drainage patterns, existing road grades and existing mature landscaping along the front yards of the residential homes along Legion Drive in the Village of Elm Grove. The path, which underwent a significant amount of Public and Board Review, was under a critical timeline from final Board approval to final completion deadlines before school started. This path consisted of approximately a half mile of trail and the costs for construction for the trail portion of the project equated to approximately \$40,000. The trail was constructed in and completed in 2005.



**Basset Rail  
Corridor  
Multi-Use Trail**

## Project Experience

A storm sewer system would have to replace the existing driveway culverts and ditches to allow a smooth transition from the front yards to the path and to the road edge. A gas main and other utilities needed to be avoided. The goal of minimizing the right-of-way disturbance, restoration and avoiding utilities was achieved by implementing a storm sewer system with small catch basin leads. The storm leads allowed for a six-foot buffer of grass between the edge of the roadway and pedestrian traffic.

The path was open for traffic one week prior to school starting and is currently providing safe travel for many residents along this busy route in this fully developed area.

### Town of Oconomowoc

The Town of Oconomowoc hired Ruekert/Mielke to assess the current state of bicycling and pedestrian facilities in the Town, and to generate specific recommendations and implements. Our Project team worked with the Town to create a plan that, when implemented, will provide Town residents with a safe, efficient, and convenient bicycle and pedestrian system that links residential areas with destination points, including, nearby communities, schools, and parks.

### City of New Berlin

Ruekert/Mielke was retained by the City to complete a preliminary study for five miles of the National Avenue Corridor including bicycle and pedestrian planning, streetscape enhancements and funding alternatives. This study also included a site analysis and conceptual design for a bicycle/pedestrian path layout through extensive commercial areas, cost analysis and phasing strategies for burial of overhead wires, along with right of way and drainage analysis.

## Projects Funded by DNR Stewardship Funds

Municipality	Year	Grant	Amount of DNR Stewardship Grant
Town of Randall	2004	Joint Randall/Twin Lakes Basset Rail Corridor Multi-use Trail	\$95,000 for trail development
	2003	Fox Park Improvements	\$26,745 for park improvements
Village of Twin Lakes	2005	Twin Lakes Stewardship Grant, Lance Park	\$207,500 for park improvements
Village of Thiensville	2003	Village Park	\$151,861 for land acquisition and development
	2002	Molyneux Park	\$112,207 for land acquisition and development
Village of Mukwonago	2004	Minor Park Development	\$96,675 for park improvements
	2004	Miniwaukan Park Development	\$50,000 for park improvements
Town of Oconomowoc	2005	Mapleton Community Center	\$110,000 for park improvements
	2005	Westshore Subdivision Park	\$15,000 for park improvements

# Quality Control Program

## Project Review and Quality Assurance Program

Annually we conduct in-person surveys of our clients, called Client Satisfaction Interviews, to inquire how we are doing and how we can improve. As part of our internal committee system, our project management committee is responsible for developing and maintaining our quality systems. With roots over 20 years old, our current quality system contains the following components:

### RFP Quality, Staffing and Schedule Review

During our review of Requests for Proposal, our first step is to hold an internal meeting of key management and project players. This meeting is to review our ability to provide the level of expertise a project requires, make sure that required staff is available to meet project deadlines and to make sure that we can deliver our products in the desired time frame. If we do not feel we can meet these goals, we will choose to pass on a particular project rather than make promises that we are unable to meet, which may later reflect on our quality. For this project, we enthusiastically decided to provide a proposal.

### Project Management Work Plan

Once the project is awarded to our team, our first task is preparation of a Project Management Work Plan. These plans are started with the budgets and schedules prepared during the proposal process and added onto according to the demands of the project. A draft of the Project Management Work Plan is discussed with the client before work is started on the project.

*Work plan elements include:*

- Schedule
- Budget
- Milestones
- Deliverables
- Review periods
- Quality assurance and quality control items
- Project team assignments

### Follow-up activities

This plan goes much further than a traditional QA/QC plan. It will address all areas of our proposal including project start-up, site evaluation, design related issues, cost estimating, public participation and future issues.

# Quality Control Program

## Pre-Design/Study Meeting

The first task after preparation of the Project Management Work Plan is the project kick-off meeting with the client. This meeting is held to make sure all team members agree with the project approach and that the Project Management Work Plan is complete. At this meeting, we encourage brainstorming and sharing of information to gain consensus of team members. No idea or concept is discounted. Duties and schedules are confirmed. Key team members are introduced and contact lists and assignments are documented.

## Quality Assurance Meetings

During the project we find that regular communication with the Client is needed to make sure that quality and work plans are followed to the satisfaction of the owner. These meetings also provide opportunities for staff and public input and review of progress, findings and deliverables.

## Public Participation

Most projects affect the public in some way and often the secret to the success of the project is in how a firm handles the public participation portion. We have recognized this for many years and know how important the participation of the public is, particularly in Park Planning projects. For that reason, as part of the kick-off meeting, we will discuss how Public Participation/Public Outreach will be approached for this project.

## Deliverables

One important way we assure quality is the timely issuance of deliverables. This allows the owner to review the preliminary results and provide input during our work. These deliverables include monthly reports.

## Quality Control

Over the many design projects we have performed, the final part of our quality program is our checklist system. Based on regulatory items, this checklist was developed to ensure:

- DNR and PSC regulations are met by recommended plans
- Permits are completed
- Variances, if desired, have been explored
- Checklist items of critical issues encountered on other projects have been addressed

## Project Tracking

Ruekert/Mielke has developed an intranet system called e-Rooms that tracks the workflow of projects and stores documents and drawings in a readily accessible form. The e-Rooms

## Quality Control Program

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system allows clients to access the system, view project documents as they are in progress and can provide notification to clients when key documents have been revised or edited. The e-Rooms system gives interested clients the ability to track the workflow of their projects in real time and have immediate access to the most current versions of project information.

All project documents will be reviewed by the Quality Manager assigned to the project, in this case, Steve Brunner, ASLA.

Documents will go through Steve. Steve will be responsible for overall quality for the project. He will verify that quality items have been successfully completed and certify this to the owner. Steve will also be responsible for coordinating the interaction of any cross-departmental project team members at weekly internal department meetings. Any owner concerns that are not addressed by staff will go directly through Steve.

We feel that our QA/QC program is second to none. This is largely due to the climate of continuous improvement instilled in our staff over the years. We design our program for your quality assurance.

# Project Team

Steven A. Brunner, ASLA—Senior Landscape Architect/Project Manager

**Education:** Bachelor of Science: Landscape Architecture, *University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1998*

**Registrations and Affiliations:** Wisconsin Landscape Architect Registration #493-014. American Society of Landscape Architects, National Recreation and Park Association, Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association, WPRA—Park Section Board Executive Committee, WPRA—Green Task Force, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited

Steve will be the project manager and contact/presentation person for this project. He has been employed by Ruekert/Mielke since 2002 and his main function with the company is working with municipalities to design and plan for park and open space design projects. Steve has assisted numerous communities in southeastern Wisconsin with the preparation of Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans, and has also teamed with several of those communities and Ruekert/Mielke's Municipal Economics & Planning Division to obtain over \$1,000,000 in grant funds through the state Stewardship program for park land acquisition and improvement since 2002. Steve recently completed work on a CORP update for the Village of Saukville, in Ozaukee County, and is currently working with the Town of Norway, in Racine County, to finalize an update to their CORP as well. In the past few years he has also assisted in the development of CORPs for the Town of Randall and Village of Twin Lakes, in Kenosha County, and the City of Oconomowoc and Village of Mukwonago, in Waukesha County. Steve has expertise in a variety of sustainable site design techniques, and he has assisted numerous communities in southeastern Wisconsin with conceptual design and facility planning for both sports-oriented and natural parks of various sizes. Outside of work Steve is an avid outdoorsman, and he is an active member of the Wisconsin Park and Recreation Association and the National Park Conservation Association.

Bruce Kaniewski—Director of Planning

**Education:** Master of Urban Planning; University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee 1983  
Bachelor of Science, Geography; University of Wisconsin-Platteville 1979

**Registrations and Affiliations:** American Institute of Certified Planners, American Planning Association

Bruce Kaniewski has worked with local communities for well over 25 years in the areas of community development; urban, exurban and town planning; and sustainable development. He has worked as a regional planner, city and village planner and zoning administrator. Since 2001 Bruce has worked as a consulting planner for the Municipal Economics & Planning Division of Ruekert/Mielke, and he now functions as Director of Planning. Bruce enjoys working with various community interests and disciplines toward the on-going process of sustaining livable communities, and studying the social and fiscal aspects of quality urban design.

“Our success has been founded upon the hiring of the most talented people and providing them with the opportunities and training for professional growth and leadership responsibilities. This atmosphere has helped our teams to take a personal interest and responsibility for their projects, which results in delivering real value to our clients.”

William J. Mielke  
President and CEO

# Project Team

Jon Cameron, M.P.A.—Economic Consultant

**Education:** Master of Public Administration; *University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee*, 2005, Bachelor of Science, Criminal Justice/Political Science; *University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee*, 2003

**Registrations and Affiliations:** Wisconsin City/County Managers Association, Wisconsin Government Finance Officers Association, American Water Works Association—Cost of Service Rate Making Seminar, May, 2006

Jon has been with Ruckert/Mielke since 2005. In 2005 he completed his Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee, specializing in municipal management. Jon has extensive experience in conducting public facilities needs assessments and impact fee studies, sewer, water and storm water cost of service rate studies, grant and loan preparation and public infrastructure cost allocation analysis. Jon is also highly experienced in utility feasibility and creation studies, providing analysis for the creation or amendment of Tax Incremental Finance Districts and conducting joint municipal service studies.

Ken Ward, P.E.—Principal/Office Manager

**Education:** Bachelor of Science, Civil Engineering, *Marquette University*

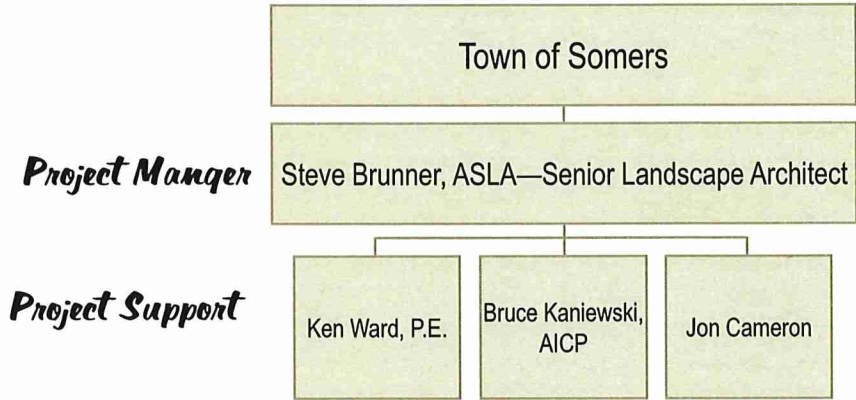
**Registrations and Affiliations:** Professional Engineer, Wisconsin, CSI Construction Documents Technologist, Citizen Participatory Certificate from Institute for Participatory Management and Planning, ACEC, WSPE, NSPE, APWA

Ken has been with Ruckert/Mielke since 1984. He has worked as a primary client contact, project manager and project engineer on a variety of municipal infrastructure projects including streets, alleys, sewers, storm water management, bike route trails and water mains. He has an extensive background in construction inspection, public involvement and public assessment of municipal improvements. Ken's most recent experience is with West End Park comprehensive park development plan for Kenosha County. This project, started in the fall of 2008, required the fast tracking of development plans for an approximate 150-acre park. Elements that needed to be incorporated into the plan include walking trails, a beach and pavilion area for a 37 acre lake and related multi-use areas for scenic overlooks, separated multi use pavilions and a potential dog park. Included in the process were multiple meetings with County staff and preparation of materials for presentation to the public in order to gain acceptance of the design elements.



# Project Team

## Key Staff Organization Chart



# Project Timeline

The following table depicts the timeline required to complete the scope of services as outlined in this proposal. This timeline reflects the timeline that is listed in the RFP, and it is a realistic expectation for the project schedule based on our successful completion of similar projects for other communities.

2009	MAR	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT
<b>PHASE 1</b> Information Gathering and Analysis	█							
<b>PHASE 2</b> Recommendations for Improvements and Additions					█			
<b>PHASE 3</b> Creation of Graphic Maps and Exhibits			█					
<b>PHASE 4</b> Finalization and Approval							█	

## Park Commission Members

Nick Lichter 9120-18 <sup>th</sup> Street	1 year term	Expires end of 2009 Ph. 859.2356
Tom Maurer 2535-1 <sup>st</sup> Street	2 year term	Expires end of 2010 Ph.
Larry Harding 445-8 <sup>th</sup> Place	2 year term	Expires end of 2010 Ph. 552.8058
Gordon Lake 2000 Green Bay Road	2 year term	Expires end of 2010 Ph. 654.5408
Karl Schiedt 4811 – 12 <sup>th</sup> Street	3 year term	Expires end of 2011 Ph. 552.9467 (Home)
Barbara Willkomm 1354-93 <sup>rd</sup> Avenue	3 year term	Expires end of 2011 Ph. 859.2453
Mary Lichter 6120-10 <sup>th</sup> Street	3 year term	Expires end of 2011 Ph. 552.7900
Alternates		
Darrell Borger 611-1 <sup>st</sup> Street		Ph. 552-8598
Liason of Town Board – Fred Loomis		
1717 – Green Bay Road		Ph. 552-8168

8.13..2009

Next meeting  
3rd Sept 21  
6:30 -

TOWN OF SOMERS  
7511 - 12<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
SOMERS, WI 53171

SOMERS PARK COMMISSION  
MEETING  
AGENDA  
08-17-09  
6:30 PM

1. Call to order
2. Approval of previous meeting minutes
3. Public announcements *Harland*
4. Discuss Somers Farmers Market *Nina Smith  
Chairperson -*
5. Fabiano Park *Good - Response -  
Craft only  
allowed 3  
times a year -*
6. 2010 Park Budget
7. Steve Brunner of Ruckert-Mielke
8. Non-agenda items and comments-Discussion only
9. Adjourn

*Compliant -  
- Dog allowed -  
Insurance Company  
Proposal Town,  
not allowed during  
market area -  
(Town Ordinance)*

*1st  
August 8,  
2009*

*Judy Lichter - Chair of Condo's  
Somers -*

*East side joint for drive of  
park  
table till next -  
Property to be zoned properly*

I hereby certify that, as the designee of the chief elected official of the Town of Somers, I posted this notice of the August 17, 2009 Park Commission meeting & Agenda in 3 public places.

Dated this 13th day of August, 2009.

Timothy L. Kitzman, Town Clerk

Request from persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made to the Clerk's Office at 262-859-2822 with as much advance notice as possible. Notice is hereby given that members of the Somers Town Board may attend for the sole purpose gathering information. No Town Board action will be taken.

P.O. Box 197  
Somers, WI 53171



(262) 859-2822  
Fax (262) 859-2331

## Town of Somers

August 12, 2009

Barb Willkomm  
1354 93<sup>rd</sup> AV  
Kenosha WI 53144-7734

Dear Barb,

Congratulations & welcome! The Town Board approved your appointment on August 11 as a member of the Park Commission. I have enclosed your oath of office. Please complete your oath before a notary or bring with you to the Town Office before the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Park Commissioners are paid \$40 per meeting. This is optional as some board & commissioners members choose to waive compensation. If you choose to receive pay, I will need payroll forms completed (including a copy of your driver's license & social security card.) If you waive payments, I will need a written statement for our files. Also enclosed is the August 17 agenda and minutes of the July meeting. If you have any questions, contact me at 262-859-2822.

  
Timothy Kitzman  
Town Clerk-Treasurer

[Oct. 24, 2008]

(1)

## THE CASE FOR FUTURE SOMERS PARKS

### (THIRTEEN REASONS TO KEEP PARKS IN LONG-RANGE PLANS FOR THE LAKESHORE NEIGHBORHOOD)

\*\*\*\*\*

**1) Lake Michigan and the Pike River---the area's most important natural features---are essentially closed to the general public.**

Somers has no public access along more than three miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. By contrast, 86% of Kenosha's shore is in public hands and 84% of Chicago's. The Pike River corridor also is basically off-limits to the public.

**2) Consultants designing a land-use plan for the Lakeshore area clearly recognize the scenic value and recreation potential of the lake and river.**

At some point in the future, Crispell-Snyder, Inc. envisions both a lakefront park and a publicly-owned natural area along the river. The consultants described Lake Michigan as a national treasure "worth protecting and enhancing." They called the Pike River "a hidden gem in the neighborhood."

**3) Our country and state have a long history of policies to preserve natural areas for the enjoyment of the general public.**

All navigable waters belong to all U.S citizens under the "public trust doctrine" established by the Northwest Ordinance of 1787. To support this bedrock principle, Wisconsin's official policy is to **accelerate public access to waterways** "particularly in the more populous areas of the state."

Under Wisconsin law, new subdivisions next to a waterway must provide a 60-foot-wide public access at least every half-mile. Applying this general theory, the Lake Michigan shoreline in Somers could use five or six public access points.

**4) For more than 40 years, planning and resource professionals have urged expanding public use of the lakefront and Pike River corridor.**

Serious land-use planning for Somers began in the early 1960s with the first "master plan" for all of Kenosha County east of I-94. The 1966 plan, developed by Harland Bartholomew & Associates, pointed to a need to further protect scenic areas such as the Lake Michigan shoreline.

East of 30th Fabiano - only part -  
Explore - Lakefront - recommend for over 40 years

## (II)

Over the next 41 years, other in-depth research repeated the emphasis on preserving natural areas for broad public use. The pro-park approach was built into a 1995 revised master plan developed by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission. Detailed studies by the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources followed the same path.

Unfortunately, in my view, the town has not yet followed this consistent advice from respected sources. However, the new Smart Growth plan for the Lakeshore Neighborhood offers an opportunity to change direction.

(For a detailed history, see the two last pages of this report)

### 5) Parks-----Positives Outweigh the Negatives

Highly vocal opposition has greeted efforts to expand public access to the lake and Pike River. Much of the resistance now, as before, comes from a cluster of residents with property adjoining the waterways.

One of the principal objections to new parks is that they automatically bring vandalism, trespassing, drug dealing and the like. How does that claim stand up? Like most people, I find it useful to trust personal experience on such issues.

My wife Rita and I frequently walk parks in the area (Petrifying Springs, Poerio, Alford, Pennoyer, Sanders). We simply have not witnessed the kind of anti-social behavior that some folks worry about. The people we meet in the parks tend to be friendly, quiet and respectful---at all ages.

In 1995, the Wisconsin DNR took note of fears from Somers residents who resisted nearby parkways or environmental corridors. It went on to say:

“There are several recreation corridors in urban or urbanized areas around the U.S. that demonstrate that these fears are largely unwarranted. For example, along the Highline Canal in Denver, not only have acts of vandalism or decreases in property value failed to materialize, but some of Denver’s most valuable homes front the heavily-used canal. Many other examples are available from around the country.”

### (III)

Here again, personal experience kicks in. Rita and I are familiar with the Highline Canal. Her sister and family lived next to it for many years. We have hiked along the canal corridor more than once. It's a great asset to the Denver area and, as my brother-in-law says, no real source of trouble

Providing public access to the lake and river remains a highly controversial issue. Roughly 60 residents attended a project kickoff-ice cream social on May 29 at Carthage College. Feedback was collected from three groups, representing the south, central and north sub-areas.

In a summary of the May 29 meeting, consultant Crystal Buck reported:

“The lake was seen as an asset, with many groups expressing the desire to create recreational opportunities and open areas with public access to the lake.”

However, contrary views were expressed by a group of residents at a Sept. 16 meeting of the Steering Committee for the Lakeshore Neighborhood plan. This prompted the advisory committee to reverse its earlier support for the proposed lake and river parks.

We have lived in Somers since 1962. Years of observation tell me that, when it comes to new parks for Somers, the tail has been wagging the dog far too long.

I respect the concerns of residents who have earnestly opposed new parks. They're good people who want the best for their community. But I honestly believe that many of their fears are exaggerated or based on misinformation. It's equally clear to me that those fears are outweighed by the broader public interest.

#### **6) Parks Bring People Together**

William Shakespeare got it right when he wrote: “One touch of nature...makes all the world kin.” He could have been talking about the role of parks in a community.



## (IV)

One consistent theme throughout the Lakeshore planning process has been the expressed desire for a more cohesive, friendly neighborhood. Our homes are stretched out along a four-lane highway and we tend to live much of our lives in isolation. Residents who participated in planning sessions clearly want to change that situation, a byproduct of busy lives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They called for a stronger neighborhood identity---a neighborhood "feel."

(One of our relatively new neighbors has tried with little success to recreate the kind of tight neighborhood circle she knew in Chicago. The lack of common, casual, family meeting places is part of the problem.)

Enter public parks---offering common ground for human interaction, similar to Boston Commons or the ancient Roman forum. Here, people can get acquainted when their kids are on opposite ends of the teeter-totter.

When our kids were in the elementary grades, Berryville School at Hy 32 and County A served as the social glue for this part of Somers. Parents knew each other and each other's kids. And the playground was a place to play ball after school. Alas, Berryville is gone---and so is the comfortable neighborhood feel. Parks could help to fill the gap.

### **7) Parks are linked to solid, economically strong communities**

Every year, *Money* magazine publishes a ranking of America's Best Big Cities. The winners are economically vibrant communities that provide the highest quality of life and put a premium on park space. (One measure used by the magazine is the square mileage of designated green space and park land within each city.)

In a 2006 survey, the National Assn. of Home Builders found that 65% of those responding said that parks seriously influenced their decision to buy a house.

Earlier, a survey by the National Assn. of Realtors showed that 50% of those responding would be more likely to buy a house close to a park. In the same study, another 50% said that they were willing to pay a 10% premium for a house located near a park or other open space.

(V)

The folks who track social trends use a term called "amenity migration." It refers to the movement of relatively well-educated, well-off people from urban centers to rural or smaller town locations that offer high environmental qualities.

Two years ago, a report from Pacific Analysts, Inc. identified four major factors leading to amenity migration. Leading the list was "a community close to protected areas, with a social perspective of conservation." The reported result was "higher per capita incomes, greater employment, higher educational levels, greater diversity of business and occupations and less cyclical economic changes."

All of the above supports the role of parks in creating a desirable, self-sustaining neighborhood.

#### **8) We're dealing with a park "idea"---not something here and now**

Some folks evidently are worried that active park projects for the lake and river already are in the works. Not so.

The Smart Growth planning program will produce only a rough blueprint for the future. It's designed to chart a general course for development in the Town of Somers for the next 20 to 30 years.

No firm park plans have been drawn. No specific park sites have been chosen. No immediate drain on the town's annual budget is in sight.

All that's on the table right now is injecting the **possibility** of two future parks---a long-range option that our town would be unwise to scrap.

#### **9) Property owners don't have to fear unwanted land takeovers**

Somehow the notion has been floated that "eminent domain" may be used to acquire private lands for new parks. This is not the case. No one is suggesting the use of government condemnation authority.

To the contrary, the consultant's report specifically states that any land transfers must involve willing sellers.

(VI)

**10) The need for new parks in Somers is certain to increase**

One argument from opponents is that Somers needs no new parks because nearby city parks already serve our population.

It's true that Kenosha's Poerio and Alford Parks are relatively close to the Lakeshore Neighborhood of Somers. But they're still at least two miles away from where I live. And our town has no control over how they are used or managed.

My guess is that the Lakeshore Neighborhood probably still is the most densely populated area of Somers. If not, it's close. Today the town's only public park east of Wood Rd. (County G) is tiny Fabiano Park next to the #2 fire station.

More important, Somers has experienced accelerated population growth that inevitably will increase future demand for parks. Even though the current housing market is weak, the state estimates that the town now has 9,452 residents. That's a 1% increase over a year ago---the biggest percentage growth among all 10 local government units in Kenosha county.

