

CITY OF RACINE PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN SUMMARY

The park and open space plan update for the City of Racine is intended to assist in promoting environmental stewardship and to assess current and future park and recreation needs within the City. The plan seeks to provide a variety of sites and facilities that will offer opportunities for City residents to participate in a wide range of recreational activities, and to protect and enhance important natural resources. Preparation of the plan was guided by the City of Racine Board of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services and staff from the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Department. The plan updates the existing park and open space plan adopted by the Common Council in 2003, and includes short-term recommendations for the period 2011 through 2015, and long-term recommendations to the year 2035.

INVENTORY FINDINGS

The planning area used to prepare the plan includes the City of Racine and Shoop Park Golf Course, which is owned by the City but located in the Village of Wind Point. The planning area encompasses about 16 square miles. The population for the City of Racine in 2010 was 78,860 residents. About 9,121 acres, or about 90 percent of the planning area is occupied with residential, commercial, or other urban uses, and the remaining 992 acres, or about 10 percent, are composed of parks, natural resource areas, or other nonurban uses. In 2010, the City owned 92 parks and open space sites, which together encompassed 1,167 acres. There were 46 other park and open space sites located in the planning area in addition to those owned by the City, including 26 publicly- and 20 privately-owned sites. The City Pathway System includes the 10-mile Lake Michigan Pathway and the four-mile Root River Pathway, which provide opportunities for biking and hiking. The planning area encompassed 570 acres of primary environmental corridor, while secondary environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas covered 18 acres and 114 acres, respectively. One natural area, five critical species habitat sites, and three geological areas, altogether encompassing 148 acres, and three aquatic habitat areas encompassing about four linear miles were located in the planning area.

FRAMEWORK FOR PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Plans that have been considered and incorporated into the updated park and open space plan include the City of Racine Comprehensive Plan, the Racine County Park and Open Space Plan, the City's Pathway System Plan/Map, the Root River Revitalization Plan, the updated natural areas plan for Southeastern Wisconsin, and five neighborhood plans prepared by the City since 2003. Per capita and accessibility standards were applied to help determine the need for additional outdoor recreation sites and facilities, based on an anticipated 2035 City population of about 80,510 persons.

PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

Plan recommendations to be carried out by the City include:

- Additional improvements to recreational facilities at 35 existing City-owned recreational parks, special use parks, community centers, golf courses, or cemeteries, including parks-related improvements identified in the City's Capital Improvement Program for 2011 through 2015.
- Development of neighborhood park recreational facilities at 14 existing City-owned parks, likely after 2015.
- Development of a formal outdoor ice skating rink, possibly in cooperation with Racine County and/or adjacent villages.
- Development of a community swimming pool and practice soccer fields.
- Development of a Riverwalk along the south side of the Root River from 6th Street to Main Street and the development of a non-motorized boat launch within the proposed Riverwalk, in accordance with the Root River Revitalization Plan.
- Development of Root River and Lake Michigan Water Trails, in cooperation with Racine County.
- Development of the Root River Pathway within Johnson Park Golf Course or in another location that promotes trail continuity.
- Continued maintenance of the City parks system, including improvements to increase access for persons with disabilities.
- Continued development of a City-wide, on-street bike system in accordance with the City's 2035 comprehensive plan and the regional transportation system plan.

