

## **MARCH MEETING NOTICE**

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission will meet on **Wednesday, March 5, 2014, at 4:15 p.m.**, at the Merrill City Hall.

The following items will be included on the agenda:

1. Approve minutes from previous meeting.
2. Approve claims.
3. Discuss usage and prioritization of Memorial Forest Salvage Timber Sale Funds.
4. Update on Stewardship Grants on River Bend Trail and Memorial Forest.
5. Monthly reports.
6. Set date for next meeting.
7. Public comment
8. Adjournment

Submitted by

Dan Novitch, Chairman  
Parks and Recreation Commission

The Merrill City Hall is accessible to the physical disadvantaged. If special accommodations are required, please contact City Hall at 536-5594.

		FEBRUARY			
ACE HARDWARE	PARTS FOR SHOP	2/10/2014		\$22.25	55200-03-40000
ACE HARDWARE	BROOM AND MOPSTICK	2/7/2014		\$31.98	55200-03-40000
ACE HARDWARE	CHAIN PROOF	2/11/2014		\$21.56	55200-03-40000
ACE HARDWARE	PVC ELBOW	2/20/2014		\$5.96	55200-03-40000
ACE HARDWARE	CEMENT PVC	2/20/2014		\$5.99	55200-03-40000
AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	1/31/2014	929	\$30.69	55200-02-15000
AMERICAN WELDING & GAS	CYLINDER RENTAL	1/31/2014	646	\$20.46	55200-02-15000
ASCAP	LICENSE FEE	1/27/2014		\$330.25	LABOR DAY
ATCO INTERNATIONAL	ICE GO PELLETS	1/31/2014	132383	\$85.00	55400-03-50000
BAUERNFEIND	KONICA COPIER MAINT.	2/11/2014	64925	\$193.51	55300-03-41500
BAUMGART WASTE REMOVAL	WASTE HAULING JAN.	2/2/2014		\$58.00	55400-02-23600
BB COMMUNITY LEASING SERVICES	COPIER MACHINE	2/11/2014	2058	\$138.25	55300-03-41500
BEIN CRAFTY	SHIRTS FOR LITTLE DRIBBLERS	2/11/2014	4628	\$413.00	55300-03-41500
BREWERS	BUS TRIP	2/14/2014	914909	\$720.00	55300-03-41500
BURGOYNE'S TOILET RENTAL	TOILET RENTAL	2/1/2014	46946	\$115.00	55200-02-15000
CENTRAL WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE	MACHINERY PARTS	1/31/2014	94404	\$216.55	55200-03-50000
CITY DIRECTORY, INC	ADVERTISING	2/4/2014	168687	\$372.00	55400-03-41000
CLAY CORNERS	SUMMER REC. PROGRAM/DEPOSIT	2/10/2014		\$25.00	55300-03-41500
DAVE'S COUNTY MARKET	VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT	1/25/2014		\$10.18	55300-03-41500
DAVE'S COUNTY MARKET	VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT	1/24/2014		\$134.04	55300-03-41500
G & K SERVICES	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE	1/30/2014	1016853087	\$47.90	55200-03-46000
G & K SERVICES	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE	2/6/2014	1016856069	\$47.90	55200-03-46000
G & K SERVICES	MATS/BROOMS	2/20/2014	1016861997	\$216.06	55400-02-23250
G & K SERVICES	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE	2/20/2014	1016862004	\$50.49	55200-03-46000
G & K SERVICES	UNIFORMS JIM/JOE	2/13/2014	1016855049	\$48.80	55200-03-46000
MECHANICAL INCORPORATED	START UP AND TEST CHILLER	12/31/2013	45134	\$653.50	55400-02-16250
MENARDS	TREATED LUMBER	2/6/2014		\$544.87	55200-08-91500
MENARDS	PVC PIPING	2/11/2014		\$83.02	55400-03-50000
MERRILL COURIER	ADVERTISING	1/31/2014	13114016	\$542.20	55400-03-41000
MERRILL DISTRIBUTING	GLOVES/GARBAGE BAGS	2/7/2014	1233948	\$271.60	55400-03-50000
MERRILL FOTO NEWS	ADVERTISING	2/27/2014	30664	\$930.90	55400-03-41000
MERRILL SHEET METAL	OLD DNR BUILDING	1/31/2014	12328	\$378.24	55200-03-50000
MERRILL SHEET METAL	WARMING HOUSE, COIL/THERMO	1/31/2014	12329	\$450.00	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	REMOVE MOUNTING PLATE	1/24/2014	6052	\$284.11	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	HYD LEAK	1/21/2014	6035	\$66.98	55200-03-50000
MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT	SNOW PLOWER	1/21/2014	6039	\$158.14	55200-03-40000
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	BIRTHDAY PARTIES	2/5/2014	136	\$72.00	55300-03-41500
MERRILL YOUTH HOCKEY	CONCESSION STAND	2/5/2014	135	\$37.50	55300-03-41500
PERMAR SECURITY SERVICES	AIR COMPRESSOR FAILING	2/14/2014	1118217	\$172.00	55400-02-16500
PERRY'S GLASS	GLASS FOR ARENA	2/15/2014		\$160.00	55400-03-50000
R & R SPECIALITIES	IMPELLER WITH PUMP	1/21/2014	54003	\$166.36	55400-03-50000
ROGER PLAUTZ	REFUND TENNIS CAMP	2/20/2014	VOUCHER	\$20.00	55300-03-41500
RTL ELECTRIC	BALANCE FORWARD	2/5/2014		\$3.00	55200-03-40000
RTL ELECTRIC	LABOR/MATERIAL MARC	2/20/2014	6077	\$854.25	55400-03-50000
SHARE CORP	T-BOWL CLEANER	2/11/2014	867064	\$219.70	55200-03-40000
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP FOR ZAMBONI	1/28/2014	2510	\$60.00	55400-03-51500
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP FOR ZAMBONI	2/4/2014	2518	\$138.00	55400-03-41500
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP FOR ZAMBONI	2/6/2014	2526	\$180.00	55400-03-51500
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP FOR ZAMBONI	2/11/2014	2535	\$276.00	55400-03-51500
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP FOR ZAMBONI	2/18/2014	2550	\$90.00	55400-03-51500
T & P SALES AND SERVICE	LP EXCHANGE	2/19/2014	2554	\$300.00	55400-03-51500
THE PATRIOT	ADVERTISING	1/31/2014	242	\$246.00	55400-03-41000
VICTORY JANITORIAL	DISINFECTANT SPRAY	1/27/2014	37332	\$102.72	55400-03-40000
VICTORY JANITORIAL	VAC/BAGS/BELT	2/11/2014	37553	\$349.00	55400-08-82000
WALMART	PAPER SHREDDER	2/18/2014		\$59.88	55400-03-10000
WIAMA	RENEWING ARENA	2/10/2014		\$100.00	55400-03-32000
WISCONSIN BIKE FED	APRIL RIDE GUIDE	2/12/2014	591	\$300.00	55400-03-41000
WPS	MARC	3/4/2014	404061701-00002	\$20.83	55200-02-22000
WPS	MARC	3/4/2014	405061701-000003	\$6,263.89	55400-02-22000
WPS	MARC SIGN	3/4/2014	405061701-00018	\$23.08	55200-02-22200

**- PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

February 5, 2014

The Merrill Parks and Recreation Commission met on Wednesday, February 5, 2014 at 4:15 p.m. at the City Hall.

Members Present: Mike Willman, Ralph Sturm, Dorwin Harris, Dan Novitch, Melissa Schroeder and Brian Artac

Members Excused Absent: Anne Caylor

Department Staff Present: Dan Wendorf and Dawn Smith

Visitors: Dave Johnson, Dewy Pfister, Charles Phelps, Don Heyel, Chris Marlow, Kandy Peterson, Pat Baily, Cory McCorkle, Nancy McCorkle, Melody Hamlin, Tonia Speener

\*\*\*Motion by Willman, seconded by Artac, to approve the minutes from the previous meeting.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Sturm, to approve the claims.

Wendorf questioned if the commission wanted the bills to come in Microsoft Excel or have the Merrill City Hall continuing to do the bills in their format. Harris stated that it is easier to read the bills when they are in Microsoft Excel. The commission would like the bills done in Microsoft Excel.

\*\*\*Carried Unanimously.

The first item on the agenda was continued discussion of outdoor pool design and location. Wendorf explained that in the last month he has had several discussions with Becher/Hoppe and City Administrator Dave Johnson on pool location, size and cost. Wendorf introduced Melody Hamlin from Becher/Hoppe, Melody went over the choices, cost and location of pool. Three options were given to the Park and Recreation Commission. Concept A with a Bather Load/Occupants of 550 and water S.F. of 11,200: Stange Park - \$7,230,725, MARC - \$6,036,350 a difference of \$1,194,375. Concept B with a Bather Load/Occupants – 250 and water S.F. of 5,000: Stange Park - \$4,259,725, MARC - \$3,604,475 with a difference of \$655,250. Concept C with a Bather Load/Occupant of 300 and water S.F. of 6,000: Stange Park - \$5,076,550, MARC \$4,117,100 with a difference of \$959,450. Novitch questioned how much it would cost just to tear down the existing building at Stange Park. Melody stated around \$120,000 with demo and excavation. Schroeder stated that the people she has talked to they want it any place but the MARC. Schroeder stated that it would be too difficult for families to get out there during the daytime and some families can not afford the bus fair. Schroeder stated that the cost difference to her does not matter; she did not want to see the pool go to the MARC. Schroeder wants a central location. Harris recommended another Public Hearing. City Administrator Dave Johnson stated that he does not recommend the pool being built at the MARC. City Administrator Dave Johnson feels it is too windy at the MARC for the pool. Harris stated that he doesn't think it would be a problem to have the pool at the MARC. Harris stated that every day of the week people and kids are out there, some walk, some ride their bikes and some get there by their parents. Schroeder stated that the parents would not be able to get the kids out there during the day. City Administrator Dave Johnson stated that people are not going to like it out there because of the wind and they will get chilled. Sturm thought that the \$7 million pool was a bit too much for the

shut down more times due to cold weather than he can remember in years past. Wendorf stated that he is starting to work on summer events and looking forward to a good summer.