Many newcomers are sure to live in or near the Lakeshore Neighborhood. Preliminary construction work already has started on River Vista, a 166-unit condo complex bordering the Pike River north of County E.

Foresight and patience are critical in creating new parks because of the long time it normally takes to acquire and develop land. So it pays Somers to be thinking at least 20 years ahead.. The late Dick Lindl, former county parks director and Somers town chairman, and I were friends. Once he drove me out to meet a farmer near Silver Lake. Dick said that he had been massaging the owner for years in hopes of securing a park site. The eventual result---much later---was Silver Lake County Park.

This inevitable time lag certainly will be a factor as the town's relatively new Park Commission goes about its work. Some time down the road, new parks on the lake and river will rate high priority attention. Sooner is better than later.

(VII)

## **11) Parks are essential for a complete community**

Our town officials recognize that Somers is in a transition stage from its quiet, semi-rural past to a more highly developed community. The possibility of becoming an incorporated village is being raised.

Prior to his election last year, Town Chair Jim Smith was quoted as saying: "We can't keep Somers as a little country town anymore. It's going to be a municipality of diversification with industrial, commercial and urban condo living."

If we're going to be a diversified, comprehensive community, good parks must be part of the mix. No modern community can afford to short-change its citizens by ignoring the need for public open spaces. In Somers, we'd be making a serious mistake by ignoring our two most prominent natural features---Lake Michigan and the Pike River.

Obviously, parks require tax dollars for purchasing property, maintenance, liability insurance and security. Town officials have to be sensitive to that fact, especially in troubled economic times. But such expenses for parks are the normal complement to any useful, legitimate town function.

To ease the cost burden, the town could be actively exploring outside fund sources, both public and private. On the public side there are such sources as the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program, which has preserved large outdoor tracts in Wisconsin. DNR people tell me that Somers never has been involved in that program.

On the private level, potential fund sources include the non-profit Nature Conservancy, which saved the Chiwaukee Prairie south of Kenosha. Last year, the Kenosha-Racine Land Trust reached a milestone---protecting 1,000 acres of land through conservation easements. Through a \$75,000 federal grant, it is acquiring a 14.5-acre parcel in the DesPlaines River watershed of Pleasant Prairie

(VIII)

Theodore Roosevelt woke his fellow citizens up to the value of parks when he created the national park system early in the last century. In every corner of the United States, and much of the world, parks are considered a necessity---not a luxury. That's because they meet a fundamental human need.

New parks in Somers clearly are vital to forging a **complete community**.

**12) Parks enhance property values**

Extensive research as far back as the 1970s established a strong link between public parks and higher property values.

One early study found that the value of properties 40 feet from a Philadelphia park averaged \$11,500 per acre---compared to \$1,000 per acre 2,500 feet from the park. In Boulder, Colorado, the price of residential property in three neighborhoods decreased by \$4.20 per foot for every foot of distance away from the city's greenbelt.

\*\*\*\*\*

Last year, the University of California published a 58-page study of the relationship between San Francisco parks and residential properties. The research covered assessed values of 13,472 single-family units---all located within 1,000 feet of every park of at least one acre.

The findings in San Francisco: Houses within 500 feet of a park were worth \$125,838 more than houses in the 500-to-1,000-foot band.  
(Not exactly small change, even for California real estate.)

**13) State law reduces the risk of illegal trespassing**

One fear expressed at the Lakeshore planning sessions was that park visitors might invade private property---walking beaches or river banks.

There's still wide public confusion about the riparian rights of property owners whose land adjoins Wisconsin waterways. But a fairly recent change in the law strengthened the rights of landowners.

(IX)

In dealing with this issue, the Legislature focused on **shoreline property that's exposed during low water periods**. (Currently, Lake Michigan water levels are well below normal, exposing several feet of sand beach.)

For a few years, the law gave fishermen and others using streams and rivers more freedom than they had enjoyed in years past. They were allowed to travel on exposed shoreline up to the "ordinary high water mark."

That changed with the passage of a new water rights law in 2001. Under this statute, a property owner can prevent people from traveling on the exposed river or stream bed. The rule now is that along rivers, as on lakes, **the user must stay in the water**. In practice, the Dept of Natural Resources advises people that they can go boating or swimming or walk the shore "as long as you keep your feet wet."

It seems likely that this rule ought to reduce trespassing violations.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thanks for your attention.

Harlan Draeger

375 Sheridan Rd.

(Appendix)

(X)

## **HISTORY---PROPOSED PARKS IN THE LAKESHORE NEIGHBORHOOD**

**1966**---Land-use plan completed for Somers, Kenosha and Pleasant Prairie by Harland Bartholomew & Associates.

This “master plan” stressed the importance of designated environmental corridors. It declared “preservation and provision of open space” a major objective: “Additional scenic areas.....particularly substantial parts of the lakefront, should be preserved and enhanced as part of the park system.”

**1984**---Comprehensive Plan for the Pike River Watershed completed by Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC).

One element called for a parkway along the Pike River to increase recreational use. It noted the only river access is at road crossings, with no suitable parking.

The Somers Town Board adopted the watershed plan except for eventual public acquisition of environmental corridors and development of a 7-mile river trail.

**1995**---Dept. of Natural Resources issued an environmental impact statement on proposed stream modifications to the Pike River. Part of that plan called for a river parkway, which triggered resistance from residents.

The Town Board approved the stormwater proposals but rejected any provisions “requiring walkways, trails and access through private lands.”

**1995**---Regional Plan Commission completed an updated master plan for the area of Kenosha County east of I-94.

One primary objective---“the protection of the primary environmental corridors from intrusion by urban developers.” It recommended that most corridors be acquired by the public or non-profit conservancy groups.

**1996**---Somers Plan Commission unanimously adopted the SEWRPC plan except for removing any references to public walkways and trails on private land. The commission said land purchases should be made “only from willing sellers at their fair market value with no use of condemnation authority.”

The Town Board approved the overall plan. However, it struck all references to proposed bike trails and land acquisition for public use.

(XI)

2007---DNR released the Wisconsin Land Legacy Report---an inventory of "places to meet Wisconsin's future conservation and recreation needs." This inventory, a product of three years' work, listed 299 outdoor resources needing special protection. Six were in Kenosha County. One was the Pike River.

\*\*\*\*\*



PROPOSAL FORM

The following professional consultant firm proposes to provide the full services outlined within this R. F.P. including the development schematic of and written documentation for the Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for the following lump sum:

\$ 23,900

*Ernest Williams*  
Signed By Authorized Authority or Principal of Firm

2/5/09  
Date

### EMPLOYEE CHARGE OUT RATES

Please fill in the employee description and hourly rate that would be charged for each type of employee. **RETURN FORM WITH PROPOSAL**

EMPLOYEE DESCRIPTION / TYPE	HOURLY RATE		
Principal	Ken Ward, P.E.	Engineer 7	\$140.00/hour
Associates	Steve Brunner, ASLA	Senior Landscape Architect	\$98.00/hour
Clerical	Admin. Assistant	Administ. Assistant	\$50.00/hour
Other	Bruce Kaniewski, AICP	Director of Planning	\$115.00/hour
Other	Jon Cameron	Economic Consultant	\$82.00/hour

**NONDISCRIMINATION AFFIDAVIT**

Steven A Brunner - Senior Landscape Architect Deposits  
Name and Title

Says that Ruekert & Mielke, Inc  
(Name of Company or Other Form of Business)

advertises for prospective employees in compliance with federal and Wisconsin civil rights and equal opportunity employment laws (42 USC 2000 et seq and Subchapter II of Chapter 111, Wisconsin Statutes); posts notices to advertise its status as an equal opportunity employer; advises employees of the right to contact EEOC or OFCCP with discrimination complaints; and ensures that its employees are free from employment discrimination based on age, race, creed, color, disability, marital status, sex, conviction record, membership in the national guard or state defense force (or any other reserve component of the military forces of the United States or this state); or use or nonuse of lawful products off the employer's premises during nonwork hours.

That the above-mentioned company complies with Executive Order 11246 entitled "Equal Employment Opportunity" as amended by Executive Order 11375 and as supplemented in Department of Labor Regulations (41 CFR).

That the above statement is accurate under penalty or perjury.

Jamud Williams  
Signed

State of Wisconsin

County of Waukesha

Subscribed and sworn to before me on  
this 6 day of February, 2009

Wanda Brady  
Notary Public

My commission expires on Sept. 6, 2009

**NONCOLLUSION AFFIDAVIT**

Steven A. Brunner - Senior Landscape Architect Deposposes  
Name and Title

Says that Ruekert & Mielke, Inc.  
(Name of Company or Other Form of Business)

has not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement, participated in any collusion, or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competition in connection with this proposal leading to the foregoing contract or in connection with the contract.

That the proposal leading to this contract has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other competitor or potential competitor.

That the proposal leading to this contract has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of this proposal to any other competitor.

That no attempt has been made to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal, which may have led to this contract.

That the above statement is accurate under penalty of perjury.

*Jermain Williams*  
Signed

State of Wisconsin

County of Waukesha

Subscribed and sworn to before me on  
this 6 day of February, 2009

*Joseph B. Leach*  
Notary Public

My commission expires on SEPT. 10, 2009

P.O. Box 197  
Somers, WI 53171



☎ (262) 859-2822  
Fax (262) 859-2331

## Town of Somers

Ms Barbara Willkomm  
1354 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Dear Barb;

It is with great pleasure to welcome you to the Park Commission. The Town of Somers – Town Board voted Tuesday, unanimously, approving your appointment to the Park Commission. I will let Tom Mauer, Chairman of the Park Commission, know of your appointment and give him your phone number and address. Just to let you know, this Saturday will be the second time for the Farmers Market,. With the rain last Saturday, I felt it was still a success. This project was one the Park Commission thought up and have be instrumental in it operation. I am enclosing the names, phone numbers and addresses of the other members so if you want to contact them, you can. Looking forward to having you on the Commission,

Best regards,

James M. Smith  
Town of Somers - Chairperson

P.O. Box 197  
Somers, WI 53171



☎ (262) 859-2822  
Fax (262) 859-2331

## Town of Somers

July 28, 2009

Barbara Willkomm  
1354 - 93 rd Avenue  
Kenosha, Wisconsin

Dear Barb:

Speaking with you the other night, I said I would send you the particulars of what the Park Commission is and does. If you so choose to be on the Commission, you will fill the unexpired term of Sue Borger which ends December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2011.

The Commission meets usually the 3rd Monday of each month at 6:00 PM. in the Town Hall. It is made up of 7 members and an alternate which can only vote in the absence of a regular appointed member. The Liason to the Commission is Town Board member Fred Loomis.

The Commission has charge of and supervision over all parks located in the Town and may exercise the powers of a board of Park commissioners under state statutes. They can reserve lands for park purposes, make plans and maps of a comprehensive park system of which they are now undertaking. They also lay out, improve and maintain parks already established in the Town.

Right now a study is being conducted by Rukert-Mielke under the supervision of the Commission which is to be completed by October 1, 2009 in order to qualify for Federal Grants and the DNR to further develop the parks we already own. The Commission will report back to the Town Board with its plan and the Board will make recommendations on what and how to proceed.

I will be calling you before the next Town Board Work session on August 6 so I may report to them of your acceptance and finalize your appointment on August 11, 2009 at the regular Town board meeting. If you have further questions, please call me anytime. I am looking forward to having you on the Park Commission, if you so choose.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jim".

Jim Smith - Chairperson Town of Somers

# Exhibit J

## 2009 COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Recommended by Park Commission: 10-12-09

Adopted by Town Board: 10-13-09

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RUEKERT/MIELKE  
W233 N2080 Ridgeview Parkway  
Waukesha, Wisconsin 53188

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**TOWN OF SOMERS**

Town Chairperson

James M. Smith

Town Supervisors

Vern Wienke

Alan Ferber

Ben Harbach

Fred Loomis

Park Commission

Tom Maurer, Chair

Larry Harding, Secretary

Gordon Lake

Nicholas Lichter

Mary Lichter

Nina Smith

Barbara Willkomm

Darrell Borger (Alternate)

Fred Loomis (Board Liaison)

Town Staff

William Morris, Administrator

Timothy L. Kitzman, Clerk/Treasurer

George Stoner, Public Works Superintendent

Parks

RESOLUTION #09-001

A PARK COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO THE  
TOWN PLAN COMMISSION AND TOWN BOARD FOR  
APPROVAL OF THE TOWN OF SOMERS  
COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town of Somers Park Commission, with the assistance of Ruckert & Mielke, Inc., have prepared a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP); and

WHEREAS, the CORP was prepared in accordance with required component guidelines as published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and

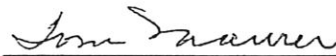
WHEREAS, the CORP will serve to guide improvement, acquisition, and management of Town parks and open spaces for the next five years; and

WHEREAS, following recommendation for approval by the Town Plan Commission and approval by the Town Board and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources may qualify the Town to apply for matching state and federal funds for park acquisition and development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RECOMMENDED by the Town Park Commission that the Town Board adopt the Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as an official planning document.

RECOMMENDED by the Town of Somers Park Commission of the Town of Somers, County of Kenosha, State of Wisconsin, on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2009.

TOWN OF SOMERS  
PARK COMMISSION



Tom Maurer, Park Commission Chairperson



Larry Harding, Park Commission Secretary

RESOLUTION #09- 016

A RESOLUTION BY THE TOWN BOARD TO ADOPT  
THE TOWN OF SOMERS COMPREHENSIVE  
OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town of Somers Park Commission, with the assistance of Ruckert & Mielke, Inc., has prepared a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP); and

WHEREAS, the CORP was prepared in accordance with required component guidelines as published by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources; and

WHEREAS, the CORP will serve to guide improvement, acquisition, and management of Town parks and open spaces for the next five years; and

WHEREAS, the Town Plan Commission has reviewed the CORP and has recommended to the Town Board that the CORP be adopted; and

WHEREAS, approval by the Town Board and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources may qualify the Town to apply for matching state and federal funds for park acquisition and development.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Board adopt the Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan as an official planning document.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Town Board of the Town of Somers, County of Kenosha, State of Wisconsin, on this 13<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2009.

TOWN OF SOMERS

By: James M. Smith  
James Smith, Town Chairperson

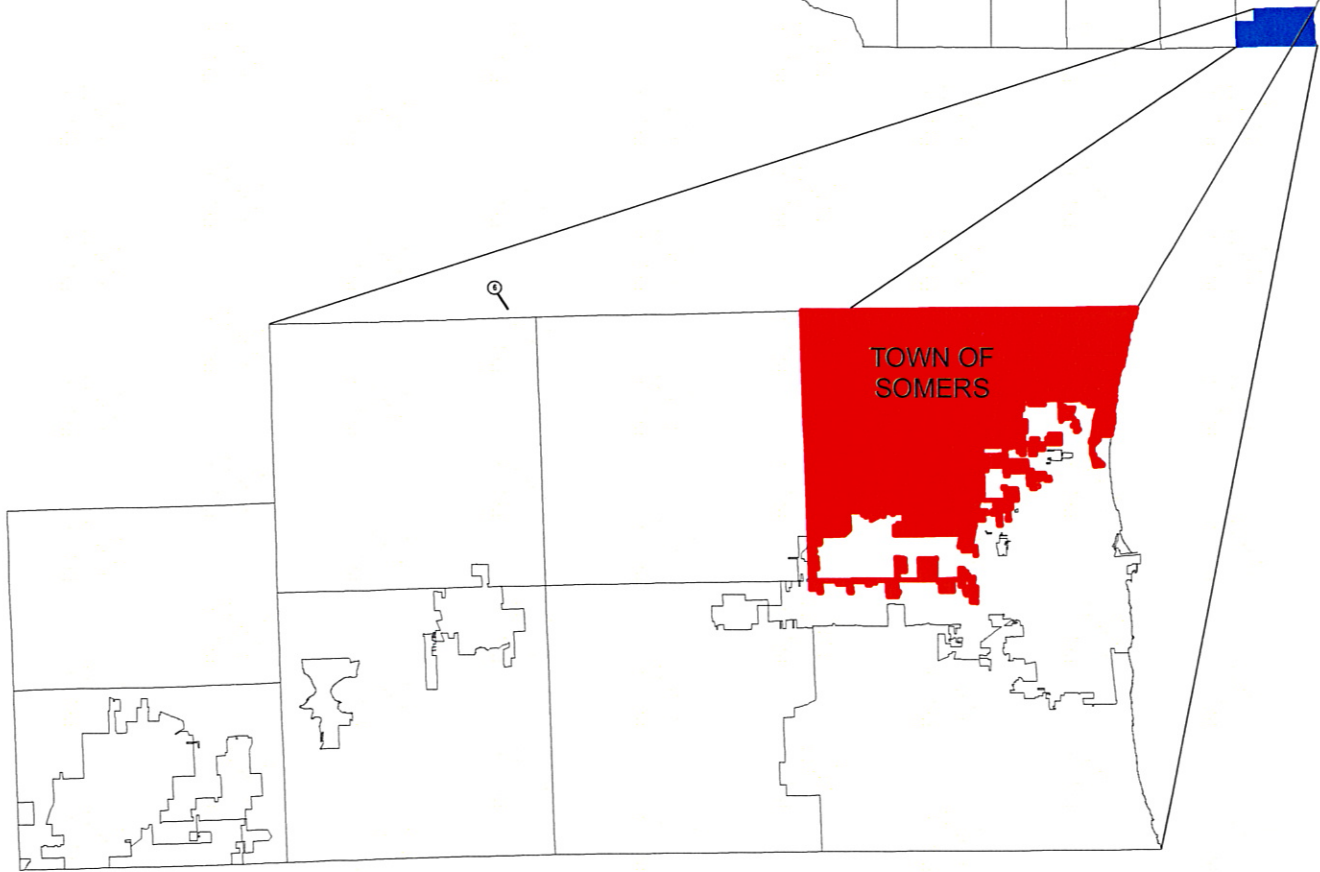
Attest: Timothy Kitzman  
Timothy Kitzman, Town Clerk/Treasurer



TOWN OF SOMERS  
PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN  
LOCATION MAP



STATE OF  
WISCONSIN



TOWN OF  
SOMERS

KENOSHA COUNTY



## I. INTRODUCTION

Quality of life is an important component of why people choose to live where they do, and many elements of everyday life contribute to perceived quality of life. Elements such as the quality of local housing and schools, government-provided services, employment opportunities, the natural beauty of the surroundings, and easy access to quality recreational opportunities and facilities all factor into why people choose to live in one community over another. Parks, open space areas, and trails are key components of high quality living environments. From mini-parks that provide little green oases all the way up to regional parks serving people from both far and near, a well-designed park system adds immeasurable value to any community. Parks, open space areas, and trails serve a broad range of key community functions, which include: meeting human needs for recreation and aesthetics, protecting and enhancing the natural environment, and shaping the extent and patterns of development. Every community's park and open space system should be planned and designed to meet the diverse needs of persons living in the community. Proper recreation-based planning requires a focus on both the types of preserved lands and resources and developed facilities needed to meet the needs of the community, as well as the geographic distribution of those features in relation to the persons who will use them, and the access that is provided.

In today's world of constant stress, continual movement, and hectic schedules, recreational activities are necessary. Recreation is defined in the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language as "the refreshment of one's mind or body after work through activity that amuses or stimulates." Outdoor recreation has many benefits, which include personal health, stronger family and community, preservation of open space, and protection of sensitive natural resources.

Personal health, both physically and psychologically, is strengthened as a result of outdoor recreation. Physically, people tend to exercise more when outdoor facilities are available and easily accessible. Psychologically, people also need a place and time to breath the fresh air and unwind from their hectic lifestyle. Preserved natural areas and open spaces in parks provide that place.

Having sufficient parks and open space areas also contributes to stronger family and a stronger community. Whether it is friendly sports competition bringing people together, a mom and dad playing with their children on the playground, or neighbors gathering in a community space, parks can make a significant improvement in the quality of a community, or more specifically, a residential neighborhood.

The natural environment and the aesthetic beauty that comes with it can also be preserved in open space areas while still providing opportunities for outdoor recreation. Access to these areas must be designed in a manner that is environmentally responsible and sustainable so that the impact on sensitive plant and animal species and habitat is minimized. This is contrasted with the mounting pressure to develop any and all open land within communities such as Somers. Preserving the open spaces and transforming them into functional recreational areas takes a significant amount of effort and planning.

There are open spaces classified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as environmental areas due to the presence of woodlands or wetlands. These environmental areas, or corridors, are difficult to develop into anything more than limited access local parks or recreational areas. These woodlands and wetlands serve important purposes for nature and storm water drainage as well as for the community.

Planning for parks is a key component in producing and maintaining a sustainable park and open space system. Effective planning will also include considerable foresight to measure the future demand for parks and open spaces. The creation of the Town of Somers Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) will provide an inventory of current park facilities, include a study of the park and open space needs of the community, generate recommendations for additions and improvements, and prioritize a course of action for the next five years.

This CORP has been prepared in accordance with guidelines that will make it certifiable by the State of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and will qualify the Town of Somers for matching grant funds through the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Local Assistance Programs, the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the Federal Recreation Trails Program. To remain eligible for these funds, the CORP must be updated every five years to ensure that it reflects the current needs of the community. The CORP can also be amended within the five-year period of grant eligibility to include additional park improvements or new park projects that come about because of new development, redevelopment, or previously unforeseen opportunities.

This CORP was prepared under the direction of the Town of Somers Park Commission. This group serves as an advisory entity to the Town Board for all decisions pertaining to park budget expenditures, facility scheduling and operations, maintenance and improvements, regulations, and land acquisition.



## II. PARK AND OPEN SPACE GOAL, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

A direction for the future of a community park and open space system is defined through the establishment of goals, objectives and policies that serve as the basis for all subsequent planning efforts. The terms goals, objectives and policies are frequently used interchangeably even though each has a very distinct definition. It is, therefore, appropriate to define each of these terms to eliminate confusion about their meaning. Goals are general in nature and represent conditions that are desired but may not be fully attainable. Goals typically are expressed in broad statements such as "to provide clean air and water in all parks." Objectives define the specific routes or actions that should be taken to achieve a goal. For example, an objective might be "construction of two new neighborhood parks in the community during the next year." By suggesting ways to reach a goal, objectives provide the direction that will help the Town lay out choices to consider in meeting the community needs. Policies are rules or courses of action used to ensure plan implementation. An example of a policy would be "all public recreation facilities shall be accessible to the disabled."

Since the development of goals, objectives, and policies for the park and open space system represents the basic recreational values and needs of the community, it also then forms the basis for subsequent development of park and open space standards. With the above-mentioned factors in mind, the following set of goals, objectives and policies was formally approved in conjunction with the adoption of this document.

### Goal:

Ensure provision and protection of sufficient parks, outdoor recreation facilities and open space areas to satisfy the health, safety, and welfare needs of residents and visitors, including special groups such as the elderly, the disabled, and pre-school age children.

### Objectives:

1. To preserve natural features and amenities and conserve natural resources for the benefit of the community and society as a whole.
2. To provide quality outdoor recreation and access to open space lands and facilities for each neighborhood of the community.
3. To coordinate the addition of new park and open space lands and facilities to the Town park system in conjunction with new development and redevelopment projects.
4. To provide a diversity of outdoor recreational opportunities so that residents of all ages have an equal opportunity to enjoy the park and open space system.

