

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The City of Waukesha (City) was a pioneer in community planning. The first Zoning Ordinance for the City was adopted in 1923 “... to direct the building of the City... and to promote the public health, safety, comfort, convenience, prosperity and general welfare”. The City has remained a leader in community planning and on January 29, 1958; the City adopted the recommendations set forth in the report entitled City Plan for Waukesha, Wisconsin, 1957. Prepared by Ladislav Segoe and Associates as the “Comprehensive Master Plan” presented information about existing and proposed public recreation areas of the City and recommended that neighborhood parks be located within approximately one half-mile of all residential areas.

In 1965, the City Park and Recreation Department prepared a report entitled Evaluation Study and Master Plan. The report evaluated five aspects of the City’s park and recreation program: the responsibilities of the Department, Department staff and personnel, existing park facilities, existing recreation programs, and Department policies.

In 1971, the City Planning Department and the Park and Recreation Department jointly prepared a report entitled Part 5, Parks and Recreation, as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. The study evaluated existing parks to determine if their size, location, type of development and use were appropriate. The report also evaluated publicly owned but as yet undeveloped park sites to determine if the sites were appropriately located and suitable for the uses anticipated. The plan also described various types of parks and recreational areas, such as tot lots, ball fields, neighborhood and regional parks, and parkways, and listed the improvements and facilities associated with each. The plan identified park and recreation requirements through the year 1980, recommended improvements to existing parks, and recommended additional sites for acquisition and development as parks.

In July 1985, the City Planning Department, in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Department, published A Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) for the City of Waukesha, Wisconsin. The report evaluated existing parks to determine if their size, location, type of development and use were appropriate. The report also evaluated publicly owned but as yet undeveloped park sites to determine if the sites were appropriately located and suitable for the type of uses anticipated. Population trends were analyzed and park and open space standards, based on those contained in the regional park and open space plan, were developed. Based on these standards and projected population growth, the need for park sites and facilities to the year 2000 were projected. The report then made recommendations for the acquisition of new park sites, and recommendations regarding the development of both proposed and existing parks.



Historic Dunbar Oak, Bethesda Park

In November 1990, the City approved a master plan for the redevelopment and beautification of the Fox River corridor within the City of Waukesha. The plan, which is documented in a report entitled Riverfront Plan, was prepared by the firms Camiros, Ltd. of Madison, Wisconsin and the Hitchcock Design Group of Naperville, Illinois. The area included in the plan extends about two miles along the river; from just north of the E. Moreland Avenue bridge in the northeastern portion of the City to the Fox River Sanctuary near the intersection of Sentry Drive and W. College

Avenue in the southwestern portion of the City. Projects proposed in the plan include the development of festival grounds and a large outdoor amphitheater in Frame Park; a pedestrian plaza near the Barstow Street bridge; walkways along the downtown riverfront; nature trails and an interpretive center in the Fox River Sanctuary; additional park improvements in Bethesda and Grede Parks, and completion of a bike trail through the downtown to connect the existing Glacial Drumlin and New Berlin bike trails. Many aspects of the Riverfront Plan have now been implemented, including the renovation of Frame Park, the Pedestrian Plaza at the Barstow Street Bridge, walkways along the downtown riverfront, an interpretive center at the Fox River Sanctuary and Fox River Trail.

In early 1993, the City Planning Department, in cooperation with the Park and Recreation Department, updated the 1985 plan. The report evaluated existing parks to determine if their size, location, type of development and use were appropriate. The report also evaluated publicly owned but as yet undeveloped park sites to determine if the sites were appropriately located and suitable for the type of uses anticipated. Population trends were analyzed and park and open space standards, based on those contained in the Regional Park and Open Space Plan, were developed. Based on these standards and projected population growth, the need for park sites and facilities to the year 2010 were projected. The report then made recommendation for the acquisition of new park sites, and a recommendation regarding the development of both new and existing parks.



Frame Park Riverwalk

The land use plan for the City of Waukesha and environs was adopted on July 14, 1993 by the City of Waukesha Plan Commission and on September 7, 1993 by the City of Waukesha Common Council. The plan was prepared cooperatively by staffs of the City of Waukesha and of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, under the direction of the City Plan Commission, with the participation of neighboring municipalities. The plan, together with supporting implementation devices, provides an important means for promoting the orderly growth and development of the City of Waukesha and environs over time. The Land Use Plan for the City of Waukesha addresses needs for the City urban service area by the year 2010.

Under the cooperative effort of the City of Waukesha Planning Department and the Park and Recreation Department in 1998, the Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) for the City of Waukesha – 1993 was updated. The 1998 POSP was prepared to incorporate the recommendations of the 2010 Land Use Plan for the City, and reflect park and open space acquisition and development activities that had occurred since 1993.

In December of 2001, the City enacted a new Zoning Code, which more accurately depicts the current trends in zoning and applies zoning more appropriately throughout the City in keeping with the 2010 Land Use Plan. More specifically in relation to the POSP, the new zoning code puts all park land under P-1 Park zoning, as well as a C-1 Lowland Conservancy zoning for the protection of wetlands. Also, there is a new C-2 Upland Conservancy Overlay District, to preserve, protect, enhance, and restore all significant upland woodlands, wildlife habitat areas, areas of rough or steep topography, and related scenic areas.

The 2007 POSP intends to further refine the recommendations from the 2010 Land Use Plan, as the City continues to grow towards the limits of the 2010 urban service area, while accounting for the recent park and open space acquisition and development activities, and factoring in current trends in

recreation. The plan will use the new demographic information now available from the 2000 U.S. Census in examining the growth and needs of the City. The intention of this plan is to continue with the City's tradition of acquisition and development of lands for nature based reasons such as natural resource protection and preservation, and development of a network of trail based activities directly related to those natural resources as well as active play areas. This plan is also intended to maintain City eligibility to apply for and receive Federal and State aids in support of acquisition and development of park and open space sites and facilities.

The City of Waukesha POSP findings and recommendations are set forth in this report.



Splash & Friends / Horeb Springs Pool

- Chapter 2 of this report presents the purpose and scope of this study including benefit and trends of recreation.
- Chapter 3 presents the general description of the City, including existing conditions and trends in population, and land use and growth patterns.
- Chapter 4 presents the park and open space preservation, acquisition and development objectives and principles, which serve as a basis for the development of the plan. Use of NRPA Level of Service Standards were incorporated.

- Chapter 5 includes the park and open space sites and needs analysis and recommendations for potential improvement of existing sites within the park system.
- Chapter 6 presents recommendations for potential future park sites. It also includes a discussion of the methods of financing land acquisition and park development.
- Chapter 7 presents the conclusion.

An adopted Park and Open Space Plan (POSP) by the Common Council is necessary to qualify the City for State and Federal grant-in-aid for the acquisition and development of park and open space sites. This plan should be evaluated annually and formally updated periodically.



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