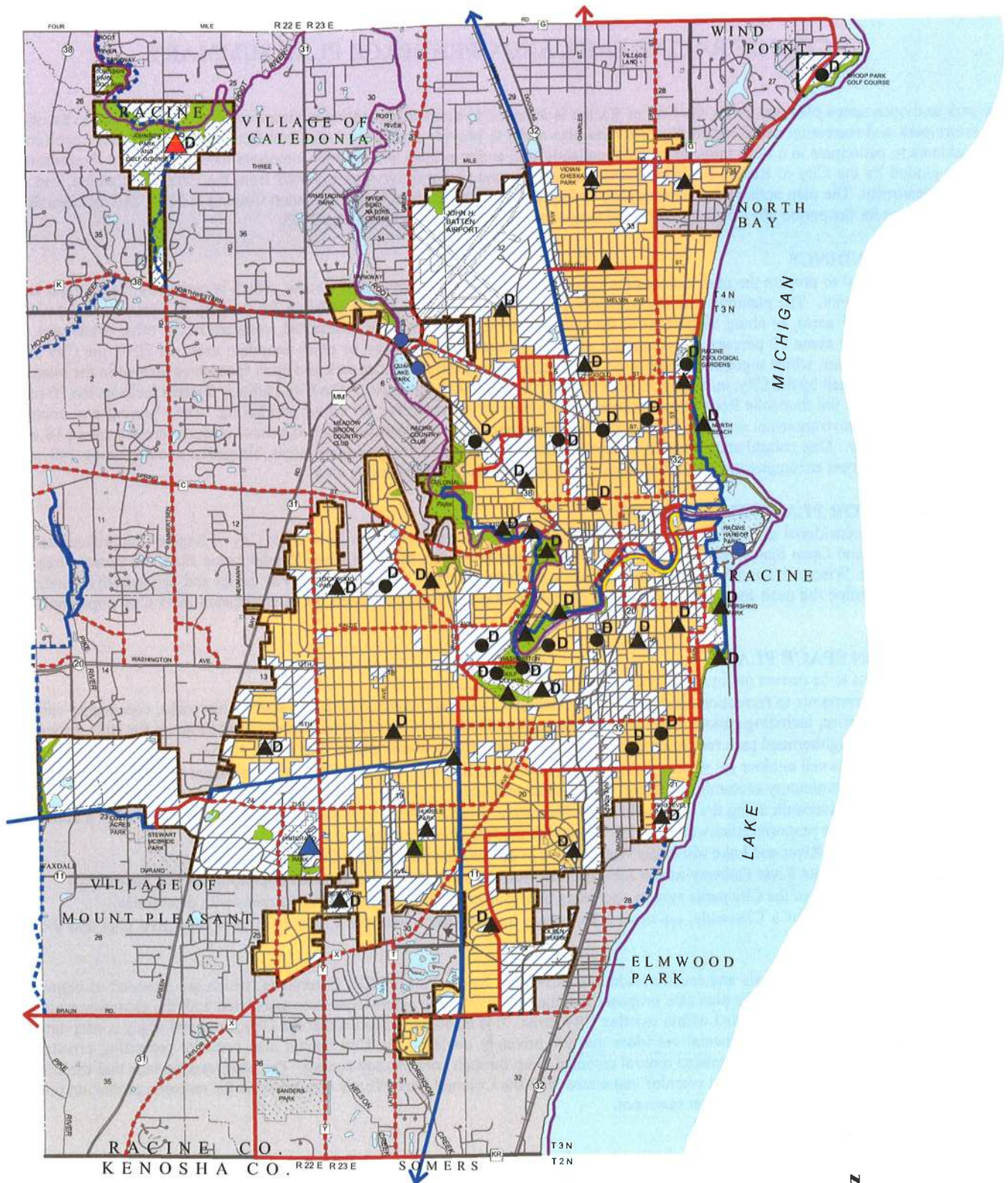
The park plan also incorporates goals and recommendations developed by the Park PRIDE Committee, which are intended to improve parks, park facilities, and park programs. The plan also proposes that the City protect the natural resources associated with the environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas located within existing City parks. It is also recommended that the City adopt and apply conservancy zoning regulations to protect primary environmental corridors that are privately owned. The City should also consider protecting privately-owned secondary environmental corridors and isolated natural resource areas through conservancy zoning. The plan recommends that the City acquire about nine acres of primary environmental corridor associated with the Colonial Park Woods Natural Area for resource protection purposes by fee-simple purchase or through a conservation easement.

IMPLEMENTATION

In addition to City implementation of the recommendations listed above, the plan recommends that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) endorse the plan, thereby continuing to make the City eligible to apply for and receive Federal and State grants for land acquisition and the development of outdoor recreation facilities.

The cost of improving and developing recreational facilities would entail an estimated cost to the City of \$8.5 million from 2011 through 2015. Costs for additional park facility development recommended by the plan beyond 2015 will be determined through the City's Capital Improvement Program and budget processes.

OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF RACINE: 2035



LEGEND

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| | EXISTING MAJOR PARK: CITY OF RACINE | | EXISTING ON-STREET TRAIL OR BICYCLE WAY | | ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT LANDS |
| | EXISTING MAJOR PARK: RACINE COUNTY | | EXISTING OFF-STREET TRAIL | | PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT |
| | EXISTING CITY OF RACINE NEIGHBORHOOD PARK OR COMMUNITY PARK | | RECOMMENDED ON-STREET TRAIL OR BICYCLE WAY | | PLANNED NONRESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT |
| | EXISTING CITY OF RACINE SPECIAL USE PARK OR OTHER PARK | | RECOMMENDED OFF-STREET TRAIL | | SURFACE WATER |
| | EXISTING RACINE COUNTY SPECIAL USE PARK OR OTHER PARK | | RECOMMENDED RIVERWALK | | CITY OF RACINE CORPORATE LIMITS |
| | ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENT OR IMPROVEMENT RECOMMENDED | | POTENTIAL WATER TRAIL | | SHOOP PARK |

Source: City of Racine and SEWRPC.