### Policies:

1. The type of park and open space facilities should be scaled to the needs of the area and population served, both present and future.
2. Whenever possible, all park sites and experiences will be made accessible to all potential users, in conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

3. Acquisition of park and open space lands should be coordinated with development to provide for reasonable acquisition costs and to facilitate site planning for development. Alternative means of reserving lands required for open space use should be fully explored to ensure that lands are obtained at the lowest cost to the public.
4. Preservation of environmental corridors, isolated natural areas, undeveloped floodplains, and other unique natural resource features in their natural state should receive special attention to ensure their maintenance as wildlife and fish habitats, as natural drainage areas, as groundwater recharge areas, and as areas for passive outdoor recreation, where appropriate.
5. Conservancy lands, which can be adequately and appropriately protected without public expenditure, should be preserved. Public funds should be used to acquire conservancy lands that cannot be protected through other means, or where public access is a high priority.
6. The Town should investigate all regulatory and acquisition tools available to preserve conservancy lands or other open space.
7. Whenever possible, parks and public areas will be linked to neighborhoods and each other by a system of non-motorized trails and path systems.
8. All parks should have multiple access points from surrounding neighborhoods.
9. Neighborhood parks should be sited and designed to enhance neighborhood cohesion and to provide a common neighborhood gathering place.
10. Park development should be planned to avoid creating nuisance situations between neighbors and park users.
11. All park and open space planning and design projects should be coordinated with land acquisition, land use control and planning programs of all federal, state, county and local agencies concerned with parks and conservation.
12. School lands and facilities will be used for park and recreational purposes where appropriate and feasible.
13. Active parklands in undeveloped areas should be acquired through developer land dedications where feasible.
14. All new residential development in the Town shall meet the park and open space standards and recommendations as outlined in this Plan.

### III. PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The Town of Somers has a strong interest in upgrading the current level of park and open space planning happening in the Town. Development of a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan will be the first effort of its kind in the Town, and the formation of a Park Commission in 2008 was a commendable first step towards ongoing planning for the Somers park system.

The Kenosha County Park and Open Space Plan, and the 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan are the park-related plans currently in effect for the County and State respectively. In addition, the Town of Somers recently completed 18 individual neighborhood plans that, together, comprise the land use plan for the Town of Somers.

#### Kenosha County Park and Open Space Plan

The County Plan, which was adopted in October of 1998 and amended in October of 1999, generally recommends in Chapter III that local units of government within the County should provide certain local park and open space sites and facilities as needed within their area of jurisdiction, and that these sites and facilities be maintained for outdoor recreation use and resource preservation purposes. The outdoor recreation element of the Plan recommends that cities, towns, and villages provide community and neighborhood parks in urban portions of the County to provide facilities for more intensive recreational activities, such as baseball, tennis, and playground activities, and that recommendations for the location of local parks and recreational facilities should be identified through the preparation and adoption of local park and open space plans. The Plan goes on to recommend that in rural areas of the County, one town-owned park and associated outdoor recreation facilities be provided in each town to serve the needs of town residents for local civic events and for organized recreation activities, such as softball and picnicking. It further recommends that this town park should be located in conjunction with another community facility that serves as a focal point for town residents such as a town hall, school, or fire station. The Plan additionally recommends that all environmental corridors and isolated natural areas within local park service areas be considered for acquisition by local units of government as necessary as development occurs. This would protect these areas for limited outdoor recreation uses, resource preservation, and drainage and flood control purposes. The Plan also provides the following recommendations applicable to the Town of Somers:

- Develop Countywide recreational trails along the Lake Michigan, Pike River, and Fox River recreation corridors
- Provide new and maintain existing boat access sites to Lake Michigan, the Fox River, and inland lakes in the County

#### 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

The statewide plan provides a more general analysis of recreational interests and related issues across a very diverse demographic area. Although the focus of the Plan is the provision of outdoor recreation, it also heavily promotes the importance of environmental preservation. The Plan offers a number of goals and actions to “make strides towards developing an improved supply of

recreation within the state, while also protecting Wisconsin's beautiful natural environment for the enjoyment of residents and visitors for generations to come."

#### Town of Somers Neighborhood Plans

Each of the Town's 17 adopted neighborhood plans provides general recommendations for the preservation of environmentally significant land and the provision of sufficient parkland in conjunction with future development. Some of the recommendations identified in the Plans include the following:

- Provide recreational trails that follow utility easements and natural areas associated with the Pike River and Pike Creek
- Include open space or parkland with future development to provide recreational opportunities for future residents
- Provide Conservancy zoning to preserve significant wetlands
- Protect environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas, wetlands, wetland buffers, and floodplains from development to preserve their environmental benefits

It is recommended that a priority be placed on developing access to parkland, especially neighborhood parks, in the most densely populated neighborhoods that currently do not have access to recreational opportunities. This priority would include the following neighborhoods: North Lakeshore, Parkside East, Parkside North, Somers West, Fairfield, and Pike River West.

The 18<sup>th</sup> and final neighborhood plan has yet to be adopted by the Town. This plan addresses land use in the North Lakeshore neighborhood. It is critically important that the provision of future parkland be a component of the final adopted version of this plan, because the North Lakeshore neighborhood is the only neighborhood in Somers with shoreline property along Lake Michigan. The Town currently does not provide any public access to this exceptional water resource, and future land use patterns should be designed in such a manner so as to provide this access.

#### **IV. PLANNING PROCESS**

Ruekert/Mielke was retained by the Town of Somers to complete a Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan update in March of 2009. On April 13, 2009 a kickoff meeting was held with the Park Commission. On June 15, 2009 the public was invited to attend the Park Commission meeting at the Town Hall to provide input on the existing condition of individual parks as well as any desired improvements that would benefit the park system. A third meeting was held on August 17, 2009 with the Park Commission to review drafts of the proposed park concept plans. Following the meeting the concept plans were revised and a draft of the CORP was compiled. A public open house was held at the Town Hall on September 21, 2009 to display the drafts of the existing and proposed Town park concept plans and to solicit feedback from residents. A final meeting with the Park Commission was held immediately following the September 21 open house to discuss the open house results, finalize the conceptual design for each park, discuss the CORP draft, and to

prioritize recommended improvements to the park system over the next five years. In the ten days following the September 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, the park concept plans were finalized and the draft of the CORP was revised to create a final CORP document. Hard copies of the final document were forwarded for review to Park Commission, Plan Commission, and Town Board members two weeks in advance of a combined meeting of the Park Commission and Plan Commission on October 12, 2009. Both the Park Commission and the Plan Commission recommended approval of the CORP at this meeting, and it was then formally adopted at a Town Board meeting on October 13, 2009. Throughout the planning process, the Ruekert/Mielke project team communicated with Town staff and the Park Commission via email as well as a special intranet website site that was set up by Ruekert/Mielke as a data sharing tool for the project.

## V. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

### Location

The Town of Somers is located in the far northeast corner of Kenosha County. The City of Kenosha forms the Town's entire southern border and the southern half of the Town's eastern border. The Town of Paris is located to the west, on the west side of Interstate 94. Somers borders the Racine County Village of Mount Pleasant to the north. The northern-most portion of the Town's eastern border is Lake Michigan. Somers is located within close proximity to Milwaukee and Chicago, and has good access to both of these metro areas.

### Water Features

As mentioned previously, the most notable water feature, Lake Michigan, borders the east side of roughly the northern half of the Town. This three-plus miles of shoreline provides a number of scenic vistas out over the Lake. A major Lake Michigan tributary, the Pike River, flows from the Village of Mount Pleasant south through the eastern section of the Town, and then empties into Lake Michigan in the City of Kenosha. Several smaller tributaries, including Pike Creek, flow into the Pike River from the north, west, and south. The South Branch of the Pike River, one of the larger tributaries, extends south from its confluence with the Pike River through much of the central portion of the Town. The East Branch of the Des Plaines River, locally known as the Kilbourn Road Ditch, flows through the far western section of Somers as it roughly parallels Interstate 94. This section of river then flows through the City of Kenosha to its eventual confluence with the Des Plaines River in the Village of Pleasant Prairie.

### Environmental Corridors and Isolated Natural Resource Areas

Primary and secondary environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas are also located within the Town. These environmentally significant areas include both wetlands and woodlands, and they serve a multitude of purposes within the Town. They contribute significantly to the rural atmosphere that most area residents desire while preserving, help to purify drinking water, and also function as integral components of maintaining the natural ecosystem. The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission has identified and delineated these environmentally sensitive areas so that local governmental agencies can protect them.

Key components of environmental corridors are: 1) rivers, streams, lakes, and associated shorelands and floodlands, 2) wetlands, 3) woodlands, 4) prairies, 5) wildlife habitat areas, 6) wet, poorly drained, and organic soils, and 7) rugged terrain and high-relief topography. Existing parks and open spaces are also considered in the delineation of environmental corridors.

Environmental corridors have been split into two major categories. Primary environmental corridors are at least 400 acres in size, two miles in length, and 200 feet in width. Secondary environmental corridors generally connect with the primary environmental corridors and are at least 100 acres in size and one mile in length. Isolated natural resource areas are at least five acres in size and are separated physically from the environmental corridors by intensive urban and agricultural land uses.

## Primary Environmental Corridors

As depicted on **Map 2**, the primary environmental corridors within the Town (1228 acres) are somewhat scattered throughout the northeast portion of the Town, with the largest tracts located in Petrifying Springs County Park and on the University of Wisconsin-Parkside campus. Much of the remaining primary environmental corridor occurs along a corridor following the Pike River and its tributaries.

The primary environmental corridors include the best remaining woodlands, wetlands, and wildlife habitat area and are, in effect, a composite of the best remaining elements of the natural resource base of the study area. These corridors have truly immeasurable environmental and recreational value. Protection of the primary environmental corridors from intrusion by incompatible uses, and thereby from degradation and destruction, is directly related to the provision of quality outdoor recreational opportunities, and should therefore be of high priority to the Town. The preservation of these areas in an essentially open, natural state, including park and open space uses, limited agricultural uses, and very low-density residential uses, will serve to maintain a high level of environmental quality in the Town, protect its natural beauty, and provide valuable recreation opportunities.

## Secondary Environmental Corridors and Isolated Natural Resource Areas

No less important are the secondary environmental corridors. These areas are very similar to the primary environmental corridors except that they are simply not as large in size. The secondary environmental corridors carry out the same valuable functions as the larger primary environmental corridors, but at a slightly smaller scale. The secondary environmental corridors are equally important to the ecosystem and to the preservation of natural resources and should be protected to the same degree.

**Map 2** depicts the secondary environmental corridor lands in Somers (381 acres). The majority of the secondary environmental corridors in the Town are found along the South Branch of the Pike River and the Kilbourn Road Ditch. The 24.20-acre Town-owned proposed park property along C.T.H. E, currently referred to as the "Gitzlaff Property," also contains a small tract of secondary environmental corridor along an unnamed tributary of the Pike River, which bisects the property.

Isolated natural resource areas within the Town (189 acres) are mainly privately owned areas widely dispersed throughout Somers, with some acreage also located on the UW-Parkside campus. Even though many of these areas are owned by private entities, their preservation remains important to the environment and to the Town.

## Soils

The Town of Somers is made up of five main soil associations, the Morley-Beecher-Ashkum, the Varna-Elliott-Ashkum, the Hebron-Montgomery-Aztalan, the Fox-Casco, and the Boyer-Granby. The Morley-Beecher-Ashkum association can be found in several small pockets in the far northwest corner and the north-central sections of the Town. This association is characterized by well drained to poorly drained soils that have either a silty clay or silty clay loam subsoil. They are formed in thin loess and the underlying clay loam or silty clay loam glacial till on low, broad ridges and knobs

that are dissected by drainageways and depressions. The Varna-Elliott-Ashkum association is the most predominant soil in Somers. Soils from this association make up the majority of the soil in the western two-thirds of the Town. These soils are also characterized by well drained to poorly drained soils. They have a silty clay loam to clay subsoil formed in thin loess and the underlying clay loam or silty clay loam glacial till on low, broad ridges and knobs. Soils from the Hebron-Montgomery-Aztalan association are found in a linear corridor along the South Branch of the Pike River, in the central section of Somers, and in a wide linear corridor along Lake Michigan. This association is made up of soils that are well drained to poorly drained, with a loam to silty clay subsoil. The soils are underlain by loamy lacustrine and outwash material on hills, knobs and lake plains. The Fox-Casco association can be found in one pocket in the north-central section of the Town. These soils are well drained with a subsoil of clay loam. They are generally found on outwash plains and stream terraces. One small linear corridor of Boyer-Granby association soils is located along a low linear terrace adjoining Lake Michigan. These soils are characterized by well drained to very poorly drained soils that have a loam to sand subsoil, underlain by sandy glacial outwash.

Overall, a high percentage of the well-drained soils throughout Somers are classified by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) as Class II soils considered to be “National Prime Farmlands.” Class II soils are considered to have high agricultural capability based on their genetic suitability for most kinds of farming. The suitability is measured based on the limitations of the soils, the risk of damage when used, and the way in which the soils respond to treatment.

### Climate

The Town of Somers has a continental climate, characterized by significant seasonal changes in weather. Winters are cloudy, cold and snowy. Small water bodies and rivers usually begin to freeze in November and remain ice covered until April. During the spring, periods of warm weather alternate with cold spells. By the end of March, nearly all precipitation is in the form of rain. Summers are warm and at times hot and humid, with cool periods not uncommon. Mild temperatures are typical during the daytime hours in the fall, with the nights being cool and clear. The change from fall to winter is often abrupt, as is the change from summer to fall.

### Population and Demographics

In order to plan accordingly so that recreational facilities will meet the future needs of residents, sound park and open space planning requires a reasonable estimation of future population levels. Developing reasonable population projections for small communities such as Somers is a difficult task due to a number of uncertainties, such as the future state of the local and national economy, changes in local growth management policy, planned improvements to infrastructure, and dramatic changes in birth and death rates. Complex mathematical models and professional judgment based on past growth trends are used by demographers to anticipate future demographic trends.

For park planning it is also necessary to define the area served by the park system. Due to the unique types of parks and the variety of recreational opportunities in the Town, Somers serves some of the recreational needs of people in areas outside of its municipal boundaries, in addition to serving Town residents. That is, it is known that non-residents utilize local park facilities, in particular the sports fields and the river access points. It is also recognized that Somers is well



situated with ready access to other appealing recreational opportunities within a reasonable drive, including those in the Cities of Kenosha and Racine, the Town of Paris, the Village of Mount Pleasant, and the Village of Pleasant Prairie. For the purposes of this Plan it is assumed that recreational in-migration is roughly equivalent to out-migration, with no net gain or loss, so the provision of local park capacity will be based on Somers' population alone.

According to the Wisconsin State Demographic Services Center, Somers' year 2009 population is estimated to be 9,361. The Town has a total area of 30.50 square miles, and a population density of approximately 297 persons per square mile. According to the Demographic Services Center, Somers has approximately 0.04 square miles of water area, or 0.07% of its total area.

According to U.S. Census Bureau Census 2000 data, in the decade of the 1980's, Somers' population grew much more slowly (0.3% increase) than that of Kenosha County (4.1% increase) over the same time period. That trend changed in the 1990's, when Somers's population increased at a slightly faster rate (16.9% increase) than Kenosha County's population (16.7% increase) over the same decade. As of the census of 2000, there were 9,059 people, 3,399 households, and 2,226 families residing in the Town of Somers. The average household size was 2.45 and the average family size was 3.00. The median age in the Town was 36 years old in the year 2000. The census data for the racial makeup of the Town indicates that the nonwhite population consists of approximately 8.43% of the total population. The Town population in 2000 was almost evenly divided between the sexes, with 4,492 female residents (49.6%) and 4,567 male residents (50.4%).

See **Table 1** for the age breakdown of residents in the Town. Just over half (52%) of Somers' population is between twenty-five and sixty-four years of age. Children and adolescents comprise over 21% of the population; and senior citizens make up the remaining 10.7% of Town residents. It is important to analyze the ages of the people who will be using the Town parks to ensure that the provided amenities meet the demand for each age category.

**Table 1**  
**Town of Somers Age Distribution (2000)**

Age	Population	%
Less than 18 years	1957	21.6
18 - 24	1413	15.6
25 - 44	2582	28.5
45 - 64	2138	23.6
65+	969	10.7
Total	9,059	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

By using historical population figures and trends, the Wisconsin State Demographic Services Center estimates the population of municipalities between census recordings. Furthermore, the Demographic Services Center uses this data to project future population. As was previously mentioned in this section, the Town of Somers' 2009 population is estimated to be 9,361 residents. The most recent population projections sourced from the Demographic Services Center figure that

Somers will grow to 10,229 by 2015 and 10,692 persons by the year 2020. These projections are further depicted in **Table 2**.

**Table 2**  
**Town of Somers Population Projections**

Town of Somers	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census	2009 Estimate	2010 Projection	2015 Projection	2020 Projection
	7,724	7,748	9,059	9,361	9,785	10,229	10,692

Source: State of Wisconsin Department of Administration, Demographic Services Center

## VI. PARK AND OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

An inventory of Somers' current parks and open space areas is the first step in this planning process. The inventory establishes a framework from which future analysis is possible. Each park and open space area is designed to provide a sufficient amount of specific recreational use areas or facilities to serve a certain number of park users. For the purpose of this study, the users of Somers' park system are defined as the year-round resident population of the Town, and a ratio is used to measure the amount of parkland that is available to this population. The ratio is typically defined as the number of park acres recommended per 1,000 persons. Smaller, more basic parks typically have a ratio of 0.25 to 0.50 acres per 1,000 people. The larger parks with more amenities will be designed to provide more recreational acreage per person. The Town of Somers uses recommended standards developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) as a guide for park and open space planning. It should be emphasized that these standards are used as a flexible guideline and adapted to the particular needs of the community.

The following is a list of various types of park and open space facilities and their recommended levels of provision, based on NRPA guidelines. This list includes a hierarchy of parks and open space facilities based on an area to population ratio and a recommended minimum service area for each type of facility. The NRPA guidelines generally recommend 6.25 to 10.50 acres of total developed open space per 1,000 persons in the community. As a rapidly growing community intent on providing a quality park system to meet all of the outdoor recreational needs of Town residents, Somers intends to establish the high end of this range, 10.50 acres per 1,000 persons, as the Town standard. The Town of Somers therefore intends to add additional parkland and make improvements to existing parkland, as necessary, to meet this standard in the future. This high standard will help the Town meet the outdoor recreational needs of future residents as the population of Somers increases.

The NRPA recommends provision levels for various types of parks based on an acreage area to community population ratio, as well as a recommended minimum service area for each of these types of parks. After evaluating the NRPA standards, a system of park types has been identified as important to the Town of Somers park system. A descriptive hierarchy of these park types in Somers is as follows:

### Mini-Park

Mini-Parks are meant to serve a specific purpose to a more densely situated neighborhood. Normally mini-parks are the size of a residential lot in the area.

Size:	Less than 1 acre.
Acres/1000 population:	Less than 1 acre.
Service Area:	¼ mile or less.
Location:	High-density neighborhoods where yards are small or unusable, and in close proximity to multi-family housing.

Typical facilities include: A grassy area or a small sandy beach. Some playground equipment and at least one sitting bench should be available. Landscaping is also a desirable asset.

### Neighborhood Park

These parks are larger than mini-parks. They will have more amenities and expand on the playground facilities to attract both young children as well as the elderly. Active as well as passive recreation opportunities should be present.

Size: 1 to 10 acres.

Acres/1000 population: 1 to 2 acres.

Service Area: ½ mile or as limited by the community's physical characteristics.

Location: Adjacent to elementary schools or near the center of a neighborhood.

Typical facilities include: Playground facilities for multiple age groups in addition to a softball or baseball diamond, tennis courts, basketball courts, picnic area, restroom facilities, an overhead shelter, landscaping, multiple sitting benches, and parking.

### Community Park

Community parks will expand on the amenities that the neighborhood parks provide. These parks are areas where larger events occur. They provide extensive active and passive recreation possibilities for anyone inclined. Community parks can be places for entertainment events such as band concerts, craft and other specialty shows, large picnics, festivals, or other larger venue events.

Size: More than 10 acres

Acres/1000 population: 5 to 8 acres.

Service Area: 1 to 3 miles.

Location: Near the center of several neighborhoods or selected because of notable natural features such as topography, woodland areas, or water.

Typical facilities include: All neighborhood park facilities plus additional softball and baseball diamonds, tennis courts, horseshoe courts, hard-surface game areas, multipurpose shelter building with restrooms, lighted parking, concession stand, and facilities for special events or activities such as an archery range, boat launch, swimming pier, sledding hill, band shell, community picnic area, extensive landscaping, and gardens.

### Special Use Area

A special use area is a park or recreation area that meets a specific need or may serve one purpose.

Size:	Varies with the size of the area and land available.
Acres/1000 population:	Variable.
Service Area:	The whole community.
Location:	Wherever appropriate sites can be secured.
Typical Facilities:	Athletic fields, golf courses, swimming pools, community center, hiking and bike trails, greenways, historic sites, archaeological sites, or conservancy areas.

### Regional Park

Diverse geographic areas that provide recreational opportunities for multiple communities. These parks encompass large areas and typically include environmentally significant lands and water bodies. They provide opportunities for both active and passive recreation on a much larger scale than community parks. Development of regional parks is controlled by higher levels of government such as the counties.

Service area: Multiple communities

Desirable Size: 200+ acres

Acres per 1,000 population: Variable

Desirable site characteristics: large diverse geographic areas that typically include surface water and/or environmentally significant lands.

### Park Trail

Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural resource areas. Their focus is on recreational value and harmony with the natural environment.

Type 1: Separate/single purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians or bicyclists/in-line skaters.

Type 2: Multi-purpose hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and bicyclists/in-line skaters.

Type 3: Nature trails for pedestrians. May be hard or soft-surfaced.

### Connector Trail

Multi-purpose trails that emphasize safe travel for pedestrians to and from parks and around the community. Focus is as much on transportation as it is on recreation.

- Type 1: Hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and/or bicyclists/in-line skaters located in an independent corridor (e.g., old railroad r.o.w., easement through private property)
- Type 2: Hard-surfaced trails for pedestrians and/or bicyclists/in-line skaters typically located within the road r.o.w.

## VII. EXISTING RECREATION SUPPLY INVENTORY

### Description of the Existing Park and Open Space System

The Town of Somers park and open space system consists of 78.25 total acres of parkland and open space areas under the control of the Town, of which 17.35 acres are currently useable via developed facilities for outdoor recreation. The system includes a range of developed facilities including neighborhood parks and a community park located throughout the Town.

This section of the Plan provides a comprehensive inventory of the existing public recreational facilities in the Town of Somers:

### Description of Existing Public Parks and Open Spaces in the Town

#### 1. **Park behind Town Hall**

Location:	C.T.H. E, south of Town Hall.
Size:	14.00 acres
Park Type:	Community park.
Facilities:	(3) softball diamonds w/backstops and bleachers (one has lights and a digital scoreboard), playground equipment with sand/gravel surfacing, separate play equipment and swings, (1) large soccer field, (2) small soccer fields, paved parking area.
Description:	This park is the main community park in Town. It is the main site for Somers recreational league softball and t-ball games.

#### 2. **Park north of Town Hall (Gitzlaff property)**

Location:	C.T.H. E, across the street and to the north of Town Hall.
Size:	24.20 acres.
Park Type:	Undeveloped open space.
Facilities:	None.
Description:	This site is divided into two halves by an unnamed tributary of the Pike River. The southern half is an old farm field, and the northern half is upland scrub vegetation. It is currently under consideration for development as a community park.

### 3. Fabiano Park

Location: C.T.H. E, behind Town Fire Station #2, approximately ¼-mile west of Lake Michigan.

Size: 1.70 acres.

Park Type: Neighborhood park.

Facilities: Playground equipment with sand surfacing, picnic table, bench, trash receptacles, (5) fitness stations in the grass, grass playfield with backstop.

Description: This neighborhood park was created in 2008 in memory of Kenosha County Sheriff Deputy Frank Fabiano, Jr., who was killed in the line of duty. The park attracts children to the playground area, and adults frequent the site to use the fitness stations.

### 4. Park in Country Charm subdivision

Location: At the end of 94<sup>th</sup> Street, in the southeast corner of the Country Charm subdivision.