No motion was made to accept the monthly reports given by Dan Wendorf.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 5, 2014 at 4:15 p.m., at the Merrill City Hall.

Public Comment: Don Heyel stated that the pool in Fort Atkinson is not located in the center of town and people utilize the pool all the time. He stated that he would like some people to think about that. Heyel stated that the nearest home is a quarter mile away.

\*\*\*Motion by Schroeder, seconded by Artac, to adjourn at 5:45 p.m.

\*\*\*Carried unanimously.

Dawn Smith  
Recording Secretary



330 Fourth Street, PO Box 8000, Wausau, WI 54402-8000  
Tel: 715.845.8000 | Fax: 715.845.8008 | becherhoppe.com

January 31, 2014  
Project No: 2011.095.00  
Invoice No: 17591

Kathy Unertl  
Finance Director  
City of Merrill  
1004 East First Street  
Merrill, WI 54452-2586

Professional Engineering / Architectural Services

Professional Services from January 01, 2014 to January 31, 2014

Phase 005 East Side Development (t/m)

**Professional Personnel**

	Hours	Rate	Amount
CAD Technician II	3.20	80.00	256.00
Project Representative I	.50	80.00	40.00
Totals	3.70		296.00
<b>Total Labor</b>			<b>296.00</b>

*43-57100-08-57500*

Total this Phase

296.00  
**\$296.00**

Phase 020 Water Park Study (t/m - \*separate inv)

Includes conceptual design and planning for water park, evaluation of site alternatives and meetings / communication with City Staff.

**Professional Personnel**

	Hours	Rate	Amount
Project Engineer III, PE	2.50	140.00	350.00
CAD Technician III	13.80	90.00	1,242.00
CAD Technician II	2.50	80.00	200.00
CAD Technician I	18.60	70.00	1,302.00
Totals	37.40		3,094.00
<b>Total Labor</b>			<b>3,094.00</b>

**Reimbursable Expenses**

Travel			24.64
<b>Total Reimbursables</b>			<b>24.64</b>

*10-55420-02-25000*

Total this Phase

24.64  
**\$3,118.64**

Total this Project

**\$3,414.64**

Total this Invoice

**\$3,414.64**

**RECEIVED**

*Ku*  
*2/11/2014*

**FEB 11 2014**

BY:

## Chapter 4 OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

Recreational needs within the city were identified by collecting public input, reviewing past plans, and creating a park Level Of Service assessment.

### B. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROJECTS COMPLETED

First we will start with a list of projects from the previous outdoor recreation plan (2008-2013), and note if they were completed or not.

**Note:** On April 10, 2011, an EF-3 magnitude tornado hit the western part of Merrill. Council Grounds State Park and the MARC were substantially damaged. Reconstruction of existing facilities in the MARC took priority over other facility improvements.

- 2008 Riverside Restrooms demolition – rebuild to ADA Standards; **Complete**  
Basketball Courts at MARC; **Incomplete**  
Resurface tennis courts at Ott’s Park; **Complete**  
Refurbish Stange Park “2-arch” Bridge; **Complete**  
Restroom facility by adult baseball fields at MARC; **Incomplete**  
Sandblast and repaint Riverside Shelter. **Incomplete**
- 2009 Ott’s Park Restrooms demolition – rebuild to ADA Standards; **will be complete**  
Construct restroom facilities at Prairie Trails; **Incomplete**  
Begin work on “River Walk” Trail System to follow the Prairie River; **Incomplete**  
Lights on 1 adult field and 1 youth field at the MARC; **Incomplete**  
Designated bike route through town; **Incomplete**  
Riverside Park bridge refurbishment. **Incomplete**
- 2010 Continue work on “River Walk” Trail System to follow Prairie River; **Incomplete**  
Locate and develop site for Dog Park; **will be working on in 2013**  
Refurbish Riverside trail system; **Incomplete**  
Improvements to Lion’s Park Restroom facility – ADA Compliance; **Incomplete but will be working on in 2013**  
New Playground equipment at Kitchenette. **Complete**
- 2011 Construct new swimming pool/aquatic center – in location to be determined **Incomplete**  
Continue work on “River Walk” Trail System to follow Prairie River; **Incomplete**  
Refurbish Gebert Park Trail System; **Incomplete**  
Re-seal/stain Kitchenette Shelter building. **Incomplete**
- 2012 Improvements/addition to Riverside Park Disc Golf Course (Eric Schalow Disk Golf Course); **Incomplete**  
Remove Shingles – steel roof on Kitchenette Shelter Building. **Incomplete will work on in 2013**
- 2013 Re-stain/seal Kitchenette Restroom building; **Incomplete**  
Construct new park maintenance building at location to be determined. **Incomplete**  
Upgrade playgrounds citywide for ADA accessibility. **Incomplete**

Investigate creating a new park to relieve use congestion of little league fields at Lion's Park. **Incomplete**

## C. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

### Informal Public Input

In the regular course of business, Merrill's Park and Recreation Department staff, members have received public input about the parks. That input and their professional experience with also shape what changes are implemented.

### Visioning Sessions

Two visioning sessions were held in the Merrill City Hall to engage the public. More detailed summaries of both sessions are in ATTACHMENT D.

#### Session #1 – September 5, 2012

Twenty people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation members, the director of the city's Parks & Recreation Department, and a planner from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning discussed the future of the city's parks and recreation facilities. The conversation was facilitated by Art Lersch, Community Resource Development Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County.

Those items that were discussed the most and by a relatively broad cross section of attendees are in **bold** directly below.

- **Build new or upgrade existing bathroom facilities throughout the park system.**
- Improve athletic fields and their amenities such as scoreboards, fencing, etc.
- **Make parks more American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.**
- Establish a city Public Works Department responsible for handling all park maintenance (e.g. City of Plover).
- **Connect parks with pedestrian and bike trails. Connect these trails to other regional trails (e.g. Bearskin, Hiawatha, Mountain Bay, etc.)**
- **Develop and implement a park marketing plan.**
- **Volunteer groups will have adopted sections of parks to maintain/improve, and market.** (Volunteers who have ownership, who take pride in the section they are maintaining).
- **Create a broader definition of what a park is;** includes more varied uses; location in other more non-traditional places such as industrial parks, roughage areas, expanded current playground areas, along rivers, etc.
- All parks should be centers of outdoor educational workshops/events. Facilities should be developed to make this a reality.
- **Improve communication between the city and current/potential volunteer and user groups.** (Note: Many in the audience agree that positive, visionary improvements must begin with this.)
- **Parks and Recreation Department will have to be changed; will need more resources,** to achieve any of the suggestions.

Session #2 – October 9, 2012

Thirteen people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation members, the director of the city's Parks & Recreation Department, and a planner from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning attended the second of two visioning sessions. The conversation was facilitated by Art Lersch, Community Resource Development Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County.

Participants prioritized the list of visionary concepts discussed during the first session. They identified the following priorities for the entire park system. The items are in no particular order.

- **Connectivity** (link pedestrian and bike trails.) Trails should become linear parks that will attract people of all ages throughout the year.
- **Build bathroom facilities** that can be used throughout the year. These facilities should be placed near trails/linear parks. Other new facilities should be built at existing parks.
- **Continue to upgrade athletic facilities.** This should always be done with keeping in mind the potential economic impact additional tournaments could have on the city.
- **Improve communication between parks user groups and the city.** Much of the work to develop connections between trails, build bathrooms, etc. cannot take place unless communication amongst stakeholders is improved. Without better communication, the collaborations necessary to make improvements to the entire system will not happen.
- **Increase park and recreation department resources.** Besides taking the lead on creating improvements in the system, additional resources are needed to help the department provide ongoing maintenance to parks that have undergone those improvements.

The group also emphasized that an effective **marketing plan** needs to be developed to attract people to the parks. They also indicated that the **Parks and Recreation Department focus on growing its existing endowment fund**. The department director reminded meeting participants that the fund can and should be used to help finance parks improvements but cannot be utilized for staff salaries/benefits.

The group recognized that these initial discussions form merely a foundation upon which further conversations will take place with the aim of developing a comprehensive parks and recreation plan.

## **Public Hearing Results**

### January 2, 2013

The first of two public hearings was held on January 2, 2013. Over 45 people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Commission members, the director of the City's Parks & Recreation Department, a planner from NCWRPC, the Mayor, the City Administrator, and several City Council Members were present, and a few people provided comments.

The general theme from those public comments was definitely to implement the plan, but to also carefully consider long term and short term costs to the tax payers. Other themes related to specific projects that should become high priorities:

1. Make Merrill bicycle friendly;
2. Implement the River Bend Trail;
3. Continue working on projects from the last 5-year plan;
4. Cooperate with County Forestry to develop 1) trails, and 2) a timber management plan in Merrill Memorial Forest;
5. Assess and upgrade all facilities at the MARC; and
6. Please provide a second public hearing on this plan.

### February 6, 2013

Since the Mayor and other members of the public didn't think enough people knew about the first public hearing on January 2, so the Parks Commission held this second public hearing.



As you can see in the picture to the right, over 30 people, including City of Merrill Parks & Recreation

Commission members, the director of the City's Parks & Recreation Department, a planner from NCWRPC, the City Administrator, and many local residents were present, and a few people provided comments.

The general theme from those public comments was definitely to implement the plan. Other themes related to specific projects that should become high priorities:

1. **Fully support creation of the River Bend Trail (4 people);**
2. **City of Merrill survey results (from City Administrator):**
  - a. people want trails and there is a lack of access to the Wisconsin River and the Prairie River; and
  - b. best parts of Merrill are its parks and the Wisconsin & Prairie Rivers.
3. Make Merrill bicycle friendly;
4. Other comments included: a. working with Lincoln County Fairgrounds; b. plan a different dog park; and c. allow gazebo in Normal Park to be reserved.

