

# **City of Manitowoc**

## **Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2017-2021**

**DRAFT - October, 2017**

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# **City of Manitowoc Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2017-2022**

## **Mayor**

Justin M. Nickels

## **Common Council**

District 1: Mike Howe  
District 2: Scott McMeans  
District 3: Jeremiah Novak  
District 4: James N. Brey  
District 5: Lee Kummer  
District 6: Eric J Sitkiewitz  
District 7: Todd Lotz  
District 8: Dave Soeldner  
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## **Comprehensive Park Plan Staff Steering Committee:**

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Justin M. Nickels, Mayor  
Lee Kummer, District 5 City Alderman  
Dan Koski, PE, Director, Department of Public Infrastructure  
Greg Minikel, Engineering Manager  
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Paul Braun, City Planner  
Tyler Caulum, Associate Planner & Economic Development Expeditor  
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Jim Muenzenmeyer, ex officio member-Transit/Buildings and Grounds Division Manager  
Rick Schwarz, alternate, ex officio member, Building Inspector

## **Stakeholder Group Participants**

Grow it Forward (GIF)  
NE WI Great Lakes Sport Fisherman  
Friends of Mariners Trail  
Manitowoc Youth Baseball Association (MTBA)  
Manitowoc Marina  
Discover Eastern Wisconsin Disc Golf (DEWDG)  
NE Wisconsin Off-Road Mountain Bikers  
Friends of the Aquatic Center  
Lakeshore Natural Resources Partnership (LNRP)  
Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed  
The Ice Age Trail (IAT)  
Manitowoc County Tennis Association (MCTA)  
Miracle League Lakeshore

## **Consultant**

Ken Jaworski, Martenson & Eisele, Inc.  
Brigit Duley, GIS Technician





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## FORWARD

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is designed to provide an overall picture of park and open space needs for the City of Manitowoc, with an implementation element that prioritizes the most pressing park needs and projects over the next six years and beyond. The planning process involved a high level of public participation and included interaction between various departments within the City and the Mayor.

In late 2016, the City of Manitowoc hired the consulting firm of Martenson & Eisele to assist in the updating of the Comprehensive Park Plan. In addition to the consultant, the effort was guided by the “Comprehensive Park Plan Staff Steering Committee” which was an assembly of City Staff members from various departments, a City Alderman and the Mayor. The consultant visited and toured all park facilities with city staff to get an intimate understanding of the current conditions, recent improvements and opportunities which exist.

It must be noted that one of the initial “charges” given to the consultant and the committee was to develop a plan that would recommend projects and opportunities that had a high degree of success. In other words, projects that would happen over the next several years. After years of tight fiscal budgets which were a result of the recession of 2008, the City of Manitowoc’s Park system can wait no more to move essential projects forward. In addition, data and trends show a strong interest by younger generations, such as millennials, to be attracted to urban areas which have interactive park systems and facilities which cater to their lifestyles.

### **Reasons for Updating the Plan**

1. Maintain eligibility for WDNR Stewardship Fund grants. A community’s park plan must be updated every five (5) years to maintain eligibility.
2. Document the need for future projects in an effort to solicit other sources of funding.
3. Identify developing recreational trends and position the City to address these trends as opportunities.
4. Use the update process as an opportunity to involve various “Stakeholder Groups” as partners to implement park goals, objectives and new opportunities.
5. Use the update process to generate public input on park opportunities and directives.
6. Update park maps to show existing facilities and potential future park projects.
7. Assist Department Heads and Community Leaders with budgeting for capital improvements.

### **The Update Process**

A phased process was used to update the comprehensive park plan. The approach can be summarized as follows:

- Phase 1:** Needs Assessment.
- a. Meetings with City Staff and the Steering Committee
  - b. Meetings with Stakeholder Groups

- c. Public Informational Meeting (Held May 18, 2017)
- d. On-Line Survey (May 18 to June 18, 2017)

**Phase 2:** Recommendations, Modifications and Improvements.

- a. Incorporate input from Phase 1
- b. Consider special studies and trends

**Phase 3:** Develop a Financial Implementation Strategy.

- a. Incorporate input from Phase 1
- b. WPRA, NPRA & WDNR organizations

**Phase 4:** Final Document Preparation and Release.

- a. "Draft" and "Final" Plans to be posted on city web site.
- b. Adoption by City Council

## **Mission & Goals**

The City of Manitowoc's mission is to provide and improve public safety, infrastructure and services across our community to ensure it is a great place to be.

It is the vision of the City of Manitowoc to be a friendly, culturally diverse, and economically vibrant community that embraces the arts and humanities and that preserves the best of small town life on the lakeshore, including health, long life, beauty, comfort, and safety.

Acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of the City's park system is directed by the Public Infrastructure Department. A year-round recreation program for all ages and abilities is also provided by the department. Public and private school buildings are utilized at no cost to the department as per facility agreements.

The Manitowoc Senior Center is part of the Department's programming and operation responsibility. The Buildings and Grounds Division handles all inside building maintenance on the facility, and the Manitowoc Parks Division handles the outside responsibilities.

The Recreation Board, Municipal Tree Commission, Zoological Board, and Committee on Aging are all advisory bodies that recommend programs and facility improvements to the standing Public Infrastructure Committee, which is made up of five (5) of the ten (10) alderpersons comprising the Manitowoc Common Council.

The City's Parks and Recreation Divisions consist of four (4) distinct sections:

1. Parks
2. Recreation
3. Zoo
4. Senior Center

The manpower of these four divisions is comprised of 11 full-time equivalent employees, and numerous part-time and seasonal employees. The main governing body for these divisions is the Public Infrastructure Committee. The divisions also receive advisory counsel from the Recreation Board, Zoological Board, Municipal Tree Commission and Committee on Aging.

The Parks Division maintains 40 defined park locations totaling 700+acres of parklands, boulevards, waysides, trails, and open spaces. It also is responsible for special event

coordination and supplies amenities such as tables and band stages for these privately and publicly run events. Parks and City owned building refuse collection is done by the Parks Division on a daily basis. Additionally, the Division maintains the Red Arrow, Blue Rail, and YMCA beach areas during the summer months. It also maintains the outdoor ice rink at Burger Boat Company Park during the winter season.

The Parks Division serves as the City's Forestry Division and is responsible for over 9,300 street trees within the City limits. The City of Manitowoc invested in the development of a park tree inventory, a park tree management plan, and a cost/benefit analysis of inventoried park trees with grant monies from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The inventory was conducted by "Stratapoint Incorporated", and the analysis and plan development was performed by registered consulting arborist, Logan Nelson. Based on the recent inventory of Manitowoc park trees, the data analysis summary indicates the potential strengths and weaknesses identified within the Manitowoc parks tree population.

Park facilities include ball diamonds, basketball facilities, cabins/field houses, concession stands, tennis courts, volleyball courts, soccer fields, playgrounds, nature trails, cross country ski trails, multi-use facilities, beach areas, restroom/shelter facilities, disc golf, dog runs, and the Aquatic Center.

The Recreation Division organizes plans, develops, and supervises a diversified program of recreation, sports, and special events for all ages and abilities. It also operates the Lincoln Park Zoo, which houses a wide variety of local, regional, national, and international species of animals.

All scheduling and reservations, as well as equipment rentals, are handled through these 2 Divisions.

The Senior Center Division administers and coordinates all activities of the Manitowoc Senior Center. Activities at the Center include day trips, seminars, physical fitness activities, life-long learning activities, special events, and recognition programs. The various boards and committees work hard to cooperate with, and assist, community organizations by providing space for a myriad of activities for older adults.

The Parks and Recreation Divisions cooperate and partner with various community organizations, school districts, businesses, and agencies throughout the region. The arrangement reduces overhead, enhances the department's revenues, and provides the ultimate in resources for the community.

Ensuring that local citizens are satisfied with programs and facilities, City staff work effectively with commerce and industry in Manitowoc to enhance the vitality and progress of this community. The development and maintenance of natural open areas available to all is also vital to the future success of the City.

Parkland acquisition, development, and maintenance is carried on through both long-range planning, such as this document, as well as through the City's subdivision review, street assessment, and other business related activities and programs.

The City is committed to improving the quality of life for all City residents and visitors. With 40 defined park sites accommodating a 2017 city population of 33,572, the task is very challenging. This is accomplished by providing and promoting well maintained and fully functional parks,

facilities, and public open spaces, as well as offering a variety of lifelong recreational opportunities and special events for people of all ages. The following goals and objectives have been reviewed and those listed below, are fundamental in guiding the City's park system and programs:

### **Goals**

- A. To revise and update information needed to make program, facility, and funding decisions, and complete an inventory of current parks and recreation facilities.
- B. To consider public and stakeholder group input concerning park use and recreation programming for youth, adult, and senior citizens.
- C. To increase connectivity to park locations through a network of trails and greenspace.
- D. To identify and utilize community partnerships to manage and fund raise to improve the City of Manitowoc park system.
- E. To seek opportunities to increase the use of underutilized parks.
- F. To balance the need for recreational facilities while protecting natural areas with parks and green space areas.
- G. To enhance natural resources features within parks and greenspace areas when opportunities to do so exist.
- H. To continually identify new opportunities and projects to improve the City of Manitowoc park system.
- I. To make the City eligible for State, Federal, and other funding sources for the acquisition and improvement of park related elements.

### **Objectives**

- 1. To provide Manitowoc residents with enough parkland, facilities, recreational programs, and open spaces to meet their needs.
- 2. To create new avenues by which parkland may be acquired and developed during the "new growth" and "redevelopment" stages of the City.
- 3. To coordinate and cooperate with various entities throughout the City before duplicating facilities, services, or outdoor recreation spaces.
- 4. To ensure that facilities and programs are accessible to all residents of Manitowoc, as well as providing accessible amenities for the disabled or senior population, where reasonable and feasible.
- 5. To advocate for the conservation and utilization of suitable sites for outdoor recreation pursuits.

6. To connect a trail system for bicyclists, walkers, joggers, and other fitness enthusiasts throughout the City and County of Manitowoc.
7. To increase the level of service needed to adequately maintain and provide surveillance to the park system and lake front.
8. To be consistent with the goals, objectives and strategies of the City's "Comprehensive Plan" and Wisconsin Smart Growth Law.

## **Policies**

The following are basic recreation policies that should be considered by local governmental agencies in decision-making with respect to its recreation operation:

1. Local governments should give significant emphasis to the needs of their citizens for outdoor recreation by considering it in all land-use planning, opening areas with recreation potential to use, and where necessary, acquiring new areas.
2. Full provision for acquiring, preserving or developing shoreline lands for public access and use should be made.
3. Rivers and other water bodies should be allowed to remain in their free-flowing state and natural setting.
4. Recreation areas should be strongly defended against encroachments from non-conforming uses, both public and private. Where recreation land must be taken for another public use, it should be replaced with other land of similar quality and comparable location.
5. Floodplain zoning should be used wherever possible as a method to preserve attractive rivers and streams for public recreation in addition to the other benefits from such zoning.
6. Local government must provide continuing and adequate funds for outdoor recreation.
7. Cooperation between the City, County, Public and Private School Districts, and other regional, state, and governmental entities is vital to the growth of the Manitowoc community.

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## COMPREHENSIVE PARK PLAN UPDATE DIRECTIVES

### **Steering Committee Initiatives**

In addition to agreeing to select several key park projects for immediate implementation, the Steering Committee also agreed upon pursuing some other key park initiatives to accomplish through the update process. A brief description of each and the reasoning follows:

#### **Improve Trail Connectivity between Existing Parks**

With current amenities such as the Ice Age Trail and Mariner's Trail within the City and the opportunities which exist with abandoned rail lines and river corridors, a continual development of a trail network connecting parks and point of interests makes long term sense. The Steering Committee felt the updated plan must continue to make recommendations for future trail connections. In addition, the need for more detailed study such as the development of a bike and pedestrian plan should improve park access and increase use. The idea of people walking and biking to parks safely is a goal worth pursuing. The plan needs to identify gaps and offer opportunities for increased connection.

#### **Focus on Further Enhancement of Existing Parks/Amenities over New Park Creation**

A general consensus of the Steering Committee and eventual public input was a "let's take care of what we have first" direction over seeking out new park locations. Certainly, unique properties may surface for acquisition that are key to some of the "connection" directives or for the enhancement of the downtown, but for the most part, the city has an adequate supply of park land to serve its population and the plan's recommendation needs to reflect an improvement to existing locations and amenities.

#### **Increase the Use of Underutilized Parks**

It should be no surprise that the demographics of certain older, established neighborhoods have changed throughout the City. Neighborhood parks were once the foundation of defined community neighborhoods where young families met to interact, play and participate in a host of recreational and social functions. Today many of those neighborhoods are host to a surrounding population much older than the families of the 1950-1980's. Gone are many of the younger children which made the parks functionally active. Today, many of the older neighborhood parks struggle to generate the activities and participation levels enjoyed decades ago. Some function more as "Urban Greenspace" than the traditional "Neighborhood Park" and its support amenities.

The Steering Committee felt that inactive parks can lead to activities of questionable nature. In other words, an active park is a safer park for all as there are more "eyes and ears" monitoring inappropriate activity. That said, a focus of the plan should be to look for activities that could bring area residents together for interaction at parks that are underutilized. Community gardens, splash pads and planned community events were suggestions to be considered.

#### **Continue to Work in Tandem with Recreational Stakeholder Groups for Ideas, Volunteering, Funding and other Contributions**

The City of Manitowoc has experienced a tremendous outpouring of support from city and area civic and conservation groups. Substantial financial donations have been received for numerous projects including the Zoo, Aquatic Center, Baseball Facilities, the Mariner's Trail just to mention a few. The City of Manitowoc park system would not be what it is today without the help of these groups. The plan must converse with these groups and welcome their input for future projects as they will likely play a key component for ideas to reach eventual reality.

**Balance the Need for Recreational Facilities while Protecting Natural Areas within Parks and Greenspace**

The Steering Committee recognized the City's deep appreciation for natural areas and their recreational benefits. Whether it's walking or biking along the lakeshore or hiking and kayaking along the wooded shoreline of rivers, it appears a connection with natural resources runs deep in the area culture. That said, any park or trail projects recommended for implementation as part of this plan must "tread lightly" on the landscape or even enhance the resource.

**Validate Plan Focus by Obtaining Public Input**

Plans will only be successful if supported by the general public so reaching to city residents and park users was considered a key component in this planning process. The Steering Committee supported the use of an on-line survey tool called "SurveyMonkey". The Committee also recommended the use of a public meeting to further educate participants on the process. Responses from this effort were outstanding to say the least. Survey results will be discussed in detail later in this plan.

**Trends that Will Impact Parks & Recreation**

A majority of planning efforts seek the most recent information on trends and social changes that could impact the preferences of the general public. Adjusting to social change and preferences can be described as hitting a moving target. It's certainly a challenge. Nonetheless, it's a required exercise if a plan's recommendations are ever to become a reality and successful in addressing those preferences. As part of this update effort, several sources that continually monitor recreational and health choice preferences were consulted and shared with the Steering Committee and general public as a means align local, state and national initiatives. These sources and trends are discussed below:

**Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association (WPRA)**

One source of trend information is the Wisconsin Park & Recreation Association (WPRA). The WPRA, along with the National Park and Recreation Association (NRPA) continuously studies variations in recreation activities, programs and preferences. Recently, the WPRA released the following trends within one of their publications that will impact how park and recreation programs may need to adjust:

1. Obesity (and its association with serious chronic diseases) is still on the rise in the United States especially in younger age groups. Expect increase focus on physical activities and quality food choices. Parks can play an important role.
2. Increasing number of older adults with different interests: "The haves and the have nots". Financial Status. Active vs Sedentary.
3. From Helicopter Parents (overshadowing every move) to Millennial Parents (let kids make mistakes).
4. Ethnic Diversity. Not accepted the same in schools vs. the community. Different preferences. Different activities.
5. From being connected 24/7 to disconnect opportunities? Pokémon Go to Pokémon No! Could we see a shift to more disconnect opportunities or more of the same?

6. The “Quality of Life” discussion: travel more, smaller homes, more free time, sense of community.
7. Impacts of “Privatization”. From naming rights to donations to recreational business opportunities. Could private money impact community/public needs?
8. Impacts of “Volunteers”. “I’m retired, now what? Baby boomers with time.
9. From “elite athletes” to “everyone is in it together”. Increase in challenges for ALL over those of the elite. Increase in silly theme events, walkathons, corporate team challenges, etc. Fund and Friend Raising.
10. Continued interest in purchasing/preserving open space and natural areas for all to use. Nature’s relaxing qualities continue to be acknowledged.
11. Empty or underutilized parks due to demographic and societally shifts.
12. Connectivity. Can I get there without an expensive car?

### **The 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)**

The 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is a document developed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources designed to provide government leaders and the general public with comprehensive, up to date information, on the status of Wisconsin’s outdoor recreation opportunities and options. The SCORP focuses on the needs of population centers and the opportunities that exist statewide. Local projects which align with the goals of the SCORP are often more competitive for grant funding. Appendix B list the Wisconsin SCORP Outdoor Recreation Goals and Actions in complete detail. The primary goals are as follows:

- Assess, understand and adapt to growing recreation tourism demands and preferences.
- Improve integration of outdoor recreation interests and needs in land use and other relevant planning efforts.
- Continue to provide and enhance public access to Wisconsin Recreational Lands and Waters.
- Conserve rural landscapes and forests through partnerships and incentives.
- Address funding challenges associated with managing Wisconsin’s Outdoor Recreation Resources.
- Promote Outdoor Recreation as a means of improving public health among Wisconsinites.
- Establish great urban parks and community green spaces

The SCORP also identifies two nationally recognized conservation projects which are endorsed and supported by the US Department of Interior in which the City of Manitowoc is and will continue to be a major component. The projects are the *Lake Michigan Water Trail* and the *Ice Age National Scenic Trail*. See Appendix B, page 6-7 for more information on these projects. Local projects which support these initiatives have been addressed within the park improvement portion of this plan.

**Parks & Recreation as a Health Choice**

The link between urban parks and public health is well documented and for good reason. Outdoor recreation encompasses a wide variety of activities, each of which has a different level of physical activity. This variety allows for physical challenges to all age groups and levels of ability. For example, trails for walking may attract a more diverse age group than those participating in tennis or softball. However, all activity is beneficial to human health.

The link between urban parks and public health is a critical partnership in an overall effort to get all age groups more active. Health agencies at every level of government acknowledge that local facilities in urban areas are essential to improved public health. The World Health Organization (2007), the White House (2010), the Center for Diseases Control and Prevention (CDC) (2009), and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (2010) each list increased or improved local recreation facilities as an important objective for increasing physical activity.

Younger generations, such as millennials, seem particularly attracted to urban areas which support an infrastructure which caters to improved health opportunities. This is an important trend for a city the size of Manitowoc which needs to attract a younger demographic for which to sustain. The City of Manitowoc has a highly respected park system and a tremendous foundation to further enhance their park and recreation facilities. However, staying abreast of developing trends and recreational opportunities will be critical to the city's future.