Size: 2.00 acres.

Park Type: Undeveloped open space

Facilities: None.

Description: This site is an open field that is under consideration for development as a neighborhood park.

### 5. Park on C.T.H. EA

Location: C.T.H. EA, approximately ½-mile south of C.T.H. E.

Size: 34.70 acres.

Park Type: Undeveloped open space.

Facilities: None.

Description: This site is an old agricultural field that is under consideration for development as a community park.

### 6. Park in Valley View subdivision

Location: 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue, at the end of 45<sup>th</sup> Street in the Valley View subdivision.



Size: 1.65 acres.

Park Type: Neighborhood park.

Facilities: ADA-accessible playground equipment with pea gravel surfacing, trash receptacle, and open greenspace.

Description: This small park receives intense use from nearby residential homes. The majority of the park consists of relatively flat open greenspace, which lends itself to the development of additional park facilities.

### **7. Petrifying Springs Park**

Location: C.T.H. A, just east of S.T.H. 31.

Size: 360 acres.

Park Type: Regional park.

Facilities: 18-hole golf course, (5) picnic shelters, restroom facilities, playground areas, softball diamonds, hiking and biking trails, cross country ski trails, sand volleyball courts, and paved parking areas.

Description: This Kenosha County Park contains a mix of active and passive recreational facilities, as well as preserved woodland areas, including a natural hardwood forest.

### **8. Somers Elementary School**

Location: Southeast corner of intersection of C.T.H. E and C.T.H. EA.

Size: Approximately 11 acres.

Park Type: Public school facility.

Facilities: Playground area, ball diamond, (2) basketball courts, open greenspace.

Description: The grounds of this public elementary school have a number of recreational facilities typical of a neighborhood park. These facilities are open for public use.

Provision Totals for the Existing Park and Open Space System

The following table, **Table 3**, presents the different types of parks and the correlated acreage of land. The Town maintains a total of 17.35 acres of active and passive accessible recreation area.

**Table 3**  
**Acreage of Different Types of Town Public Parks**

Type of Park	Active <sup>1</sup> and Passive Accessible <sup>2</sup> Recreation Area	Undeveloped Open Space	Total
Mini Park	0.00	0.00	0.00
Neighborhood Parks	3.35	0.00	3.35
Community Park	14.00	0.00	14.00
Special Use Areas	0.00	0.00	0.00
Potential Parks	0.00	60.90	60.90
<b>Total Public Park Facilities</b>	<b>17.35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78.25</b>

<sup>1</sup>Active Recreation Area: Playgrounds, athletic fields, etc.

<sup>2</sup>Passive Accessible Recreation Area: walking trails, picnic groves, etc.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance at Town-Owned Parks

The needs of those with disabilities are very important to consider when planning for outdoor recreation. **Table 4** provides an outline of how well the Town of Somers meets those needs. Overall, there is a deficiency in the provision of disabled accessible amenities throughout the park system in Somers.

Most playgrounds and main activity areas in the Town parks are not disabled accessible. The majority of the playground equipment and many of the structures and facilities are ADA compatible; however, much of the non-compliance results from the lack of hard-surfaced paths from main park access points and parking areas to provide direct access to the facilities and playground areas. Improvements that should be addressed in the future include the implementation of ADA compliant pathways to provide access from parking and entrance points to the bathroom facilities, seating areas, and transition points on playground structures. These improvements would replace the typical surfacing that now exists on many of the main access routes in Somers' parks with hard-surfaced pathways. These pathways can be designed in a sustainable manner as permeable pavement so that current drainage patterns are not affected.

One of the stated goals of this CORP is to ensure that open space and recreation facilities and programs are designed to meet the special needs of all residents, especially the disabled. The most effective way of addressing the needed improvements is to develop a five-year capital improvement schedule for the park system. This schedule would help to budget resources and create a feasible timetable for the improvements to be completed. Development of a full and detailed evaluation of ADA accessibility compliance needs would assist in assessing the need for future updates to existing facilities. Certainly all new parks, playground, and bathroom facilities will be constructed in accordance with ADA codes and established guidelines.

**Table 4  
Accessibility of Equipment and Facilities in Town Parks**

	Park/Open Space Site	Accessible Marked Handicap Parking Stalls	Accessible Route to Main Activities	Accessible Play Equipment	Accessible Route to Transfer Point At Play Equipment	Accessible Open Shelter	Accessible Restrooms	Accessible Route to Restrooms
1.	Park behind Town Hall	No (Lot by Town Hall – Yes)	No	Yes	No (sand)	N/A	N/A	N/A
2.	Park north of Town Hall (Gitzlaff property)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
3.	Fabiano Park	Yes	No (grass)	Yes	No (sand)	N/A	N/A	N/A
4.	Park in Country Charm Subdivision	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5.	Park on C.T.H EA	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6.	Park in Valley View Subdivision Park	No	No (grass)	Yes	No (pea gravel)	N/A	N/A	N/A

\*Note: Accessibility designation of “yes” requires barrier-free hard-surfaced access to facilities for disabled persons.

## VIII. OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Evaluation of solicited public input, and analysis based on set recreation standards are the two most commonly used methods for conducting a community outdoor recreation needs assessment. Utilizing both methods together will most accurately pinpoint the needs of the community. This section of the CORP provides a summary of the public input process, an assessment of the current park and open space facilities in Somers based on a Town-customized version of National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines and standards, and a summary of the recreational activity findings outlined in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and their bearing on local park planning.

### Needs Assessment: Public Input

Without year-round inventories of how many people use each of the parks, public input from residents and park users is needed to identify the current state of the parks, the future needs of the parks, and how well the current and future amenities serve the public. Because public input is critically important, several meetings were held during the development of the CORP to obtain feedback from residents and park users. A summary of these meetings is as follows:

1. Public Meeting 1: A kickoff meeting with Town staff and the Park Commission was held on April 13, 2009. Residents were invited to attend via public notice. At this meeting every park and potential park in the Town was individually identified. Discussion ensued regarding the present state of each park and the facilities available at each park. A “wish list” was created to identify desired improvements that could make each park more attractive or user friendly.
2. Public Meeting 2: A second meeting with the Park Commission was held on June 15, 2009. Residents were again invited to attend via public notice. At this meeting a draft list of desired park improvements for the next five years was drafted, and service areas for each of the existing Town parks were identified on maps. There was then discussion regarding areas that were identified as underserved, and the potential need for new parks.
3. Public Meeting 3: A third meeting with the Park Commission was held on August 17, 2009. Residents were again invited to attend via public notice. At this meeting drafts of the proposed concept plans for each of the Town existing and proposed parks were reviewed and discussed, and feedback was received from the Park Commission and the public.
4. Public Meeting 4: A public open house was held on September 21, 2009 to display the drafts of the proposed concept plans for each of the Town existing and proposed parks. The format of the open house was very informal, and residents were invited to view the plans up close and to have one-on-one discussions with Park Commission members and the Ruckert-Mielke project team. Approximately 25-30 residents attended the open house.
5. Public Meeting 5: A final meeting with the Park Commission was held on September 21, 2009, immediately following the public open house. Residents were again invited to attend via public notice. At this meeting discussion took place regarding the feedback received from residents at the open house. A draft of the CORP was also reviewed, and the majority of the discussion surrounded the prioritization of the recommended improvements over the next five years, so

that a 5-year capital improvement schedule could be developed as the last step in completing the CORP. Minor revisions to the CORP draft were suggested by the public officials as well as residents.

6. Public Meeting 6: A public hearing was held on October 12, 2009, immediately preceding a combined meeting of the Park Commission and Plan Commission. Residents were allowed to speak in advance of the scheduled consideration of the recommendation to approve the plan at the combined meeting.

In addition to the public meetings, a community public opinion survey was created to obtain additional feedback from residents regarding the state of the Town parks, open spaces, and trails. The survey was made available on the Town website, and it was also distributed at several Town meetings in the summer of 2009, as well as at the public open house on September 21<sup>st</sup>. See **Appendix E** for the survey and results.

#### Needs Assessment: Recreation Standards Analysis

**Table 5** depicts the NRPA recommended acreage standards for each type of park per 1,000 persons in the population, and the existing Town-owned active and accessible passive acreage per park category in Somers. Using the 2009 estimated population, **Table 5** indicates that the Town of Somers is far below both the acreage recommended by the NRPA guidelines and the adopted Somers standard with an aggregate 17.35 acres for recreational activity. This breaks down to 1.86 acres per 1,000 persons – well below the NRPA range of 6.25 to 10.50 acres of developed park and open space land per 1,000 persons, and Somers’ standard of 10.50 acres per 1,000 persons.

Mini-parks are the smallest unit of parks and open space. **Table 5** depicts the NRPA recommended acreage for this type of park to be 0.25 – 0.50 acres per 1,000 persons. The Somers standard coincides with the high end of this standard at 0.50 acres per 1,000 persons. According to the inventory of existing public park facilities, Somers does not have any parks that classify as mini-parks. According to the calculation based on the 2009 estimated population, the Town should have 4.68 acres classified as mini-parks to satisfy the needs of residents.

Fabiano Park and the unnamed park in the Valley View Subdivision are the two developed neighborhood parks in Somers. At 2.00 acres per 1,000 persons, Somers’ standard again coincides with the high end of the neighborhood park acreage provision recommended by NRPA (as shown in **Table 5**). To date, the two neighborhood parks in the Town account for 3.35 acres, or 0.36 acres per 1,000 persons, far below the standard.

The 14.00 acres of parkland south of Somers Town Hall serve as the only developed community park in the Town. This calculates out to 1.50 acres of community parkland per 1,000 persons, far below the NRPA recommended 5 – 8 acres per 1,000 persons and the Somers standard of 8 acres (see **Table 5**). Petrifying Springs County Park also contains both active and passive recreational facilities typical of a community park. Since these facilities are readily accessible to the public, for the purpose of this study, Petrifying Springs County Park is considered to function as a community park. With roughly half of its 360 acres comprised of active and passive accessible recreational

parkland, the Petrifying Springs County Park acreage increases the available community park acreage in Somers to 20.72 acres per 1,000 persons, well above the Town standard.

There is not a clearly defined standard for the provision of special use area acreage. Somers does not currently have any parkland classified under this category in the Town park system.

**Table 5**  
**Active and Passive Accessible Acres in the Town of Somers' Public Park and Open Space Facilities**

<u>Type of Park</u>	<u>NRPA Guidelines</u> (Acres per 1,000 persons)	<u>Somers Standard</u> (Acres per 1,000 persons)	<u>Public Park Facilities in the Town</u>			
			<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>Acres per 1,000 persons</b> (2009 estimated population) <sup>1</sup>	<b>Acres per 1,000 persons</b> (2015 projected population) <sup>2</sup>	<b>Acres per 1,000 persons</b> (2020 projected population) <sup>3</sup>
Mini Park	0.25 - 0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Neighborhood Park	1.00 – 2.00	2.00	3.35	0.36	0.33	0.31
Community Park	5.00 – 8.00	8.00	14.00	1.50	1.37	1.31
Special Use Area	Variable	Variable	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.25 - 10.50</b>	<b>10.50</b>	<b>17.35</b>	<b>1.86</b>	<b>1.70</b>	<b>1.62</b>

<sup>1</sup> Based on the 2009-estimated population of 9,361 for the Town of Somers (See Table 2).

<sup>2</sup> Based on the 2015 projected population of 10,229 for the Town of Somers (See Table 2).

<sup>3</sup> Based on the 2020 projected population of 10,692 for the Town of Somers (See Table 2).

### Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

In the fall of 2006 the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources published the 2005-2010 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. The Plan provides insight into current trends, needs, and participation rates for outdoor recreation activities on a statewide level.

Data regarding recreation demand in the state was acquired via four separate survey sources: 1) The 1999-2004 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) and version 18 of the NSRE (called the Wisconsin Survey), which was conducted September to November, 2004; 2) The Outdoor Industry Foundation (OIF) 2002 Outdoor Recreation Participation & Spending Study, A State-by-State Perspective; 3) The Department of Tourism 2004 Wisconsin Advertising Awareness and Competitive Analysis Wave VIII Study (WAVE VIII); and 4) written, internet, and mail comments obtained at a series of eight public meetings held in 2005 to discuss barriers for increased outdoor use. The survey results include Wisconsin residents as well as visitors who recreate in Wisconsin.

According to the SCORP, the following ten outdoor recreation activities have the highest participation rates among Wisconsin outdoor recreation participants ages 16 and older:

1. Walking for pleasure
2. Family gathering
3. Viewing/photographing natural scenery
4. Gardening or landscaping for pleasure
5. Visiting nature centers, etc.
6. Driving for pleasure
7. Viewing/photographing other wildlife
8. Attending outdoor sports events
9. Picnicking
10. Sightseeing

These ten activities represent mainstream recreation activities that warrant facility design considerations for the future planning of Somers' park system. The Town's existing parks offer opportunities for only some of these activities, and the ranked list may help the Town prioritize facility development at recreation sites so that all of these activities can be adequately offered to residents in the future. With the majority of the activities on this list being passive or nature-based recreational activities, a review of this list is also a good reminder of the importance of meeting recreational demand while simultaneously preserving natural resources and the scenic beauty of the planning area.

The SCORP also assesses local recreational needs, and includes a summary of 373 local park and recreation plans on file from communities across the state as part of the WDNR recreation grants program. The assessment identifies the top planning recommendations resulting from this summary in the categories of park and open space acquisition needs, general recreation improvements, and new recreation developments. The needs identified in each category are as follows:

#### Park and Open Space Acquisition Needs:

- Community Parks
- Dog Parks
- Ice Age Trail
- Mini Parks
- Neighborhood Parks

#### General Recreation Improvements:

- ADA accessible facilities
- Athletic field upgrades and improvements
- Better signage
- Playground equipment upgrades
- Restroom upgrades

#### New Recreation Developments:

- Bike trails
- Boat launches

- Camping
- Disc golf courses
- Ice skating rinks
- Indoor recreation complexes
- Nature trails
- Park shelters
- Picnic areas
- Scenic drives
- Skateboard parks
- Sledding hills
- Soccer fields
- Swimming pools
- Tennis court development
- Trail connections
- Volleyball courts
- Water access
- Water trails
- Water spray parks

Overall, the results indicate a need for safer and easier access to existing facilities, and development of parks with a varied mix of both active and passive recreational activities. These recommendations should be taken into consideration as the Town prioritizes future park improvements and developments.

DNR Stewardship grant funding programs and priorities change on an annual basis. It is important to continually monitor funding programs and priorities and attempt to integrate SCORP priority projects into stewardship grant applications whenever possible.

#### Indication for Future Park and Recreation Facilities

An evaluation of existing parks, the facilities and recreational opportunities that they offer to residents, and the current population is important when assessing the immediate needs of the Town of Somers park system. An element of the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is an evaluation of the future needs of the Town. A future needs assessment can be used to assist Somers with planning and budgeting for future park improvement, acquisition and development. The future needs of the Town are determined both through an application of the recommended minimum acreage standards to a reliable population projection, as well as through an examination of the locations of existing facilities in comparison to where the population density is located and where the potential population growth is projected to occur.

Somers' population is projected to grow steadily over the next ten plus years, with a 14% increase expected from 2009 to 2020, as shown in **Table 2**. Comparing the future population to the Somers recommended park acreage standard (also the high end of the acreage guidelines recommended by NRPA) of 10.50 acres per 1,000 persons, Somers should provide and maintain 112.27 acres of parks and open space in the year 2020. Currently 17.35 acres of parks are available for public use. Therefore, if the population of Somers grows as projected through the year 2020, the number of



acres of developed parkland currently provided by the Town is vastly insufficient to meet the established standard.

Even though the numbers would seem to project a considerable deficiency, the outlook for the near future of the Somers park system is considerably more positive. The main reason for this outlook is the considerable amount of vacant parkland that is already under the control of the Town of Somers, and proposed to be developed as future parkland. The Town in fact has a beneficial jumpstart on the development of the vacant parkland as it is also currently working with the Ruekert/Mielke project team to finalize conceptual designs for these properties, in conjunction with the development of the CORP. An additional 60.90 acres of vacant parkland has already been acquired and is currently in the conceptual planning stage for development as park and open space land. Adding 60.90 acres of useable recreational land would increase the total acreage of parkland in Somers to 78.25, or 7.32 acres per 1,000 persons based on the projected 2020 Town population. This total would fall within the acreage range recommended by NRPA, but would still be below the 10.5 acres per 1,000 persons required by the Town standard. This means that if Somers develops all of the currently vacant land in Town that is proposed for parks, there will still be an acreage deficiency in the near future. The Town should therefore not hold off on looking to add more park and open space land. Along with a larger population, future development absorbs vacant land. If properly planned for, Somers will be able to provide more acreage and facilities to the park system to remain ahead of population growth.

The proximity of Town residents to the parks and open space facilities is another important indicator of how well the existing facilities meet the needs of the community. The easiest way to show the geographical need for parks and open spaces is to create maps indicating the service areas, or distance people will travel to use the parks. The Town of Somers uses different service areas based on the types of parks as shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6**  
**Park Types and Corresponding Service Areas**

<u>Type of Park</u>	<u>Service Area</u>
Mini-Park	¼ mile
Neighborhood Park	½ mile
Community Park	3 miles
Special Use Area	Variable

Maps have been created to illustrate which areas of the Town are served adequately by existing neighborhood and community parks based on these typical service radii. **Map 3** illustrates the location of the two neighborhood parks in the Town and the standard one half-mile service area around them. The map also shows the same service radii around an existing community park and County park because for the purpose of this study each of these larger parks also functions as a

neighborhood park for residents within the service area around them. A service radius is also projected around Somers Elementary School because the school grounds contain some of the facilities typical of a neighborhood park. In some instances the radii are interrupted and do not extend beyond arterial roadways or railroad lines, because these transportation routes are considered to be pedestrian barriers that do not allow for safe travel, especially by children, to and from neighborhood parks.

The service area of the existing community park is shown on **Map 4**. A service area is also shown around Petrifying Springs County Park on the map because it functions as a community park. This map illustrates that almost the entire Town, except for several small isolated areas, is sufficiently serviced by community parks.

Specific recommendations for future park and recreation facility locations are described in Section IX.

## IX. COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

### Future Parks

#### 1. Town Community Parks

The Town of Somers is currently deficient in the provision of community park acreage. A service area of three miles around the Town community parks on **Map 4** indicates that the geographic location of the existing community parks sufficiently serves roughly the entire Town; however, this spatial analysis is somewhat deceiving because Petrifying Springs County Park is included on the map as a community park because it provides many of the facilities typical of a community park. The acreage standard analysis reveals that adequate community park acreage under the control of Somers is not provided to serve the current population of the Town. Even though Petrifying Springs County Park realistically provides community park facilities which serve the needs of Town residents, any improvements or changes to these facilities is not under the control of the Town, and it is in Somers best interest to work toward satisfying the community park needs of its population independent of outside parkland. Even with the proposed future development of two vacant Town properties into 58.90 acres of additional useable community parkland, the Town would still only then have an estimated 6.82 acres of community parkland per 1,000 persons in 2020 based upon the projected population of 10,692. With the Somers standard at 8 acres per 1,000 persons, a deficiency will therefore exist, and the Town will need to add additional community parkland acreage to meet the needs of residents according to the standard.

The two Town-owned properties that are proposed for development as community parks are a 24.20-acre site north of Town Hall, locally known as the "Gitzlaff property," and a 34.70-acre property on C.T.H EA, approximately ½-mile south of C.T.H. E. Conceptual master plans have been prepared for each these potential parks in conjunction with the development of this CORP. These plans are included in **Appendix F**.

The Gitzlaff property is an "L"-shaped property that is roughly bisected diagonally by an unnamed tributary of the Pike River. The southern half of the property is currently still being farmed. The northern half of the site consists of mostly upland area with scattered scrub vegetation. A linear forested corridor parallels the creek. This corridor has been identified as secondary environmental corridor. The conceptual master plan for this site details mostly passive recreational facilities designed around the unique natural resources on the site.

The 34.70-acre site on C.T.H. EA is a mostly flat site that is currently in agricultural use. The conceptual master plan for this property details a predominantly active-recreational use park. The development of this site as a quasi-sports complex would provide a location for local sports organizations to more comfortably accommodate their need for space to program competitive events, and would also allow for future expansion of Town recreation programs. Existing storm water drainage patterns are very evident on this site, and the proposed design calls for these patterns to remain intact, with the site storm water features such as rain gardens and bioretention swales to be designed efficiently around the natural contours of the landscape.

#### 2. Town Neighborhood Parks

The Town of Somers is currently served by two neighborhood parks. According to the figures, the Town is deficient in the provision of the neighborhood park acreage required to serve its current population; however, when demonstrating the geographic need for neighborhood parks, one must also take into account the proximity of community parks and public school facilities. Community parks are larger in scale than neighborhood parks, but in some areas of Somers the community parks provide for many of the recreational facilities typical of neighborhood parks, and therefore also serve the function of neighborhood parks. Somers Elementary School is a public school facility that also provides many facilities of a neighborhood Park and functions as a neighborhood park for those residents in the service area.

The Neighborhood Park Service Area Map (**Map 3**) indicates areas of Somers that are not currently served by neighborhood parks. That is, they do not fall within the 1/2-mile recommended service area of any of the Town's neighborhood parks, or the service area boundary is broken by a pedestrian barrier, such as a major arterial roadway, railway, or water body. This map shows that the vast majority of the Town of Somers, including most of the densely populated areas, is not within the service area of a neighborhood park. The neighborhood park deficiency that exists in the indicated areas on the map, along with future growth, will require additional neighborhood park facilities to be provided by the Town of Somers in the future. It is recommended that Somers explore future opportunities for development of neighborhood parks in currently underserved population concentration areas, and in conjunction with any new residential development. Every effort should be made in areas of new development to provide access from the residential areas to new or existing neighborhood parks via interconnecting trails, sidewalks, or low-volume residential streets.

The Town currently owns a 2-acre property in the Country Charm subdivision that has been proposed for development as a neighborhood Park. A park on this site would satisfy the neighborhood park deficiency in this residential area. The site has historically been used for agricultural purposes and is relatively flat in grade. See the conceptual master plan for this site in **Appendix F**.

Below is a list of facilities and associated estimated costs in 2009 dollars for a typical new neighborhood park (approximately 8 acres in size). It is recognized that neighborhood parks vary greatly in size and type and number of facilities, but the information below can be used as a guide for Somers when initiating the planning process for a new neighborhood park.

### Typical Neighborhood Park

Park Element:	Estimated Cost:
Topographical site survey	4,500
Master planning	12,000
Construction documents	13,000
Play equipment (purchase and installation)	50,000
ADA playground surfacing	10,000
Multi-use playfield	35,000
Soccer field	40,000
Basketball court	15,000

Open-air shelter w/attached restroom building	120,000
Asphalt parking (20 stalls)	20,000
Asphalt walking trail	5,000
Site landscaping	40,000
Picnic tables (10)	10,000
Grills (2)	1,000
Benches (8)	9,600
Trash receptacles (5)	4,000
Total	\$ 389,100

The above total cost assumes that the parkland is acquired at no cost to the Town of Somers. This would occur through a donation or by dedication. If land does need to be acquired for the development of a neighborhood park, land acquisition costs should also be included in the estimated cost at a rate of approximately \$30,000 per acre. The above total cost also includes minor grading for the development of the listed facilities, but substantial site preparation and earthwork would be an additional cost, if necessary.

### 3. Town Mini-Parks

Currently, the Town of Somers park system does not include any parks that would be categorized as mini-parks. It is recommended that Somers explore future opportunities for the development of mini-parks to satisfy the minimum acreage standard (0.50 acres per 1,000 persons) for this type of park. In a rural community such as Somers, the most effective mini-parks that receive the most use tend to be small play structures, pocket green spaces, or sitting areas in close proximity to multi-family residential housing. These locations meet the needs of the residents of these developments because they do not have access to their own attached yards. It is therefore also recommended that Somers explore opportunities to site future mini-parks adjacent to multi-family residential areas.