### **City of Merrill Comprehensive Plan Issues**

The City of Merrill created a comprehensive plan in 2006. Below are some of the transportation issues that residents identified. Only issues that relate to outdoor recreation were listed.

- Abandoned rail corridors and spurs are not available to adjacent landowners to own. Abandoned rail bridges over the Wisconsin River.
- Snowmobile trails need better access to local businesses. A comprehensive review of the snowmobile network is needed, because it keeps changing every other year, and some corridors may need permanent protection.
- There are some discussions of a riverwalk system in the downtown.
- A recreation trail could connect Prairie River Park to Stange Park.
- Additional issues relate to aging infrastructure and the cost to improve, high-speed areas, congestion areas, overall flow of traffic or network, funding transit system, lack of intra-city bus service, and the need for an integrated pedestrian/bike plan.

### **Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan Issues**

Lincoln County created a comprehensive plan in 1999. A survey was administered and part G (Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources) relates to outdoor recreation. When asked which of nine different types of parks and recreational facilities were needed (more than one could be selected), the most common responses were "multi-use trails for bicyclists, pedestrians, skiers, and snowmobilers..." (43%) and "natural areas such as nature trails, wildlife viewing areas, [and] interpretive centers..." (40%). These were followed by waterfront parks (31%) and campgrounds (23%). Just under 31% of respondents believed that no additional parks or recreational facilities were needed. Responses from town and city residents were not significantly different.

### **Lincoln County Comprehensive Plan Goals & Policies**

#### Transportation Element

*Goal #2: Trails of various types (e.g. ATV, snowmobile, walking, biking, horse, etc.) will be joined together and linked with other transportation modes such as roads both inside and outside the county to support greater regional economic activity.*

*Goal #3: County departments will coordinate the development of a plan that effectively promotes Lincoln County trail systems.*

#### Policy:

Install bike and pedestrian lanes wherever feasible to encourage a more sustainable approach to community and economic development. These amenities will also be developed in such a way as to promote quality of life and healthy lifestyle practices. Work with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation to create economical, safe, and efficient designs of bike and pedestrian lanes that also improve the flow of traffic.

Enhance signage to bring people into the cities off of Route 39/51. The route's corridors near both Tomahawk and Merrill are well traveled. Attracting people off of the route to visit both cities is consistent with the City of Merrill 51 Corridor Feasibility Study and Tomahawk Main Street initiatives.

## **Chapter 5**

# **OUTDOOR RECREATION VISION, GOALS, & OBJECTIVES**

The development of an efficient outdoor recreation plan depends upon establishing specific recreation and open-space goals and objectives from public participation. These goals and objectives will provide general direction to the Forestry, Recreation, and Parks Department for outdoor recreation purposes over the next 5 years.

People who attended two visioning sessions, described on page 17 & 18, came up with the following vision and goals. The Parks Committee created goal 6.

### **Vision:**

*“Merrill, City of Parks, is committed to celebrating its heritage through diversified outdoor opportunities along the Wisconsin and Prairie Rivers which enhances quality of life for all generations.”*

### **Goals are not listed in priority order:**

#### **1. Trail Connectivity**

Link neighborhoods throughout the city with multi use trails. Make sure there are opportunities for unorganized recreation along the trails themselves, so the trails become linear parks that will attract people of all ages throughout the year.

**2. Build bathroom facilities** that can be used throughout the year. These facilities should be placed near trails/linear parks. Other new facilities should be built at existing parks.

**3. Continue to upgrade athletic facilities.** This should always be done with keeping in mind the potential economic impact additional tournaments could have on the city.

**4. Improve communication between park user groups and the city.** Much of the work to develop connections between trails, build bathrooms, etc. cannot take place unless communication among stakeholders is improved. Without better communication, the collaborations necessary to make improvements to the entire system will not happen.

**5. Increase park and recreation department resources.** Besides taking the lead on creating improvements in the system, additional resources are needed to help the department provide ongoing maintenance to parks that have undergone those improvements.

#### **6. Gradually Bring Parks Into ADA Compliance.**

All new facilities already must be ADA compliant (Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 [ADA]), but existing facilities have had a long grace period to come into compliance. Short term and permanent fixes will be part of each park's capital improvements list in this plan.

**7. Create new outdoor pool.** The outdoor pool is an aging facility (about 40 years old) in great need of repair, as well as needing to comply with the new ADA pool regulations of 2010.

## **Chapter 6**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

Recommendations and Capital Improvements are strategies for satisfying issues identified. Although it is unlikely that all recommendations presented in this plan will be undertaken in the next five years, they should be recognized as causes for action if the opportunity or need arises.

#### **A. RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **River Bend Trail**

Merrill's outdoor recreation vision statement recognizes the livability that the Wisconsin River adds to the city. The River District Development Foundation of Merrill is pursuing plans for a trail from downtown to Council Grounds State Park along the Wisconsin River – *River Bend Trail*.

- Complete parts of the trail as the opportunities arise, and attempt to finish segments when they are mostly complete (e.g. a segment is defined as the corridor between two roads). See the map in Attachment F.

##### **Connect Parks with Bike and Pedestrian Trails**

Merrill has parks interspersed along the Wisconsin River and Prairie River within densely developed housing. Connections between parks will focus on using the existing street network.

- Analyze how to make sure the roads and sidewalks are friendly to wheelchairs and bicyclists, and make sure connections exist from each park to each neighborhood.

##### **Develop Volunteerism Mechanism**

Merrill residents would like to help build the improvements they want, because they have time, and understand that most people don't want their taxes going up. A combination of grants, city taxes, club fundraisers, and club & public volunteer efforts could be used to improve some types of park facilities (see Fig. 2).

Some possible projects include:

- Painting murals on buildings.
- Upgrade athletic facilities.

##### **Grow the Park Endowment Fund**

The Merrill Park Endowment Fund is a joint effort between the Merrill Parks & Recreation Department and the Merrill Area Community Foundation. The Endowment Fund will allow the Department to invest in park improvements, recreation programs, playgrounds, and special events that have not been possible due to budget shortfalls.

- Actively promote the fund's existence among the general public and specialty groups of all age groups.
- Possibly create a memorial program where people can provide a specific donation and receive a brick paver engraved with their name and placed next to an existing tree, bench, or other object, and with new objects costing more.

### **Concessions in Park**

A possible way to raise money for park maintenance and increase isolated park area usage could be coordinating a local restaurant to operate a unique concession stand.

#### **Keys to possible success:**

- Provide a unique experience. Selling concessions in a park is just a convenience. If it is to make revenue to support the park, then it must be unique. High end foods that are not commonly available within Merrill would be part of the unique experience. Another part of a unique experience would be a convenient location or a destination use that residents would consider a hidden gem. Maybe this spot would become a hangout for musicians to jam at, which would provide free entertainment to patrons who would linger and buy concessions.
- Request a local food and beverage establishment to operate such a facility. Additional park staff would be needed if a restaurant does not choose to participate. Part of the contract would state that the City would receive 20% of beverage sales and 10% of food sales.

### **ADA Improvements**

Cooperate with Streets Department to reline parking lots to add accessible marked parking spots in each park, and also to fix any paths in disrepair. Each park has a variety of ADA improvements listed in the Capital Improvements section on page 32.

### **Develop Trails in Memorial Wildlife Area**

Merrill Memorial Wildlife Area, described on page 15 & Map 2, is a vast area that was never developed since its donation to the City. No management of the land exists now. Actively managing the forest for wildlife and developing trails on the property would open up this resource for more people to use. Increased usage of this property from trail development would bring a need for restrooms, map kiosks, and trailhead parking. With its proximity to the Prairie Dells Park and Lincoln County Forest, future considerations should include connecting this wildlife area with the county lands for developing a contiguous trail system throughout.

The Lincoln County Forestry, Land, and Parks Department is considering upgrading the restroom at Haymeadow County Park. Haymeadow County Park is a former DOT wayside with a small picnic area and restrooms. This park may see increased usage due to planned development at Prairie Dells Scenic Viewing Area.

- Cooperate with County Forestry to determine how any improvements within the Merrill Memorial Wildlife Area will compliment Haymeadow County Park and Prairie Dells Scenic Area.
- Consider creating a property management plan to determine which areas would be developed for what uses.

### **Snowmobile Trail**

The Lincoln County Outdoor Recreation Plan lists a need to review snowmobile trails in Merrill to determine if permanent easements are needed to maintain access to destinations within Merrill like gas stations, hotels, and restaurants.

- Review snowmobile routes connecting Merrill with surrounding areas to determine if multiple use trail right-of-ways (easement) that snowmobiles could use are needed.

### **Market the Park Amenities**

A variety of residents commented on advertising what is currently available and especially after the following amenities are added:

- Refurbished ball fields;
  - Advertising could occur in conjunction with the Chamber.
- New RV amenities possibly at Riverside Park;
  - An ad could be taken out wherever RV clientele would see it;
  - Possibly contacting a reporter could get this new facility mentioned locally in Merrill, and regionally in neighboring counties;
- A tot lot within an existing park
  - A note in local mass media could promote this new use in a park.

One mass media marketing possibility for the whole city is to use existing newsletter money once a year to create a full glossy “insiders guide.” Additional money for such a project would come from selling advertising space in the guide.

### **Creative Park Programming**

Anyone would be able to host events in the parks for the benefit of the community. Possibly create a formal approval process through the Parks Department to allow professionals and interested individuals to share their craft in 90-minute time blocks in a park. The Parks Department would also coordinate a common print or other mass media theme to advertise each 90-minute event, and the instructor’s sponsor (acquired by the instructor) would pay for advertising the event.