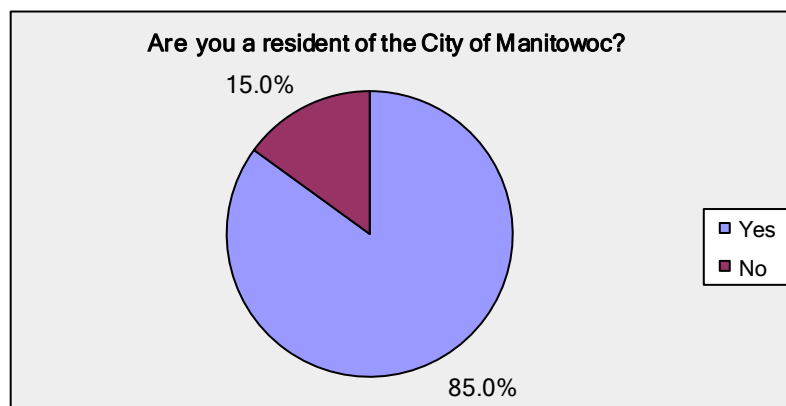
## THE PEOPLE HAVE SPOKEN! PARK AND RECREATION SURVEY RESULTS

Validation of how a City's park system is rated and what the public's expectation are for the system can be captured through public outreach. For this planning process, an on-line survey was developed through the use of a tool called "SurveyMonkey". Working with the Steering Committee, a series of questions were developed that were intended to provide guidance on how the park system could be improved. In addition, several questions asked for written responses that would allow the respondent to elaborate even more on various topics.

In an effort to not overwhelm the potential respondent, the number of questions was capped at 16. The survey was designed to be completed within 15 to 20 minutes depending on the level of comments the respondent wanted to list. The survey was hosted on the city's web site. The window to complete the survey was set from May 18 to June 18, 2017. Efforts to promote the survey included radio advertising, posters, paper advertisements, cable TV announcements and general word of mouth. The survey effort was kicked off by a public meeting on May 18 where attendees were asked to "go and spread the word".

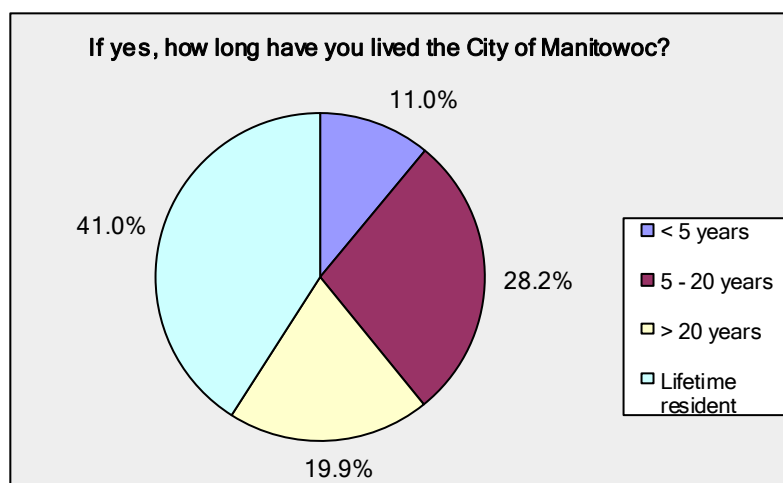
The outreach effort was considered a success in securing a total of 646 survey responses, 544 of which came from city residents. To put that number in perspective, there are approximately 14,634 households in the City of Manitowoc. Due to the detailed written comments received, the survey's level of importance to the planning process increased and served as a solid foundation from which to recommend future projects and their locations. Below is a brief assessment of some of the findings by question.

### Question 1



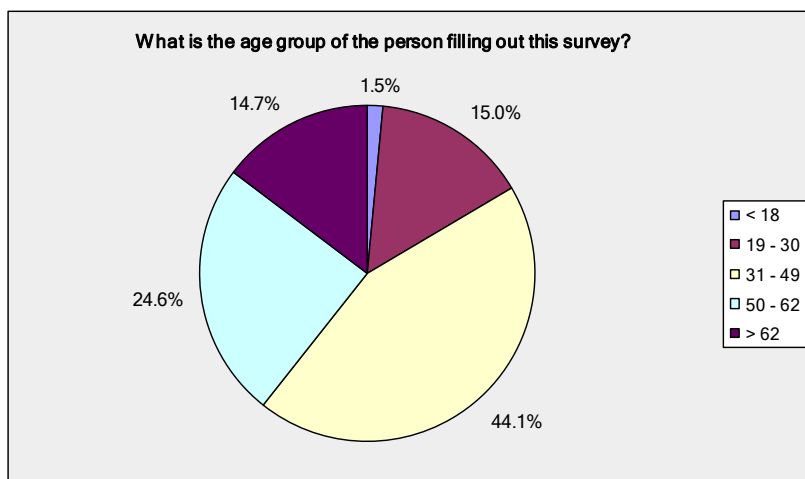
Since the survey was made available through the city's web site and not mailed, it was available to non-residents as well. To monitor the balance between residents and non-residents, Question 1 simply asked if the respondent was a city resident. Recognizing the fact city parks are available to the general public, input from non-residents was welcomed. In total, 15% of the respondents were non-residents which appears to have provided a nice balance of input.

## Question 2



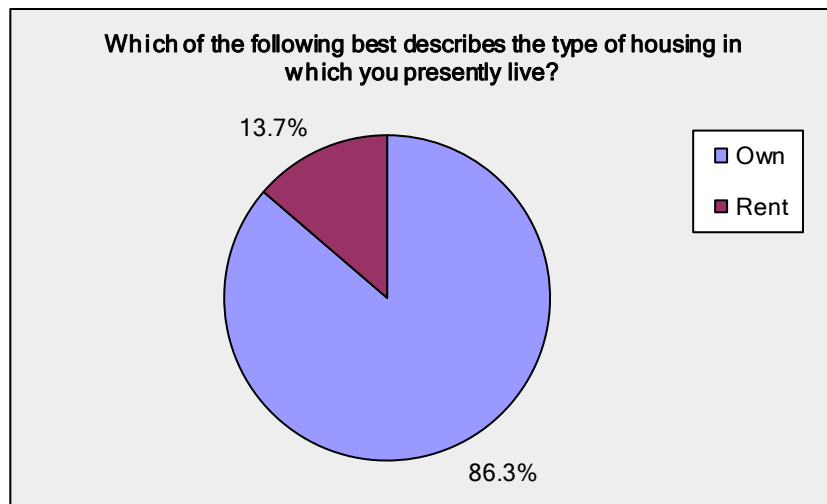
Question 2 attempted to probe a bit into the history of the respondent with the city park system. As expected, most respondents have lived in the City their entire lifetime (41%) or for at least 20 years (20%) or more (61% total). Hence, it's fair to say most of the survey respondents are basing their responses and comments on a long history and familiarity with the city's park system. This should be considered a benefit to the results.

## Question 3



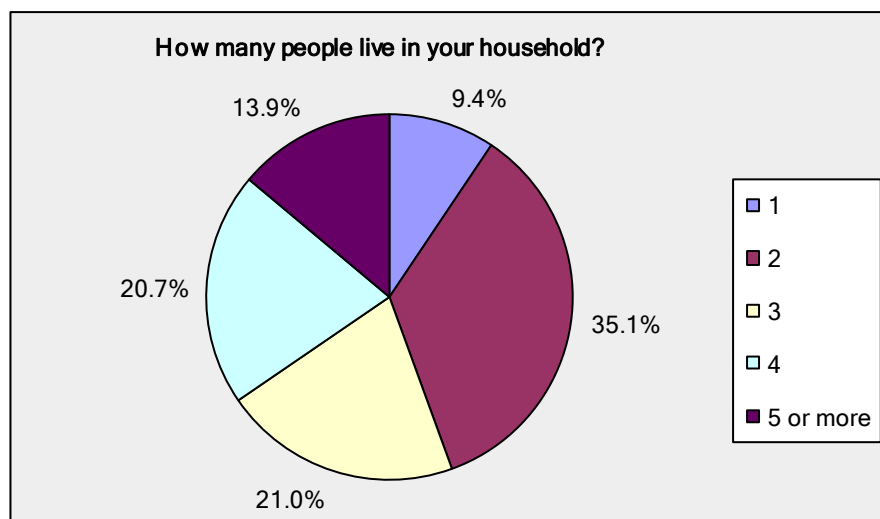
Respondent age was obtained by asking Question 3. The results align closely with work force age groups which is somewhat expected. However, the results were disappointing in that a larger percentage was not obtained in the <18 age group. It was hoped an electronic format for the survey would have increased the participation of this age group who are primary users of many of the amenities provided throughout the park system. On the other hand, with the exception of the <18 age group, responses seem to be spread out fairly even between age groups proving for good diversity.

#### Question 4



Closely associated with Question 2, Question 4 attempted to disclose the housing preference of respondents. Although not a hard and true factual assessment, one could assume the respondents who rent may cater to a more transient lifestyle. A majority of respondents own their home (86.3%). In reference to using the survey results, Question 4 has little influence on future park recommendations. It provides more of a validation of results in that respondents are heavily vested in the community.

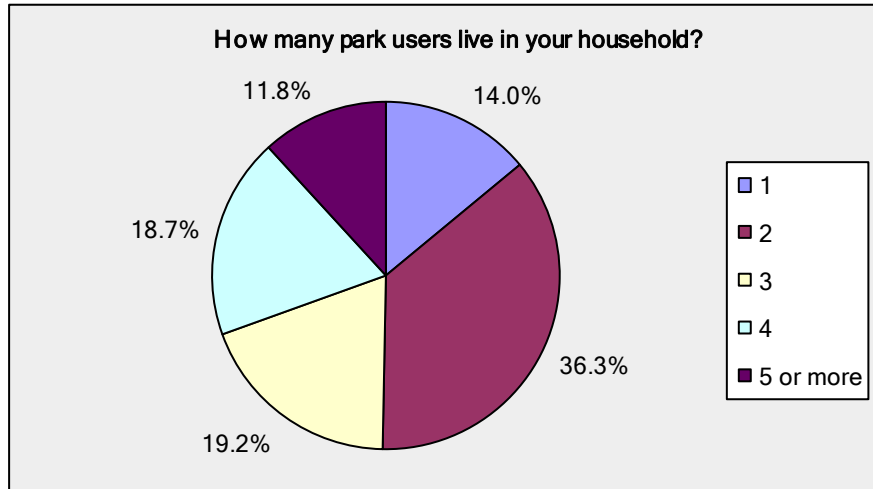
#### Question 5



Survey representation was targeted in Question 5. To put this question into perspective, the average household size for the City of Manitowoc is 2.24 people according to the 2010 US census. If each survey response was assumed to be a household, the average household size of total survey respondents calculates out to be 2.94, significantly higher than census figure. This detail should be considered a plus as it means a larger percentage of the population is

represented by the results. The pie chart also shows a nice balance between the diversity of household sizes. Again, a positive result.

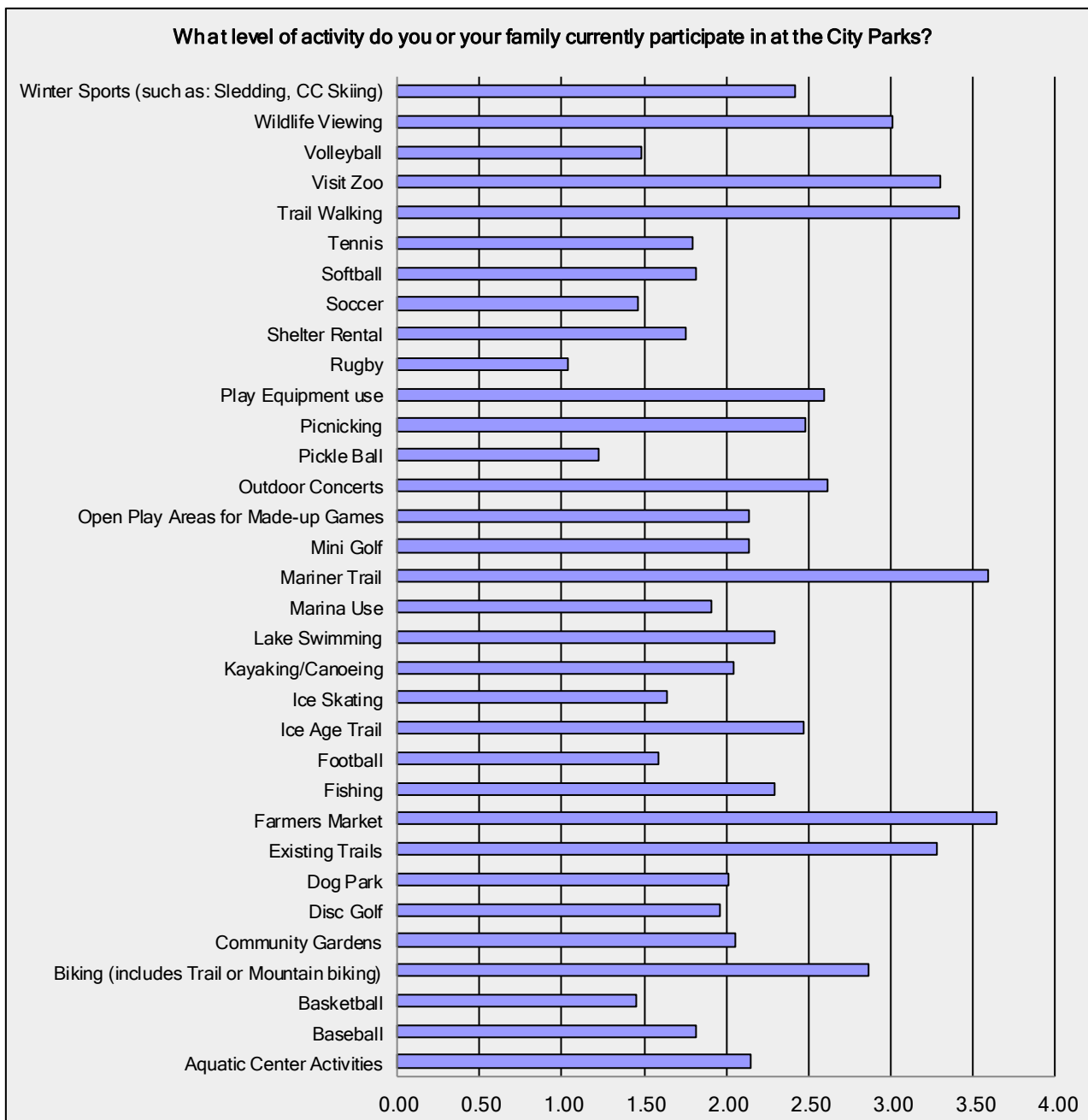
### Question 6



Question 6 was asked to provide more clarity on the assumption that all living in a household, use parks. When compared to Question 5, the results show little deviation. However, one can notice a slight variation in that, the larger a household is, the greater the chance someone from that household is not a park user. Reasons could range from age, ability or simply, non interest.



## Question 7

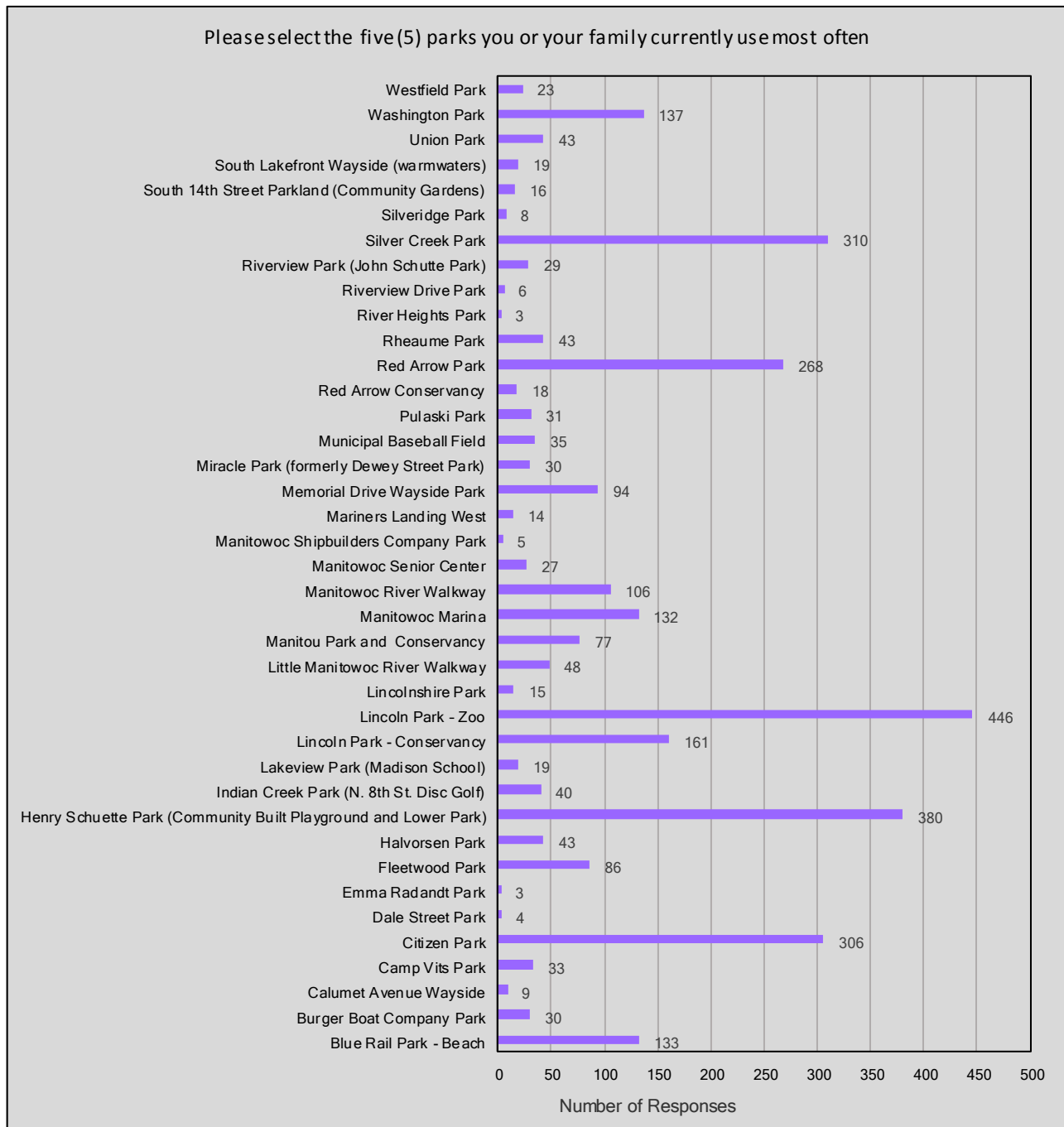


Question 7 was the first question of the survey that really delved into park use preferences and the results are very interesting and in some cases, surprising. For example, the success of the Manitowoc Farmers Market is well known. However, few would have guessed it would lead the list for most participation. Trail use activities rate high on several fronts which shows investments made in the past on these types of amenities are reaping rewards today.