### 4. Town Special Use Areas

NRPA does not recommend an acreage standard for this park category because these types of parks tend to be unique to the community. They are considered special use areas because there are few amenities available and there is normally a single facility or two that the parks provide, such as a canoe launch or community gathering area. The Town of Somers is currently in discussion with private landowners about the possibility of acquiring two properties for possible addition to the park system as special use areas. The first property is owned by the Ho-Chunk Sovereign Nation, and it encompasses approximately 16.5 acres of land on the northeast corner of C.T.H. A and 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, just east of the Kenosha Country Club. Approximately 900 feet of the Pike River runs through the southwest corner of the property, the length of which is surrounded by a linear corridor of forested floodplain. This entire corridor is classified as primary environmental corridor. The remainder of the property consists of wetlands and upland scrub brush. The site is currently used by fisherman, mostly during the seasonal salmon, steelhead, and brown trout spawning runs up the river, and an unimproved gravel parking area is located off of the road intersection at the southwest corner of the property. The site has tremendous potential for development as a passive use special use area with improved access to the river, and it is recommended that the Town continue to pursue this opportunity.

Recommended improvements would include: general site cleanup, improved parking and access from the road, improved trails and river access points, signage, seating areas, and invasive vegetation management.

The second property with potential for acquisition and development as a special use area is located on C.T.H. E, immediately west of the Canadian Pacific Railway line, and just west of the Gitzlaff property. The property encompasses 7.86 acres, almost all of which is designated as secondary environmental corridor. The majority of the property consists of forested wetlands, with a small upland area adjacent to the road access point. A very narrow extension of an unnamed tributary of the Pike River runs through the property. The site has potential for development as a nature-based special use area, with recommended improvements to include: improved access from C.T.H. E and a small parking area, primitive trails, signage, and seating areas. There has also been discussion between the Town and adjacent property owners about acquiring the property to serve as a regional storm water detention area. If this approach is pursued, it is recommended that the storm water functionality be designed in such a manner so as to preserve the significant natural resources on the site, including the wetland vegetation and the wildlife habitat. It is also recommended that the Town explore a future connection between this site and the proposed park on the Gitzlaff property to the east.

In addition to the previously-mentioned properties, it is recommended that Somers continue to explore opportunities to add special use parkland along the shore of Lake Michigan. This exceptional water resource is a recreational jewel that Somers essentially turns its back on in regards to public access. The Town should take advantage of all future opportunities to provide this access, including developing parkland in conjunction with utility, conservation, and drainage easements.

## Town Trails

According to the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, walking for pleasure is the highest-ranking recreational activity for residents ages 16 and older. A system of trails and connections to regional trail systems can provide excellent passive recreational opportunities for community residents. Somers' park system currently lacks opportunities for on-trail and off-trail walking in the Town parks, as well as pedestrian routes and connections between individual parks, and to other Town destinations. During the development of this CORP there was a great deal of discussion about the desire of Town residents to implement a trail system, and ultimately to provide a connection to other nearby trails. **Map 5** depicts the existing and proposed trails in the Town of Somers.

### 1. Existing Trails

The northern segment of the Kenosha County Bike Trail, locally referred to as the "North Shore Bike Trail," begins at 35<sup>th</sup> Street and 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the City of Kenosha and runs north through Somers along an old railroad right-of-way all the way to the City of Racine. The entire length of this trail is crushed stone, and it is marked with signage at most major intersections. From the southern end of this trail in downtown Kenosha, an approximately 5-mile on-road route winds around to a connection with the southern end of the Kenosha County Bike Trail at 89<sup>th</sup> Street and 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue. This is where the trail again turns into an off-road crushed stone path

that runs south all the way to Lake Bluff, Illinois. There is also an asphalt connector trail that was installed in 2008, extending 1.75 miles west from the Kenosha County Bike Trail along C.T.H. E to Petrifying Springs County Park.

The Kenosha Lakefront Trails are a series of asphalt bike paths through several lakefront parks in Kenosha. With several small on-road connections, these trails form a route that comes within a very short distance of connecting to the Kenosha County Bike Trail at the west end of Poerio Park, in the far northeast corner of the City of Kenosha.

## 2. Proposed Trails

In following the recommendation in the Kenosha County Park and Open Space Plan to establish recreational trails along the Pike River corridor, the Town of Somers submitted a grant funding request through the State CMAQ program in early 2009 for a proposed trail segment. The proposed trail would start at the northwest entrance to Petrifying Springs County Park off of C.T.H. A, and would follow a route along A and S.T.H. 31 north into the Village of Mount Pleasant, roughly paralleling the Pike River for most its length. A second trail segment is also proposed by the Town along the more easterly section of the Pike River. This trail segment would start at the connection with the Kenosha County Bike Trail ½-mile south of C.T.H. A, and would follow the River corridor south to an eventual connection with the northern end of the Kenosha Lakefront Trails. The majority of this trail segment is proposed to be off-road, via easements and existing road rights-of-way, but some on-road segments may also be necessary to make the complete connection.

Another major north-south trail is proposed for the future along the corridor adjacent to the South Branch of the Pike River. This trail would be mostly a recreation trail that would take advantage of the scenic beauty of the secondary environmental corridor along the river. The route would start at the Town boundary with Kenosha on the south end and run all the way north to Petrifying Springs County Park. Again, a combination of easements through private property and off-road sections of trail would need to be incorporated to implement this trail.

Following the theme of trails along river corridors, another trail is proposed by the Town of Somers to follow the Kilbourn Ditch corridor from C.T.H. K at the Kenosha County airport north to the Village of Mount Pleasant. Roughly the northern two-thirds of this trail would be implemented along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The goal of this trail would be to have as much off-road trail as possible, but stretches of on-road trail may be necessary to implement the entire length of the proposed route.

A major east-west trail is also proposed as a way to connect the civic center of the Town, and all of the existing and proposed parks in this area, to all of the previously mentioned north-south trail routes. This route would essentially be an extension of the 1.75-mile asphalt connector trail that was implemented in 2008 along C.T.H. E. Proposed future connections would extend the trail to the east along E to a meeting with the proposed Pike River Trail, and to the west along E to a connection with the Town Hall site and nearby parks. A further segment to the west would take a roundabout route to the proposed park in the Country Charm subdivision, and an eventual connection to the proposed trail along 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

In addition to the trails mentioned, it is recommended that Somers continue to explore opportunities to develop trail connections from all outlying areas into the central civic area of Town, and to work with neighboring communities to implement a regional trail system. It is also recommended that all future park development and improvements in the Somers park system be coordinated with the development of new trails, connections to existing trails, and overall enhancement of the Town trail system. An extensive network of trails connecting to local and regional destinations would best serve the recreational needs of the residents of Somers. Incorporating trails into all new development will help to make this a reality. Some of the more economical ways to implement improvements to bicycle and pedestrian travel between parks and other Town destination points in the short term are as follows:

- 1) Establish on-street and off-street trail connections between community destinations, including parks.
- 2) Provide crosswalk improvements.
- 3) Create trailhead locations that include wayfinding and interpretive signage at Town parks and other important Town destinations.

It is recommended that the Town of Somers conduct a more comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian facility study in the future, with a focus on assessing the state of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and specific recommendations for improvements. This will include a more detailed analysis of proposed trail routes, and identification of necessary easements, road improvements, and property acquisitions.

### Recommended Improvements to Existing Parks and Open Space Areas

Individual parks and park equipment have been identified as in need of improvements, augmentations, or upgrades. The recommended changes to the park system include:

#### 1. Overall Park System

- Gradually make the park system accessible for those with disabilities.
  - Provide hard-surface barrier-free access from parking and main circulation areas to park facilities.
  - Upgrade for disabled persons the usability of park facilities such as benches, water fountains, and picnic tables.
- Implement an Adopt-a-Park program to help with park maintenance.
- Implement forestry management practices at all parks to maintain the health of all park vegetation.



- Install uniform signage to identify all Town park sites.
- Obtain survey boundary maps and legal descriptions for all Town park sites.
- Investigate the opportunity to acquire parkland with a minimum 15-acre tract available for implementation of a fenced dog park.

## 2. Park behind Town Hall

- Install a hard-surface walking trail.
- Relocate and expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible play equipment and surfacing.
- Add safety fencing between the playground area and parking/entrance drive.
- Expand the existing parking area.
- Add field lighting to all softball fields.
- Add new bleachers to all softball fields.
- Replace backstops at all softball fields with new fencing.
- Implement outfield fencing at all softball fields.
- Define the parking area with striping.
- Install an open-air shelter with restroom facilities.
- Install a restroom/concession building.

## 3. Park north of Town Hall (Gitzlaff property)

- Create final park design construction documents.
- Eradicate invasive vegetation.
- Remove garbage and debris from site.

## 4. Fabiano Park

- Relocate and expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible play equipment and surfacing.
- Install an open-air shelter with restroom facilities.
- Install a hard-surface walking trail.

- Relocate the existing fitness equipment.
  - Relocate and upgrade the horseshoe pit.
  - Install landscape screening of U.S. Cellular compound and adjacent private property.
  - Relocate the park sign.
  - Implement a new memorial feature.
  - Redefine the parking area to be safer and more efficient.
  - Designate parking stalls with signage for park use only.
5. Park in Country Charm subdivision
- Create final park design construction documents.
6. Park on C.T.H. EA
- Create final park design construction documents.
7. Park in Valley View subdivision
- Implement two (2) unlighted tennis courts.
  - Expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible play equipment and surfacing.
  - Install a hard surface walking trail.
  - Thin existing vegetation along 64<sup>th</sup> Avenue for safety and access.
  - Eradicate invasive vegetation.
  - Install trees throughout the site.

## Park Improvement Cost Schedule

The Town of Somers Park Commission has developed a park improvement cost schedule to prioritize improvements and acquisitions for the next five years. The schedule is subject to change as it is anticipated that the Park Commission revenue budget will be supplemented with additional funds from alternate sources such as grants and private donations, or depleted due to unforeseen maintenance items. A summary table of this park improvement cost schedule is located in **Appendix B**.

## Review of Existing Operation and Maintenance Capabilities and Impact of Planned Park Improvements

The Town of Somers Public Works Department currently has four full-time year-round employees involved in the maintenance of the park system.

A variety of equipment and materials is used to maintain the Town of Somers park system, including a multitude of both power and hand tools that are typical of a landscape installation and maintenance company. Power tools include landscaping items such as mowers, weed eaters, leaf blowers, etc. Hand tools include rakes, shovels, picks, etc. The Public Works Department also utilizes a range of vehicles including dump trucks, large pick-up-trucks, etc. to maintain the Town park properties.

As more sites are added to the park system and facilities are added to existing parks, it is recommended that the Town re-evaluate the maintenance staff and equipment that are allocated to maintaining the Town parks. This evaluation should take place in conjunction with the budgeting and funding discussions for each individual project.

## Conclusion

In comparison to other southeastern Wisconsin communities, Somers has been somewhat behind in recent history in regards to satisfying the outdoor recreational needs of residents. The major community park in Town, the land immediately south of Town Hall, is centrally located and has served the needs of residents adequately as a central gathering space and the site for most sporting events. Overflow needs for recreational space beyond what this park can handle have never seemed to be extreme because many residents have adapted to using their own large rural properties as additional recreational space, and the quality of life in the Town therefore has not suffered greatly due to the park acreage deficiency. Instead, the quality of life in Somers has remained high due to a combination of other factors, including the natural beauty of the area and the quality of the housing and schools. As the population continues to grow, it will be increasingly difficult for the Town to accommodate the needs of residents without adding parkland and improving existing facilities. The Town took a positive step towards rectifying this situation through the formation of a Park Commission in 2008. This measure established a group that can now focus on enhancing and building up the Town of Somers park system. Even with the proposed addition of two community parks to the Town park system in the near future, Somers' will still face a deficiency in the park acreage that is available to meet the recreational needs of Town residents, as well as deficiencies in

service area coverage and the proximity of parks to residential population concentrations. Led by the Park Commission, Somers expects to address acreage deficiencies and gaps in service area coverage by exploring opportunities to implement new park facilities in conjunction with new development. Gradual improvements should also be made to upgrade disabled accessibility at all existing parks as funding becomes available to do so. Somers should also continue to explore opportunities to develop a multi-use trail system that would connect not only to existing parks and other popular Town destination points, but also to a regional trail system, and ultimately to other neighboring communities. Finally, it is critically important that the preservation of sensitive natural resources be a component of parkland acquisition, so that scenic beauty and important wildlife habitat can be preserved in the Town, and recreational access to these resources can be programmed in an environmentally sensitive manner.

## **X. FUNDING PROGRAMS**

A multitude of funding options are available to Somers to complete the proposed improvements to the Town park system. These funding sources can come in a variety of forms: State and Federal grants and loans, donations, local bonds, user fees, and impact fees. The following is a summary of some of the potential funding sources available to the Town:

### **A. WDNR's River Protection Grant Program**

Communities and nonprofit groups can receive state financial help to protect rivers under a new program that aims to prevent water quality, fisheries, habitat, and natural beauty from deteriorating as the number of homes and recreational, industrial, and other uses increases along rivers.

River Planning Grants:

- \$10,000 max per grant.
- 75% state share max.
- Some eligible activities include (in priority order): 1) river organization development, 2) information and education, 3) assessments of water quality, fish, and aquatic life, and 4) nonpoint source evaluations.
- Capital Improvement Projects are not eligible for funding under this grant.

River Management Grants:

- \$50,000 max per grant.
- 75% state share max.
- Some eligible activities include (in priority order): 1) purchase of land or easements, 2) development of local ordinances, and 3) restoration of instream or shoreland habitat.

Eligible Sponsors:

- Units of local government.
- Nonprofit conservation organizations.
- Qualified river management organizations (incorporated; purpose statement or past actions related to river protection; open membership).

### **B. Programs Administered through WisDOT**

#### **Statewide Multi-modal Improvement Program (SMIP)**

Several programs are collectively funded under this program, as follows:

## Local Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program

*Program Description:* Transportation enhancements are transportation-related activities that are designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of transportation systems. The transportation enhancements program provides for the implementation of a variety of non-traditional projects, with examples ranging from the restoration of historic transportation facilities, to bike and pedestrian facilities, to landscaping and scenic beautification, and to the mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff. Most of the requests and projects awarded in Wisconsin have been for bicycle facilities. Examples of bicycle projects include multi-use trails (in greenways, former rail trails, etc.), paved shoulders, bike lanes, bicycle route signage, bicycle parking, overpasses/underpasses/bridges, and sidewalks.

Transportation enhancement activities must relate to surface transportation. Federal regulations restrict the use of funds on trails that allow motorized users, except snowmobiles.

A project sponsor must pay for the project and then seek reimbursement for the project from the state. WisDOT receives Federal funds for the program through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). These funds provide up to 80% of the project costs, with the sponsor providing at least the other 20%. Projects costing \$100,000 or more that involve construction are eligible for funding, as are non-construction projects costing \$25,000 or more.

*Next Funding Cycle:* Applications will be due in Spring 2010, as part of the SMIP process for the 2011-2012 funding cycle.

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Program (BFPF)

*Program Description:* The primary purpose of the BFPF is to fund bicycle or bicycle/pedestrian facility planning and construction projects. Pedestrian-only facilities, such as sidewalks and streetscaping type projects are not eligible for funding. Construction projects must be \$200,000 or more, and planning projects must be a minimum of \$50,000. The project must be usable when it is completed, and not staged so that additional money is needed to make it a useful project. This is a reimbursement program with funding eligible for up to 80% of project costs. \$2.72 million is available in Wisconsin annually.

*Next Funding Cycle:* Projects are solicited in even numbered years with applications available in January and due in April.

## STP-Discretionary Program

*Program Description:* Provides funds for bicycle and pedestrian facility projects that foster alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel.

## Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Program (CMAQ)

*Program Description:* The primary purpose of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) is to fund projects and programs that reduce travel and/or emissions in areas that have failed to meet air quality standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and small particulate matter. Bicycle and pedestrians projects are eligible for CMAQ if they reduce the number of vehicle trips and miles traveled. Almost all bicycle projects eligible for Transportation Enhancements and STP-D are likely to be eligible (see examples above), but a higher burden of proof that the project will reduce air pollution will be required. Non-construction activities such as maps and brochures are also eligible. CMAQ is NOT a statewide program; only bicycle projects in Milwaukee, Kenosha, Racine, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Washington, Sheboygan, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Walworth and Door counties are eligible.

*Next Funding Cycle:* Applications for the 2012-2014 funding cycle are due in April of 2011.

### Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS)

*Program Description:* The goals of the program are to enable and encourage children to walk and bicycle to school, to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, and to facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools. 2009 funding for Wisconsin projects is projected to be \$3+ million. The next funding cycle is anticipated to be spring of 2010.

### Planning Grants

- Communities awarded a Planning Grant will receive the services of either a WisDOT hired and paid consulting firm or the services of a Regional Planning Commission or Metropolitan Planning Organization for the purposes of assisting the community with the development of a comprehensive Safe Routes to School Plan.
- Schools included in the grant may include both public and private schools.

### Infrastructure and Non-Infrastructure Grants

- Eligible projects or activities must focus on children in kindergarten through eighth grades. Projects must be within a two-mile radius of any elementary or middle school.
- Projects are 100% fundable to the limit of the project award, with the caveat that sponsors must first complete the project, and then seek reimbursement from the state. The minimum award amount is \$25,000 for infrastructure projects and \$10,000 for non-infrastructure projects. There is no maximum award, but the ability to fund projects over \$200,000 is limited due to the amount of funds available.
- Eligible projects include sidewalk improvements, on-street and off-street bicycle facilities, and pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements.

- Desired outcomes of projects or activities include increased bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic safety, improved air quality, improved childhood health, enhanced community accessibility, improvements to the physical environment that increase the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools, and increased community interest in bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
- The next application period will be early 2010.

### Other Funding Sources

*Highway Safety Improvement Program* - Bicycle and pedestrian projects are now eligible for this program. This program focuses on projects intended for locations that should have a documented history of previous crashes.

*Surface Transportation Program Urban (STP-U) Funds* – Metropolitan areas receive an allocation of funds annually. These funds can be used on a variety of improvement projects including bicycle and pedestrian projects. Most of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations that administer this program have been using these funds to integrate bicycle and pedestrian projects as larger street reconstruction projects are taken on.

*Incidental Improvements* - Bicycle and pedestrian projects are broadly eligible for funding from most of the major federal-aid programs. One of the most cost-effective ways of accommodating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations is to incorporate them as part of larger reconstruction, new construction and some repaving projects. Generally, the same source of funding can be used for the bicycle and pedestrian accommodation as is used for the larger highway improvement, if the bike/pedestrian accommodation is "incidental" in scope and cost to the overall project. Overall, most bicycle and pedestrian accommodations within the state are made as incidental improvements.

Contact your local WisDOT grant specialist for more information on specific programs, and to receive updated information on project eligibility, funding cycles and application deadlines

### **C. Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program**

Administered by: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry

The urban forestry grant program is designed primarily to fund projects that improve a community's capacity to manage its trees. Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties, tribal governments, and not-for-profit organizations. This is a 50/50 matching program. Applicants must match grant funds one for one with cash, in-kind services, or donations. Approximately \$600,000 is available from state and federal funds. Grant requests may range from \$1,000 to \$25,000. There is no maximum project size, however, reimbursement is limited to \$25,000. The project period is approximately one year.

Eligible and Ineligible Projects and Costs.



Eligible projects include development/implementation of:

- Urban forest management plan and/or its components.
- Vegetation ordinances.
- Community tree inventories.
- Master tree planting plans.
- Training programs for employees or volunteers.
- Public information/involvement plans.
- Demonstration projects to provide education, training, information exchange, or technology transfer.
- Contract specifications to tree care.
- Hazard tree inventories.

Projects are not limited to those listed and two or more of the above tasks can be combined into one project. Operations projects such as tree planting, pruning, fertilizing, and removal are eligible; however, these types of projects will receive lower priority.

Ineligible projects include:

- Stump or brush removal.
- Land or boundary surveys or title search.
- Appraisals for sale or exchange of real property.

Approved project costs include:

- Salaries and fringe benefits of personnel directly engaged in project.
- Cost of services, supplies, equipment or facilities used on the project.
- Value of labor, services, supplies, equipment or facilities donated to the project by third parties.

Ineligible costs include:

- Indirect costs or overhead.
- Costs incurred before or after the project period.
- Purchase of equipment valued over \$5,000.
- Fines and penalties imposed due to violations or failure to comply with federal, state and/or local regulations.

- Costs for which payment is received under another state or federal program, with the exception of the Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant program.
- Certain types of donations.
- Gifts, t-shirts, refreshments and similar items provided to thank project workers.

Regional Urban Forestry Coordinators are available to assist with grant applications. The rating criteria are also available upon request.

An Intent to Apply must be submitted by July, with an application deadline of October, annually.

#### **D. Federal Recreation Trail Funds**

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds through the transfer of federal gas excise taxes paid on fuel used in off-highway vehicles. These funds are used to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses. Congress has authorized \$85 million for the program in 2009. Of this total, \$840,000 annually is used for program administration and trail-related research, technical assistance, and training. The remaining funds are distributed to the states. Wisconsin is slated to receive just under \$2.8 million in 2009.

Eligible sponsors include towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governing bodies, school districts, state agencies, federal agencies or incorporated organizations are eligible to apply for funds. Incorporated organizations are those that are incorporated under s.181.32, Stats., whose primary purpose is promoting, encouraging or engaging in outdoor recreation trails activities.

Eligible project activities include:

- Maintenance and restoration of existing trails.
- Development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages.
- Construction of new trails (with certain restrictions on federal lands).
- Acquisition of easement or property for trails.

Sponsors may receive a grant for up to 50% of the total project costs of recreational trail projects. In addition to the sponsor match consisting of cash payments, the sponsor may utilize donations of labor, materials, services and land for the trail project to act as the 50% non-federal cost share. These donations must be consistent with program rules and be identified at the time of application.

Interested sponsors for 2010 projects should get in contact with the community services specialist located at the regional Department offices. Completed applications are due back in the appropriate regional office by May 1, 2010. Regional DNR staff review and rank the eligible projects using a ranking tool developed in cooperation with the State Trails Council. After ranking within each

Region, the projects are then combined in a statewide priority listing. Projects that rank the highest statewide will be funded to the extent that funds are available. The regional community services specialist will notify all grant applicants as to whether their application will be funded.

### **E. Acquisition and Development of Local Parks (ADLP)**

S. 23.09(20), Wis. Stats.; ch. NR 51, subchap. XII, Wis. Adm. Code.

Funds are available to acquire land, rights in land, and develop public outdoor recreation areas for nature-based outdoor recreation purposes. The deadline for application is May 1 of each year.

Program Goal: to enhance the quality of life for Wisconsin residents and visitors by expanding the opportunities for outdoor recreation in local parks and recreation areas.

Funding Criteria for Evaluating Projects (not in priority order):

- Implementation priorities contained in state and local comprehensive outdoor recreation plans.
- Meets needs and deficiencies identified in the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the approved local comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, or the approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plans of other units of government including regional or integrated management plans.
- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.
- Is regional or statewide in nature and can be documented as such.
- Documentation shows benefits to tourism.
- Results in a first of a kind facility for the project sponsor or service area.
- Provides or supports a water-based activity.
- Serves the greatest population.
- Involves volunteers, local donations or cooperation by two or more service clubs.
- Applicants that have never received an outdoor recreation program grant.
- Provides for completion of a project already started where the sponsor has shown the ability to provide quality outdoor recreation facilities for its citizens without grant assistance.
- Sponsor has completed prior LWCF, ADLP, UGS, URGP or projects successfully.
- Involves two or more governmental agencies.