For example, a local for-profit instructor may wish to teach a Tai Chi session in a park. No cost would be charged by the Parks Department for use of the park and no charge would be levied to those who showed up, but an advertising fee would be charged for the instructor’s sponsor to pay. Instructors would also have the option of renting a space for their class to show up and use too. The 90-minute blocks of time would be enough to whet someone’s appetite for the activity, without the hassle of registering in advance.

### **Create Broader Park Definition**

Residents in the visioning sessions recognized that different areas may provide unique outdoor recreational opportunities. These spaces may keep young people interested in their city’s history, and provide different experiences than traditional green spaces.

#### **Examples in Merrill:**

- Historical properties along the Wisconsin River, south of the railroad tracks and east of Center Avenue may be developed into for-profit businesses that may generate many bicycle and walking trips to this scenic area. The *Eastside Waterfront Initiative, Riverfront revitalization Plan, 2010*, documents a variety of ways to develop this area of Merrill. For example, the water tower could become a landmark where people meet for a bike ride, a walk, or some “creative park programming” listed earlier. A building nearby could become the second “Smith Center” that would be free of interior ice usage as requested by visioning session residents.

- An island park could become an outdoor concert facility (see Fig. 3).
- **Parkour** (does not currently exist in Merrill) – Individuals may use public spaces to become physically active.

**Parkour** is a training discipline that developed out of military obstacle course training. Practitioners (traceurs) aim to move from one place to another, negotiating the obstacles in between.

Parkour is not widely practiced in dedicated public facilities such as skate parks. Although efforts are being made to create places for it, some traceurs do not like the idea as it is contradictory to the philosophy of freedom. Traceurs practice parkour in urban areas such as gyms, parks, playgrounds, offices, and abandoned structures.

Concerns have been raised regarding trespassing, damage of property, and the practice in inappropriate places. However, most traceurs will take care of their training spots and will remove themselves quickly and quietly from a public place if asked. One of parkour's values is to respect people and places as well as helping others. One of the first campaigns to preserve this sort of philosophy is the 'Leave No Trace' project, stressing the importance of training safe, respecting the environment and the people around you.

**Memorial Forest Timber Salvage Sale Revenue Priority Expenditures:**

\*The following is a summary of projects or equipment that has been referenced, requested, or discussed within the past year through our planning process and two public hearings for the Outdoor Recreation Plan. These items were added by Commission and Public Input. I have included the summaries from the public visioning sessions and excerpts from the current Outdoor Recreation Plan. I feel it important to give serious consideration to those items that receive continual mention from the public and from the Parks & Recreation Commission.

<b><u>Project/Equipment</u></b>	<b><u>Estimated Cost</u></b>
Stewardship 50% match for Memorial Forest	\$13,000
Memorial Forest Continued Improvements	\$25,000
Zamboni	\$100,000
Contribute to Park Endowment Fund	\$20,000
Allow for more continual improvements and maintenance-	
-on a year to year basis, not just crisis management	
Normal Park Restrooms	\$85,000
New Outdoor Water Park	\$4,000,000
**Demo old pool/restrooms	\$125,000
New Restrooms at Stange Park	\$85,000
**New pool location dependent	
Bike/Pedestrian Route amenities City Wide	*\$10,000 currently *10,000 for racks, Signs, maps, paint, promotion, etc.
Riverside Trail rehab work	\$15,000
Gebert Park Trail rehab work	\$5,000
Irrigation to MARC Athletic Fields	\$50,000
Resurface Stange Park Tennis Courts	\$20,000
Trail improvements MARC (paving, more granite)	\$20,000
Restrooms at Prairie Trails	\$35,000 (vault toilets)
Expand Skate Park to tennis court west	\$40,000
Expand Disc Golf Course	\$10,000
Pedestrian Trail along Prairie River to connect to River Bend Trail	\$???
Install field lights on Varsity Soccer & Softball Field	\$160,000
Replace aging lights at Athletic Park	\$210,000
Replace aging lights at Ott's Park	\$110,000
Trail connectivity	\$??
Parking Lot north of Smith Center building	\$50,000
*Dependent upon Pool Location selection	
Would not recommend considering parking lot until	
Pool location is completely decided upon	

\*\*This is only a partial list and as you can see it is very extensive. As previously mentioned I attached the lists that were derived from our recent plan and there are many worthy projects remaining that are not mentioned on this list.

**2014 Capital Request(s) Merrill Parks & Recreation Department**  
**Approved and ranked by Parks & Recreation Commission 10/2/13**  
***(Rank scale is 1=most important)***

**1.) Equipment:**

Trade in current John Deere 72" front deck mowers (1145 & 1445) for 2014 John Deere 1445 front deck mower. The old 1145 model currently has a snow blower and cab on it and is used quite heavily for the sidewalks that were added so the new model will have to include a hard cab and blower. The blower and cab from the 1145 is not transferrable to the new 1445 model.

**Requested Amount:   \$30,000**

**Improvements**

**2.) Smith Center HVAC replacements (cont'd):**

Preventatively place 2 aging heaters serving locker rooms 2, 3, 4, 5

**Requested Amount:   \$34,250**

**3.) Riverside Park:   Sandblast and repaint park shelter**

**Requested Amount:   \$10,000**

**3.) Stange Park: New metal roof over existing roof and repaint shelter**

**Requested Amount:   \$15,000**

**4.) Stange Park: Pool demolition (replace with Huffcutt pre-cast restroom building same as Normal Park proposal)**

**Requested Amount:   \$175,000**

***\*\*Dependent upon Pool Location selection, and decision on what to do with current pool structure. Current exterior restrooms are non-ADA compliant and in need of replacement at some point in the future regardless. (Especially as a "reservable park")***

**5.) Normal Park:       New restrooms (Huffcutt pre-cast restroom building similar to Riverside Park)**

**Requested Amount:   \$100,000 \*Will cost more than Riverside because of need to run all utilities to proposed site vs. Riverside was disconnect and reconnect with modular building**

**6.) New Municipal Pool:**

**Requested Amount: \$4,000,000**

***\*\*Dependent upon location, size, design of new pool. Also will depend upon community support through donations and fund drive.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Dan Wendorf  
Parks & Recreation Director  
City of Merrill

# NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

210 McClellan Street, Suite 210, Wausau, Wisconsin 54403  
Telephone: 715-849-5510 Fax: 715-849-5110  
Web Page: [www.ncwrpc.org](http://www.ncwrpc.org) Email: [staff@ncwrpc.org](mailto:staff@ncwrpc.org)



SERVING ADAMS, FOREST, JUNEAU, LANGLADE, LINCOLN, MARATHON, ONEIDA, PORTAGE, VILAS AND WOOD COUNTIES

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Merrill Parks & Recreation Commission  
FROM: Fred Heider, AICP  
DATE: January 3, 2013  
  
RE: 2013-2018 Merrill Outdoor Recreation Plan—Results from 1<sup>st</sup> Public Hearing

---

Below is a summary of what I heard from those in attendance at the January 2, 2013 public hearing on the plan. This summary below will go in the plan on about page 19-20:

---

### Public Hearing Results

The first of two public hearings was held on January 2, 2013. Over forty-five people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Committee members, the director of the City's Parks & Recreation Department, a planner from NCWRPC, the Mayor, the City Administrator, and several City Council Members were present, and a few people provided comments.

The general theme from those public comments was definitely to implement the plan, but to also carefully consider long term and short term costs to the tax payers. Other themes related to specific projects that should become high priorities:

1. Make Merrill bicycle friendly;
  2. Implement the River Bend Trail;
  3. Continue working on projects from the last 5-year plan;
  4. Cooperate with County Forestry to develop 1) trails, and 2) a timber management plan in Merrill Memorial Forest;
  5. Assess and upgrade all facilities at the MARC; and
  6. Please provide a second public hearing on this plan.
- 

Also attached are small revisions to the Capital Improvements list in the plan. The changes are minor but reflect some of the comments heard at the January public hearing such as:

1. We now know that a Bicycle & Pedestrian plan will be created, and we will begin with the already mapped "Bike Route Designations;"
2. Begin "work on" was replaced with "planning for" new aquatic center. Maybe the sentiment was to create a basic document that lists how pool creation and maintenance would be funded.
3. Begin "work on" was replaced with "create implementation plan..." for the River Bend Trail. Maybe creating a *memorandum of understanding* between the City and the River Bend Trail Foundation would outline cooperative efforts that each would undertake; and
4. Replaced "visitor center" with "trail head" at City Forest. A visitor center brings visions of a building, while a trail head could be a building or information kiosk.



## City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Visioning Session

October 9, 2012

Process facilitated and report completed by

Art Lersch

University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County

Thirteen people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation members, the director of the city's Parks & Recreation Department, and a planner from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning attended the second of two visioning sessions on October 3, 2012 related to the Merrill parks system. The conversation was facilitated by Art Lersch, Community Resource Development Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County.

### I. Prioritizing Concepts

Participants prioritized the list of visionary concepts discussed during the first session. They identified the following priorities for the entire park system. The items are in no particular order.

- **Connectivity** (link pedestrian and bike trails.) Trails should become linear parks that will attract people of all ages throughout the year.
- **Build bathroom facilities** that can be used throughout the year. These facilities should be placed near trails/linear parks. Other new facilities should be built at existing parks.
- **Continue to upgrade athletic facilities.** This should always be done with keeping in mind the potential economic impact additional tournaments could have on the city.
- **Improve communication between parks user groups and the city.** Much of the work to develop connections between trails, build bathrooms, etc. cannot take place unless communication amongst stakeholders is improved. Without better communication, the collaborations necessary to make improvements to the entire system will not happen.
- **Increase park and recreation department resources.** Besides taking the lead on creating improvements in the system, additional resources are needed to help the department provide ongoing maintenance to parks that have undergone those improvements.

The group also emphasized that an effective **marketing plan** needs to be developed to attract people to the parks. They also indicated that the **Parks and Recreation Department focus on growing its existing endowment fund**. The department director reminded meeting participants that the fund can and should be used to help finance parks improvements but cannot be utilized for staff salaries/benefits.