On the other hand, “team sports” appear less popular. This may be due to several factors such as scheduling, required coaching/refereeing and individual time constraints could all play

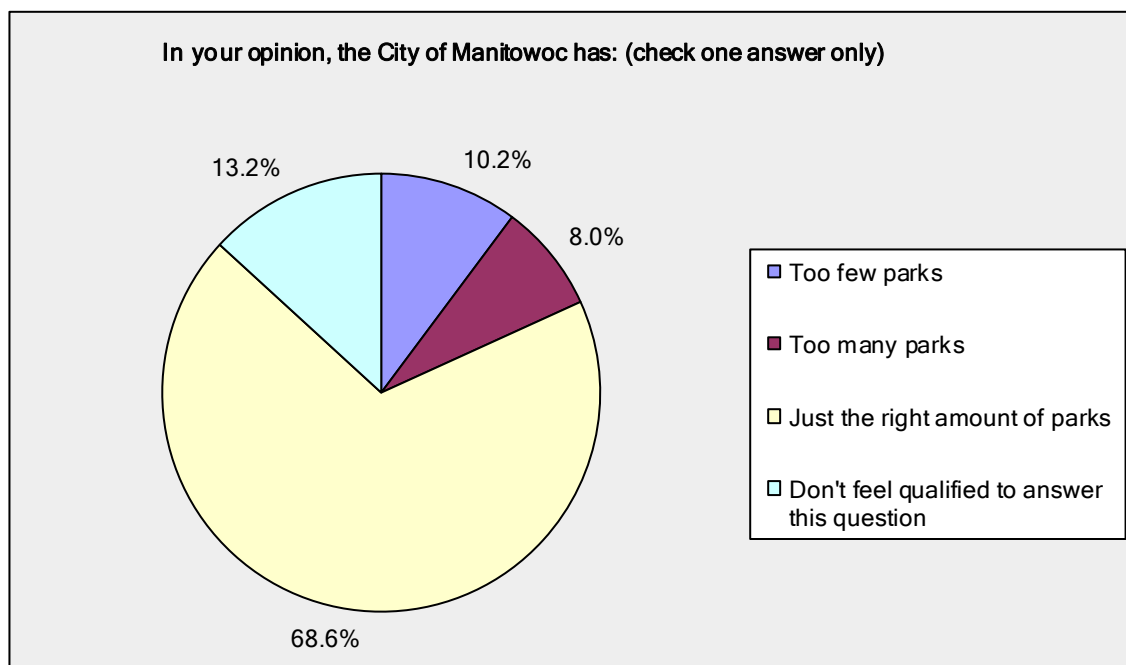
factors. It appears activities which can be done at the convenience of the individual's schedule, rated higher. If the intent of the plan update is to further enhance opportunities and use, Question 7 provides key information for future city investment that will "pay back" in use. The top 12 activities from survey respondents were as follows: 1. Farmers Market; 2. Mariner Trail; 3. Trail Walking; 4. Visit Zoo; 5. Existing Trails; 6. Wildlife Viewing; 7. Biking; 8. Outdoor Concerts; 9. Play Equipment Use; 10. Picnicking; 11. Ice Age Trail; 12. Winter Sports

## Question 8



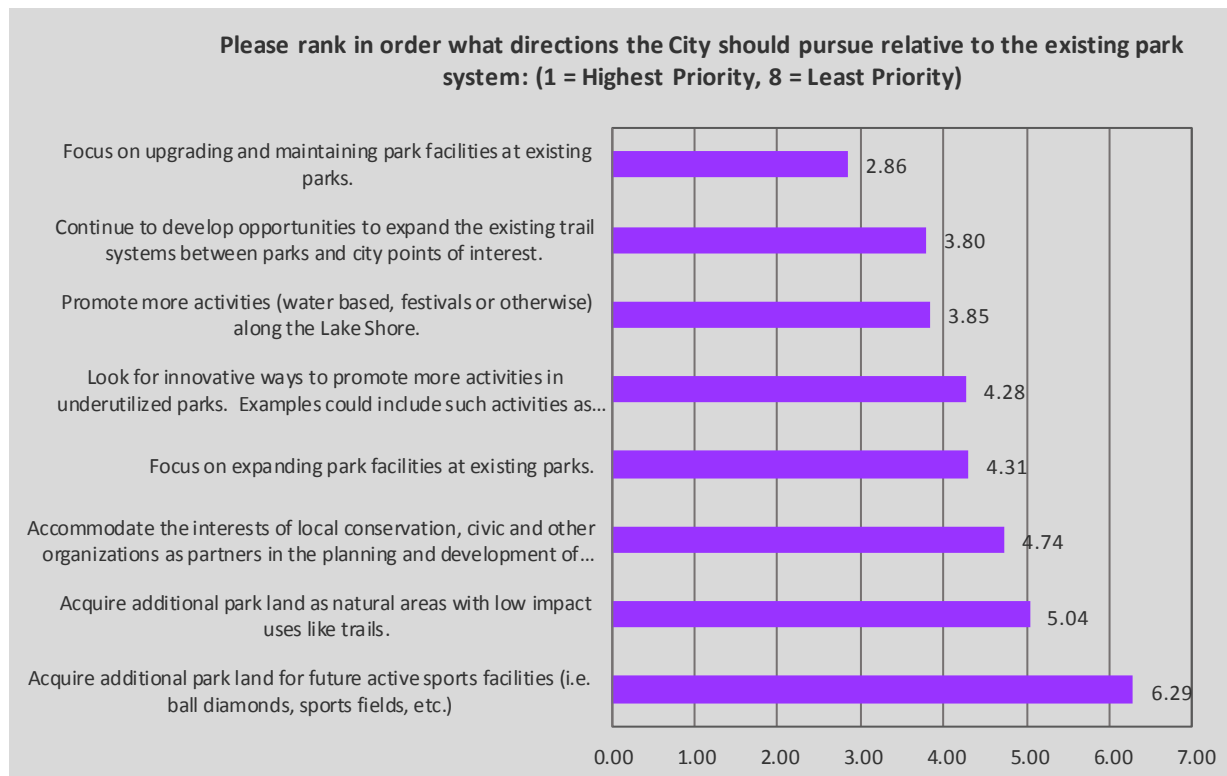
Question 8 attempts to gauge park preference and use levels. Like Question 7, the results are key to where financial resources may be invested in the future. As one would expect, larger community or special use parks top the list as the amenities there are designed to attract the entire community over just a neighborhood. The top five parks by use in order are the Lincoln Park Zoo, Henry Schuette Park, Silver Creek Park, Citizens Park and Red Arrow Park. One surprise in the results, may be the higher use identified for Washington Park. Specialized events at the park, such as the newly established farmers market and outdoor concerts, likely elevated the ranking. A positive direction.

### Question 9

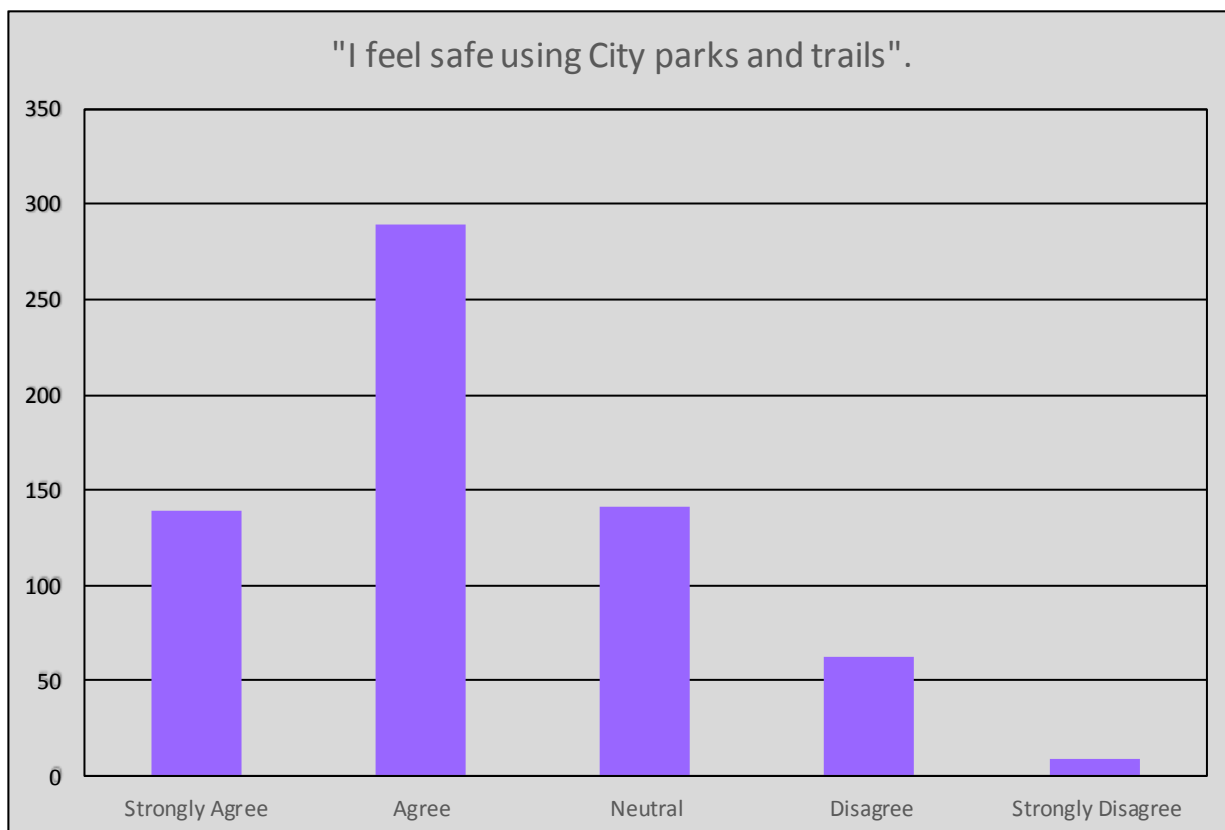


Question 9 was asked to basically validate a Steering Committee directive which was to focus on improving existing parks over acquiring new parks. Respondents to the question did just that with over 68% stating the City maintains just the right amount of parks.

## Question 10

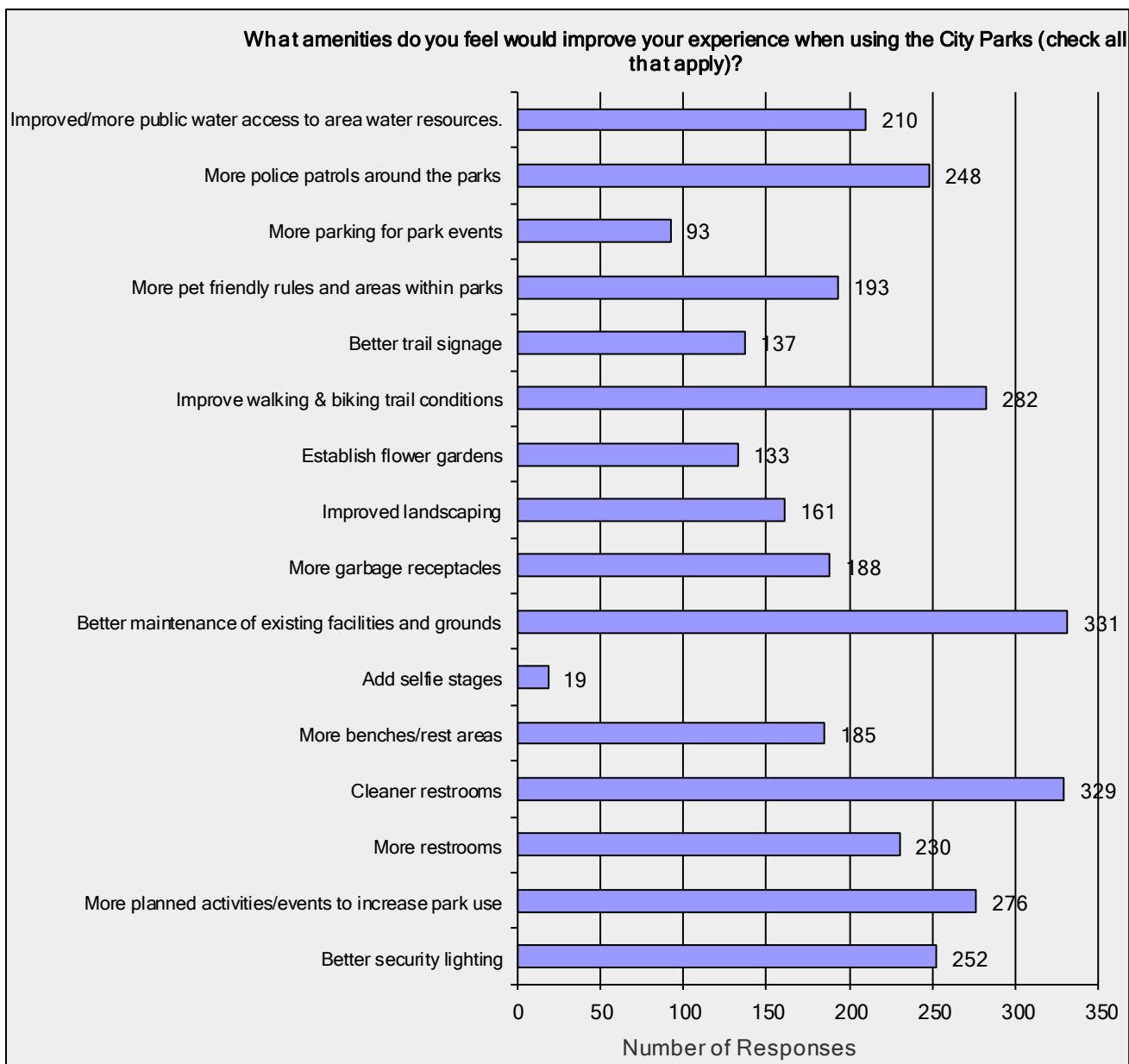


Question 10 was designed to assess general directives to further focus the park plan. “Focusing on upgrading and maintaining park facilities at existing parks” was the highest priority response. This response was consistent with the results contained in Question 9. The second priority response was “Continue to develop opportunities to expand the existing trail system between parks and city points of interest”. That response was consistent with the input received through Question 8 where trail use rated high. The lowest priority was “Acquire additional park land for future active sports facilities”. A response consistent with Question 9.

**Question 11**

Question 11 was a bold question to ask respondents but one the Steering Committee felt was warranted. Safety is certainly a consideration of a user when using a park so anything the plan directives could do to make a park experience more pleasant should be a goal. Overall the results point to overall acceptance of feeling safe. However, still 70 of the 639 respondents to this question (roughly 1 in 10), disagreed or strongly disagreed. Further research into comments (Question 13 & 16) along with Question 12, gave more detailed information as to reasons why. Suffice it to say, stronger surveillance, curfew hours or park design may need to be further investigated.

## Question 12



Question 12 was designed to give respondents and even greater opportunity to provide direction and potentially influence the recommendations of the plan. Here, some general trends began to emerge as it relates to how the park system and experience could be improved. First of all, the need for better maintenance rose to the top followed closely by cleaner restroom (also a maintenance function). The consistent message for improving trail use and experiences rated as the third priority. It was encouraging to see respondents supporting more planned activities at parks. They also provided some guidance on the safety topic by calling for more police patrols and better security lighting.

### Question 13

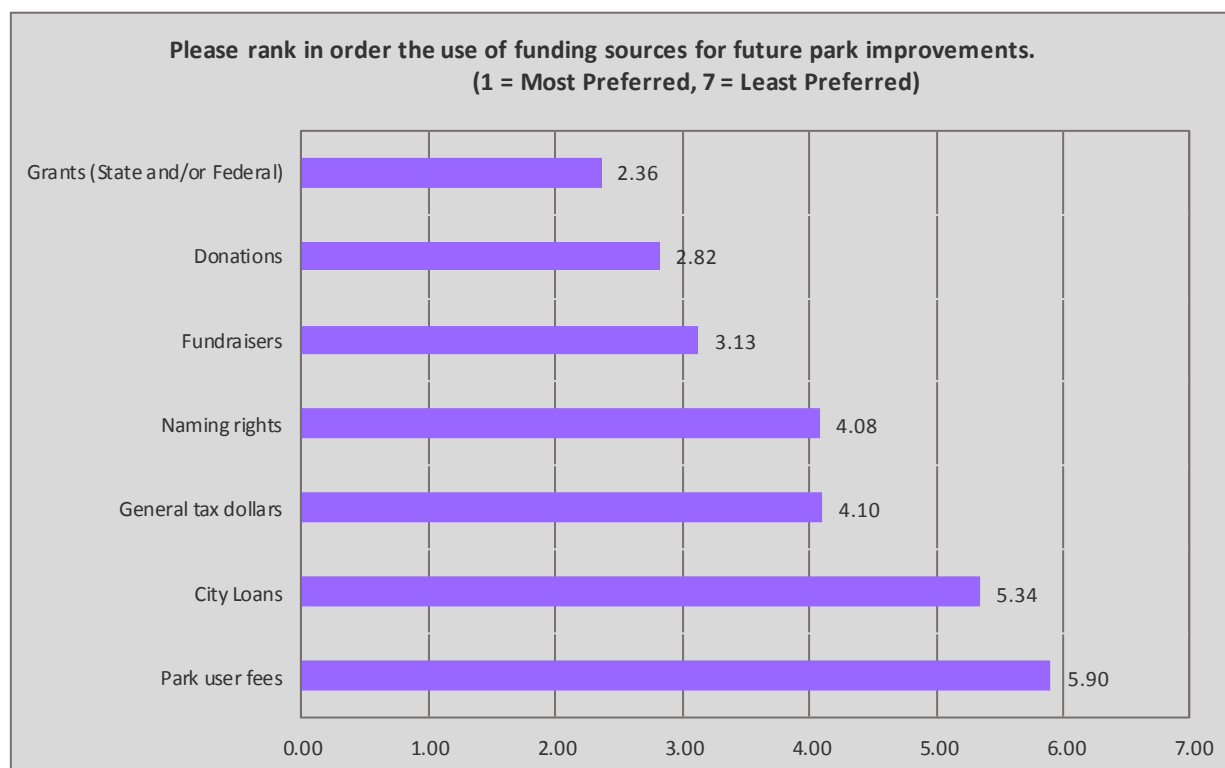
Question 13 was developed to allow for open comments designed to give respondents the opportunity to speak openly about how they could improve the city park system. The question asked:

*“If I were King or Queen of the City of Manitowoc Park System, I would change or pursue the following”:*

An impressive 384 comments were obtained and recorded. All comments are presented in their entirety in Appendix B. In an effort to summarize the content, the comments were categorized under nine (9) major trend line topics. The topics in order based on the number of comments received are New Ideas, Maintenance Related, Trail Related, Policy Related, Surveillance, Waterfront, Recreation Programs, Pet Friendly and Habitat for Wildlife.