- Acquires land where a need for additional land acquisition is supported by an approved comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.
- Serves as a demonstration project for other project sponsors.
- Corrects a documented health or safety problem.
- Renovates existing facilities that are in danger of being lost for public use.
- Sponsor is able to adequately maintain and operate the area or facility.
- Provides multiple season, multiple activity use.
- Serves the recreation needs of elderly person, minorities and disabled person. Facilities provided must exceed those required by state or federal regulations.

#### Eligible Project Examples

- Land acquisition projects that will provide opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation.
- Property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries and reservoirs that will provide water-based outdoor recreation.
- Property that provides special recreation opportunities, such as floodplains, wetlands and areas adjacent to scenic highways.
- Natural areas and outstanding scenic areas where the objective is to preserve the scenic or natural values, including areas of physical or biological importance and wildlife areas. These areas shall be open to the general public for outdoor recreation use to the extent that the natural attributes of the area will not be seriously impaired or lost.
- Land within urban areas for day-use picnic areas.
- Land for nature-based outdoor recreation trails.
- Support facilities for swimming in a natural water body, including beaches, swimming areas and bathhouses.
- Fishing and hunting facilities, such as fishing piers and trails.
- Boating facilities such as launching ramps and docks.
- Observation and sightseeing facilities such as overlooks, turnouts and trails.
- Picnic facilities, including tables, fireplaces, shelters and paths.
- Camping facilities, including tent and trailer sites, tables and fireplaces.
- Winter sports facilities, such as slopes and trails for sledding and tobogganing, cross-country ski trails, and facilities for ice-skating.

- Urban recreation areas, such as undeveloped play areas, bicycling trails, walking and horseback riding trails.
- Support facilities, including entrance and circulation roads, utility and sanitation systems, erosion control work, parking areas, toilet buildings and educational facilities where there is a permanent professional naturalist staff and the facilities are for nature interpretation.
- Renovation or redevelopment of existing nature-based outdoor recreation.
- Habitat restoration projects.
- Permanent landscaping and burial of overhead wires.
- Open shelters and multi-purpose shelter buildings that support a nature-based outdoor recreation activity.
- Fences and lighting for the protection of park users.
- Park signs.

#### Ineligible Project Examples

- Projects that are not supported by a local comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.
- Land to be used for non-nature-based outdoor recreation.
- Restoration or preservation of historic structures.
- Acquisition and development of areas and facilities that do not meet the definition of nature-based outdoor recreation specified in s. NR 51.002, such as spectator sports, playgrounds, swimming pools, dedicated sports fields, tennis courts, hockey rinks, and indoor horse arenas.
- Development of areas and facilities to be used for professional athletics.
- Development of amusement facilities, waterslides or the construction of facilities that are only marginally related to nature-based outdoor recreation.
- Construction of park employee residences.
- Development of areas and facilities to be used solely for game refuges or fish production purposes unless they are open to the public outdoor recreation needs identified in SCORP.
- Construction of lodges, motels, luxury cabins or similar facilities.
- Development projects in previously undeveloped recreation areas that consist solely of support facilities, unless the facilities are clearly required for proper and safe recreational use of the area.
- Buildings primarily devoted to operation, maintenance or indoor recreation.

- Acquisition and development of golf courses.

#### **F. Urban Rivers S. 30.277, Wis. Stats.; ch. NR 51, subchap. XIV, Wis. Adm. Code**

Funds are available to acquire land, rights in land, or develop shoreline enhancements on or adjacent to rivers that flow through urban or urbanizing areas, in order to preserve or restore urban rivers or riverfronts for the purposes of economic revitalization and nature based outdoor recreation activities.

Program Goal: to improve the quality of urban waterways and riverfronts through preservation, restoration or enhancement which will encourage economic revitalization and expanded outdoor recreational opportunities that involve enjoyment of the state's natural resources.

Deadline: Applications are due by May 1 of each year.

#### Funding Criteria for Evaluating Projects (not in priority order):

- Acquires land or land rights that preserve or restore natural values, including aesthetic values, and enhance environmental quality along urban waterways.
- Provides new or expanded diverse recreational opportunities to all segments of urban populations.
- Provides new or expanded access to urban waterways.
- Acquires blighted lands that will be restored to complement riverfront redevelopment activities.
- Encourages comprehensive riverway planning within and between municipalities and other agencies.
- Provides opportunities for increasing tourism.
- Acquires lands that through proper management will improve or protect water quality.

#### Eligible Projects

1. Land acquisition projects that preserve or restore urban rivers or riverfronts for the purposes of economic revitalization and nature based outdoor recreation activities.
2. Shoreline enhancements – development or habitat restoration projects that serve public recreation or resource conservation purposes and are dependent on being on a shoreline including:
  - Projects that support nature-based outdoor recreation activities.
  - Riparian buffer rehabilitation including establishment of native vegetation, which may include slope and site preparation, and control of exotic plant species.

- Shoreline stabilization, which may employ bioengineering practices, and other environmentally beneficial stabilization techniques.
- Engineering and design costs for approved shoreline enhancement projects.
- Removal of seawalls, retaining walls, overhead wires, roads, buildings and levees.
- Open shelters, multi-purpose shelter buildings and primitive campsites.
- Fences for protection of park users.
- Lighting for public safety.
- Park signs.
- Shoreline access.
- Shoreline enhancement projects associated with river corridor restoration following dam removal shall receive a priority for funding.

Ineligible Projects:

1. Construction or repair of seawalls and lagoons, and environmental remediation or clean-up of site contamination.
2. Dredging projects unless the dredging is incidental to the overall project.
3. Land to be used for non-nature based outdoor recreation.

**G. Urban Greenspace S. 23.09(19), Wis. Stats.; ch. NR 51, subchap. XIII, Wis. Adm. Code**

Funds are available to acquire lands to provide natural space within or near urban areas, protect scenic or ecological features, and to provide land for nature-based outdoor recreation, including noncommercial gardening.

Program goal: To enhance the quality of life for Wisconsin urban dwellers by providing open natural space within or in proximity to urban development.

Funding Criteria for Evaluating Projects (not in priority order):

1. Planning considerations include projects that:
  - Specifically implement a priority of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.
  - Implement the approved master plans of two or more units of government or regional planning agencies.

- Preserve land that is listed on the natural heritage inventory database.
- Implement elements of water quality plans or initiatives.

2. Project considerations include land that:

- Serves the greatest population centers.
- Serves areas of rapidly increasing populations.
- Is accessible, where accessibility is appropriate.
- Has unique natural features, threatened or endangered species, or significant ecological value.
- Provides open natural linear corridors connecting open natural areas.
- Has water frontage.
- Contains or restores wetlands.
- Protects sensitive wildlife habitat.
- Protects an area threatened by development.
- Preserves a natural community or could be restored to a natural community.
- Can be shown to be of regional or statewide significance.
- Related to brownfield redevelopment.

3. Administrative considerations include projects that:

- Are ready to be implemented.
- Continue to eligible acquisition projects previously started.

Eligible Land Acquisition Projects

- Implement priorities contained in local master plans.
- Acquire land for open natural space within or in proximity to urban development.
- Protect areas or naturally formed features that have scenic, ecological or other natural values.
- Provide land for noncommercial gardening for inhabitants of urbanized areas.

Ineligible Projects



- Development projects.
- Land to be used for non-nature based outdoor recreation purposes.

**H. Acquisition of Development Rights S. 23.09(20m), Wis. Stats.; ch. NR 51, subchap. XV, Wis. Adm. Code**

This Stewardship initiative makes funds available to acquire development rights (easements) in areas where restrictions on residential, industrial or commercial development would enhance nature based outdoor recreation.

Program Goal: to acquire development rights for the protection of natural, agricultural, or forestry values that would enhance nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities.

Deadline: The application is due by May 1 of each year.

Funding Criteria for Evaluating Projects (not in any priority order):

- Has frontage on a river, stream, lake or estuary.
- Creates a buffer between land that has been permanently protected for natural resource and conservation purposes and potential or existing residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Is within the boundary of a large acquisition project established by the department, a governmental unit or a nonprofit conservation organization, where the uses of the property will complement the goals of the project and the stewardship program.
- Is within an environmental corridor that connects 2 or more established resource protection areas.
- Provides or enhances nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Is in proximity to other permanently protected land.
- Protects areas of natural, scenic, geological, or archaeological value.
- Acquires land threatened by increasing development pressures.

**I. Land And Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)**

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF), signed into law September 4, 1964, provides federal financial assistance for the purpose of acquisition and/or development of land for outdoor recreation. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) administers the program at the state level.

Funds are provided to the states and passed to political subdivisions in the form of 50 percent reimbursement grants. Reimbursements are made on all eligible expenditures up to the amount of the approved grant.

The estimated cost of a proposed project as indicated in the grant application will not always reflect the actual project cost. However, grant awards are based upon the estimated project cost shown in the grant application. Grant reimbursement is limited to 50% of actual eligible project costs or the approved grant amount, whichever is less. Consequently, it is very important to estimate project costs carefully.

Reimbursements are made only on costs incurred and paid by the grantee during the project period as identified on the grant agreement. The only exception to this is on “pre-agreement planning costs,” which can include site investigation and selection, site planning, feasibility studies, preliminary design, environmental assessment, preparation of cost estimates, and construction drawings and specifications.

The following two lists describe the types of eligible and ineligible projects for LCWF program funding:

#### Eligible Projects

- Observation and sightseeing facilities; including hiking, biking, equestrian, cycle, snowmobile and nature trails.
- Land acquisition for park and recreation use.
- Picnic facilities, including open shelters.
- Camping facilities.
- Swimming facilities, including beaches, pools, bathhouses and related equipment.
- Winter sports facilities, including ski runs/lifts, outdoor skating rinks, tobogganing and sliding slopes, warming huts, etc.
- Playground equipment and outdoor sports facilities such as ball fields and game courts, golf courses, skate parks, etc.
- Sport shooting areas for skeet, trap, rifle, pistol and archery.
- Lake and pond construction/restoration for boating, fishing and aesthetic purposes.
- Landscaping and plantings for wildlife food and cover.
- Renovation or redevelopment of existing facilities that have deteriorated or become outdated.
- Support facilities including roads, parking, signs, walkways, utility systems, lighting, restrooms, concession buildings, trailer dumps, fences, etc.

### Ineligible Projects

- Acquisition or development of areas and facilities to be used primarily for semiprofessional and professional arts and athletics.
- Development of school “athletic plant” facilities.
- Construction of employee residences.
- Development of amusement facilities, convention facilities, and commemorative exhibits.
- Development of nature and geological interpretive facilities that go beyond interpreting the project site and its immediate surrounding area.
- Development of outdoor recreation and support facilities to be used exclusively by the handicapped.
- Acquisition, restoration or preservation of historic structures.
- Acquisition, construction or renovation of lodges, motels, and luxury or “nonaustere” cabins.
- Facilities at a zoo for the purpose of housing, caging, displaying or caring for animals.
- Acquisition of museums and sites to be used for museums.
- Mobile recreation units such as playmobiles, skatemobiles, swimmobiles, show wagons, puppet wagons, and porta-bleachers.
- Acquisition of areas and facilities to be used solely for game refuges or fish production purposes.

### **J. Lake Protection Grants**

Counties, towns, cities, villages, tribes, qualified lake associations, public inland lake districts, qualified nonprofit conservation organizations, town sanitary districts, and other local governmental units as defined in s. 66.0301 (1)(a) Wis. Stats. established for lake management, are eligible to apply for funding to protect and improve the water quality of lakes and their ecosystems.

*Maximum Award:* Up to 75% of project costs, with a maximum of \$200,000.

Eligible Projects include:

- Purchase of land or conservation easements that will significantly contribute to the protection or improvement of the natural ecosystem and water quality of the lake.
- Restoration of wetlands or shoreline habitat.

- Development of local regulations or ordinances to protect lakes and the educational activities necessary for them to begin to be implemented.
- Lake classification projects that allow counties to tailor local land and water management programs to classes of lakes in response to development and recreational use pressures.
- Lake management plan implementation projects.

Ineligible Projects include dam repair, operation, or removal; purchase of property on which a dam is located; dredging; design, installation, operation or maintenance of sanitary sewers or septic systems; routine chemical treatments or mechanical harvesting of aquatic plants; maintenance and operation of equipment or facilities; and water safety patrols.

*Deadline:* Applications are due annually in May.

## **K. Local User Fees**

Communities have imposed user fees to help offset the costs of park improvements and recreation program costs. These fees are discretionary and are usually set by the Local governing body in charge of park regulations.

## **L. Impact Fees**

An impact fee is a one-time charge that a community collects from a new development, and it is designed to recover the cost involved in providing public facilities to service that new development. Wisconsin Statutes 66.0617 governs the use by municipalities of imposing and collecting impact fees. "Parks, playgrounds, and land for athletic fields" are considered to be eligible public facilities for which a community may impose an impact fee. Before imposing impact fees, the community must prepare a public facilities needs assessment that establishes service standards, capital costs and develops the rational relationship between the fee and new development. The Town of Somers has park impact fees in place for both residential and non-residential developments. The language found in Section 18.30 (J) of the Town of Somers Code of Ordinances is as follows:

*(J) Public Park Impact Fee.*

*(1) Amount-Residential Use. The developer shall pay to the Town Clerk/Treasurer as a condition of approval by the Town Board of a final plat, certified survey map, planned unit development, multi-unit dwelling plan or condominium plat a public park impact fee of One Thousand Forty-five (\$1,045.00) Dollars for each buildable lot or unit included in the final plat, certified survey map, planned unit development, multi-unit dwelling plan or condominium plat. Twenty-five (25%) percent of the total public park impact fee for the proposed residential use development shall be paid at the time of final approval by the Town Board and prior to the recording of a final plat, certified survey map, planned unit development, multi-unit dwelling plan or condominium plat. The remaining balance of the public park impact fee attributable to each buildable lot or unit within the proposed residential use development shall be payable upon the earlier of the issuance of a*

*building permit or the sale, exchange or other conveyance of such buildable lot or unit, unless otherwise agreed by the Town and the Developer by written Development Agreement.*

*(2) Amount-Non-Residential Use. The developer shall pay to the Town Clerk/Treasurer as a condition of approval by the Town Board of a final plat, site plan, certified survey map, planned unit development or condominium plat a public park impact fee of One Thousand Forty-five (\$1,045.00) Dollars per residential equivalent density unit (REDU). The REDU is calculated by dividing the gross square footage of land included in the final plat, site plan, certified survey map, planned unit development or condominium plat by the R-4 Urban Single-Family Residential District minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet. The total public park impact fee for the proposed non-residential use development shall be paid at the time of final approval by the Town Board of the proposed non-residential use development and prior to the recording of a final plat, certified survey map, planned unit development or condominium plat, unless otherwise agreed by the Town and the Developer by written Development Agreement.*

#### **M. Community Development Block Grants**

The Community Development Block Grant program is a federally funded program administered by each county. Funding is granted to local municipalities for ADA projects by a formula method. The Town of Somers has not applied for Community Development Block Grant funding for park-related projects in the past.

## APPENDIX A: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT GUIDELINES

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a comprehensive civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA requires that newly constructed and altered state and local government facilities, places of public accommodation, and commercial facilities be readily accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities.

Specific regulations applying to the responsibilities of local governments are found in Title II of the ADA. Recreational facilities, including play areas, are among the facilities required to comply with the ADA.

For further information, "The Universal Access to Outdoor Recreation - a Design Guide," (available from: MIG Communications, 1802 Fifth Street, Berkeley, CA 94710, (510) 845-0953, fax (510) 845-8750) is an excellent source for accessibility guidelines relating to recreational facilities. Additional guidance can also be found in federal publications available through the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board - often referred to as the "Access Board." Their contact information is:

The Access Board  
1331 F Street, NW, Suite 1000  
Washington, DC 20004-1111  
(202) 272-0080 (v) - (202) 272-0082(tty) - (202) 272-0081 (fax)  
(800) 872-2253 (v) - (800) 993-2822 (tty)  
Website: <http://www.access-board.gov/>  
email: [info@access-board.gov](mailto:info@access-board.gov)

**APPENDIX B: TOWN OF SOMERS 5-YEAR PARK IMPROVEMENT COST SCHEDULE**

PARK SITE/PROJECT	RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENT	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
		IMPROVEMENT COST PER YEAR:				
Park behind Town Hall	Install a hard-surface walking trail	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$7,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
	Relocate and expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible play equipment and surfacing					\$50,000
	Add safety fencing between the playground area and parking/entrance drive					\$3,600
	Expand the existing parking area					\$12,000
	Add field lighting to all softball fields	\$20,000	\$15,000			
	Add new bleachers to all softball fields		\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,400	
	Replace backstops at all softball fields with new fencing		\$10,000	\$10,400	\$10,800	
	Implement outfield fencing at all softball fields		\$2,500	\$2,600	\$2,700	
	Define the parking area with striping	\$2,500				
	Install an open-air shelter with restroom facilities			\$120,000		
	Install a restroom/concession building					\$90,000
Park north of Town Hall (Gitzlaff property)	Create final park design construction documents			\$14,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
	Eradicate invasive vegetation	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,400		
	Remove garbage and debris from site	\$2,000	\$2,000			
Fabiano Park	Relocate and expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible playground equipment and surfacing	\$35,000				
	Install an open-air shelter with restroom facilities		\$120,000			
	Install a hard-surface walking trail	\$9,500				
	Relocate the existing fitness equipment	\$1,500				
	Relocate and upgrade the horseshoe pit		\$500			
	Install landscape screening of U.S. Cellular compound and adjacent private property	\$1,250				
	Relocate the park sign		\$2,000			
	Implement a new memorial feature		\$15,000			
	Redefine the parking area to be safer and more efficient	\$8,000				
	Designate parking stalls with signage		\$2,000			

PARK SITE/PROJECT	RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENT	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
		IMPROVEMENT COST PER YEAR:				
Park in Country Charm subdivision	Create final park design construction documents			\$4,000	\$7,500	
Park on C.T.H. EA	Create final park design construction documents	\$5,000	\$8,500	\$8,500	\$6,000	\$4,000
Park in Valley View subdivision	Implement two (2) unlighted tennis courts					\$80,000
	Expand the existing playground with new ADA-accessible playground equipment and surfacing					\$35,000
	Install a hard surface walking trail					\$4,000
	Thin existing vegetation along 64 <sup>th</sup> Avenue for safety and access					\$750
	Eradicate invasive vegetation					\$750
	Install trees throughout site					\$12,000
<b>TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS:</b>		\$91,750	\$188,700	\$175,600	\$40,400	\$301,100

\* Note: A 4% inflationary cost increase per year has been added for all improvements beyond 2010.



## APPENDIX C: DEFINITIONS

Definitions for frequently used park and recreation terms are listed below:

Accessible: According to ADAAG, the term "accessible" is used to describe a site, building, facility, or portion thereof that complies with the ADA guidelines.

Active Recreation: Any outdoor sport or athletic activity including, but not limited to, basketball, tennis, swimming, soccer, baseball, or football.

Active Use Area: An area primarily designed for active activities of one or more age groups. This type of design may have, as its primary feature, play fields, playground apparatus, ball fields, active trail use (e.g., ATV use, snowmobiling, and cross country skiing), tennis, and/or basketball courts, or a combination thereof.

Barrier Free: Refers to the physical features that make sites and facilities universally accessible.

Environmental Corridor: A defined area, usually oriented in a linear pattern along a river or drainage pattern that contains a high concentration of environmentally significant features (plant species, wildlife, land forms, water features, etc.).

Isolated Natural Resource Areas: Minimum five acre size areas that generally consist of those natural resource base elements that have an "inherent" natural value, such as wetlands, woodlands, wildlife habitat areas, and surface water areas that are physically separated from primary and secondary environmental corridors by intensive urban or agricultural land uses.

Multi-use Trail System: A recreational system of trails in a community that affords a variety of year-round uses to a wide segment of the community (e.g. hiking, bicycling, jogging, cross-country skiing, etc.). Multi-use trail systems typically contain barrier free, hard surface segments that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Park Service Areas: The zone of influence of a park or recreation area. Service areas are usually determined by the average distance users are willing to travel to reach a facility. Although usually expressed in terms of service radius, it must be remembered that features such as major traffic arteries and rivers influence the distance users must travel. Also, a park or recreation area may be unique in the county or region and will therefore extend the zone of influence of that facility to the entire county or region.

Passive Recreation: Low impact activities such as walking, fishing, nature observation, and picnicking.

Passive Use Area: An area primarily designed for passive activities. This type of facility often emphasizes natural settings and de-emphasizes active recreation facilities.

Primary Environmental Corridor: Linear areas that include a wide variety of the most important natural resource and resource related elements (wetlands, woodlands, and wildlife habitat) that are at least 400 acres in size, two miles long, and 200 feet wide as designated by the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC).

Secondary Environmental Corridor: Linear areas typically located along small perennial and intermittent streams that facilitate surface water drainage with a minimum area of 100 acres and minimum of length of one mile that maintain pockets of natural resource areas. These areas are often remnants of primary environmental corridors that have been partially converted to intensive urban or agricultural use as designated by SEWRPC.

**COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN  
COMMUNITY OPINION SURVEY – RESULTS  
TOWN OF SOMERS**

**Part A: Current Park Usage****1. How many people live in your household?**

<b>24 Responses Total</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
1 person	3
2 persons	13
3 persons	3
4 persons	2
5 or more persons	3

**2. In the last 12 months, how many times have you and/or your household used Town parks?**

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
None	6	
1-5 times	8	
6-10 times	3	
11-20 times	3	1. Shoreland Lutheran
20 or more times	4	

**3. Is there a park within safe walking distance (less than ½ mile) form your home?**

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Yes	10	1. Shoreland Lutheran
No	14	

**4. Are you aware of the existing pedestrian/bicycle trails in the Town?**

<b>24 Responses</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Yes	13
No	11

5. How often do you use pedestrian/bicycle trails in the Town?

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Daily	0	
Weekly	4	
Monthly	3	
Few Times a Year	3	
Never	14	1. There are none. I live along Sheridan Road. Where are the trails? 2. Don't know where they are. 3. County-don't know of Town trails.

6. What do you use the pedestrian/bicycle trails for?

<b>Check all that apply</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Transportation	2	
Recreation	9	
Exercise	8	
I Do Not Use The Trails	12	1. What trails? 2. Would use for exercise and recreation if I knew where they were

7. How often do you use the fitness stations at Fabiano Park?

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Daily	0	
Weekly	0	
Monthly	0	
Few Times a Year	3	
Never	21	1. Did not know there were fitness stations there. Will check it out. Great idea. 2. Did not know they existed. 3. Is this where the cell phone tower is at? Thought this park was abandoned. Though no fault of the Park Commission.

**Part B: State of the Existing Park System**

**8a. The Town of Somers Park System meets my outdoor recreation needs.**  
 (Two people didn't respond to this question)

<b>22 Responses -2 didn't respond</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	4
Agree	4
Neutral	5
Disagree	5
Strongly Disagree	4

**8b. The Town's park system should offer a variety of both active and passive park uses.**  
 Active: Ball diamonds, soccer fields, tennis courts, etc.  
 Passive: Picnic areas, hiking/nature trails, natural areas, etc.