There was some additional discussion about getting a better sense of who is using the parks based on age.

## II. Other Concepts

The following list is a reminder of the issues not mentioned as priorities but should, the group indicated, be addressed further into the implementation of the new Outdoor Recreation Plan.

- Establish a city Public Works Department responsible for handling all park maintenance (e.g. City of Plover).
- Volunteer groups will have adopted sections of parks to maintain/improve, and market. (Volunteers who have ownership, who take pride in the section they are maintaining).
- Create a broader definition of what a park is; includes more varied uses; location in other more non-traditional places such as industrial parks, roughage areas, expanded current playground areas, along rivers, etc.
- All parks should be centers of outdoor educational workshops/events. Facilities should be developed to make this a reality.

Meeting participants noted that part of the “**broader definition of what a park is**” is embedded in the desire to develop linear parks throughout the city (trails) that are connected.

## III. Vision Statement Development

After reviewing the concepts discussed during the last meeting under the appreciative inquiry scenario and the differences between a vision and a mission statement, the facilitator split the larger group into two work units. Each unit developed a draft vision statement.

During discussion about and wordsmithing of the two draft statements, the large group developed the following vision statement for the City of Merrill Parks System.

*“MERRILL CITY OF PARKS IS COMMITTED TO CELEBRATING ITS HERITAGE THROUGH DIVERSIFIED OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES ALONG THE WISCONSIN AND PRAIRIE RIVERS WHICH ENHANCES QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL GENERATIONS.”*

(Note: The group vacillated over the phrase “outdoor passions” versus “outdoor opportunities.” Although “passions” was chosen, the word does not sound right in the context of the sentence. It will be up to the city Parks and Recreation Commission to change the wording back to “outdoor passions” if it wishes.)



## City of Merrill Parks & Recreation Visioning Session

Sept. 5, 2012

Process facilitated and report completed by

Art Lersch

University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County

Note: Highlighted items were changed per comments at the Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> Session.

Twenty people, including local residents, City of Merrill Parks & Recreation members, the director of the city's Parks & Recreation Department, and a planner from North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning attended the first of two visioning sessions on September 5, 2012 related to the Merrill parks system. The conversation was facilitated by Art Lersch, Community Resource Development Educator, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Lincoln County.

### I. Primary Discussion Themes

The following ideas were identified as potentially promoting long-term positive change for the entire park system. Many but not all were discussed thoroughly during the evening. Many of these ideas could serve the purpose if implemented of conveying a collective image of how the park system should enhance residents' quality of life and attract more visitors to the City of Merrill. Those items that were discussed the most and by a relatively broad cross section of attendees are in bold directly below.

- **Build new or upgrade existing bathroom facilities throughout the park system.**
- Improve athletic fields and their amenities such as scoreboards, fencing, etc.
- **Make parks more American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.**
- Establish a city Public Works Department responsible for handling all park maintenance (e.g. City of Plover).
- **Connect parks with pedestrian and bike trails. Connect these trails to other regional trails (e.g. Bearskin, Hiawatha, Mountain Bay, etc.)**
- **Develop and implement a park marketing plan.**
- **Volunteer groups will have adopted sections of parks to maintain/improve, and market.** (Volunteers who have ownership, who take pride in the section they are maintaining).
- **Create a broader definition of what a park is; includes more varied uses; location in other more non-traditional places such as industrial parks, roughage areas, expanded current playground areas, along rivers, etc.**
- All parks should be centers of outdoor educational workshops/events. Facilities should be developed to make this a reality.
- **Improve communication between the city and current/potential volunteer and user groups.** (Note: Many in the audience agree that positive, visionary improvements must begin with this.)
- **Parks and Recreation Department will have to be changed; will need more resources, to achieve any of the suggestions.**

## II. Broad Parks & Recreation Vision

In order to get attendees thinking about what the City of Merrill park system should look like in the not so distant future, they were presented with the following scenario.

*YOU ARE ASLEEP FOR 15 YEARS. WHEN YOU WAKE UP YOU FIND THAT MIRACLES HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN ALL OF THE MERRILL PARKS. WHAT HAS HAPPENED THAT MADE MERRILL PARKS THE MOST PLEASANT TO VISIT IN WISCONSIN?*

Attendees were also asked to consider the following criteria when discussing this scenario and later on in the session when attempting to identify improvements that can/should be made in specific parks.

- A. *DEGREE TO WHICH IMPLEMENTED MEASURE HAS THE POTENTIAL OF GENERATING CONSISTENT PARKS AND RECREATION REVENUE OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME (MANY YEARS).*
- B. *HIGH NUMBER OF POTENTIAL DESIRABLE AND MEASURABLE COMMUNITY IMPACTS (OTHER THAN REVENUE GENERATION).*
- C. *HIGH IMPORTANCE. (WILL THERE BE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES IF THE MEASURE IS NOT IMPLEMENTED SOON?)*
- D. *CAPACITY OF PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT TO TAKE THE LEAD IN IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURE.*
- E. *POTENTIAL NUMBER OF PARTNER AGENCIES/INDIVIDUALS (IN ADDITION TO PARKS & RECREATION) INTERESTED IN WORKING TOGETHER AND HAVING THE COLLECTIVE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT THE MEASURE.*
- F. *ABILITY OF PARKS & RECREATION AND/OR OTHER PARTNERS TO PROVIDE MAINTENANCE AND UPKEEP RELATED TO THE NEWLY IMPLEMENTED MEASURE.*

Those in attendance mentioned the following ideas.

- Indoor aquatic center with warm water therapy area. A zero/barrier free entrance should also be included. Perhaps this facility can be located at the MARC.
- Toddler Park – a space with toddler sized play structure in an existing park (tot lot). Maybe have a few of these around town.
- Permanent bathroom facilities (no port-a-potties).
  - ✓ At the MARC softball and baseball fields
  - ✓ Area from parking lot to ball fields - make it handicap accessible
  - ✓ Make a better experience by adding automatic score boards and other amenities
  - ✓ Not enough ADA parking spots throughout MARC/other park parking lots
- Develop an open space area in the downtown where the old bakery was torn down.

- Promote the arts in the downtown area, including the painting of murals along outside walls.
- Upgrade athletic facilities at all parks. The primary aim of doing this should be to attract for tournaments (WIAA) to the city. More tournaments generate more revenue for the entire city (hotels, restaurants, other businesses).
- Create areas of serenity in the parks, primarily for folks who want to use the facility and stay away from crowds attending or engaged in athletic activities.
- Develop more handicap accessible parking spaces throughout the park system, particularly at the MARC.
- Develop even stronger connections with the Merrill School System (partner in creating park based athletic and educational events).
- Establish a city Public Works Department responsible for handling all park maintenance (e.g. City of Plover).
- Connect parks with pedestrian and bike trails. Connect these trails to other regional trails (e.g. Bearskin, Hiawatha, Mountain Bay, etc.). Incorporate entertainment, educational opportunities, water access points, etc. along these trails and in parks.
- Develop and implement a park marketing plan.
  - Market the parks to residents and to potential external audiences (we must compete with other towns for patrons).
  - Establish park fundraising goals.
  - Grow and make better known the existing parks system endowment
- Develop RV/travel campground in appropriate parks, such as Riverside. (Capture local tourists who need to stay in area for an event such as the Tomahawk MDA/Harley Ride).
- Create a park east of Center Avenue (none currently exist).
- Create a park in the Johnson Street area (south of the Arena) & another park south of Joe Snow Rd. Both this area (Johnson St) and east of Center Avenue were designated several years ago as possible places to locate new parks.
- Volunteer groups will have adopted sections of parks to maintain/improve, and market. (Volunteers who have ownership, who take pride in the section they are maintaining. Marshfield is a good model).
  - More organized collaboration is needed to successfully manage volunteer groups.
  - Central project volunteer manager could be helpful.

- Volunteers could take the lead in fundraising for park sections that they are maintaining.
- City should relax rules that make it difficult for or prevents park development.
- Improve communication between the city and current/potential volunteer and user groups.
- Create a broader definition of what a park is; includes more varied uses; location in other more non-traditional places such as industrial parks, roughage areas, expanded current playground areas, along rivers, etc.
- Develop park Emergency Action Plan.
- Connect parks with local Native American reservations; hold educational events in parks teaching non-natives what that culture is about and vice versa.
- All parks should be centers of outdoor educational workshops/events. Facilities should be developed to make this a reality.
- More uses for older children and younger adults.
- Develop access points from parks and connecting trails to rivers.
- Create more opportunities for indoor/outdoor recreation (more disk golf, etc.).
- Parks and Recreation Department will have to be changed; will need more resources, to achieve any of the suggestions made during this meeting.
- Develop Crime Prevention through Environmental Design plan. We need to plan ahead for this purpose.
- More winter utilization for all parks.
- Amphitheater, farmers market near the riverfront.
- Parks dept. does an outstanding job with the limited resources they have.
- 911 access analysis of each park - can you find a 911 caller in a park?
- Collaborate with whole community to satisfy a 1,000 kid event.
- Identify and expand entertainment & cultural opportunities within each park.

- Need a strong positive attitude, so that different ideas can be presented and people not mentally beat up.
- Need a year-round MARC building that does not have ice in it (hockey/ice skating) so others can use it in winter.

### III. Ideas for Specific Parks

- Lion's Park bathroom facilities need upgrading.
- Level ground of the park near the library (prevent high water).
- Park and Recreation kids; there should be better organization of their group so they do not dominate the park, discouraging others from using it.
- MARC; there should be a bathroom facility closer to the ball diamonds.
- A grandstand should be built at Athletic Park.
- Complete the development of Normal Park. It should be developed into an entertainment park. This is perfect because the park is easy to find. Build off of the fact that this is the home of the Merrill City Band. Restrooms and landscaping work should be part of the development.
- Improve existing skateboard park primarily by developing some sound proofing.
- Make Gerbert Park more accessible, much easier to locate (primarily using directional signage).
- Cenotaph "Memorial" Park - needs extensive restoration, it is overgrown now.