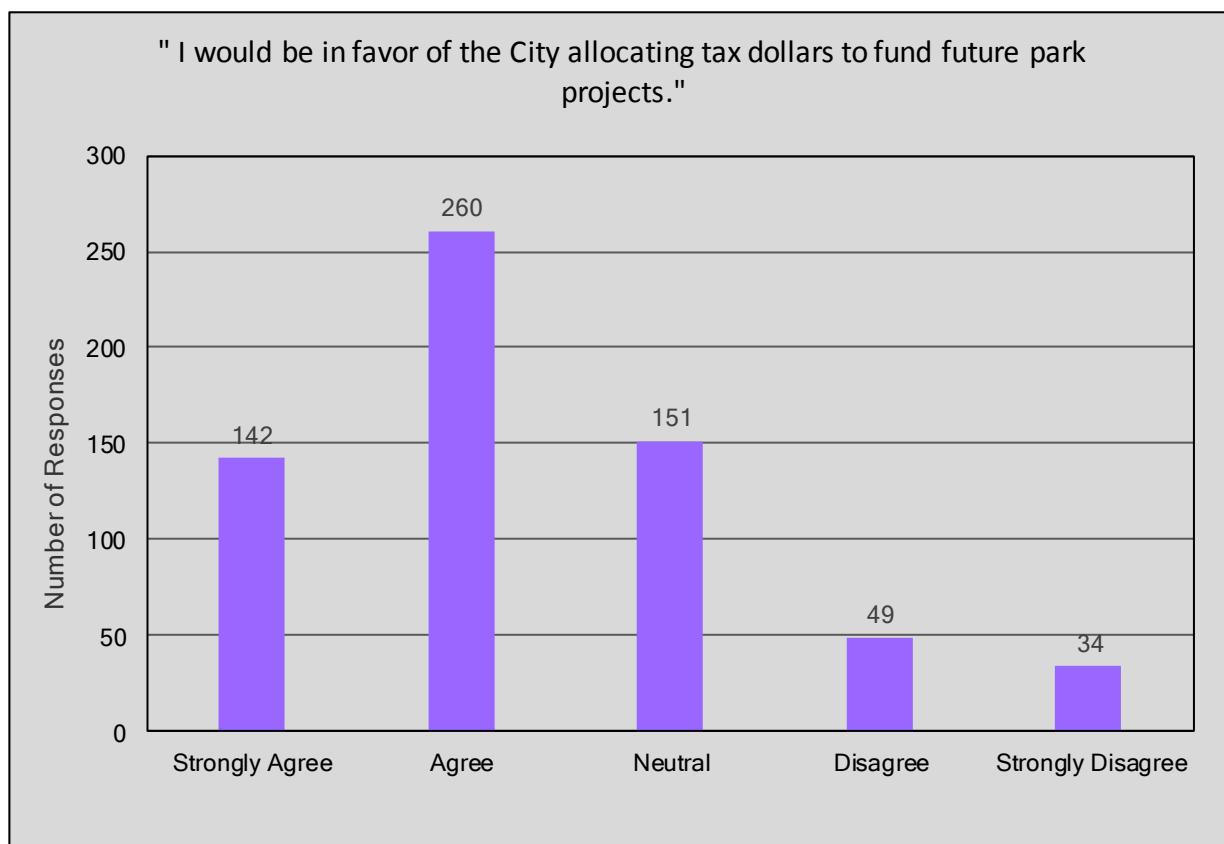
Users of this plan are encourage to read the wealth of comments obtained through Question 13 in Appendix B.

### Question 14



There is no escaping the issue that improving park facilities in the future will cost money. The preferred choice on where that money should come from was the basis of asking Question 14. The results are not surprising in that three sources are preferred over using general tax dollars. Those preferences included grants, donations and fundraisers. All of which have been successfully used by the city in the past. Park user fees has the least support.

### Question 15



Recognizing the fact that general tax dollars will be a necessary future funding source for park projects, Question 15 delved further into the public acceptance level of using tax revenues. The results were surprisingly more supportive than one might expect. As noted by the chart, 402 respondents favored the directive while only 83 opposed. The results indicate that the community must feel proud of their park system and are willing to invest tax dollars into preserving, maintaining and improving it. The results of Question 15 should be a tremendous assets to community leaders which would like to move park improvement project forward into the implementation phase. Especially, those directives supported by the Steering Committee and survey respondents.

### Question 16

Question 16 was the final question of the survey and was basically developed as a "catch all" for any parting comments. The question was worded as:

*"Please provide any additional comments related to any of the Park and Recreation survey questions".*

Another 172 comments were obtained and recorded under this opportunity. Some of which were repetitive to Question 13. Nonetheless, additional valuable input was received. Again, all comments are presented in their entirety in Appendix B. In an effort to summarize the content,



the comments were again categorized under major trend line topics. The topics in order based on the number of comments received are Policy Decisions, General Comments, Maintenance Related, New Ideas, Surveillance, Funding Options, Waterfront, Recreation Programs, Trail Related, Habitat for Wildlife and Pet Friendly.

Users of this plan are encourage to read the wealth of comments obtained through Question 16 in Appendix B.

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## MASTER PLAN FOR PARK FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Any plan is only as good as the ability of a community to implement it. The “Master Plan” section of this document has identified all of the improvements and land acquisitions that should be made to the City’s park system in the short and long term. Numerous sources were used to develop the Project List including the survey results, Steering Committee, Mayor, Stakeholder Groups, Consultant and other specialized studies.

To assist the reader with the location of each park within the city and where proposed projects may occur, Maps 1-4 have been developed and follow this section. In addition, individual park maps for each park location are included in Appendix H.

**Table 1**  
**Project List for all City of Manitowoc Parks**

	Proposed Amenities	Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
<b>Community-Wide Projects</b>					
CN property acquisition	New Park. Land Acquisition	X			\$300,000
Rails to Trails possibility in the southern area of the city/county on CTH CR	New Trail.			X	\$800,000
Park area with open shelter on the corner of Quay St and S. Lakeview Dr.	New Park. Land Acquisition (Coal Area)		X		\$100,000
New Trail - Manitou Park to Woodland Dunes Nature Center, Two Rivers, WI	Connecting Trail.	X			\$425,000
New Trail - along lakeshore, Silver Creek Park to Red Arrow Park, through UW property	Connecting Trail. Also see Silver Creek, Red Arrow and Red Arrow Conservancy Projects.	X			\$100,000
New Trail - Manitou Park to Spring Street, along old railroad bed	Connecting Trail	X			\$100,000
Double the width of Mariners Trail wherever possible. Add more benches	Upgrade existing trail			X	\$400,000
Mariners Trail - redirect trail along lakeshore around Manitowoc Yacht Club for safety purposes	Redirect Trail. Also see Blue Rail Beach Projects		X		\$115,000
Spring Street to old WPS Property via sheet wall along Manitowoc River	Connecting Trail			X	\$5,000,000
New Trail - Lincoln Park to Indian Creek Park via conservancy land	Trail connecting parks. Also see Lincoln Park Conservancy Projects.			X	\$120,000
Splash pads	Also see Dale Park, Pulaski & Union Park Projects		X		\$75,000
New Trail - WPS property to River Lofts (downtown) via railroad property or sidewalk	New Trail.		X		\$100,000
	Proposed Amenities	Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost

		Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>				
New Trail - Mariners Trail to Lincoln Park to Indian Creek Park	New Trails. Also see Lincoln Park Zoo, Lincoln Park Conservancy & Indian Creek Projects			X	\$200,000
New Trail - Red Arrow Park to S. Lakeview Drive via lakeshore trail through MPU property	New Trail		X		\$250,000
Pedestrian Bridge over Little Manitowoc River to eliminate the safety concern of Maritime Drive traffic	Pedestrian Bridge.			X	\$135,000
Enlarge dog parks	See Indian Creek & Blue Rail Park Projects			X	
Develop indoor athletic facility	New Facility. No location mapped.			X	\$1,500,000
Develop indoor water park	New Facility. No location mapped.			X	\$2,000,000
Marking and signing hiking/biking trails		X			\$10,000
Lincoln Zoo - provide EDU to public and organized events	New Program			X	
Update the City's Bike and Pedestrian Plan.	New Plan. Last Plan was developed in 1995.	X			\$15,000
Soccer Complex	Recently there have been discussions regarding trading Municipal baseball field with MPSD soccer complex at Miracle Park		X		\$500,000/\$50,00
Bike stands at all parks			X		\$20,000
More benches/rest areas along trails			X		\$20,000
More flower gardens within parks			X		\$10,000
Develop a state of the art farmers market/craft show venue with shelters and support infrastructure	No location mapped.		X		\$250,000
Designate more bike lanes along city streets.			X		\$50,000
<b>Maintenance Items</b>					
Cleaner restrooms		X			
Better maintenance of existing facilities		X			
Current parks maintenance needed totaling \$1,055,000		X			\$1,055,000
More maintenance at the Zoo; Summer Staff & Landscaping			X		
More parks maintenance staff to take care of parks		X			
Surveillance cameras in parks		X			
<b>Park Name</b>					
Blue Rail Park	Walking Path	X			
	Shrub Islands	X			
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>	<b>Immediate Priority 1-2 years</b>	<b>Moderate Priority 3-4 years</b>	<b>Long Term Priority 5 plus years</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>

		Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
	Proposed Amenities				
Blue Rail Park (cont'd)	Enlarge Dog Park			X	\$10,000
Blue Rail Park - Beach	Benches Along Blue Rail Pier	X			\$2,000/ea
	Trail Reroute			X	
	Upgrade on Restrooms		X		\$20,000
	Sand Dune Construction	X			
	Dune Grass Plantings	X			
	Kayak/Canoeing Launch	X			\$5,000
	Board Walk	X			\$ 10,000
Burger Boat Company Park	No proposed projects				
Calumet Avenue Wayside/Visitor Information Center	Nature Trail			X	\$2,000
	Upgrade Picnic Areas			X	\$5,000
Camp Vits Park	Improve Parking Capacity	X			\$75,000
	Accommodate and Connection to Ice Age Trail		X		\$50,000
	Pit Restroom		X		\$25,000
	Raise or Boardwalk Trails where needed. Include some small bridges.	X			\$15,000
	Install Kayak/Canoe Rest Stop Along River			X	\$10,000
	Rest Area -Information Kiosk-Bike Stands	X			\$5,000
Citizen Park	Phase 3 of Aquatic Center			X	
	Additional/Upgrade Parking	X			\$75,000
	Bathroom Expansion			X	\$75,000
	Upgrade Playground Equipment in SW Corner		X		\$35,000
	Upgrade Softball Fields		X		\$30,000
Dale Street Park	Community Garden		X		\$5,000
	Upgrade Playground Equipment		X		\$25,000
Emma Radandt Park	Community Gardens	X			\$5,000
Fleetwood Park	Tree Trimming along Tennis Courts	X			
	Restrooms		X		\$125,000
	Improve Walking Trail: Widening, Boardwalk/Bridge		X		\$8,000
	Proposed Amenities	Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost

	Proposed Amenities	Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
Halvorsen Park	Community Gardens and Splash Pads if Ball Diamonds Removed		X		\$30,000
	Remove Outfield Fencing	X			\$5,000
Henry Shcuette Park	Trail Switchbacks	X			\$10,000
	Trail Stairs Switchback Connection to Lower Park	X			\$20,000
	Storage Shed		X		\$5,000
	Restroom (For Lower)			X	\$100,000
	Shelter-Information- Kiosk	X			\$2,500
	Replace Shredded Tires with Alternative			X	\$15,000
Indian Creek Park	Small Bridge for Course		X		\$15,000
	Creek Trail from RR to N. 8th Street		X		\$75,000
	Upgrade Dog Exercise Area			X	\$30,000
	Play Equipment, Shelter & Restroom to Serve Adjacent Residential Neighborhood			X	\$150,000
John Schuette Park	Bank Stabilization and River Walk Trail			X	\$5,000,000
Lakeview Park	Community Gardens			X	\$5,000
Lincoln Park Conservancy	New Creek Trail (Boardwalk)		X		
Lincoln Park Zoo	Improve Lincoln Park Entrance		X		
	Trail/Bridge			X	\$100,000
	Acquire Additional Green Space		X		
	Concession and Gift Stand			X	\$15,000
	Open Shelter and Restrooms			X	
	Wildlife Exhibits			X	
	Observation Deck			X	
	Upgrade Tennis Lighting	X			\$15,000
Lincolnshire Park	No proposed projects				
	Trail to Spring Street	X			\$25,000
Manitowoc Community Garden	Green House Structure		X		\$10,000
	Compost Structure		X		\$2,500
	Improve Landscaping			X	\$5,000
	Proposed Amenities	Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost

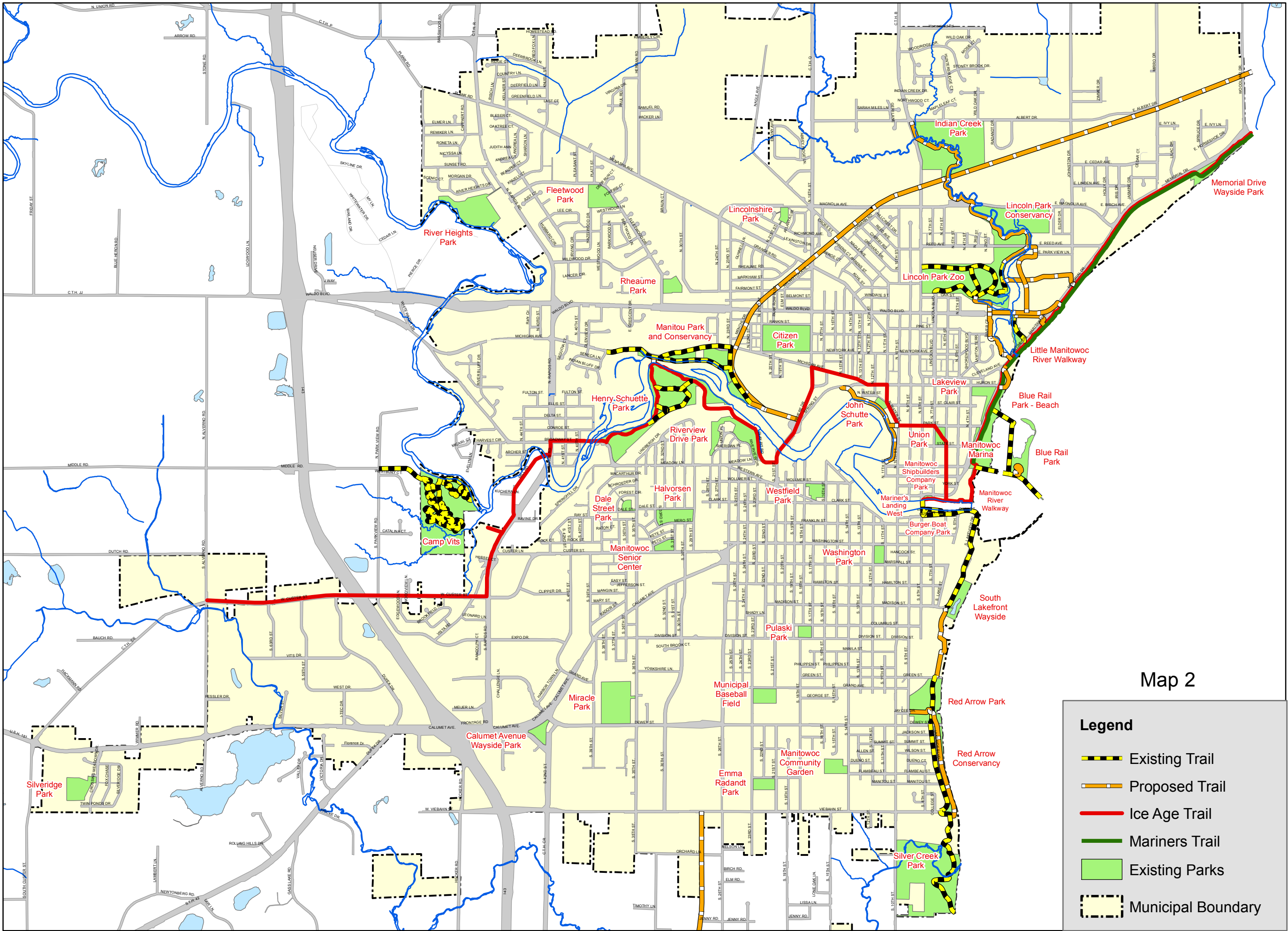
		Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>				
Manitowoc Marina	Convert Parking Lot into RV Campground			X	\$250,000
	Food Stand	X			\$10,000
	Portable Restroom Shelter	X			\$85/month
	Fish Stringer Selfie Stage	X			\$5,000
	Establish Fishermen Spectator Area with Tables/Benches, etc.		X		\$5,000
	Benches/Tables along walkway from Marina to Yacht Club	X			2,000/ea
	City Web Site Upgrade to include marina events, daily fishing reports, live weather feeds	X			
	Install Signage	X			\$15,000
	Alter South Trail Entrance from YMCA	X			\$57,000
Manitowoc River Walkway	No Projects Proposed				
Manitowoc Senior Center	No Projects Proposed				
Manitowoc Shipbuilders Company Park	No Projects Proposed				
Mariners Landing West Park	No Projects Proposed				
Memorial Drive Wayside	No Projects Proposed				
Miracles Park	Additional Parking		X		\$150,000
Municipal Baseball Field	No Projects Proposed				
Pulaski Park	Add Splash Pad Area		X		\$25,000
	Upgrade Play Equipment		X		\$15,000
Red Arrow Conservancy	Trail Expansion along Lake Shore	X			\$75,000
Red Arrow Park	Acquire Large Inflatable Outdoor Movie Screen for Special Events			X	\$4,000
	Establish Green Space Summer Fest Area		X		
	Trail. 9 <sup>th</sup> St. to Beach	X			\$30,000
	Expand Tennis Courts-Lighted			X	\$200,000
Rheaume Park	Upgrade Parking Lot Surface		X		\$100,000
	Walking Path from Park to N30th St. Trail so pedestrians could avoid walking on the overpass		X		\$25,000
	Upgrade Playground Equipment		X		\$35,000
River Heights Park	Install Disk Golf Course			X	\$15,000
Riverview Drive park	No Projects Proposed				
Silver Creek Park	Restrooms	X			\$100,000
	Install Towrope	X			\$25,000
	Disk and Bike Storage Shed	X			\$25,000
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>	<b>Immediate Priority 1-2 years</b>	<b>Moderate Priority 3-4 years</b>	<b>Long Term Priority 5 plus years</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>

		Immediate Priority 1-2 years	Moderate Priority 3-4 years	Long Term Priority 5 plus years	Estimated Cost
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>				
Silver Creek Park (cont'd)	Upgrade Lower Concessions Stand	X			\$125,000
	Streambank Stabilization. Address erosion.	X			\$150,000
	Multi-Purpose Lounge/Clubhouse			X	\$100,000
	Separate Walking Trails from Disc Golf			X	\$25,000
Silveridge Park	Develop Master Plan	X			\$8,000
	Pedestrian Walkway			X	\$20,000
	Soccer Play Fields			X	\$30,000
South Lakefront Wayside	Beach Nourishment Project		X		\$150,000
Union Park	3 Hole Mini Disk Golf Course			X	\$3,000
	Install Court Area			X	\$50,000
	Add Splash Pad Area			X	\$25,000
UW Manitowoc Campus	Trail Connection/Upgrade to Red Arrow Conservancy	X			\$25,000
Washington Park	No Projects Proposed				
Westfield Park	Expand Court Area		X		\$75,000
	Community Gardens			X	\$5,000
	<b>Proposed Amenities</b>	<b>Immediate Priority 1-2 years</b>	<b>Moderate Priority 3-4 years</b>	<b>Long Term Priority 5 plus years</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>