<b>24 Responses</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	9
Agree	10
Neutral	2
Disagree	0
Strongly Disagree	3

**8c. The Town's park system should place extra emphasis on active recreation facilities and activities.**

<b>24 Responses</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	4
Agree	9
Neutral	8
Disagree	2
Strongly Disagree	1

**8d. The Town's park system should conserve areas of environmental significance (woodlands, wetlands, water bodies, etc.)**

<b>24 Responses</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	12
Agree	8
Neutral	0
Disagree	1
Strongly Disagree	3

**8e. The Town's park facilities are adequately accessible for those persons with disabilities.**

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Strongly Agree	6	
Agree	5	
Neutral	7	1. Never been to Somers Park-we use bike trail, Petrifying Springs and Hawthorne Hollow a lot.
Disagree	6	
Strongly Disagree	0	

**8f. The Town parks are clean and well maintained.**  
 (One person didn't respond to this question)

<b>23 Responses (1 didn't respond)</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Strongly Agree	6	
Agree	9	1. Could use mowing more often.
Neutral	6	1. Never been to Somers Park-we use bike trail, Petrifying Springs and Hawthorne Hollow a lot.
Disagree	1	
Strongly Disagree	1	

**8g. The Town parks are too crowded.**  
 (One person didn't respond to this question)

<b>23 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Strongly Agree	1	
Agree	0	
Neutral	8	1. Never been to Somers Park-we use bike trail, Petrifying Springs and Hawthorne Hollow a lot.
Disagree	8	
Strongly Disagree	6	

**8h. The Town parks offer adequate recreational opportunities for all age groups.**

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Strongly Agree	5	
Agree	2	
Neutral	11	1. Never been to Somers Park-we use bike trail, Petrifying Springs and Hawthorne Hollow a lot.
Disagree	4	
Strongly Disagree	2	

**8i. The Town parks offer adequate recreational opportunities for all seasons.**  
 (spring, summer, fall, winter)

<b>24 Responses</b>		
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>	<b>Handwritten Comments</b>
Strongly Agree	5	
Agree	6	
Neutral	8	1. Never been to Somers Park-we use bike trail, Petrifying Springs and Hawthorne Hollow a lot.
Disagree	3	
Strongly Disagree	2	

8j. Overall, the Town of Somers Park System adequately serves the outdoor recreational needs of Town residents.

<b>24 Responses</b>	
<b>Choices</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>
Strongly Agree	4
Agree	3
Neutral	10
Disagree	5
Strongly Disagree	2

**Part C: Park Facilities**

9. Please rate the relative importance or need for each facility in the Town of Somers Park System.

<b>24 Responses</b>	<b>No. of Responses</b>			<b>No Response</b>
	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	
Walking/Fitness Trails	5	3	16	
Playgrounds	2	10	12	
Basketball Courts	7	15	2	
Dog Parks 1 comment: See Below	9	5	10	
Fishing Areas	12	6	6	
Ice Rinks 1 comment: Outdoor Only	8	11	5	
Ball Diamonds	3	10	11	
Hiking Trails	5	5	14	
Soccer Fields	6	12	5	1
Outdoor Swimming Areas	13	9	2	
Tennis Courts	10	10	4	
Volleyball Courts	9	13	2	
Cross Country Ski Trails	9	8	7	
Public Gardens	10	7	7	
Horseshoe Pits 1 Comment: Dangerous w/out supervision	14	8	2	
Wildlife/Nature Viewing Area	9	5	10	
Skate Boarding Area	15	5	1	3
Permanent Restrooms	4	7	13	
Picnic Areas	3	9	12	
Picnic Shelters	4	8	12	
Campgrounds	18	5	1	
Sledding Areas	6	12	6	



Snowmobile Trails	19	4	1	
Pavilions (year round shelters)	8	9	7	
Nature Trails	4	8	12	
Conservancy Areas	9	4	11	
Bicycle Trails	4	7	13	
Performing Arts Space	13	9	2	
Rain Gardens	12	10	2	
Bocce Ball Fields	16	6	2	
Splash Pads	18	3	1	2 1. What are they?
Archery Ranges 1 Comment: Dangerous w/out supervision	21	2	1	

**Handwritten Comments:**

1. I have lived here 3 years. I was not aware of fitness stations at Fabiano Park. I was not aware of all Somers has to offer. I am aware of County bike trails and pets.
2. I would like to see the Pike River accessible for canoeing and kayaking. Both are growing in popularity and are a quiet activity. Perhaps funds are available for development. I would also like to see a Lake Michigan Shore Park. Perhaps a daylight hours only-just in an area where people could enjoy the beauty-no picnic area, playground, or overdevelopment. A County/Town joint effort.
3. Dog Park: We would be very interested in a fenced dog park, as would a lot of other people. It doesn't look like one will happen at Petrifying Springs, which a number of people had hoped for. A good model is the dog park south of the Milwaukee Airport.
4. I use Valley View Park with my grandchildren almost 3 days a week. They love the sand! I requested over 1-1/2 years ago to put at least some type of bench (should be on the west side of slide so sun is not in our eyes in the evenings). Still nothing. Don't just beautify all other parks and forget about little "Valley View". If possible, maybe some swings. There are 3 grandmothers one day with their grandchildren and nowhere for us to sit. Thank you!  
Kathleen Losch, 6305 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Unit 133, 53144 (262) 945-8584.
5. You did not invite additional comments, but I'll use this space to offer a few general observations. Somers is producing its first comprehensive outdoor recreational plan to meet DNR requirements for State grants. That word "comprehensive" is important. It signifies a broad, long-term approach to park and recreation needs throughout the Town. In its RFP, Somers stated that the consultant should review "adopted neighborhood plans" as well as six current parkland areas. No neighborhood plan has been adopted as yet for the Lakeshore corridor. The overriding issue in this area is the concept of potential public parks and spaces. The unhappy fact is that we have no public access to the Town's dominant natural feature- Lake Michigan. The same goes for the lower \_\_\_\_\_ of the Pike River. All this despite clean-out support for park space from planning and natural \_\_\_\_\_ professionals for more than 40 years. I realize that the Town has its hands full trying to develop the large

\_\_\_\_\_ property and other \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Somers. But this immediate challenge should not prevent Somers from acknowledging a need to open scenic waterways to the public at some point in the future. Mount Pleasant looks ahead to doubling its park acreage by 2020. Pleasant Prairie's current plan foresees 16 new parks in the next 25 years. It is my belief that the need for Lakeshore Parks must be part of the Park Commission's long-range thinking. Two \_\_\_\_\_ supporting that view are enclosed. Our Town should not be preparing a park-recreation plan merely to qualify for State grants. Advance planning for parks in a growing community makes sense whether grants are in the picture or not. Somewhere down the line, we should finally open up Lake Michigan to the public. Harlan Draeger, 375 Sheridan Road.

**Town of Somers  
Preliminary Conceptual Master Plans for Existing and Proposed Parks  
Public Open House – Feedback Form  
September 21, 2009**

Please list below any comments that you have regarding the preliminary conceptual master plans that have been prepared for each of the existing and proposed parks in the Town of Somers:

1) Park behind Town Hall (14.00 acres):

**Comments:**

1. Good
2. Okay
3. Great idea
4. In general, too many “fragmented” parks. May compete with each other versus consolidating several into one LARGE park.
5. Great start

2) Park north of Town Hall on County Trunk Highway E (Gitzlaff property) (24.20 acres):

**Comments:**

1. Really good.
2. Duplicates some aspects of Hawthorne Hollow. They may be able to help you with restored prairie, etc.
3. Nice.
4. Community gardens too small.
5. We are retired and not into any of these sports except archery, so this is the only park we would use. Very much like the natural areas and community garden. Hopefully this park would be used by teachers and children at Somers Elementary for science lessons, etc. If you have a Nature Center (which is a great idea), have you thought about how you would staff it and maintain it? Only concern is that the driveway is quite long-eats up a lot of space, costly to plow, harder to police. Perhaps it could be located closer to the front, especially so the impact on the environmental corridor is lessened (less runoff).
6. Very good! Hard to tell if walking path would be 100 percent safe given where parking is.

3) Fabiano Park (1.70 acres):

**Comments:**

1. Very good, especially basketball courts and pavilion.
2. Okay.
3. Like the hard surface walking trail, landscaping, and pavilion. I believe the basketball court and volleyball will attract loitering by teenagers. I would prefer a greenspace and focus on plants/grass.
4. Great idea-love the basketball court-need to have activities for all ages.

## APPENDIX E

5. Nice!
6. Great idea to dedicate this area to Officer Fabiano.

### 4) Park in Country Charm subdivision (2.00 acres):

#### Comments:

1. Good.
2. Nice greenspace.
3. Good for the subdivision.
4. Where will we park cars? Or are we expected to walk to the park?
5. Should be some (10) off street parking. Restrooms are "usually" out of service, graffiti targets and eyesores.
6. Love it. The sooner the better. Would like playground equipment as soon as possible.
7. Nice. I hope there is one like it across Hwy E by us.

### 5) Park on County Trunk Highway EA (34.70 acres):

#### Comments:

1. Really, really good.
2. Good trail.
3. Good idea.
4. Great.

### 6) Park in Valley View subdivision (1.65 acres):

#### Comments:

1. Good.
2. Tennis? Why? Who eradicates invasive species?
3. Good for the subdivision
4. Great.

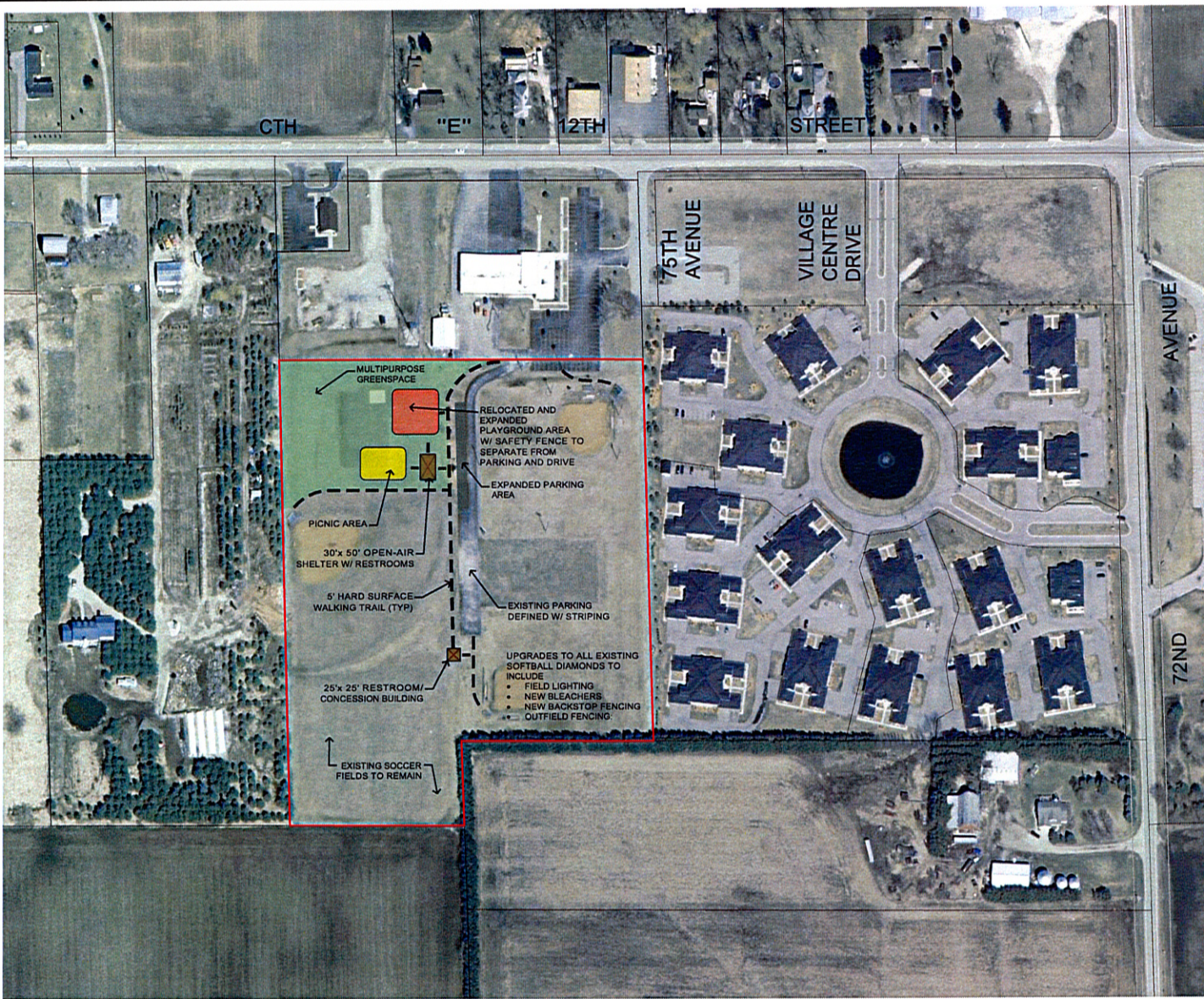
#### General Comments:

1. Looks like a lot and really good parks (enough).

\* Please leave your feedback form in the box provided by the door as you exit. Thank you for your interest in the Town of Somers park system!

Town of Somers and Ruckert/Mielke Project Team

RM11115



**14.00-ACRE PARK CONCEPT PLAN  
TOWN HALL SITE**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

— PROPERTY BOUNDARY



GRAPHIC SCALE

DATE: OCTOBER, 2009

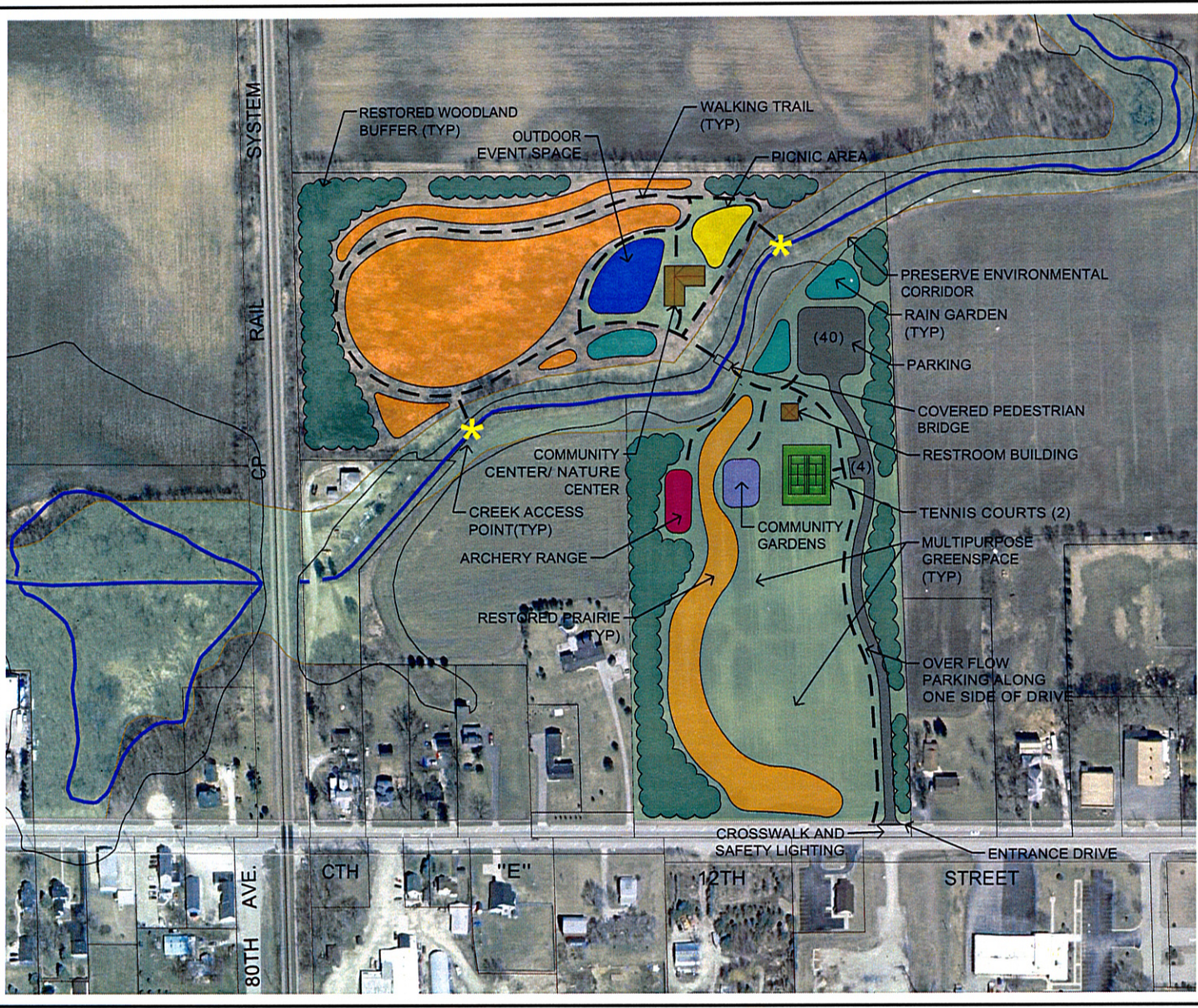
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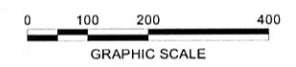


**24.20-ACRE PARK CONCEPT PLAN  
GITZLAFF SITE NORTH OF TOWN HALL**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- PIKE RIVER TRIBUTARY

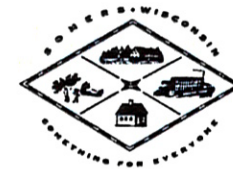
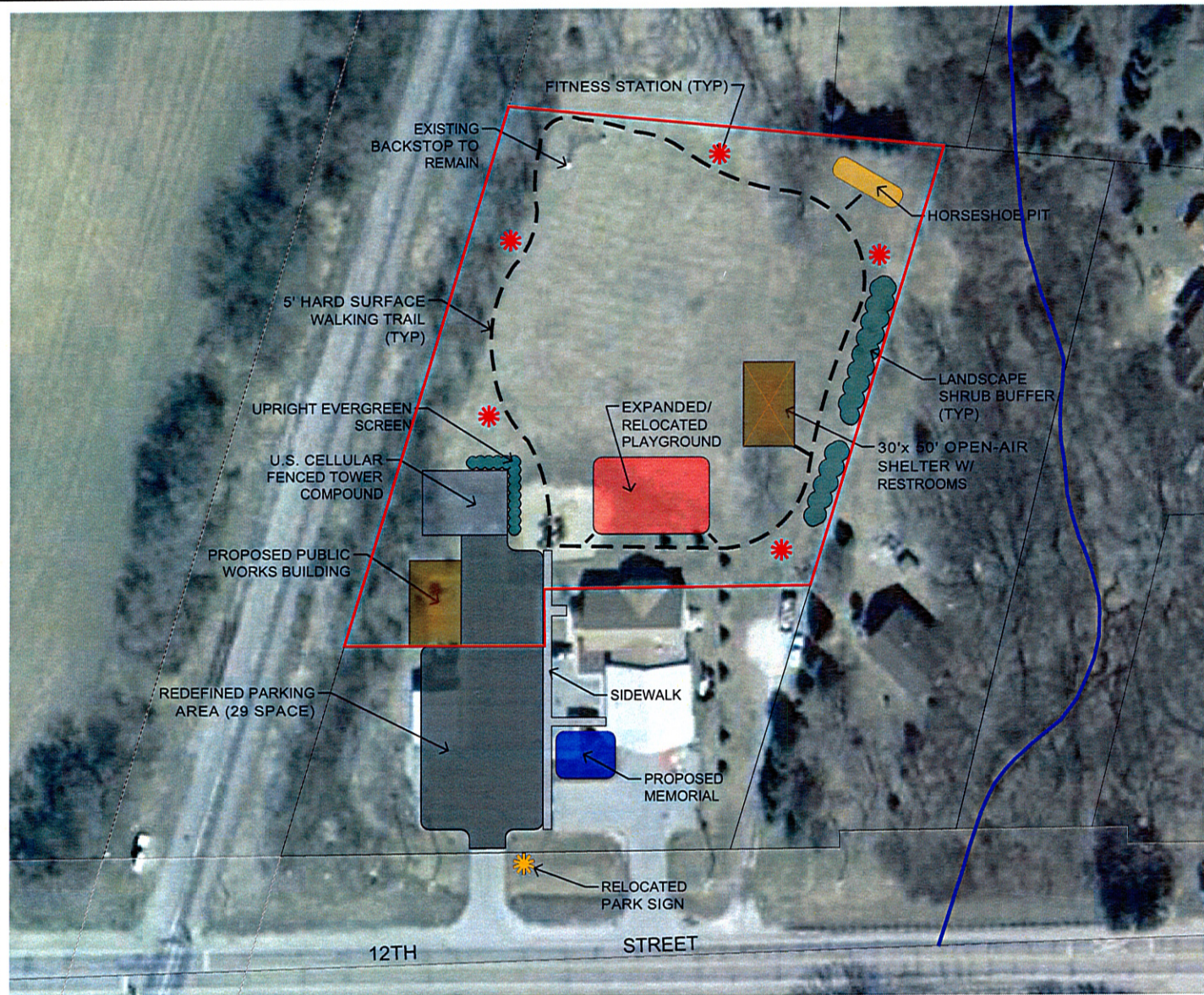


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RM111TLB



**FABIANO PARK CONCEPT PLAN**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

— PROPERTY BOUNDARY



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

RM1117LB



**1.65-ACRE PARK CONCEPT PLAN  
VALLEY VIEW SUBDIVISION**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

-  PROPERTY BOUNDARY
-  SHADE TREE
-  EVERGREEN TREE



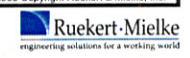
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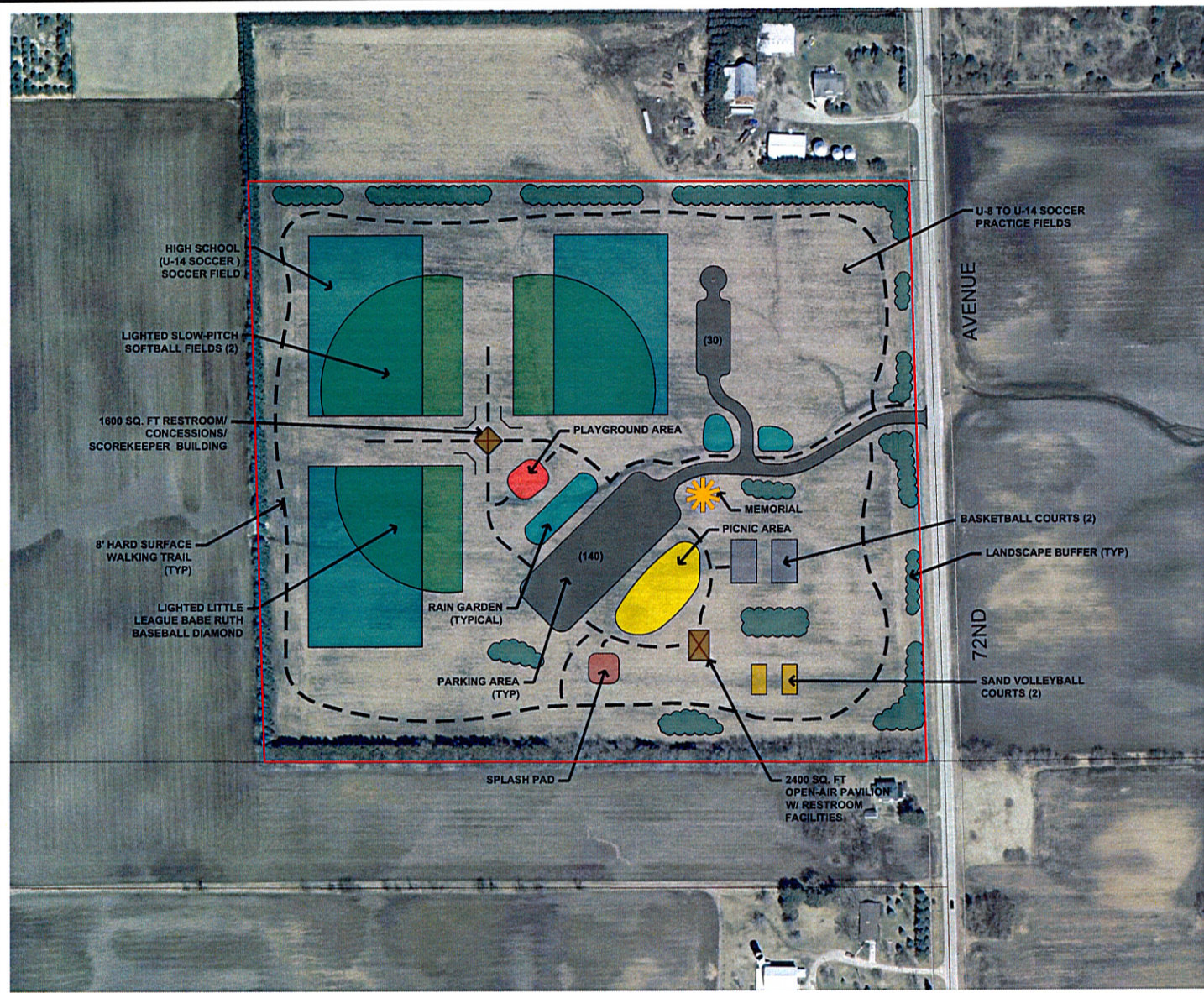
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RM1117LB