### IV. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled to take place Wednesday, October 3, 2012, 6:00 p.m. (Likely to be held in Council Chambers.) The purposes of the meeting are to prioritize the primary suggestions that were made during the first session and to develop an overarching vision statement for the City of Merrill Parks & Recreation system.

## **B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS 2013-2018**

Capital improvements to parks are the addition of labor and materials that improve the overall value and usefulness of that park. Routine maintenance is considered the normal cycle of repair and upkeep for existing facilities and is traditionally funded through the Park and Recreation Department's operations budget. For example, upgrading an outdoor restroom facility for universal access would qualify as a capital improvement, while repainting an outdoor restroom is considered routine maintenance.

Projects listed below are subject to receiving budgetary approval in the years they are planned. All listed projects may not be completed. Short term and permanent fixes to make each park ADA accessible are identified among other improvements listed below:

- 2013 Construct Dog Park
  - Lions Park Restroom ADA Remodel
  - Begin planning for new aquatic center
  - Create implementation plan for developing and maintaining River Bend Trail
  - Begin citywide bicycle & pedestrian plan creation
  - Riverside Park Trail improvements
  - Gebert Park Trail improvements
  - Develop master plan for Normal Park
  - New infield at Athletic Park
  
- 2014 Continue work on Aquatic Center Development
  - Sandblast & Repaint Riverside Park Shelter
  - Construct restroom facility at Normal Park
  - Begin implementation of master plan for Normal Park
  - Construct restroom facility at Prairie Trails Park
  - Install lights on varsity softball field at MARC
  - Continue River Bend trail development
  - Irrigation to Athletic Fields at MARC
  - Begin implementing bicycle & pedestrian plan
  - Emergency exit route established at MARC
  
- 2015 Lights on Varsity soccer field at MARC
  - Explore curling capabilities at Smith Center
  - Improvements/addition to Riverside Park Disc Golf Course
  - Restroom facility by MARC adult ball fields
  - New lights at Athletic Park
  - Finish and open new Aquatic Center
  - Finish River Bend Trail from Center Ave to Council Grounds
  - Continue implementing bicycle & pedestrian plan
  - Continue implementation of Normal Park Master Plan
  - Construct Basketball Courts at MARC
  
- 2016 Begin working establishment of River Bend Trail as State Trail
  - Begin working on connectivity of Bearskin/Hiawatha State Trails to Mountain Bay State Trail via our newly constructed River Bend Trail
  - New field lights at Ott's Park
  - Continue implementing bicycle & pedestrian plan

Continue implementation of Normal Park Master Plan

- 2017 Repave parking lot at Stange Park  
Lagoon Bridge replacements at Stange Park  
Construct meeting/banquet "4-season" room above community room in Smith Center  
Continue implementing bicycle & pedestrian plan  
Continue implementation of Normal Park Master Plan  
Trail expansion at Prairie Trails
- 2018 Install lights at Lions Park baseball complex  
City Forest road and trail improvements  
Construct trail head at City Forest  
Build new shelter with Council Grounds and WDNR along joint trail on south end of MARC  
Continue implementing bicycle & pedestrian plan

15th AVE S &amp; South Dakota St. Seattle, WA

## Welcome

The goal of the Beacon Food Forest is to design, plant and grow an edible urban forest garden that inspires our community to gather together, grow our own food and rehabilitate our local ecosystem.

Join us to improve public health by regenerating our public land into an edible forest ecosystem. We work to reduce agricultural climate impact, improve our local food security, provide educational opportunities, and celebrate growing food for the benefit of all species.

Please support the Beacon Food Forest by getting involved, donating and spreading the word.

## What is a Food Forest?

A food forest is a gardening technique or land management system, which mimics a woodland ecosystem by substituting edible trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals. Fruit and nut trees make up the upper level, while berry shrubs, edible perennials and annuals make up the lower levels. The Beacon Food Forest will combine aspects of native habitat rehabilitation with edible forest gardening.

The goal of the Beacon Food Forest is to bring the richly diverse community together by fostering a Permaculture Tree Guild approach to urban farming and land stewardship. By building a community around sharing food with the public we hope to be inclusive to all in need of food.

The Food Forest is set to include an **Edible Arboretum** with fruits gathered from regions around the world, a **Berry Patch** for canning, gleaning and picking, a **Nut Grove** with trees providing shade and sustenance, a **Community Garden** using the p-patch model for families to grow their own food, a **Gathering Plaza** for celebration and education, a **Kid's Area** for education and play and a **Living Gateway** to connect and serve as portals as you meander through the forest.

The Beacon Food Forest started in 2009 as a final design project for a permaculture design course. The 7-acre site is located in the Beacon Hill neighborhood to the west of Jefferson Park, 2.5 miles from downtown Seattle. Phase One (2 acres) is scheduled to be up and running by early 2014.

### About Permaculture

[View Our Video](#)

[About The Project](#)

## Get Involved

We are seeking the help of Beacon Hill community members, local institutions and city wide volunteers to join together to build and grow a Food Forest.

To get involved with our project and receive event notices about upcoming work parties, please [Join Our Mailing List](#).

In the meantime, there are committees working behind-the-scenes to develop this community project. The teams include field work, education, outreach, event planning and marketing services. All are welcome to get involved.

Forks up to all those who have supported our efforts so far.

[Sign Up for a P-patch Plot](#)

[Join Our Mailing List](#)

[Sign Up to Volunteer \(Soon!\)](#)

[View our Calendar](#)

## Support Our Community



## In The News

Crosscut  
February 16, 2012  
[Nation's largest public Food Forest takes root on Beacon Hill](#)

NPR  
March 1, 2012  
[Seattle's First Urban Food Forest Will Be Open To Foragers](#)

Food First  
Nov 2, 2012  
[Nurturing Food Sovereignty In The Big City](#)

Interchange Media Video  
June 7, 2012  
[Vimeo: Beacon Food Forest](#)

## Work Parties

November 16, 2013  
10am-3pm

October 19, 2013  
10am-3pm

## Events

To Be Announced

## Meetings

To Be Announced

The Beacon Food Forest is community powered and survives on generous donations of volunteers. This project's success is sustained by the support of neighbors around the world.



Several ways to support the Beacon Food Forest:

## Beacon Food Forest Permaculture Project

Donate Time or Materials  
Donate Music or Art

is located at 15th Ave S, and S Dakota St, Seattle WA to the **COMMUNITY POWERED**

acres site provides opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding, for education and recreation.

Visit us on-site to help us build our Food Forest or [Join Our Mailing List](#) to get involved.

[Get Directions](#)

[View Photos on Facebook](#)

### Contact Us

Jacqueline Cramer  
Co-founder, Site Management,  
Education  
[j.cramer@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.cramer@beaconfoodforest.org)

Glenn Herlihy  
Co-founder, Site Management, Media  
Relations  
[g.herlihy@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:g.herlihy@beaconfoodforest.org)

Melanie Coerver  
Administration  
[m.coerver@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:m.coerver@beaconfoodforest.org)

Judi Johnson  
Volunteer Coordinator  
[j.johnson@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.johnson@beaconfoodforest.org)

Julie Haack  
Arts and Culture  
[j.haack@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.haack@beaconfoodforest.org)

Jill DelSordi  
Marketing & Communications  
[j.delsordi@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:j.delsordi@beaconfoodforest.org)

Melody Wainscott  
Media Coordinator  
[m.wainscott@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:m.wainscott@beaconfoodforest.org)

Melanie Richardson  
Tour Coordinator  
[m.richardson@beaconfoodforest.org](mailto:m.richardson@beaconfoodforest.org)



Sponsored by



[GET INVOLVED](#) [DONATE](#) [LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT](#) [JOIN OUR MAILING LIST](#) [GET DIRECTIONS](#)

© 2013 Beacon Food Forest. All rights reserved. Design by [White Window Studios](#).

15th AVE S & South Dakota St. Seattle, WA

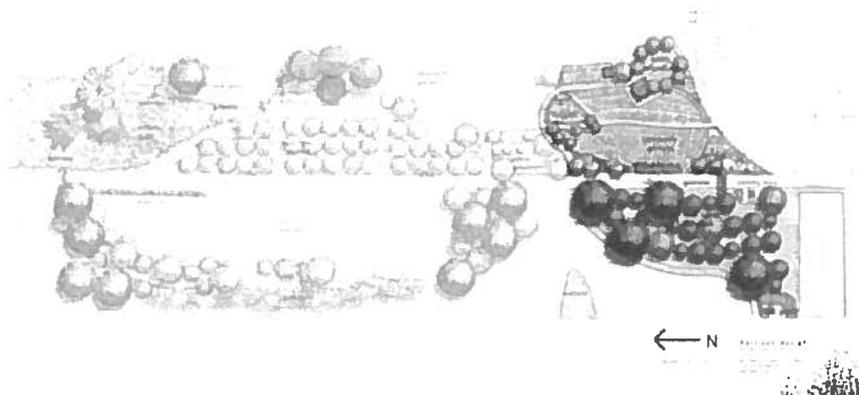
## About The Project

The Beacon Food Forest (BFF) started in 2009 as a result of a permaculture design course final project. To pass the course four students selected the BFF's actual site and created a dream design which demonstrated all the design elements we had learned in the course. The best tools to come out of this final project were a full size landscape design drawing, which we used to present our concept to the community and Seattle City agencies, along with the language to support this design. The schematic designs below held a lot of leverage. The design, drawn by a certified Landscape Architect, fit the actual topography of the site and had massive community support and input.

As volunteers we are doing our best to both build a public food forest and offer help to others who are thinking of building a food forest. If you find this advice helpful please consider a donation.

As of May 2013 we are continuing to work on the hardscaping, water supply and plant bed building as well as ongoing community engagement. We plan on planting the understory dwarf trees, shrubs and perennials in the fall of 2013 and open our P-Patch beds by late winter 2014.