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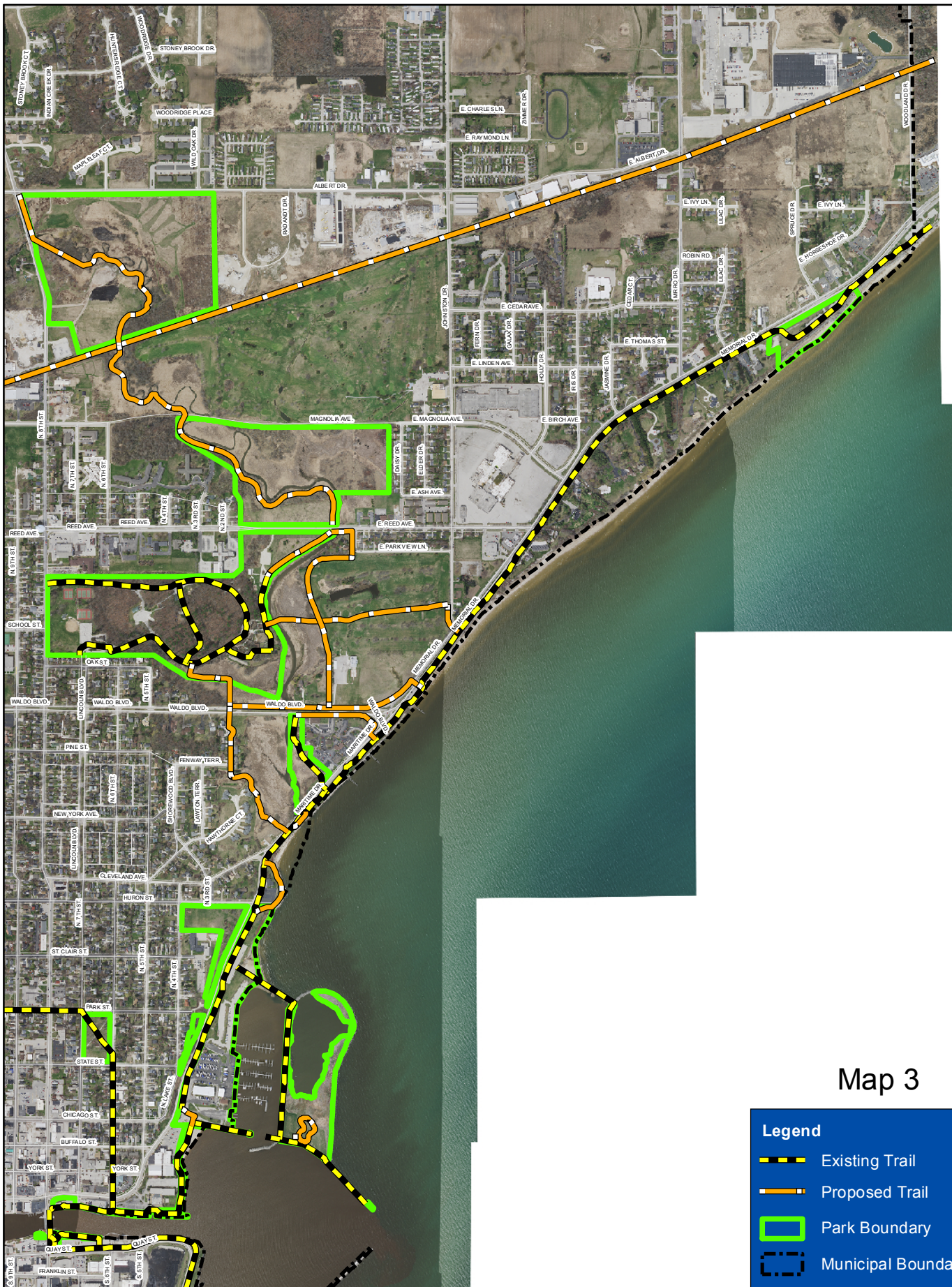
Map 2

Legend

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Ice Age Trail
- Mariners Trail
- Existing Parks
- Municipal Boundary

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Map 3

**Legend**

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Park Boundary
- Municipal Boundary



# North Lakefront Trail System

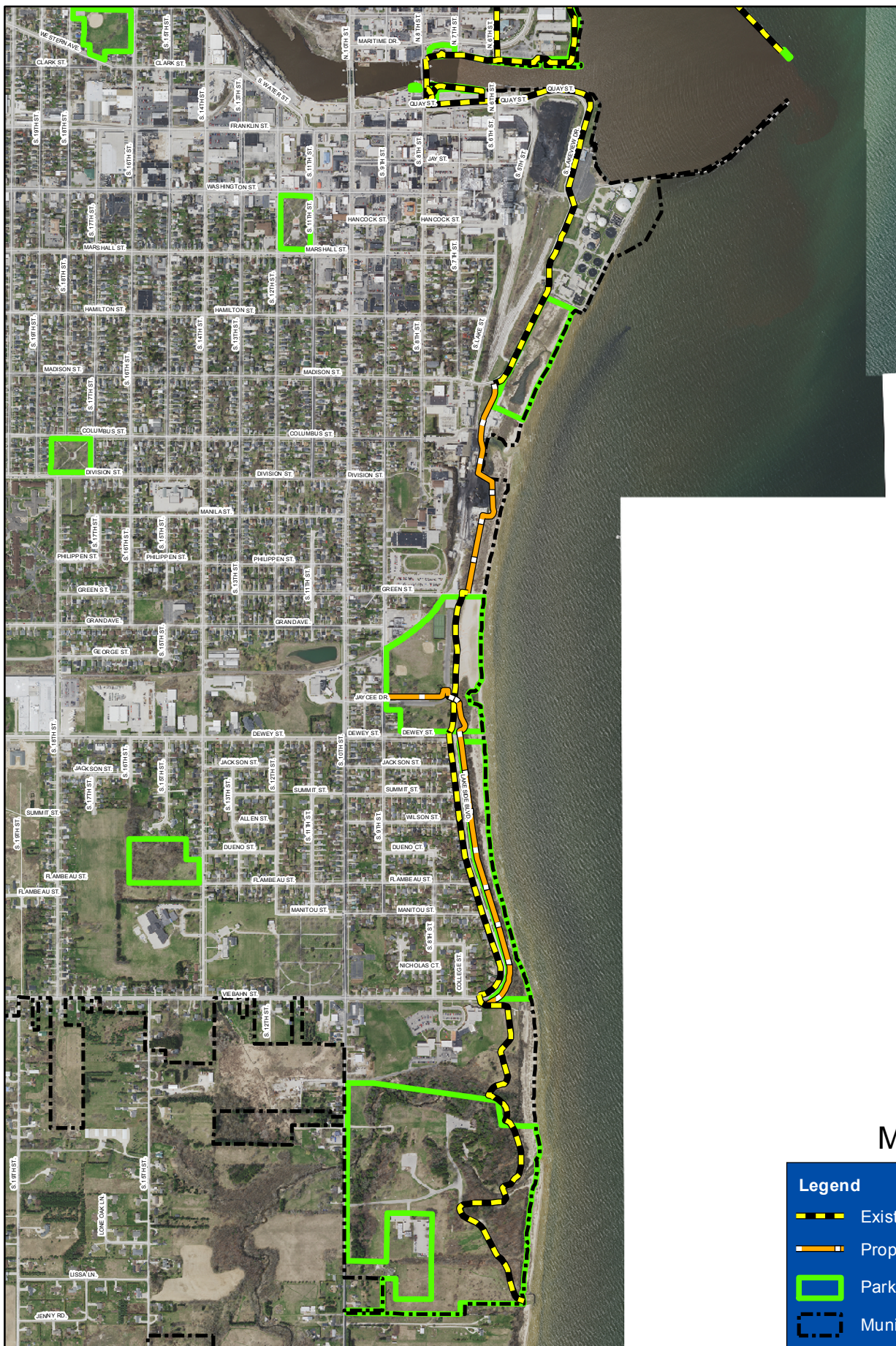
City of Manitowoc, Wisconsin



Map prepared by:  
City of Manitowoc  
Planning Department  
Map Plotted October 2017




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Map 4

**Legend**

-  Existing Trail
-  Proposed Trail
-  Park Boundary
-  Municipal Boundary



# **South Lakefront Trail System**

*City of Manitowoc, Wisconsin*

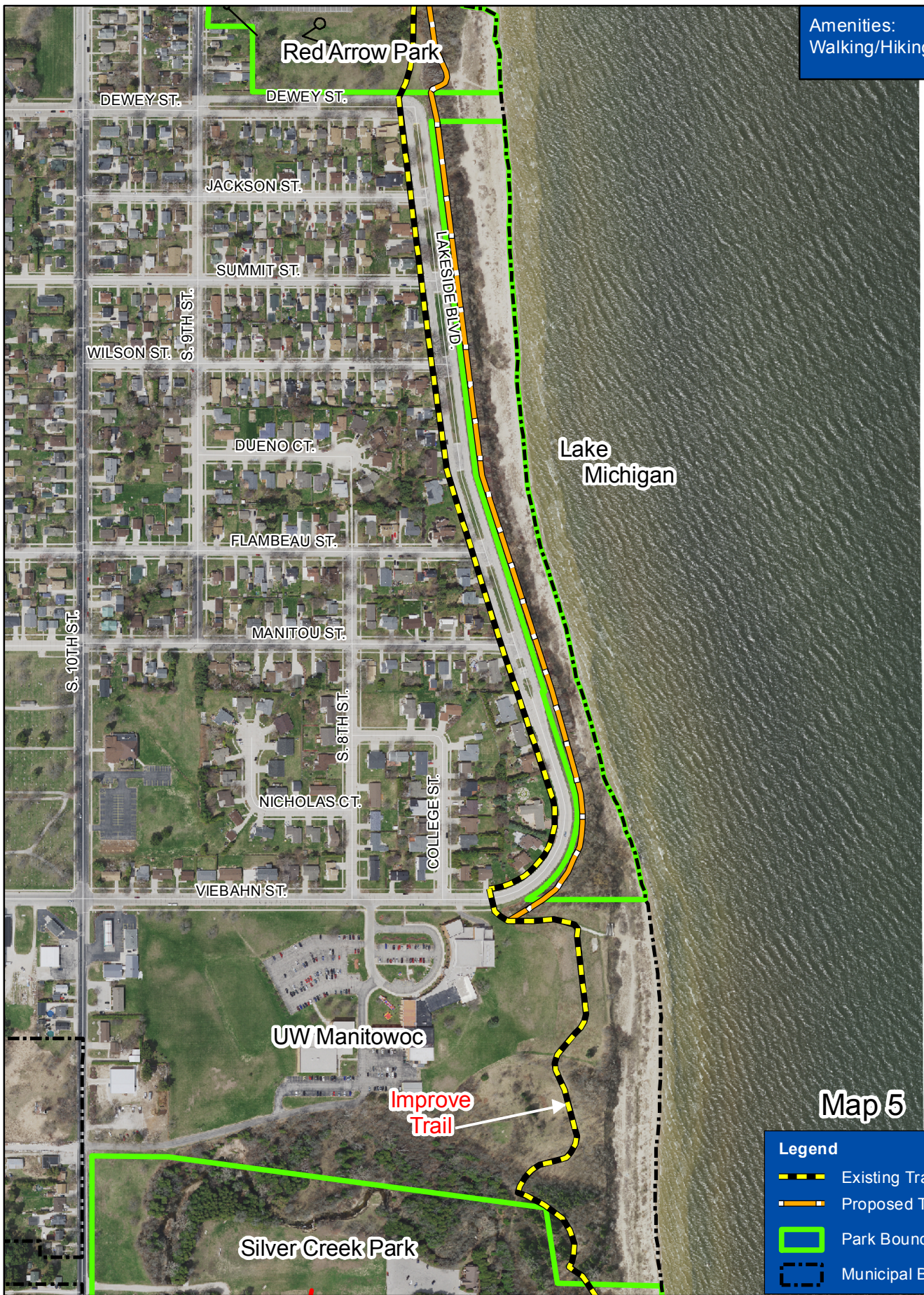


Map prepared by:  
City of Manitowoc  
Planning Department  
Map Plotted October 2017

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Amenities:  
Walking/Hiking



Map 5

**Legend**

- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Park Boundary
- Municipal Boundary



# Trail - Red Arrow to Silver Creek Park

City of Manitowoc, Wisconsin



Map prepared by:  
City of Manitowoc  
Planning Department  
Map Plotted October 2017



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## MASTER PLAN FOR LAND ACQUISITIONS

Although the support to purchase additional lands has waned according to the survey results, there may be opportunities to acquire key pieces of land to augment the City Park System. Some of these future opportunities which should not be discounted, could include natural resource protection, public greenspace to support downtown functions, areas to serve future residential development and greenways to connect existing or future parks.

New parkland may occur in the form of a dedication of land by a developer based on the City's Subdivision Ordinance, a combination of dedication and acquisition, grants, or acquisition as budgeted over a period of time. Dedication may especially be preferred by the City if a developer desires to plat in an area that has been designated for future parkland on the City's Land Use Plan. That is why future acquisitions should be coordinated with the City's Comprehensive Land Use Plan as well. The following are land acquisition projects which are recommended:

### **Next Five (5) Years (See Map 1 and Table 1)**

1. Acquisition of the CN property - This purchase would create more trail connection possibilities along the north side of the river into the downtown area. The location could also serve as a larger public gathering for special events alleviating some of the crowded conditions at Washington Park. The location almost completely surrounded by the Manitowoc River. The area has the opportunity to accommodate large festivals near the downtown.
2. Acquisition of the corner of Quay Street and S. Lakeview Drive - This is the location of the current coal pile site. An acquisition here accomplishes several objectives. However, improving lakefront views and attracting residents and visitors to the downtown lakefront area appear top of the list. The acquisition would require some support infrastructure like shelters and restrooms. Similar to the CN property, the site could be used for special events and downtown festivals as well.

### **Longer Term or Opportunity Driven Acquisitions**

1. West Central Manitowoc - A need to acquire additional acreage adjoining the Manitowoc River and along the Manitou Park area will enhance the existing property now owned by the City. This will increase recreational opportunities for biking, walking, jogging, and other water-related recreational pursuits.
2. Camp Vits Park - Acquire additional acreage to provide better access and preserve other natural areas. This would include securing rights over a 60 foot strip of land that would provide better access to the park from S. Parkview Road and eventual acquisition of land south to Custer Street. Also, trying to obtain access for the Ice Age Trail to enter the park from the east is also an objective. Any acquisitions that may be able to accommodate off-street parking would improve park function. Additional parkland for access to this pristine park would open the entire area to residents. This nature-based park is extremely important to preserve due to its unique natural resources and topography.
3. Northwest Section of Manitowoc. A 10 acre site to accommodate a Neighborhood Park maybe warranted in this section of the City especially if more residential growth occurs in this area. An acquisition here needs to be supported by residential growth identified in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

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## MASTER PLAN FOR TRAIL DEVELOPMENT

With current amenities such as the Ice Age Trail and Mariner's Trail within the City, and the opportunities which exist with abandoned rail lines and river corridors, a continual development of a trail network connecting parks and point of interests makes long term sense. The Steering Committee felt the updated plan must continue to make recommendations for future trail connections. In addition, the need for more detailed study such as the development of a bike and pedestrian plan should improve park access and increase use. The idea of people walking and biking to parks safely is a goal worth pursuing. This plan has identified gaps and offers opportunities for increased connection.

The trail initiative is also supported by the City's 2009 "Comprehensive Plan". That plan made reference that the City should develop a system of connecting trails that would ultimately become major regional trails. These trails should extend beyond the City limits, and connect to other County and State trails. The key elements of the City's trail system should include:

1. The recreational trail system within the City of Manitowoc needs to be expanded and connections made with proposed and existing parks and to County trails.
2. Promote bicycling as a significant and alternative mode of intra-city and intercity travel.
3. Incorporate bicycle planning into all other City planning efforts, as well as infrastructure development and enhancement projects and programs.

The trail routes will involve a combination of City-owned park and conservancy lands, easements through private property, and sections on public street rights-of-way.

A "trailhead" for the lakeshore trails is recommended to be located near the Lake Michigan Car ferry docking area. Many carferry users are bicyclists, and promoting access to the bicycle trails should be an important element of tourism promotion for the area.

Where feasible, these trails should be designed as an eight (8) to ten (10) foot wide trail which meets American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards. AASHTO standards are the nationally recognized standards for facilities that utilize federal funding.

In recent years, the City and County of Manitowoc have worked in conjunction with various agencies and groups to provide quality trails in the area. These cooperative efforts must continue. A number of trails have been established for walking, jogging, biking, rollerblading, and other forms of both active and passive types of recreational activities.

The philosophy behind the trail initiative is to link Manitowoc with Brown County to the north, Sheboygan County to the south, and the western boundaries of the outlying counties as well.

The following major trail systems are currently within the City limits, and should be linked with other County-wide trails as soon as feasible.

1. **Mariners/Ice Age Trail** - Developed between the center of Manitowoc and Two Rivers, this 5.5 mile trail provides access to both communities where their City limits meet. A Department of Transportation grant, along with local and regional support, allowed both cities to realize this precious resource. Additional maintenance and improvements will

be needed in the future, which would include additional lighting, telescope additions, landscaping, and user amenities and shoreline protection. The “Friends of the Mariners Trail” group has been formed to work on future plans for the trail.

2. **Riverwalk** - Located between the Manitowoc Marina and the Burger Boat Company Park on Quay Street. User amenities, landscaping, signage, and lighting will also be needed to enhance this section.
3. **Rahr Pathway** - Located in Manitou Park along the Manitowoc, additional lands should be set aside along with pedestrian and user amenities. Other improvements might include landscaping, fishing pads, signs, and bridge construction across the Manitowoc River to Henry Schuette Park.
4. **North 10<sup>TH</sup> Street Corridor** - Paved with extra wide shoulders, this bike trail leads into the downtown section of Manitowoc. Additional on-street paving should be constructed whenever the South 10<sup>th</sup> Street is reconstructed.
5. **Little Manitowoc River Trail** - Should extend from Maritime Drive, through Lincoln Park and conservancy area, around the golf course area to N. 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The upper part of the trail goes through an area that is expected to be platted within the next several years, and the trail design can be integrated into future subdivision plats.

Map 2 of this plan shows all of the proposed trails as part of this planning effort throughout the City. Since Map 2 is a relatively small scale map, more detail on where the proposed trails are specifically located can be seen on Maps 3, 4 and 5 which immediately follow. For even more detail, proposed trail locations can be seen on in the individual park site maps which are listed by park name in alphabetical order within Appendix G of this report. In addition to the Maps, Table 1 lists all proposed trail projects. Trail projects within each park are shown on the individual park maps.