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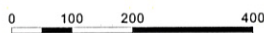


**34.70-ACRE PARK ON C.T.H EA  
CONCEPT PLAN**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

— PROPERTY BOUNDARY



GRAPHIC SCALE

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RM1171LB




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**COUNTRY CHARM SUBDIVISION PARK  
CONCEPT PLAN**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

-  PROPERTY BOUNDARY
-  SHADE TREE
-  EVERGREEN TREE



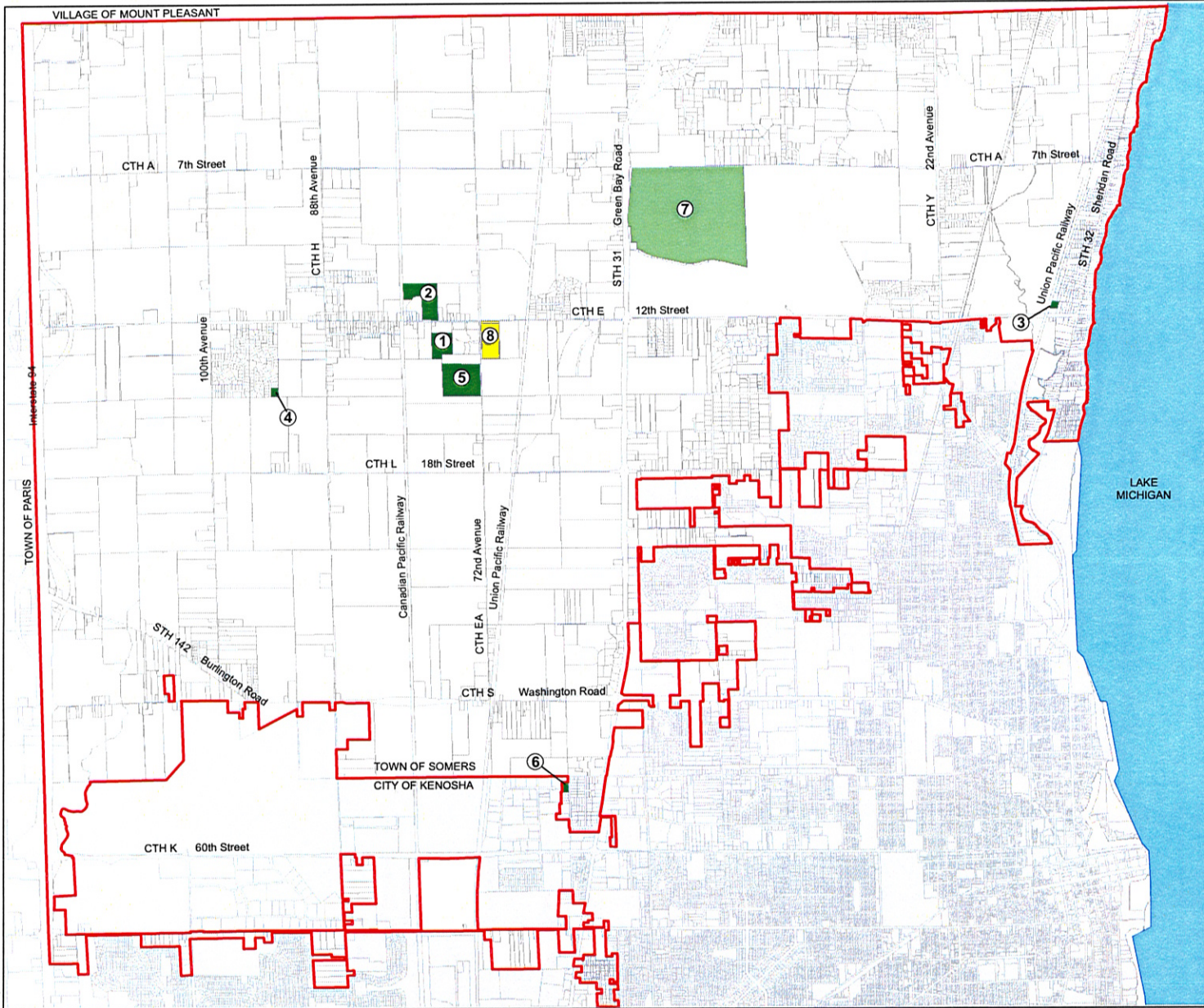
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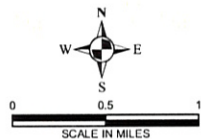
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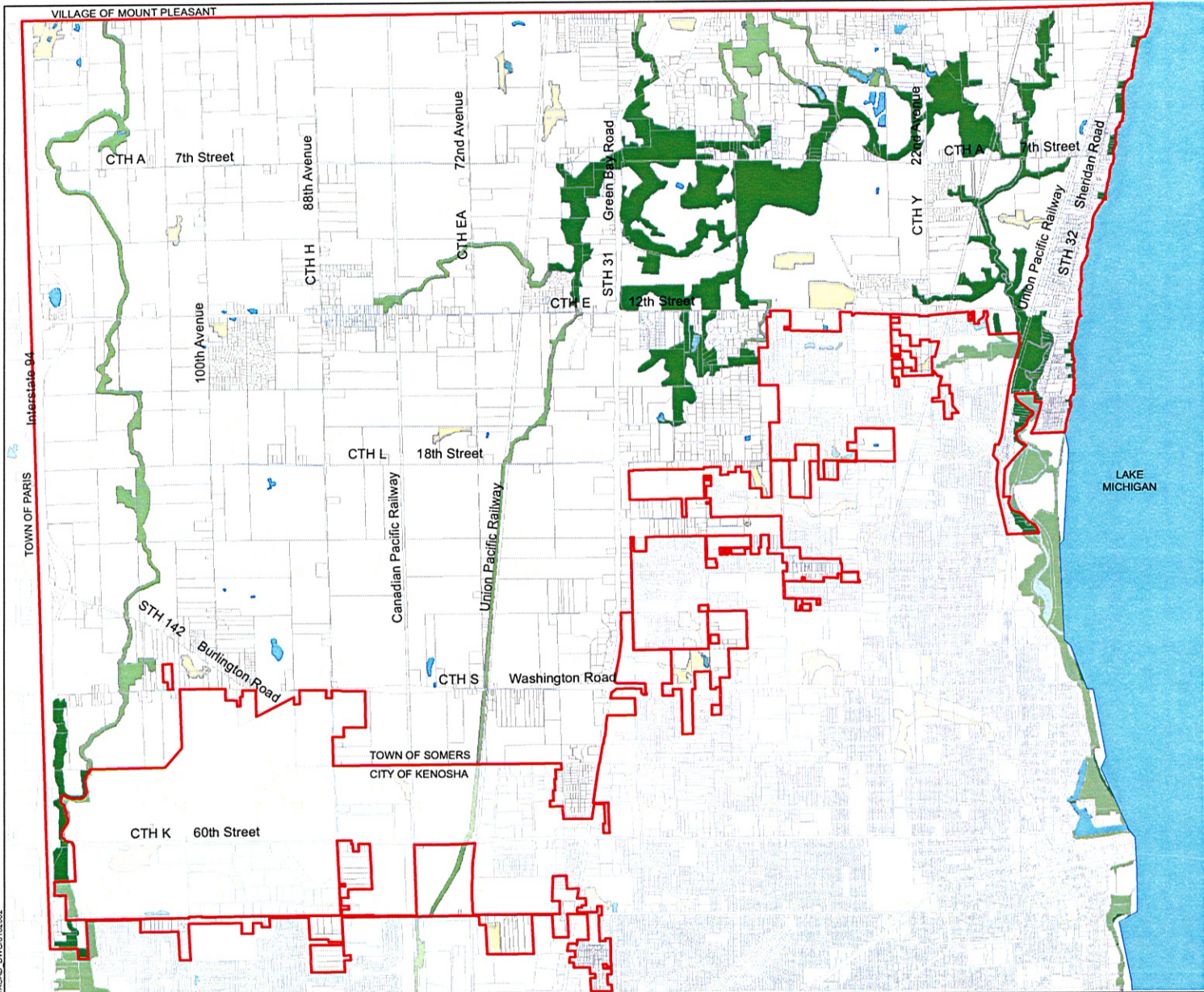


**MAP 1**  
 EXISTING & PROPOSED  
 PUBLIC PARK SITES  
 TOWN OF SOMERS  
 KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

- Legend**
- TOWN LIMITS
  - PUBLIC PARK SITES**
  - ① 14.00 ACRES BEHIND TOWN HALL
  - ② 24.20 ACRES NORTH OF TOWN HALL
  - ③ 1.70 ACRE FABIANO PARK
  - ④ 2.00 ACRES IN COUNTRY CHARM SUBDIVISION
  - ⑤ 34.70 ACRES ON HWY "EA"
  - ⑥ 1.65 ACRES IN VALLEY VIEW SUBDIVISION
  - ⑦ PETRIFYING SPRINGS COUNTY PARK
  - ⑧ SOMERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



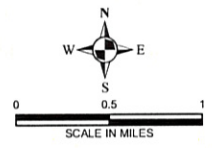
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 SOURCE: KENOSHA COUNTY PLANNING & MAPS



**MAP 2**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDORS**  
**AND ISOLATED NATURAL**  
**RESOURCE AREAS**  
 TOWN OF SOMERS  
 KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**Legend**

- TOWN LIMITS
- PRIMARY ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR
- SECONDARY ENVIRONMENTAL CORRIDOR
- ISOLATED NATURAL RESOURCE AREA
- SURFACE WATER

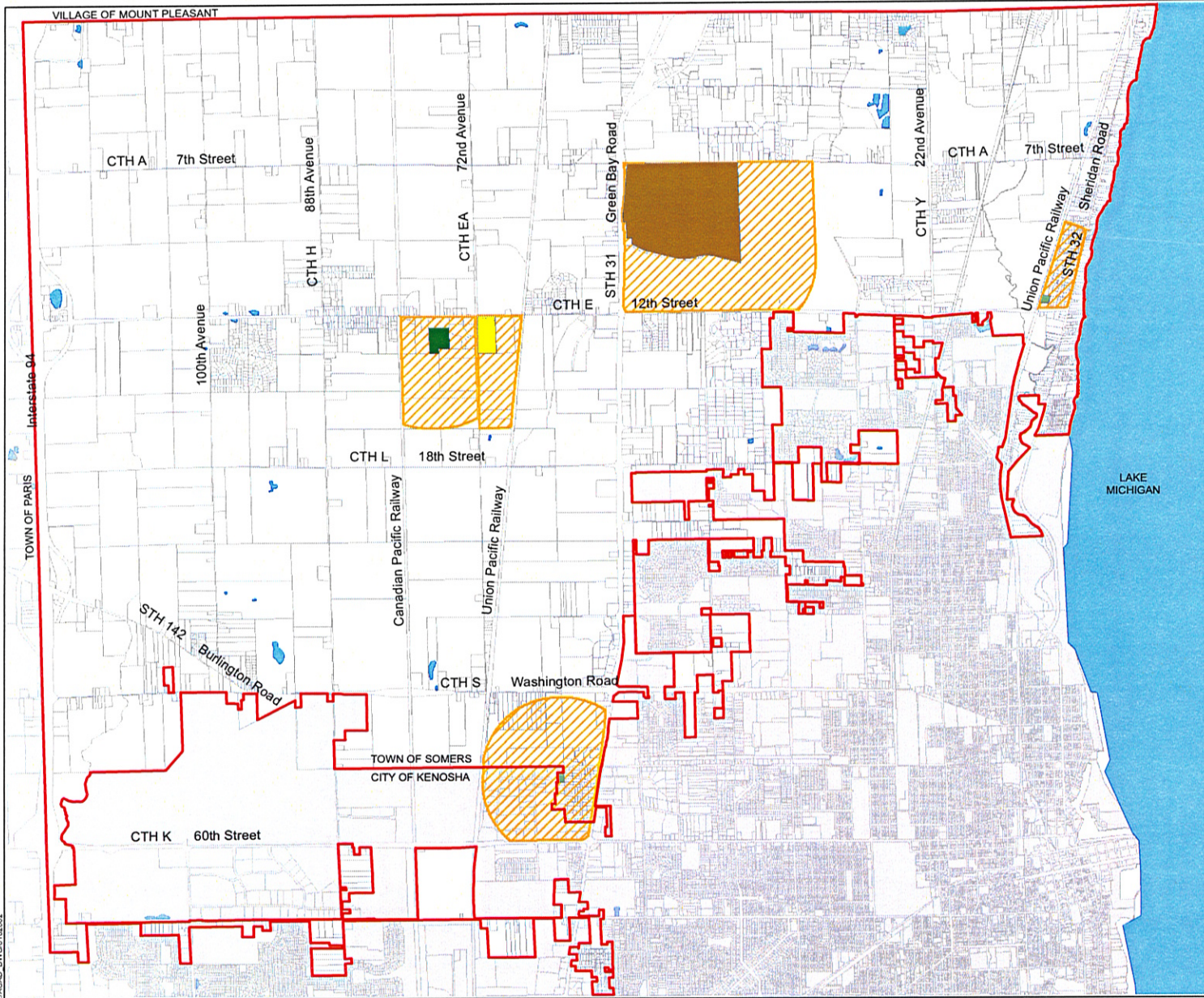


DATE: SEPTEMBER 2009



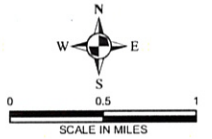
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SOURCE: KENOSHA COUNTY, RUEKERT/MIELKE



**MAP 3**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SERVICE AREA**  
 TOWN OF SOMERS  
 KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

- Legend**
- TOWN LIMITS
  - NEIGHBORHOOD PARK SERVICE AREA
  - NEIGHBORHOOD PARK
  - COMMUNITY PARK
  - REGIONAL PARK
  - PUBLIC SCHOOL FACILITY
  - SURFACE WATER

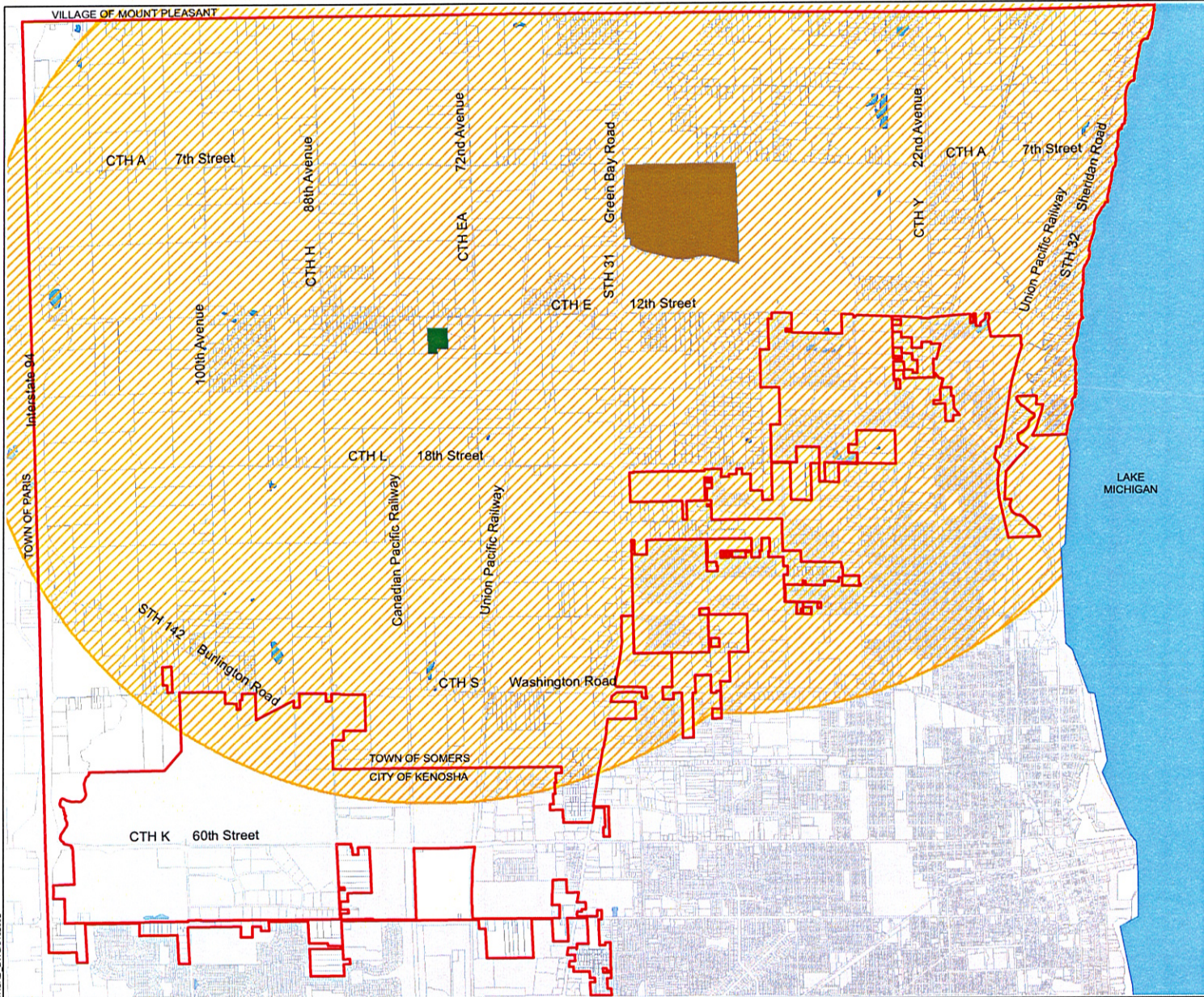


DATE: SEPTEMBER 2009



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SOURCE: KENOSHA COUNTY, RUEKERT/MIELKE



**MAP 4**  
**COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREA**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
 KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**Legend**

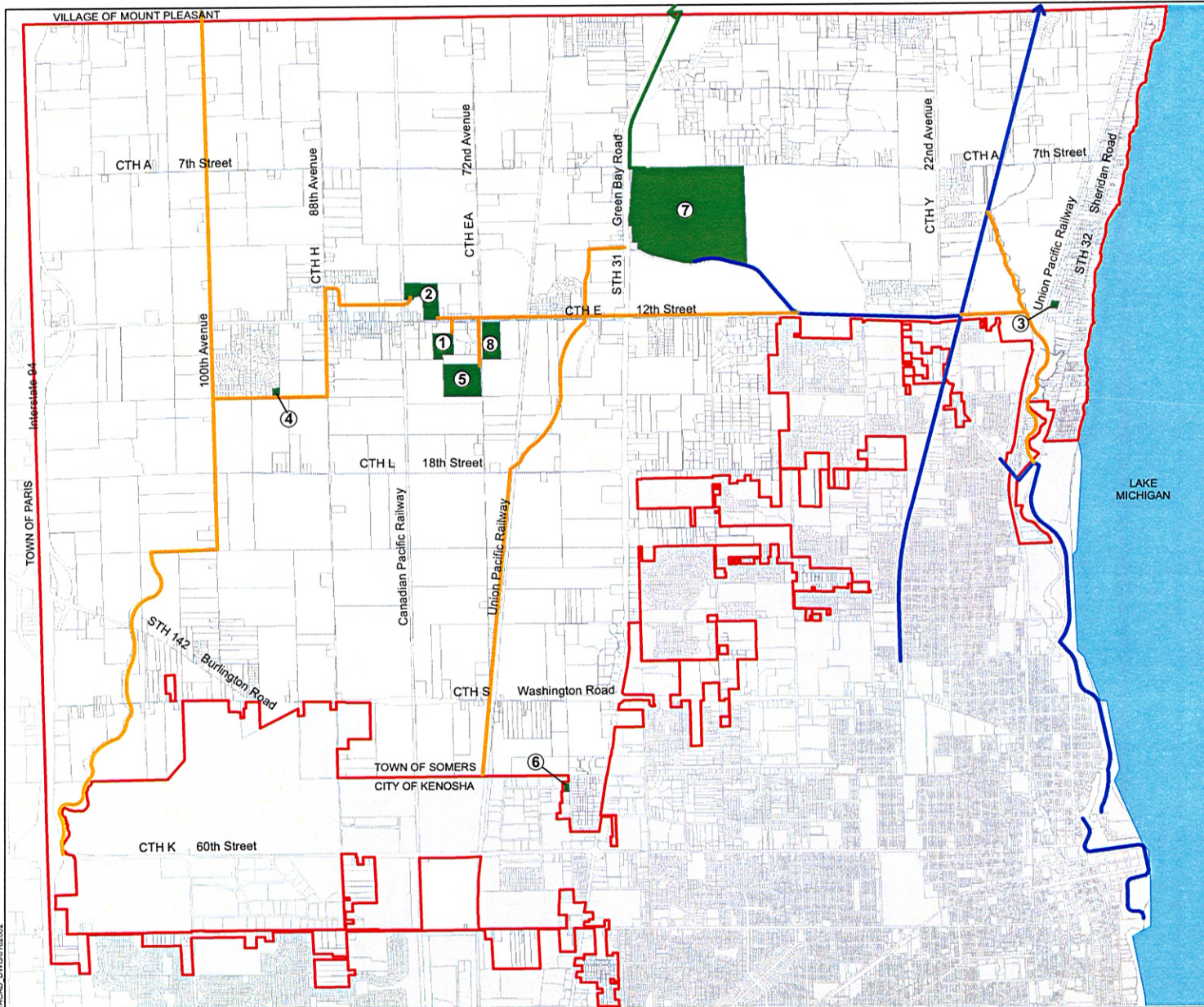
- TOWN LIMITS
- COMMUNITY PARK SERVICE AREA
- COMMUNITY PARK
- REGIONAL PARK
- SURFACE WATER



DATE: SEPTEMBER 2009



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 SOURCE: KENOSHA COUNTY, RUEKERT-MIELKE



**MAP 5**

**EXISTING & PROPOSED TRAILS**

TOWN OF SOMERS  
KENOSHA COUNTY, WISCONSIN

**LEGEND**

- TOWN LIMITS
  - EXISTING BIKE TRAIL
  - PROPOSED BIKE TRAIL
  - PROPOSED MULTI-USE TRAIL
- PUBLIC PARK SITES**
- ① 14.00 ACRES BEHIND TOWN HALL
  - ② 24.20 ACRES NORTH OF TOWN HALL
  - ③ 1.70 ACRE FABIANO PARK
  - ④ 2.00 ACRES IN COUNTRY CHARM SUBDIVISION
  - ⑤ 34.70 ACRES ON HWY "EA"
  - ⑥ 1.65 ACRES IN VALLEY VIEW SUBDIVISION
  - ⑦ PETRIFYING SPRINGS COUNTY PARK
  - ⑧ SOMERS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



DATE: SEPTEMBER 2009



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 SOURCE: KENOSHA COUNTY, RUEKERT/MIELKE