## Phase I for Beacon Food Forest



## Full 7 Acre Proposal

### In The News

Crosscut  
February 16, 2012  
[Nation's largest public Food Forest takes root on Beacon Hill](#)

NPR  
March 1, 2012  
[Seattle's First Urban Food Forest Will Be Open To Foragers](#)

Food First  
Nov 2, 2012  
[Nurturing Food Sovereignty In The Big City](#)

Interchange Media Video  
June 7, 2012  
[Vimeo: Beacon Food Forest](#)

### Work Parties

March 15, 2014  
10am-3pm

February 15, 2014  
10am-3pm

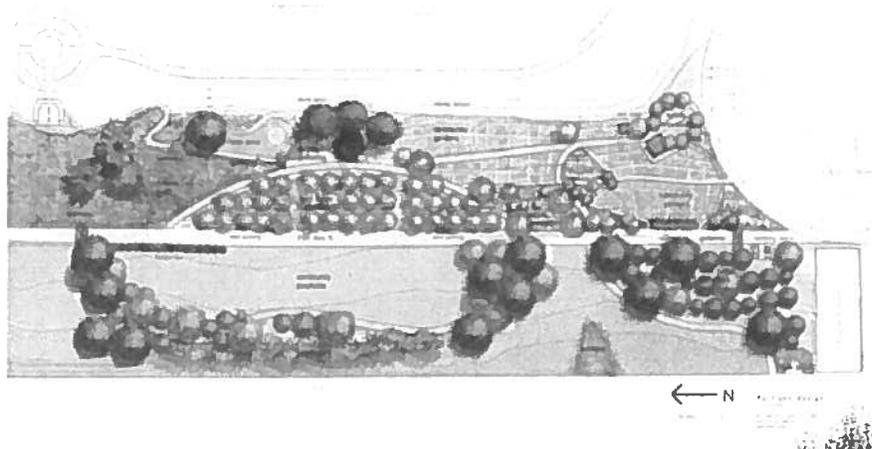
January 18, 2014  
10am-3pm

### Events

To Be Announced

### Meetings

To Be Announced



## Our Plan

The Beacon Food Forest values renewable resources and services while following Permaculture Principles (PCP).  
 Read more about our plan: [How We Got Started](#)

Steps:	Permaculture Principles:
Step 1: Find the land.	Observe and Interact.
Step 2: Find a core group of dedicated believers.	Integrate rather than segregate.
Step 3: Introduce the BFF Concept to the Community.	Use and value diversity.
Step 4: Create a relationship with the landlord and begin negotiations.	Use and value renewable resources and services. Apply self regulation and accept feedback.
Step 5: Create leverage.	Creatively use and respond to change.
Step 6 : Continuous Outreach and Community Engagement.	Use edges and value the marginal.



Community Partner



Sponsored by



© 2013 Beacon Food Forest. All rights reserved. Design by [White Window Studios](#).



**merrill**

Location. Nature. People.

**Smart Move**

## CITY OF MERRILL

Parks & Recreation Dept. - Smith Center

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

**To:** Parks & Recreation Commissioners  
**From:** Dan Wendorf  
Parks & Recreation Director  
**Re:** Geographic Pool Locations in other Communities

Dear Commissioners,

After hearing many discussions on Pool location within our community, as it relates to central location and convenience, I felt it necessary to help with the debate and use technology to see what other communities have done recently with their new water parks. I would certainly love to have a pool in a central location that is easily accessed by every one of our citizens. We have some unique challenges with each of our locations.

Attached you will find a series of "Google Maps" that I generated to show you where these other communities chose to construct their new aquatic facilities as it relates to the center of their respective communities. You will see that a majority of the locations are not located centrally. I am not lobbying one way or the other on location; I simply wanted to show you that there are many others that had to locate their facilities on the outer edges of their community.

I hope this helps.

Respectfully,

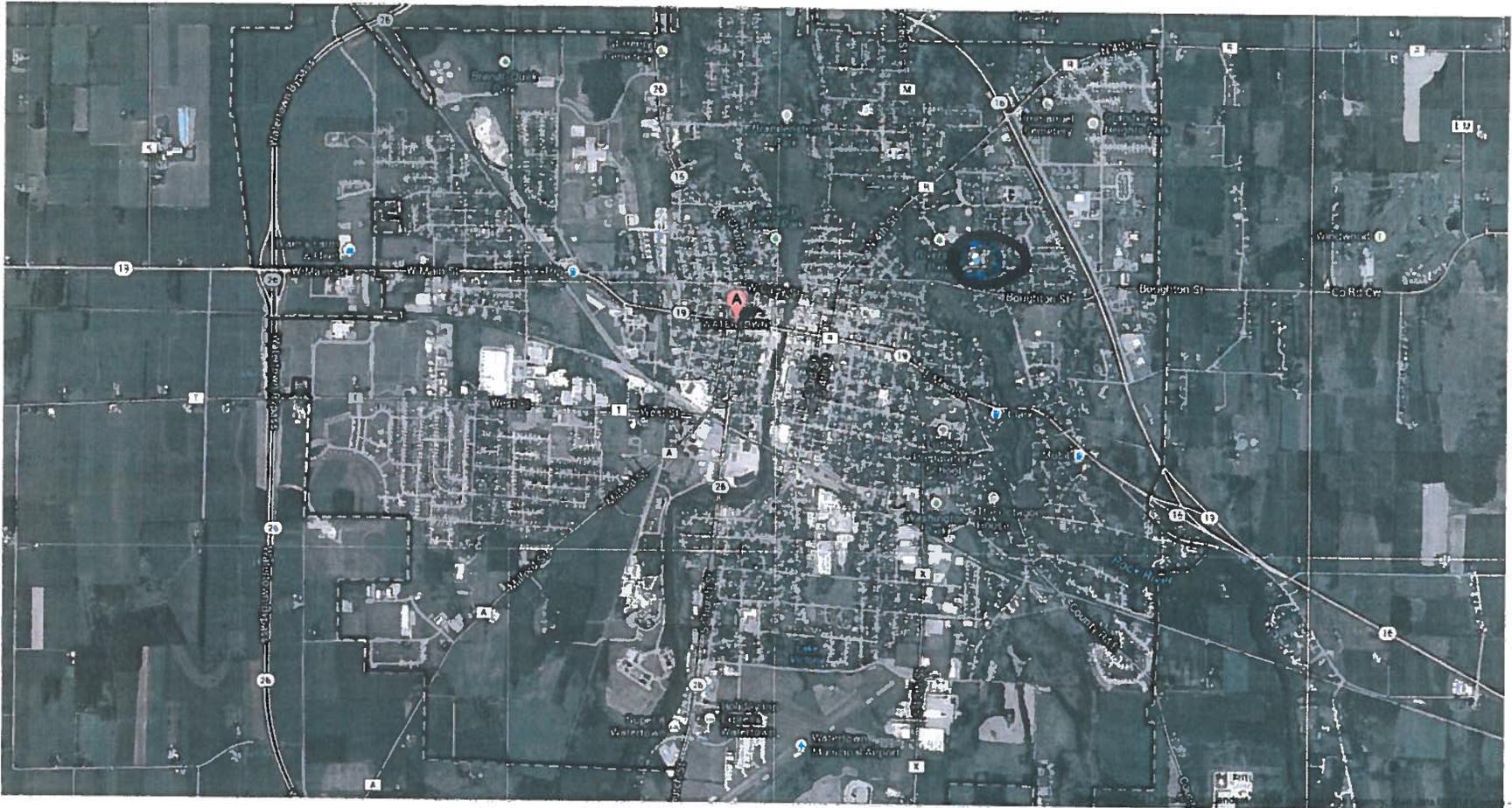
Dan Wendorf  
Parks & Recreation Director  
City of Merrill

1100 Marc Drive • Merrill, Wisconsin • 54452  
Rec. Dept. Phone: 715.536.7313 • Smith Center Phone: 715.536.6187  
Fax: 715.539.2790  
[www.merrillparkandrec.com](http://www.merrillparkandrec.com)