Trail projects which will serve several parks and have community wide significance are summarized below: (Please note these projects are not listed in priority order. See Table 1 for priority rankings)

1. New Trail: Rails to Trails possibility in the southern area of the City/County on CTH CR.
2. New & Connecting Trail: Manitou Park to Woodland Dunes Nature Trail via Rails to Trails.
3. New & Connecting Trail: Trail along lakeshore, Silver Creek Park to Red Arrow Park, through UW property.
4. New & Connecting Trail: Manitou Park to Spring Street, along old railroad bed.
5. Trail Upgrade: Widen Mariners/Ice Age Trail where needed.
6. Trail Realignment: Redirect lakeshore trail around Manitowoc Yacht Club for safety purposes.
7. New & Connecting Trail: Spring Street to old WPS property via sheet wall along Manitowoc River.

8. New & Connecting Trail: Lincoln Park to Indian Creek Park via conservancy land.
9. New Trail: WPS property to River Lofts (downtown) via railroad property and sidewalk.
10. New & Connecting Trail: Mariners Trail to Lincoln Park.
11. New & Connecting Trail: Red Arrow Park to S. Lakeview Drive via lakeshore trail through MPU property.
12. Pedestrian Bridge: Bridge over Little Manitowoc River to eliminate the safety concern along Maritime Drive.
13. Pedestrian Bridge: Bridge over Manitowoc River connecting Manitou Park with Henry Schuette Park.
14. Trail Upgrades: Marking and signing existing trails. More benches and rest areas.
15. New Plan: Update the City's Bike and Pedestrian Plan.
16. New Plan: Designate more bike lanes along city streets

With the listing and hopeful implementation of the projects listed above, significant progress will be obtained which was one of the Steering Committee directives: Improve Trail Connectivity to Existing Parks.

### **Other Park and Open Space Plans**

The following plans should be referred to during consideration of capital improvement projects:

1. "The part of Manitowoc Downtown River Corridor Master Plan" (dated December, 2009)
2. Lake Michigan Ice Age Trail Corridor Plan for Kewaunee, Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties, Wisconsin approved by the Natural Resources Board at the December, 2006 Board Meeting. This was a joint project of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, National Park Service (exit DNR), Bay Lake Regional Planning Commission (exit DNR), and the Ice Age Park and Trail Foundation (exit DNR).
3. "Manitowoc Riverwalk Master Plan and Design Guidelines", adopted on October 19, 2009.
4. "City of Manitowoc Comprehensive Plan", adopted on December 21, 2009
5. "Preliminary Design and Engineering Study for the River Walk along the East Bank of the Manitowoc River", 2014

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## INVENTORY OF EXISTING OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Currently the City of Manitowoc Department of Public Infrastructure operates and maintains 40 different parks and public open spaces totaling approximately 712 acres. In addition, site maps of each park is included within the plan noting both existing and proposed facilities.

### **Park Classifications**

The following classifications are derived from the 2011-2016 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Guidelines – A project of the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration. They have been modified to fit local conditions. These classifications can be used as a guideline for understanding what services are typically provided as well as the area that each park typically serves.

#### **Community Parks**

These parks serve several neighborhoods within a one-two mile radius. Typically, these parks are twenty-five acres or more. Community parks address broad base community-wide needs. For example, community parks provide athletic fields while preserving areas for passive recreational uses. Amenities typically include:

- athletic courts, fields, or playfields;
- boat launches;
- ice rinks;
- landscaped/natural areas with trails;
- parking;
- pavilion/shelter with kitchen;
- picnic tables/grills;
- playground equipment;
- restrooms;
- sledding hills/tobogganing runs; and
- swimming pools.

Accessibility should be by vehicle, biking, and on foot. These parks should be linked to the public transportation system, existing and future trail network and sidewalks.

#### **Neighborhood Parks**

Neighborhood parks serve residential areas within a half mile walking distance. The minimum desirable size varies from two – twenty acres. Neighborhood parks have a mix of active and passive uses. Usually, 50 percent of the area of a neighborhood park is used for active recreation and fifty percent is passive recreation, such as undeveloped natural areas. This limits problems such as noise, overuse, and congestion. Development and amenities typically include:

- playground equipment;
- play fields/open space;
- picnic tables;
- landscaping;
- sport field/court;
- pedestrian path; and trails;
- parking.

Access by foot should be made possible, especially since these parks are designed for children. One should not have to cross a collector or arterial to access the park. Low volume minor streets should be used as a linkage from the residential area to the neighborhood park.

### **Mini-Parks**

Mini-parks are those that service a limited population or specific group such as tots or senior citizens. They have a quarter mile or a smaller service area, and are usually less than an acre in size. These parks are generally situated in neighborhoods, apartment complexes, village house developments, or senior housing complexes. Development and amenities typically include:

- playground equipment;
- landscaped sitting areas; and
- picnic tables.

Access to those parks should be located centrally within a neighborhood or housing development to provide easy access.

### **Special-Purpose Parks**

This type of park facility emphasizes a chief feature or features, which are unique to the municipality. Examples of this type of facility include children's zoos, marinas, fairgrounds, and historical features to mention a few. Due to the varying degree of features these types of parks offer, the age group of users is often widespread. Often the service area of this type of park includes the entire municipality and is sometimes regional as well. No average park size or service area standard exists.

### **Urban Greenspace**

Greenspace parcels are areas that are reserved for the preservation of unique land, water, vegetative, historic, and other aesthetic features in their natural state. Due to the sensitive aesthetics of these areas, they are typically addressed separately from park settings. Urban greenspace may serve certain portions or the entire community. The size and level of service of these areas varies with the type of use. The normal standard is one-two acres per 1,000 persons and two-five mile radius. Access is important since these areas provide a visual and psychological relief from urban development. Often, these areas take advantage of streams and other natural features, which then help preserve areas for wildlife and other environmental assets of a community. Due to the often linear configuration of greenspace areas, they are conducive trail use. Urban green spaces can be used for linking open spaces/parks, public facilities, preserving natural resources/wildlife, preserving areas not suitable for development, and addressing the lack of open space in an area. These areas can be used as a less expensive means of addressing stormwater management. Open green space areas may or may not have to be improved but some amenities or characteristics may include:

- walking/hiking trails (abandoned railroad lines, right-of-ways);
- environmental corridors or linear parkways;
- creeks/streams/wetlands/drainageways/rivers/ponds/lakes/floodplains;
- ravines;
- wetland or areas of high groundwater;
- woodlands;
- steep sloped areas (12% or greater); and
- minimal landscaping areas.

## **Park Classifications**

Based on the classification standards noted above, the city parks were categorized. Please note that several of the parks have been reclassified since the last plan update. The reclassification occurred for several reasons. The most notable is the specialized uses some of the parks now offer. Another reason was the parks overall function, location and size. Finally, survey results had some influence as well, documenting how the parks are being used.

From the classifications below, one can begin to see a trend developing within the park system. For example, the city contains a large percentage of “Special Use” Parks indicating a willingness by the city to offer a wide variety of recreational experiences in a compatible format. Also, the public’s interest in natural area preservation and trail use shows up in the amount of “Urban Greenspace” areas. The acreage total is almost double the recommended standards. But standards are just that – standards. In the case of the City of Manitowoc, the public desire for diverse recreational experiences along with the preservation of key natural features certainly justifies the classifications as noted within the current park system. The location of all parks within the City is shown on Map 1. Maps of each park including existing and proposed projects can be viewed in Appendix H.

### **A. Community Parks (213.17 total acres)**

1. Citizens Park (26.49 acres)
2. Henry Schuette Park (64.81)
3. Lincoln Park Zoo (70.41)
4. Miracles Park (26.50)
5. Red Arrow Park (24.96)

### **B. Neighborhood Parks (61.64 total acres)**

1. Emma Radandt Park (5.19)
2. Fleetwood Park (11.05)
3. Halverson Park (10.02)
4. Lakeview Park (6.97)
5. Pulaski Park (3.14)
6. Rheaume Park (5.55)
7. Silveridge Park (11.02)
8. Union Park (3.72)
9. Westfield Park (4.98)

### **C. Mini Parks (8.95 total acres)**

1. Burger Boat Company Park (.68)
2. Dale Street Park (2.22)
3. John Schuette (Formerly Riverview Park) (2.69)
4. Lincolnshire Park (2.65)
5. Manitowoc Shipbuilders Company Park (.62)
6. Mariners Landing West (.09)

### **D. Special-Use Parks (312.68 total acres)**

1. Blue Rail Park (13.32)
2. Blue Rail Beach (4.17)
3. Calumet Avenue Wayside Park (4.93)
4. Camp Vits (76.62)
5. Indian Creek Park (69.20)

6. Manitowoc Community Gardens (6.56)
7. Manitowoc Marina (18.22)
8. Manitowoc River Walkway (2.11)
9. Memorial Drive Wayside Park (7.44)
10. Municipal Baseball Field (7.16)
11. Silver Creek Park (79.14)
12. Riverview Drive Park (16.42)
13. Washington Park (3.75)

\*Municipal Athletic Baseball field is owned and maintained by the City of Manitowoc. In 1999, the football field and track areas of Municipal Field were deeded to the Manitowoc Public School District. A deed restriction noted that the City of Manitowoc, Manitowoc Lutheran H.S., and Roncalli H.S. were exempt from any charges to use these facilities.

**E. Urban Greenspace (120.41 total acres)**

1. Lincoln Park Conservancy (45.12)
2. Little Manitowoc River Walkway (5.25)
3. Manitou Park and Conservancy (26.02)
4. Red Arrow Conservancy (10.61)
5. River Heights Park (24.19)
6. South Lakefront Wayside (9.22)

**Future Parkland Needs**

Based upon the NPRA standards of ten (10) acres of parkland for each 1,000 residents in a community, Manitowoc should have approximately 335 acres of parkland to serve its estimated 33,572 residents. The assessment above reveals the city manages a total of 40 specified park sites totally 713.21 acres of land within the park system at present. This total is significantly higher than the suggested standard. However, approximately 120 acres or nearly 16.4 percent are classified “Urban Greenspace” and will not be developed for active park use. Some of the lands are in their natural state and will continue to be managed as natural areas.

Although the support to purchase additional lands has waned, there may be opportunities to acquire key pieces of land to augment the park system. Some of these future opportunities which should not be discounted, and could include natural resource protection, public greenspace to support downtown functions, areas to serve future residential development and greenways to connect existing or future parks.

## **Community Parks**

### **1. Citizen Park**

Citizen Park ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in park use according to the survey. Citizen Park comprises 26.49 acres.

Citizen Park has recently completed some significant renovations. They include two adult tennis courts with 60' blended line, two age 10 and under quick-start tennis courts, two pickleball courts, two adult basketball courts, and one youth basketball court. This project has been made possible by the Manitowoc County Tennis Association, the City of Manitowoc, and multiple other donors.

The Manitowoc Youth Baseball Association recently constructed a new baseball complex at Citizen Park which includes four new diamonds. A grand opening event was held on June 12, 2017.

The Safe Winter Walking program is generally held at the Citizen Park Recreation Center from January through March. This program helps those who wish to walk in the winter, but want to avoid the snow, cold and ice, meet their fitness goals.

The City's Aquatic Center opened in 2010. The new Aquatic Center became a community wide and "team effort" project, funded by both public and private dollars. Amenities of the aquatic center include three water slides, a diving board, a four lane lap pool, a lazy river, a zero-entry area for children, a sand play area, concession stand and mini golf. Due to these unique amenities, the park attracts users outside of the City. A Phase 3 expansion to the aquatic center is planned and is being led by the "Friends of the Aquatic Center" group.

**Capacity for use** - This Park is heavily used and will continue to be in the future. Space to accommodate additional infrastructure such as parking is becoming a challenge. Future projects include upgrading the softball fields, parking areas and play equipment

### **2. Henry Schuette Park**

Henry Schuette Park ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in park use according to the survey. The community park comprises 64.81 acres. The park is centrally located in the City by the scenic Manitowoc River. The natural landscape includes rolling terrain, wildlife, aquatic type plants, bushes, and forest area. This community park provides off-street parking, a community built playground, open air shelters, grills, fishing areas, and over six miles of nature and fitness trails in a beautiful scenic vista along the Manitowoc River. Cross country skiing is allowed on the trails in winter; however, the trails are not groomed.

The park has two (2) parts: a Community Built Playground constructed in 2003 by the Friends of the Park, Inc. in the upper portion, and the lower park which contains natural walking/biking paths along with an exercise course area.

The playground covers the size of a football field. Children of all ages can enjoy the playground structures such as the wave and twisty slides, a castle, parallel bars, zigzag ladder, rubber bridge, sand box area, tot swings, playhouse, tunnel, bridge and therapeutic swing. In 2016, the City of Manitowoc's first expression swing was installed at the park.

In order to increase awareness, appreciation, and enjoyment of the Manitowoc River, a handicap accessible canoe & kayak launch was installed at lower Henry Schuette Park. The Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed (FMRW) partnered with the City to seek funding for the launch from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

In 2017, the City of Manitowoc was designated an Ice Age Trail Community by the Ice Age Trail Alliance, whose mission is "to create, support and protect a thousand-mile footpath tracing Ice Age formations across Wisconsin - the Ice Age National Scenic Trail." A portion of the trail goes through Henry Schuette Park.

**Capacity for future use** - The park continues to provide both passive and active recreation activities. This is a heavily used park, and this pattern is expected to continue in the future. A major proposed park project is a pedestrian bridge north over the Manitowoc River connecting to Manitou Park trail system. Other proposed projects include trail upgrades & switchbacks, a storage shed and an improved surface for the playground.

### 3. Lincoln Park Zoo

The Lincoln Park Zoo ranked 1st in park use according to the survey. The community park's active area comprises 70.41 acres. Again, due to the zoo function of the park, this park attracts users far outside the city limits.

The park also features a ball diamond, lighted tennis courts, playgrounds, picnic areas, restrooms, field house and shelter rentals, nature trails, wildlife areas, fish rearing pond, off-street parking and of course the Lincoln Park Zoo.

**Capacity of future use** - This park will continue to be a heavily subscribed park by the public because of the rental functions, zoo attendance, and tennis court activity. The park will require an improved entrance, trail connections and other shelter, restroom and wildlife exhibit amenities. Future projects are also identified in detail within the *2014 City of Manitowoc Lincoln Park Zoo Long Range Plan*.

### 4. Miracles Park (Formerly Dewey Street Park)

Located in the south-central portion of the City, Miracles Park has progressed to community park status due to recent upgrades. These updates will improve attendance. The 26.50 acre park contains the Regional X-sports complex skate park, the Goodwill NCW Miracle Field of Dreams, a fully accessible playground, a soccer field, and a concession stand/shelter with public restrooms. A vehicle entrance to the park along with a small parking lot can be found off of South 35th Street.

The Miracle League of the Lakeshore, a Wisconsin unincorporated non-profit association, operating as a program of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin, constructed a baseball diamond facility that is accessible to, and useable by, people with special needs and physical limitations. The construction of a new ball diamond with the assistance of the Manitowoc Youth Baseball Association (MYBA) was completed in 2017.

**Capacity of future use** –This park will begin to function more as a community park serving the south central portion of the city. Proposed projects include a new parking lot with access off S. 39<sup>th</sup> Street and potential park boundary expansion to the north to accommodate a soccer complex.

## 5. Red Arrow Park

Red Arrow Park ranked 5th in park use according to the survey. The active portion of the park comprises 24.49 acres. Red Arrow Park abuts Lake Michigan and offers many recreational amenities, such as a handicap-accessible lakefront and beach walkway.

Specific park amenities include two little league diamonds with bleachers, playground equipment, restroom/shelter/bathhouse facility, restroom/shelter, swimming beach, picnic areas off street parking facilities, four unlighted tennis courts, lakefront walkway system, small watercraft boat launch with parking area and a concession stand/open air shelter. Recent improvements include the placement of a memorial on the south side of the park honoring the Red Arrow 32nd Infantry Division.

**Capacity of future use** - This community park serves a wide variety of active recreation users. Some groups include Lincoln High School physical education classes, practices and games for MPSD and Little League baseball teams. The park is also attractive to beach goers. The city should expect to see continued active use at the park. Since the park may have the potential to attract summer special events, proposed plans call for the establishment of a greenspace summer fest type area, inflatable movie screen, trail expansion from S. 9<sup>th</sup> St to the lakefront and a potential upgrade of the tennis court area. Many survey respondents felt that their park experience at Red Arrow may be improved by better surveillance of suspicious park activities.

## Neighborhood Parks

### 1. Emma Radandt Park

This is a 5.19 acre park located on the southeastern side of Manitowoc was donated by the Radandt Family to provide active and passive recreational opportunities for area residents. In addition to a small picnic area, a playground was added in 2014. Fundraising for this equipment was done by the Golden K group along with Habitat for Humanity.

The City of Manitowoc has been awarded two grants for tree planting at Emma Radandt Park (an American Transmission Corporation grant for \$3,500 and a Canadian National grant for \$2,500). Approximately 34 trees, such as Oak, Elm, Maple, Hackberry and Arborvitae, were planted in 2016.

**Capacity for future use** - This park is underutilized and needs to be developed further to attract more use. Proposals include the establishment of a community garden area to attract more families from the neighborhood. Although not recommended within the next 5 year planning window, long term improvements could include off-street parking, a small shelter, restroom and upgraded play equipment.

## 2. Fleetwood Park

This north-centrally located park contains 11.05 acres of parkland. It's a beautiful traditional style neighborhood park that includes off street parking, two tennis courts, playground equipment, nature trails and an open grass area for volleyball or other open play sports.

**Capacity for future use** - This is a well-functioning, traditionally designed neighborhood park that is used by residents in the immediate area. Proposed improvements include upgrading the walking trails, some tree trimming to allow better air circulation around the tennis courts and a restroom facility.

## 3. Halvorsen Park

Halvorsen Park is 10.02 acres and is located in the heart of a west central residential area of the City. The park contains two softball diamonds with bleachers and player benches that serve various ball groups, especially youth baseball teams, in the spring, summer, and early fall. Other existing facilities and uses include a restroom/shelter building, drinking fountain, playground equipment, utility shed and picnic area.

**Capacity for future use** - The park is used mainly by surrounding neighbors but also serves various ball groups in the spring, summer, and early fall. The future of the softball diamonds hangs in the balance and will need to be based on the amount of use. Should the diamonds be removed, the location maybe converted to community garden facilities where surrounding residents may have an interest. In addition, given this parks strong residential surroundings, a splash pad is proposed to attract more youth and bring area neighborhood families together.

## 4. Lakeview Park

Lakeview Park serves as a neighborhood park that overlooks Lake Michigan and borders Madison Elementary Public School with a beautiful scenic vista. The park contains 6.97 acres. Much of the area along Maritime Drive is conservancy, and too narrow for active recreation uses. The park contains one ball diamond and some open greenspace for open play.

**Capacity for future use** – Due to this parks location, it is limited in its function as neighborhood park to surrounding residents. In an effort to increase park use, a potential community garden site is proposed which could also have value to the adjacent elementary school. However, not beyond the long term realm of possibilities would be for the city to sell Lakeview Park for development reasons and use the money garnered from the sale for park improvements elsewhere in the city.

## 5. Pulaski Park

Pulaski Park is 3.14 acres in size and is located in the south-central portion of the City in an established residential neighborhood. The proximity of the Municipal Baseball Field, and several public and parochial schools nearby, relieves some of the pressing needs for active recreation. Existing facilities include playground equipment, restroom/open air shelter building, drinking fountain, lighted pathways, benches, basketball hoop and a picnic area.



**Capacity for future use** – This park is used by surrounding neighbors and elementary students coming and going from school. However, the park appears underutilized and needs increased attraction. To achieve increased use, a splash pad and playground upgrades are proposed to attract more youth to the park and bring area families together.

## 6. Rheume Park

Rheume Park is located in the north-central portion of the city and consists of 5.55 acres. It was donated to the City of Manitowoc by William Rheume in 1960. The park is located in one of the most densely populated areas of the city. The park serves as a buffer between the railroad and the city's Fleetwood Drive Park Maintenance Facility, in addition to residential uses to the north and west. Existing facilities include an unlighted softball diamond with bleachers, playground equipment, off-street parking, drinking fountain, restroom/open air shelter building, basketball hoop, benches and a picnic area.

**Capacity for future use** - This park serves a small sector in the northwest and north-central sections of the City. No change in its function is proposed. However, future projects include the upgrading of play equipment, upgrading of the parking lot and the construction of a trail crossing over the railway to the east.

## 7. Silveridge Park

Silveridge is an undeveloped 11.02 acre park located in the far southwest section of the city. Except for the installation of new playground equipment in 2016, not much development has occurred at the park since its acquisition.

**Capacity for future use** – Some concept plans have been developed for the park but it appears a more formal master site plan is needed. For now, some open play greenspace which could be used for soccer is proposed but that recommendation could change pending the results of the master site plan. The master plan process should direct how the park will function within the city's park system. Options for the park could include establishing it as a traditional neighborhood park or develop it a special use park.

## 8. Union Park

This 3.72 acre park was originally known as the North Side Park and is located north of the downtown district within an older established residential neighborhood. It is a park deep in history and tradition. Land for this park was donated by Manitowoc founder Benjamin Jones. It was renamed Union Park in recognition of the 2,467 men who served on active duty during the Civil War.

In 1939, a Civil War cannon was donated by W.R.C. It was unveiled by Jane Kress whose mother gave a hand-sewn flag to departing Civil War soldiers. The Manitowoc County Historical Society raised funds to erect a historical marker commemorating the site of the training grounds for the volunteers who left for the Civil War in Manitowoc County. More recently, the designated Ice Age Trail traverses through the central portion of the park.

Existing facilities include playground equipment, drinking fountain, restroom/overhead shelter building, lighted pathways, picnic area and the aforementioned Civil War Cannon Memorial.

**Capacity for future use** - This park is surrounded by residential land uses on all sides. Park usage is moderate but the park could use some improvements to encourage more use, especially by area youth. To achieve increased use, a splash pad and the establishment of a paved court area are proposed. Some open green space should be maintained on the southern end of the park to accommodate special events and open play.

## **9. Westfield Park**

Westfield Park is a 4.98 acre neighborhood park located in the center of Manitowoc. Existing facilities include one (1) lighted softball field with bleachers, a basketball court, playground equipment, restroom/open air shelter/concession building, drinking fountain, off street parking and benches.

**Capacity for future use** - The park will continue to function as a neighborhood park with the addition of organized use of the lighted ball diamond in the spring and summer. To establish the park as more of a neighborhood function, court area expansion and community gardens are proposed, especially since nearby Washington Park will continue to function as a special events location.

## **Mini Parks**

### **1. Burger Boat Company Park**

This downtown .68 acre urban park that was created during reconstruction of the Eighth Street Bridge. The park abuts the south side of the Manitowoc River and provides passive recreation to residents and tourists within the downtown business district.

The park makes a great connection for the river and downtown walkway system. Current facilities include benches, lighting, scenic vistas, flagpole, farmer's market location, and fisherman's wharf.

The ice skating rink in downtown Manitowoc (located on the Farmer's Market parking lot adjoining Burger Boat Park) is officially open for any and all citizens to use during weather cooperating winter months.

**Capacity for future use** - This is a mini-park that serves the downtown area. Tourists use the park, people frequenting the farmers market use the area, and local residents traverse from one side of the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge to the other side. Expectations are continued steady usage of this area. Downtown planning efforts should incorporate the assets of this park and the activities it accommodates.

### **2. Dale Street Park**

This small 2.22 acre mini park is located in the central section of the City and is surrounded by residential homes. The park caters to a walk-in population emanating from adjacent residential

homes. The park previously contained tennis courts but they have been removed and replaced with an open greenspace play area. Existing facilities include playground equipment, picnic area, benches and paved trails.

**Capacity for future use** - This park is surrounded on all sides by homeowners. Most of the usage is from the neighborhood and the park usage is expected to remain constant. To encourage resident interaction, community gardens are proposed where the tennis courts use to be. The park could also benefit from the upgrading of playground equipment. Splash pads proposed at nearby Halvorsen Park could be an amenity to this residential area as well.

### **3. John Schuette Park (formerly Riverview Park)**

This 2.69 acre site affords an excellent scenic view of the Manitowoc River. Existing facilities include playground equipment, lighted pathways benches and a picnic area.

**Capacity for future use** – Due to this parks location and limited facilities, little change is proposed for its function. However, the lower portion of the park along the river holds tremendous potential as a key trail link to the city's overall trail network. That said, the northern bank of the river will need to be stabilized to accommodate trail development. That effort will be an expensive financial undertaking but one deemed warranted if the trail is ever to become a reality.

### **4 Lincolnshire Park**

This north-central park measures approximately 2.65 acres, and its borders are land-locked with houses, which limit any future growth. Existing facilities include open playfield areas, paved access into park off Richmond Street and Camden Court, playground equipment and disc golf. The two disc golf baskets were donated by a citizen and installed at this park with the help of the Discover Eastern Wisconsin Disc Golf organization.

**Capacity for future use** - This Park is surrounded by neighbors on all sides. Future development of this park is limited. No new projects are proposed.

### **5. Manitowoc Shipbuilders Company Park**

Manitowoc Shipbuilders Company Park is an urban park that lies in the heart of downtown Manitowoc. The park connects to the north side of the Manitowoc River and downtown walkway system. The site is 0.62 acres in size and was added as part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Street bridge reconstruction. Although not deeded as a park, this passive green space provides recreation to residents and tourists within the downtown business district. It also provides a connection for the river and downtown walkway system. Existing facilities include benches, lighted walkways, riverwalk, playground equipment and a lighted flag pole arrangement.

**Capacity for future use** - This park is located on the north side of the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, and is used by tourists visiting Manitowoc and by local residents shopping and going to activities in the downtown area. Again, this park's function should be incorporated into the any downtown redevelopment plans. No specific projects have been proposed.

## 6. Mariners Landing West

This 0.09 acre mini park compliments the beauty of the Manitowoc City Hall Complex. Located to the east of City Hall, the park allows a beautiful scenic vista for the shopping district connecting the Eighth Street and 10th Street bridges. It also provides a passive and relaxing area of greenway and history within the downtown for local business people and shoppers. The City Hall and park offer permanent seating, landscaped areas, hard surface patio, walkway, fishing, picnicking and an overall river vista.

**Capacity for future use** – The mini park is expected to see increased use with different activities and programs planned for the downtown area. Like Burger Boat Company Park and Manitowoc Shipbuilders Company Park, Mariners Land West should be incorporated as an asset to any downtown redevelopment planning efforts and initiatives.

## Special Purpose Parks

### 1. Blue Rail Park

Blue Rail Park is a 13.32 acre special use area that was created, and is still owned, by the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). The park is managed through an agreement between the City and the ACOE. The “island” was created from harbor dredging’s and serves as protective barrier to the Manitowoc Marina and Harbor. Park amenities include the very popular Blue Rail Trail which connects to the Mariner’s Trail through Blue Rail Beach onto the Manitowoc Breakwater Lighthouse. Another popular feature is a dog exercise area (dog park) which is often used by boaters who carry their canine friends.

**Capacity for future use** - The park is used by residents and tourists alike. However, it serves a very important tourist accommodation function due to its location adjacent the Manitowoc Marina, connection to the Mariners Trail, lighthouse and overall scenic appeal to Lake Michigan. The park and beach area is also very visible from State Highway 42 (Maritime Drive) which is a designated National Lakeshore Tour travel route. This park provides a passive recreation area for those wishing to picnic or enjoy the lake area. Blue Rail Park will continue to be one of the most visible city recreation areas and must be managed accordingly. Proposed projects include more walking paths, enlarging the dog park area and adding shrub islands. Coordination with Manitowoc Marina and Blue Rail Beach Park projects is highly recommended.

### 2. Blue Rail Beach Park

Located adjacent Blue Rail Park, Blue Rail Beach provides more opportunity to enjoy the lakeshore. This 4.17 acre area contains a shelter and an off-street parking lot along with accommodating the highly popular Mariner’s Trail.

**Capacity for future use** – This park will continue to see significant use by locals and tourist alike. Proposed improvements include dune enhancements, kayak/canoe launch, shelter upgrade to include restrooms and boardwalk installations. A reroute of the Mariner’s Trail is proposed on the north end of the park to increase separation between Maritime Drive and trail users.

### 3. Calumet Avenue Wayside Park

The Calumet Avenue Wayside Park is a 4.93 acre site classified as a special use facility serving the needs of motorists and tourists exiting off I-43. This rest stop oasis is home to the Manitowoc Visitor and Convention Bureau. The facility includes off-street parking (including RV/trailer parking), picnic area, wooded area, nature trails, and the Visitor and Convention Bureau facility.

**Capacity for future use** - This park should continue to function as currently used. Proposed projects include upgrading the picnic area and nature trails.

### 4. Camp Vits,

Camp Vits is a 76.62 acre special use park located on the far western edge of the city along the scenic Manitowoc River. Containing bluffs, ravines, mature hardwood forest and wildlife areas, this park is a true natural resource gem. Hence, it is a good park for nature-based activities, such as tree and plant identification or water science activities.

In 2013, the City's first public mountain bike trail opened at Camp Vits Park. The Northeast Wisconsin Off-Road Mountain Biking Club (NEWOMB), which "adopted" the park under the Parks Division's Adopt-A-Park Program, designed and built the trail. The trail consists of a two mile beginner loop with three advanced sections branching off of the beginner loop. An extension was completed to allow access to the river.

Parking is not available at Camp Vits or on town roads. Visitors may park on Custer Street or any other street that allows parking. At the trail head located on Parkview Road, you will find an information kiosk and a bike repair station.

**Capacity for future use** – Due to the parks unique natural features and the investment made in the mountain biking trail system, little change in function is proposed for Camp Vits. However, some support type projects are proposed such as raising or “boardwalking” section of bike trail impacted by wet conditions, a pit or portable restroom facility and a river kayak/canoe rest spot. A solution must be obtained to accommodate the vehicles of park users. Finally, since the park is adjacent the Ice Age Trail, it would be a natural fit to have the Ice Age Trail travers through a section of the park to showcase the glaciated features. It appears the park, with proper site design, could accommodate both mountain bike and trail walkers with separate trail systems.

### 5. Indian Creek Park

Located in the northeast portion of the City, this 69.20 acre park showcases a natural beauty with the Little Manitowoc River winding through the center of the park. A natural spring is located in the southeast portion of the property. The park currently contains an 18-hole disc golf course. The Discover Eastern Wisconsin (DEW) Disc Golf group contributed many volunteer hours in building and maintaining the disc golf course including a bridge. A large off-leash dog run area and agility course are adjacent to the disc golf course which gives dogs a great place to exercise. Dog are allowed on a leash throughout the remainder of the park.

**Capacity for future use** – Currently Indian Creek Park qualifies as a special use park. However, there is a need for a community type park in the north-east portion of the City. That

said, the park should look to accommodate more traditional park amenities. To achieve that function, proposed projects include the addition of restroom facilities and playground equipment. The enlargement or upgrade of the dog exercise area, development of a pedestrian trail and a bridge are other proposed projects.

## **6. Manitowoc Community Garden (South 14<sup>th</sup> Street Parkland)**

The Manitowoc Community Gardens, formerly referred to as South 14th Street Parkland, consists of 6.56 acres. It has a mixture of trees with rolling terrain, and a small pond in the center. The southwestern portion of the property adjoins Monroe Elementary School.

In 2015, a community-built garden was constructed on just under two acres of parkland under the direction of the Grow It Forward organization. The project has been well received and supported by the community. So much, that other park locations have been recommended by this plan for community gardens.

**Capacity for future use** – Due to the parks recent success as a community garden location, no change in function is proposed at this time. Proposed improvements include a greenhouse and compost area.

## **7. Manitowoc Marina**

The 18.22 acre Manitowoc Marina is classified as a special use facility serving the recreational boating needs of the residents and non-residents of the area. The area is heavily used in the spring, summer, and fall seasons by boaters, tourists, and Mariners Trail users. Ice fishing can be popular in the winter. The marina's current facilities include breakwater structures, a confined disposal facility, a travel hoist, 233 slips / 17 full swing moors, a parking lot, restroom facilities, a fish cleaning station, a six-lane launch ramp, a fuel dock, a marina administration building, a repair building, a ship store, charter fishing, shoreline and pier fishing, a boat storage facility, picnic tables, park benches, Mariners Trail, and a sanitary disposal station.

**Capacity for future use** - Heavy usage is expected to continue in the future. The economic impact of the marina should not be under estimated. To that end, the marina should always look for ways to enhance the user's experience. One of the proposed projects is to convert one (or more) of the parking lots used for boat storage into an RV camping area. The intent being to keep marina users close to the downtown area. Other projects include establishing an outside food stand to be leased to organizational groups, realigning the trail from the YMCA, adding a portable restroom facility and constructing a fish stringer selfie stage. Increased efforts to market the marina on the City's web page is also recommended.

## **8. Manitowoc River Walkway**

This walkway starts at the 8<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, loops around the Manitowoc Museum, the Inn at the Maritime Bay, YMCA, and connects to the Mariners Trail at the Manitowoc Marina. Facilities include lighted paved walkways, benches, landscaping, signs, and scenic views of Lake Michigan. This walkway is also designated as part of the Ice Age Trail.

**Capacity for future use** - This area is used heavily by residents of Manitowoc, Two Rivers, and tourists from outside the immediate area. The walkway should continue to be managed and maintained as essential infrastructure for the downtown area and for tourism promotion.

## 9. Memorial Drive Wayside Park

Memorial Drive Wayside Park is located between Memorial Drive and Lake Michigan on the north-east end of the City. The park is 7.44 acres and includes amenities such as lakefront scenic vistas, beach area, picnic area, and off-street parking stalls. The Mariner/Ice Age Trail traverse the entire length of the park.

**Capacity for future use** - The wayside is used heavily by people using Mariners/Ice Age Trail and tourists coming and going from Manitowoc to Two Rivers. The function of this park will continue as managed. No specific projects are recommended at this time.

## 10. Municipal Baseball Field

The baseball field is owned and operated by the City. The baseball field complex is 7.16 acres. The football / track / playfield areas are owned and operated by the Manitowoc Public School District (MPSD).

Current facilities include lighted baseball diamond with dugouts, press box, drinking fountain, concession stands, storage building, off-street parking, restrooms, batting cages, seven sets of bleachers, picnic tables, and scoreboard.

**Capacity of future use** - The baseball field is used extensively from May through September with ball games from the MPSD, the American Legion program, and the semi-pro baseball team, the Manitowoc Bandits. No changes in function are proposed.

## 11. Silver Creek Park

Silver Creek Park is located on the southern border of the city. The park ranked 3rd in park use according to the survey. This 79.14 acre park is arguably Manitowoc's most diverse park. Silver Creek Park is set on the shore of Lake Michigan with Silver Creek running through the park area. The park contains several scenic overlooks. It also boasts other unique features such as rolling topography, rural-like wooded public areas, and a winter sports area. A 37-hole disc golf course is located in the park. A new playground system was installed in 2017.

This beautiful park offers one of the top-rated disc golf courses in Wisconsin with 37 challenging holes. It host several tournaments annually. The course has multiple concrete tee areas on each hole accommodating all skill levels. The course winds past picnic areas along Silver Creek and the beaches of Lake Michigan, up and down hills and through the woods. The signature "Lighthouse Hole - #22" brings even more excitement with the basket surrounded by Lake Michigan on three sides and set atop a six-foot lighted lighthouse. In 2016, nine more holes were added to the course with the assistance of the Discover Eastern Wisconsin Disc Golf group.

Other park amenities include soccer fields, ice skating, sledding facilities, concession stand, field house with restrooms, playground equipment, two off street parking facilities, three (3) large picnic areas with tables and grills, nature trails, cross country ski trails (ungroomed), swimming beach and fishing along Silver Creek and the lakeshore.

**Capacity for use** – Given Silver Creek’s location on the far southern border of the City, it will continue to function as a special use park facility as opposed to a conventional community park. Due to its heavy use and diversified offerings of recreational experiences throughout the year, numerous projects are recommended for implementation. Proposed projects include additional restrooms, a storage shed, concession stand upgrade, towrope and streambank stabilization along Silver Creek.

## **12. Riverview Drive Park**

Riverview Drive Park is a combination of conservancy/sports field. This park is a 16.42 acre parcel of land with two acres of this land being leased to the Manitowoc Chiefs Football Club. Steep slopes adorn the backside of this park making it unusable.

**Capacity for future use** - Current park usage is expected to remain the same for this area park. The park should continue with its current functions. No significant projects are recommended.

## **13. Washington Park**

Washington Park is 3.75 acres in size and sits in the heart of downtown district. It hosts many community events such as the Tuesday Night Farmers Market. Washington Park features the MetroStage on which many concerts are held on summer evenings. Due to the level of community events hosted at the site, it’s classified as a special use park and not a traditional neighborhood park. Surprisingly, Washington Park ranked as the 7<sup>th</sup> most used park by survey respondents indicating an interest in the functions of this park.

Existing facilities include playground equipment, restroom/shelter building, drinking fountain, benches, lighted pathways, two basketball courts, picnic area and the permanent band shell.

**Capacity for future use** - This downtown park is heavily used from April to September for various activities and concerts and those uses should continue. Users of the park include residents from the surrounding neighborhood, as well as visitors traveling to Manitowoc for the special events. No significant projects are recommended. However, Washington Park should be recognized as a key public park area in any downtown renovation planning efforts.

## **Urban Greenspace**

### **1. Lincoln Park Conservancy**

The Lincoln Park Conservancy is a 45.02 acre natural area parcel located north and adjacent the Lincoln Park Zoo. The conservancy includes the Little Manitowoc River which traverses the length of the park. The conservancy includes a substantial amount of floodplain and wetland areas which are highly valued for flood control and wildlife habitat.



**Capacity of future use** – The conservancy will continue to be managed as natural area. However, proposed plans call for the development of a trail through the parcel eventually connecting to Indian Creek Park to north. Portions of this trail will likely need to be developed as a boardwalk.

## **2. Little Manitowoc River Walkway**

Located along the Little Manitowoc River and Lake Michigan, this 5.25 acre site provides tremendous coastal opportunities during a major part of the year. Scenic vistas, wildlife areas and passive recreational amenities such as paved walkways, fishing areas, benches, picnic areas, parking, and wildlife viewing areas are provided for both local and regional users. An exercise station, donated by Aurora Health Care, was recently constructed along Maritime Drive.

**Capacity for future use** - New construction along the river and connection to the Mariners Trail has increased recreational opportunities at this site. The function of this area will continued to be managed as it currently exists. Propose projects include continued development of the trail system, much of which could include floating boardwalks.

## **3. Manitou Park and Conservancy**

Situated along the north side of the Manitowoc River, this area generally functions as an ADA accessible fishing facility catering to the boating and fishing public with auto-boat trailer parking. Approximately one-half of the 26.02 acre park is developed, with the remainder as a conservancy area. This park and conservancy area caters to a wide variety of users including walkers, joggers, bikers, in-line skaters, fishing enthusiasts, and kayak/canoeist.

Existing amenities include a shelter with restrooms, drinking fountain, picnic area, open park shelter, boat dock / fishing pier, boat launch, auto and boat trailer parking, ADA accessible fishing pads, walkway system and a dog exercising area.

**Capacity for future use** - This park and conservancy area is heavily used by boaters, fishermen, bikers, walkers, and other trail users. Park usage is expected to remain constant or perhaps increase. The major proposed project calls for the construction of a pedestrian bridge which would cross the Manitowoc River connecting Manitou Park with Henry Schuette Park.

## **4. Red Arrow Conservancy**

The Red Arrow Conservancy is a 10.61 acre linear section of land that extends approximately 2,800 feet along the Lake Michigan Shoreline connecting Red Arrow Park with the UW Manitowoc campus. The conservancy area does not contain any developed amenities.

This area has been adopted by Citizens for a Scenic Lakeside. They have worked with the City and Woodland Dunes to develop a management plan for the site. Goals of this plan are to create scenic views, foster a native bird habitat, and to minimize further erosion of the bluff. This project is also part of a statewide initiative called “Restore the Shore”, headed by Woodland Dunes.

**Capacity of future use** - This conservancy area will maintain in its current function with the exception of accommodating a new trail connecting Red Arrow Park with the UW campus trail.

## 5. River Heights Park

Located in the North-west portion of the City, this park contains 24.19 acres of land located along the scenic Manitowoc River. Currently, this park is undeveloped. Public street access occurs at the southern end of Sylvan Drive and off of N. Rapids Road.

**Capacity for future use** - Riverview park will stay primarily on its current natural state. However, with the growth of disc golf in the area, a smaller disc course is proposed for the park.

## 6. South Lakefront Wayside Park

This 9.22 acre park is located between S. Lakeview Drive and Lake Michigan. The park serves primarily the needs of motorists providing a lakefront scenic vista and passive recreational aspects. The park also contains a portion of the Mariners/Ice Age Trail which currently ends at a trail head parking lot on its southern end. Plans for the trail to extend southward to Red Arrow Park are proposed. Existing facilities include off-street parking, benches, picnic area and natural beach.

**Capacity for future use** - This area will continue to be used by the general public, as well as the tourists coming into Manitowoc to enjoy the lakefront and scenic amenities. The park should continue providing this function. Increased use of the park will likely occur if the Mariners/Ice Age Trail extends from the park southward to Red Arrow Park. The park would also benefit from a beach nourishment project which would improve the beach experience.

## Public School Facilities & Agencies

1. **Andrew Jackson Elementary** - is mentioned in this report because it augments the neighborhood playground segment. Located in the north central portion of the City, it contains 8.25 acres of land. It includes playground apparatus, basketball courts, and open playing areas.
2. **Benjamin Franklin Elementary** - is 11.49 acres of land that helps add to the neighborhood playground classification. It includes playground apparatus, basketball courts, and open green spaces.
3. **C.G. Stangel Elementary** – is located in the northeast portion of the City, this playground contain 9.78 acres of land. Because of the lack of municipal parks in this area of the City, this playground enhances active recreation prospects for that area of Manitowoc.
4. **James Monroe Elementary** - is 14.40 acres of land that also offsets parkland in the southeastern portion of the City. Amenities include an open space area, playground apparatus, and basketball court.

5. **Jefferson Elementary** - is 3.88 acres of land that also offsets parkland in the southeastern portion of the City. Amenities include an open space area, playground apparatus, and basketball court.
6. **Madison Elementary** - is 4.78 acres of land that also offsets parkland in the northeastern portion of the City. Amenities include an open space area, playground apparatus, and basketball court.
7. **Riverview Elementary** - is 14.05 acres of land that also offsets parkland in the northwestern portion of the City. Amenities include an open space area, playground apparatus, basketball court, soccer fields, and ball diamonds.

These elementary schools were included as they provide municipal level playground facilities for a wide range of active recreational uses that are provided in areas exceeding three (3) acres in size, the minimum size for playgrounds.

Intergovernmental cooperation between the MPSD, Manitowoc County, and the City of Manitowoc continues to be strong and greatly enhances the offering of recreation and open space facilities to the community. The MPSD and the City have a long-standing agreement for shared use of facilities without charging. Manitowoc County and the City have worked on several projects concerning parks and open space maintenance. The Cities of Two Rivers and Manitowoc have cooperative arrangements for equipment and programs that benefit both communities. The City also works with regional and State entities on numerous green space, wetland, floodplain, and wildlife concerns in Manitowoc.

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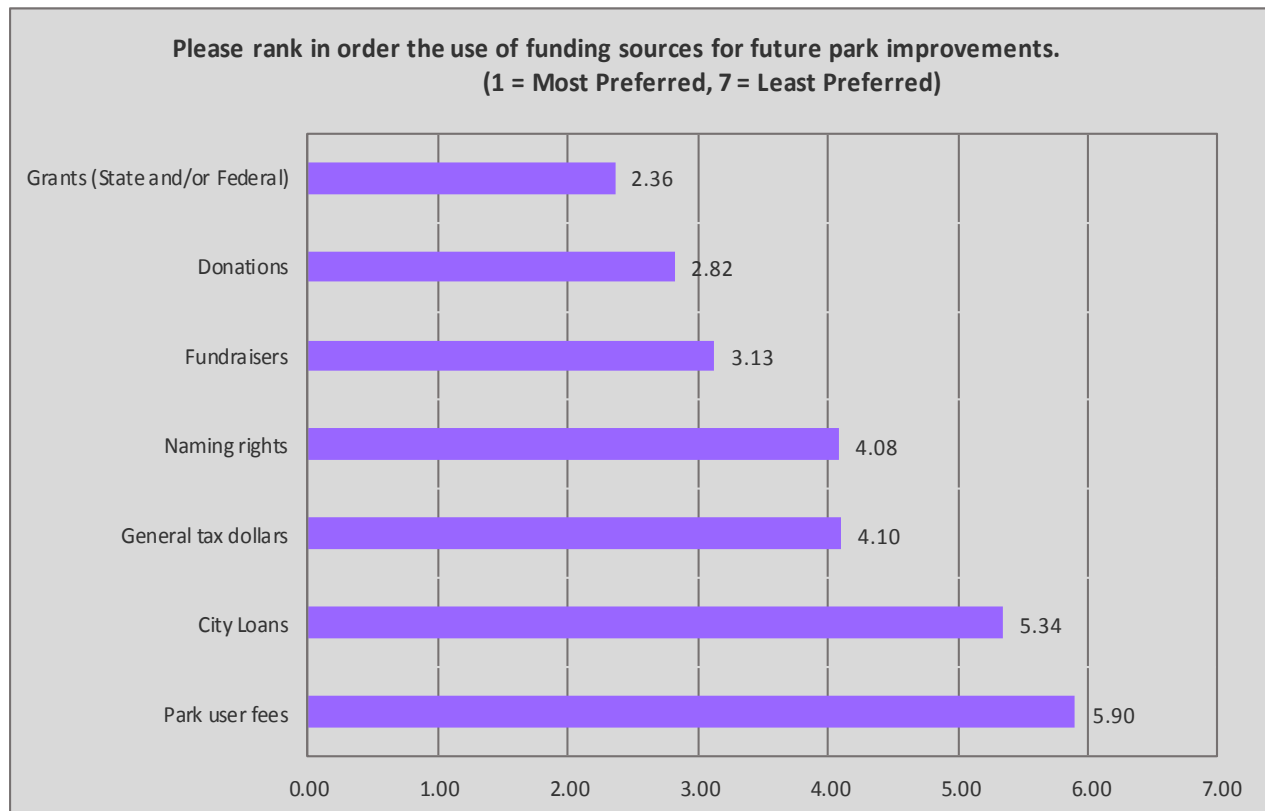
## FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan has listed many projects that will hopefully be implemented over the next five years. There is no escaping the issue that improving park facilities in the future will cost money. Some projects will certainly take longer to develop than others. The level and timing of funding can be a significant catalyst in how fast some projects move up the priority list.

The City of Manitowoc park system has benefited greatly from a wide range of “Friends Groups” and other non-profit civil type organizations which have contributed handsomely to many initiatives city wide. Suffice it to say, amenities such as the Mariner’s Trail, Ice Age Trail, Lincoln Park Zoo, waterpark, disc golf courses, mountain bike trails and other amenities would not be in existence today without the fundraising assistance provided by many stakeholder groups. The continuation of working directly with groups cannot be overstated as they provide the most cost effective way for projects to become reality.

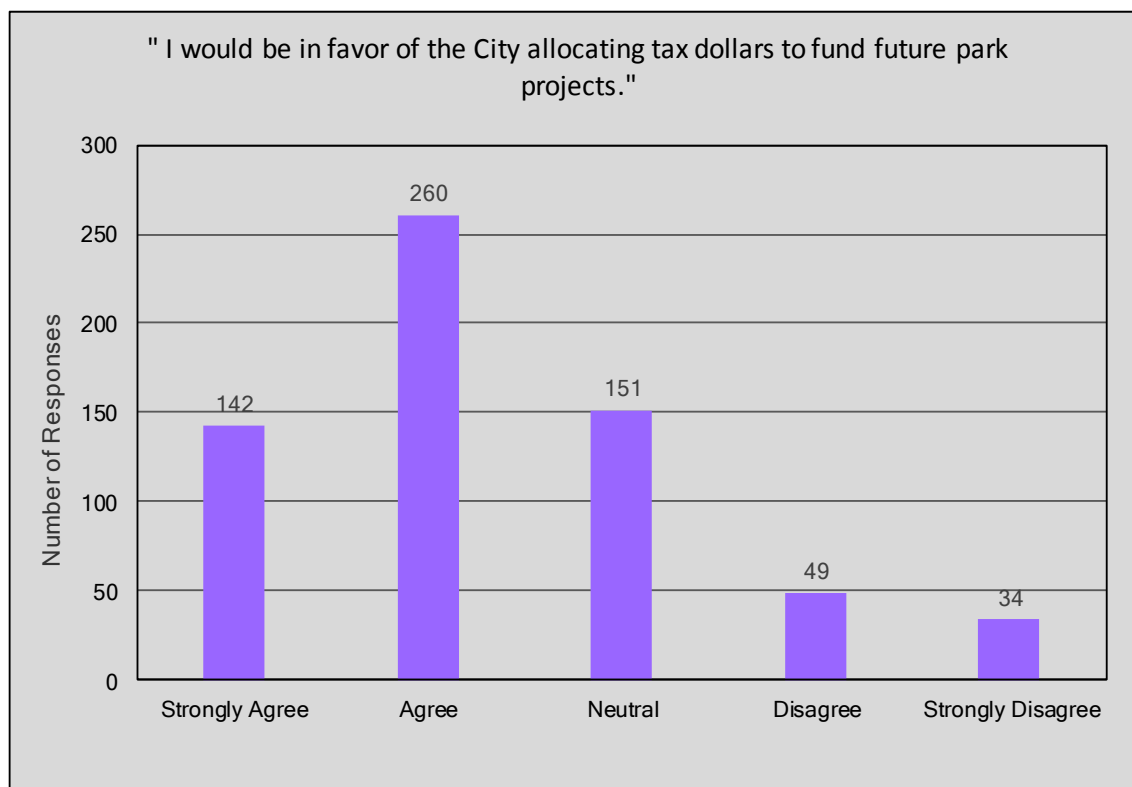
In addition to donations and fundraising activities, grants can be pursued if the projects meet the goals of the grant program (See Appendix D). Historically, land acquisition, trail development and water related activities have been actively supported by state and federal programs.

The preferred choice on where that money should come from was the basis of asking Question 14. The results are not surprising in that three sources are preferred over using general tax dollars. Those preferences included grants, donations and fundraisers. All of which have been successfully used by the city in the past. Park user fees has the least support.



As expected, general tax dollars was not a “preferred” choice compared to the often perceived “free money” that could be obtained through grants, donations and fundraisers. Nonetheless, most city residents should realize it will play a significant role if certain projects are to become a reality.

To further test the support of survey respondents, Question 15 was asked regarding the use of general tax revenues. The results were surprisingly more supportive than one might expect. As noted by the chart, 402 respondents favored the directive while only 83 opposed. The results indicate that the community must feel proud of their park system and are willing to invest tax dollars into preserving, maintaining and improving it. The results of Question 15 should be a tremendous assets to community leaders which would like to move park improvement project forward into the implementation phase.

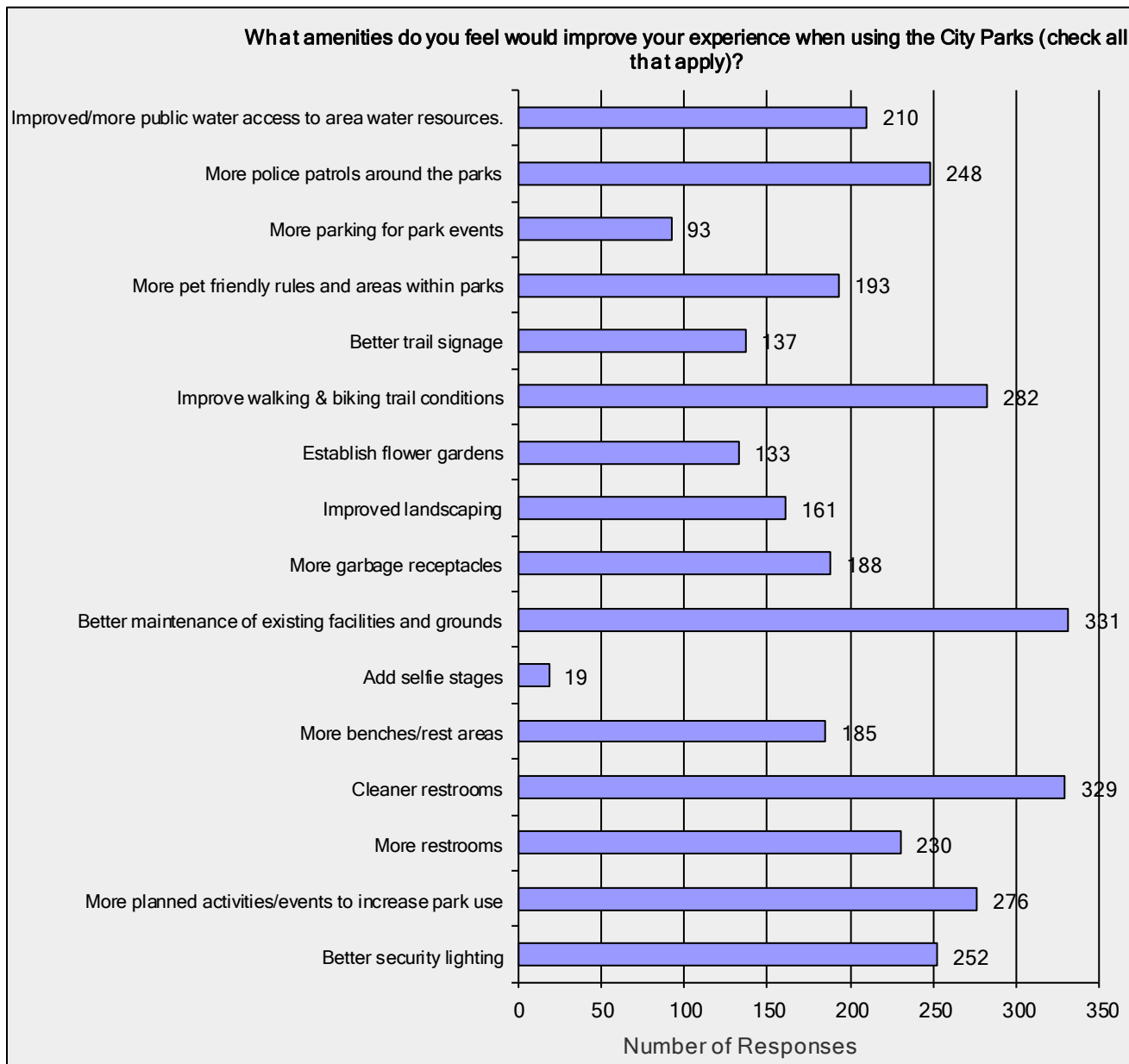


Relative to funding future projects, city leaders and staff must assess each projects funding potential separately. Certain projects will align much better for securing donations than others where general tax revenues may be needed. To assist with the research effort, Appendices D (Grant Funding Opportunities), E (Regulatory Devices Available to Local Governments) and F (Methods of Acquiring Public Lands) have been included in this report.

Each Appendices goes into significant details on each of these topics and can be used as a source of information in aligning projects to the appropriate funding and implementation tool. In addition, the City may want to secure the services of a grant writing consultant to assist in the preparation of grants which often times can be very time consuming.

## **Park Maintenance Initiative**

One directive that was obvious from the survey results, was a need for better park maintenance. Results from Question 12 of the survey make that directive very clear.



However, if the maintenance program is to improve, one must assess what the maintenance program currently provides. That said, the current cleaning program includes:

- One (1) employee at 25 hours per week.
- Each restroom is cleaned one (1) time per week. There are 30 public restrooms and 9 rentable restrooms for a total of 39 parks restrooms that require cleaning.
- Each location has a developed list of responsibilities and cleaning products to use.

Suggestion to improve the program could include any of the following:

- Implementing a “new” structured cleaning program, including standard cleaning methods for each task.
- Redirecting staff from current tasks to restroom cleaning to allow for more dedicated cleaning time.
- Hire additional staff and acquire an additional vehicle for a fulltime cleaning crew.
- Clean all high use restrooms daily and low use every other day. (this would require about 105 man hours per week to clean the 12 high use restrooms daily and other restrooms every other day.
- Outsource cleaning through a private company based on a bid process and satisfactory results.

Another consideration is the use of more portable restroom facilities which are contracted through private vendors. It appears the public is getting more tolerant and comfortable with this solution as well since they are the norm for many large sporting, special and social events.