*An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.*



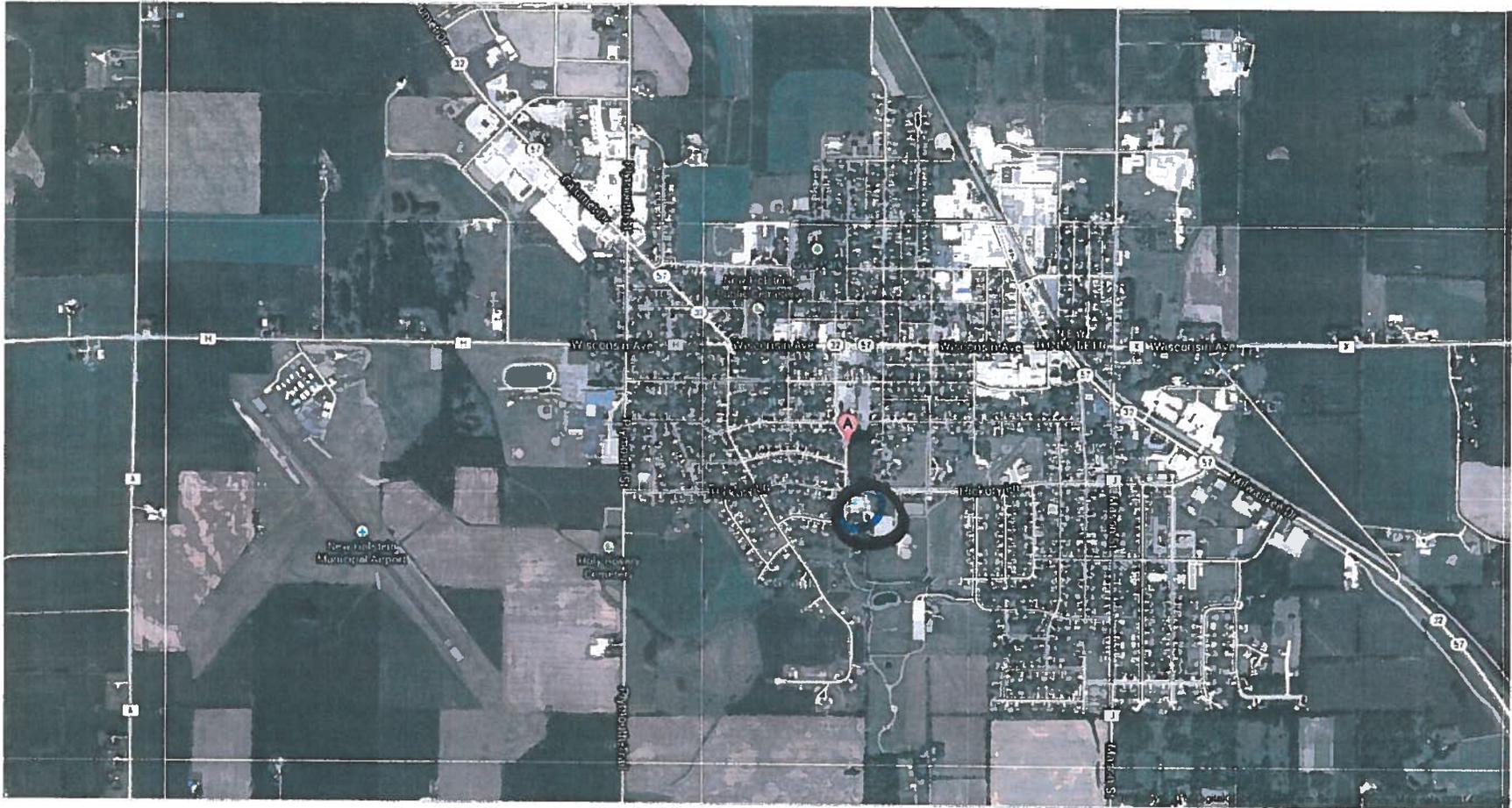
To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.







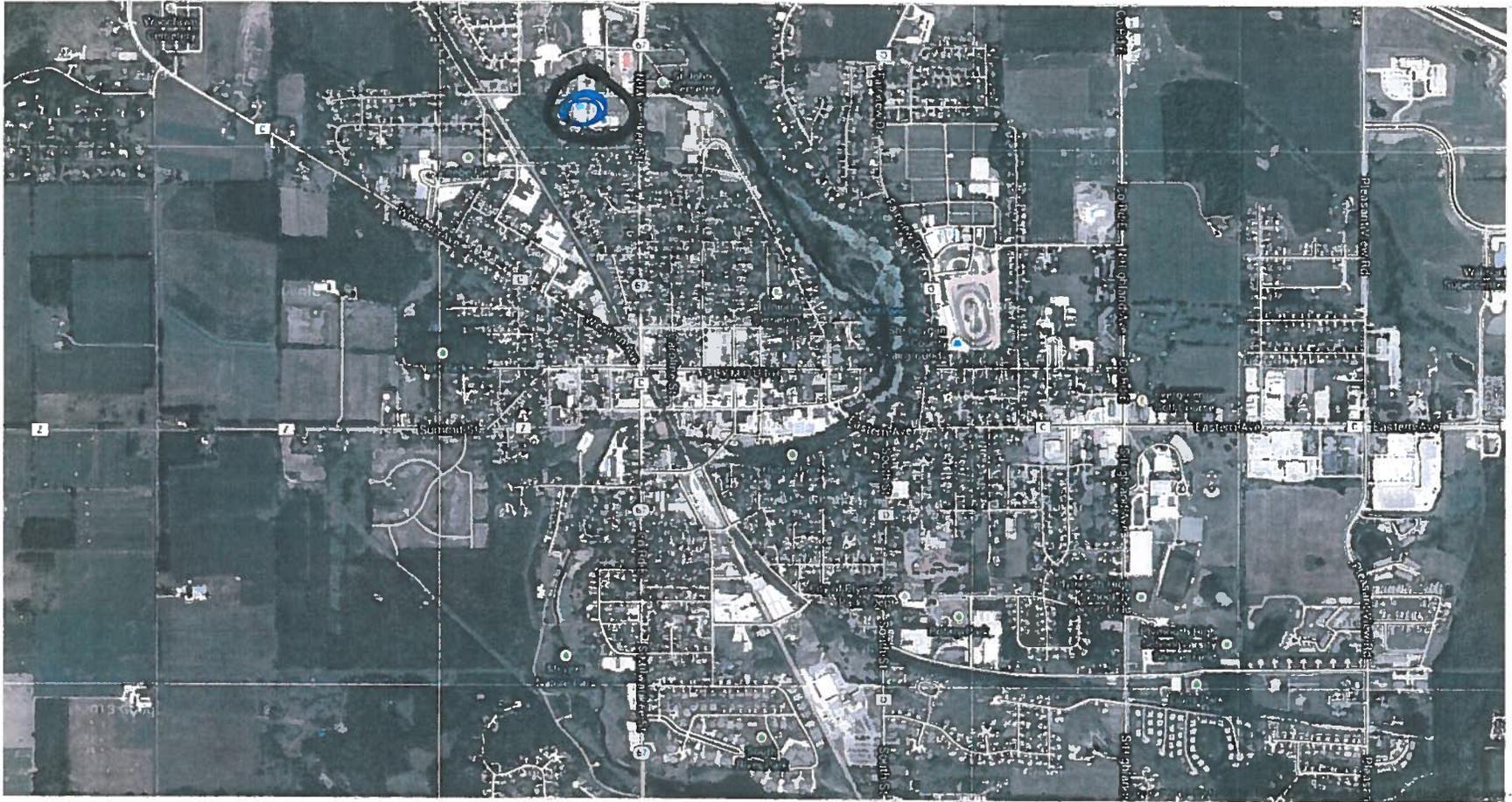
To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.



\* 2.5 mil 2009



To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





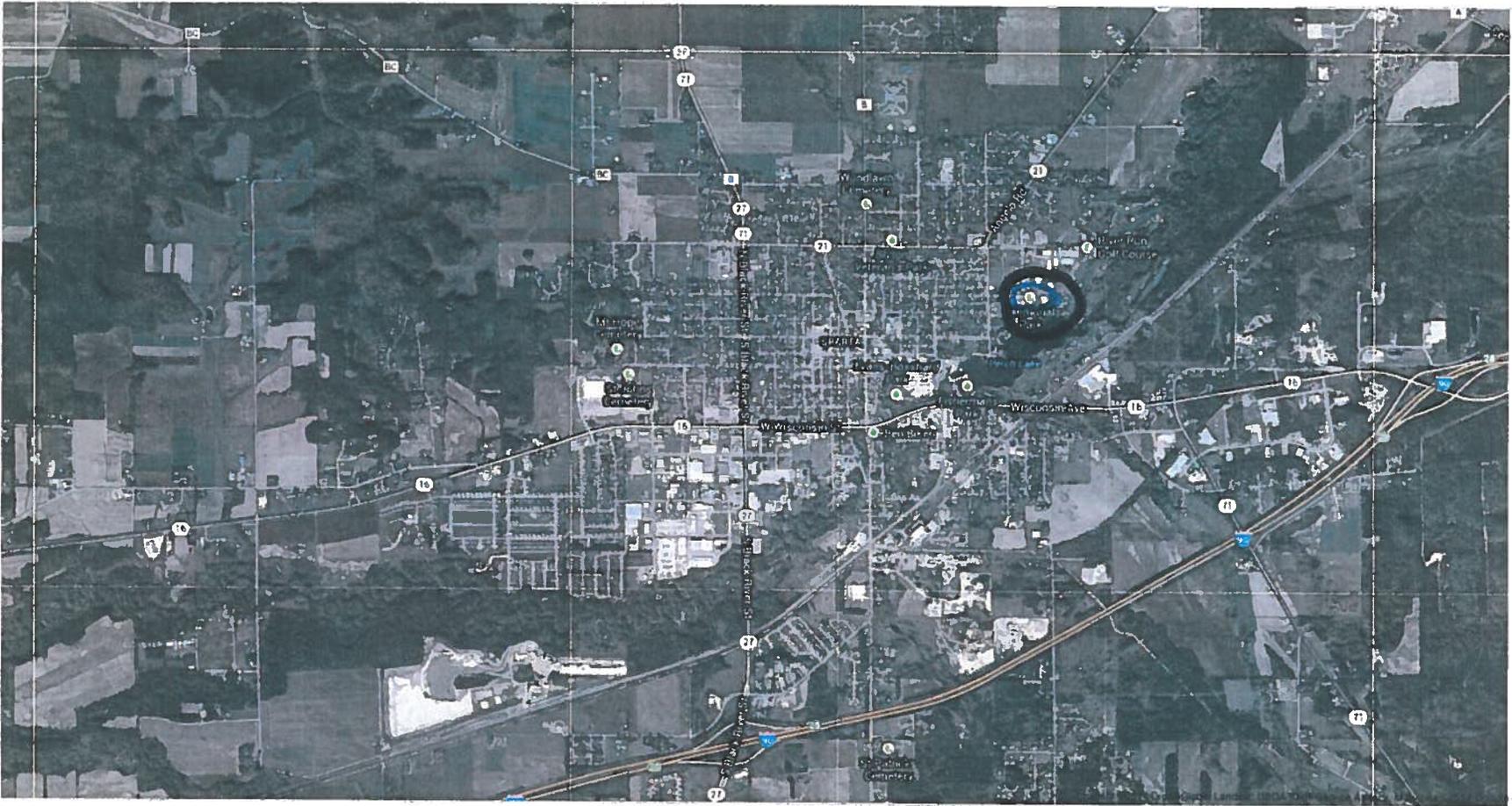
To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.



Sparta

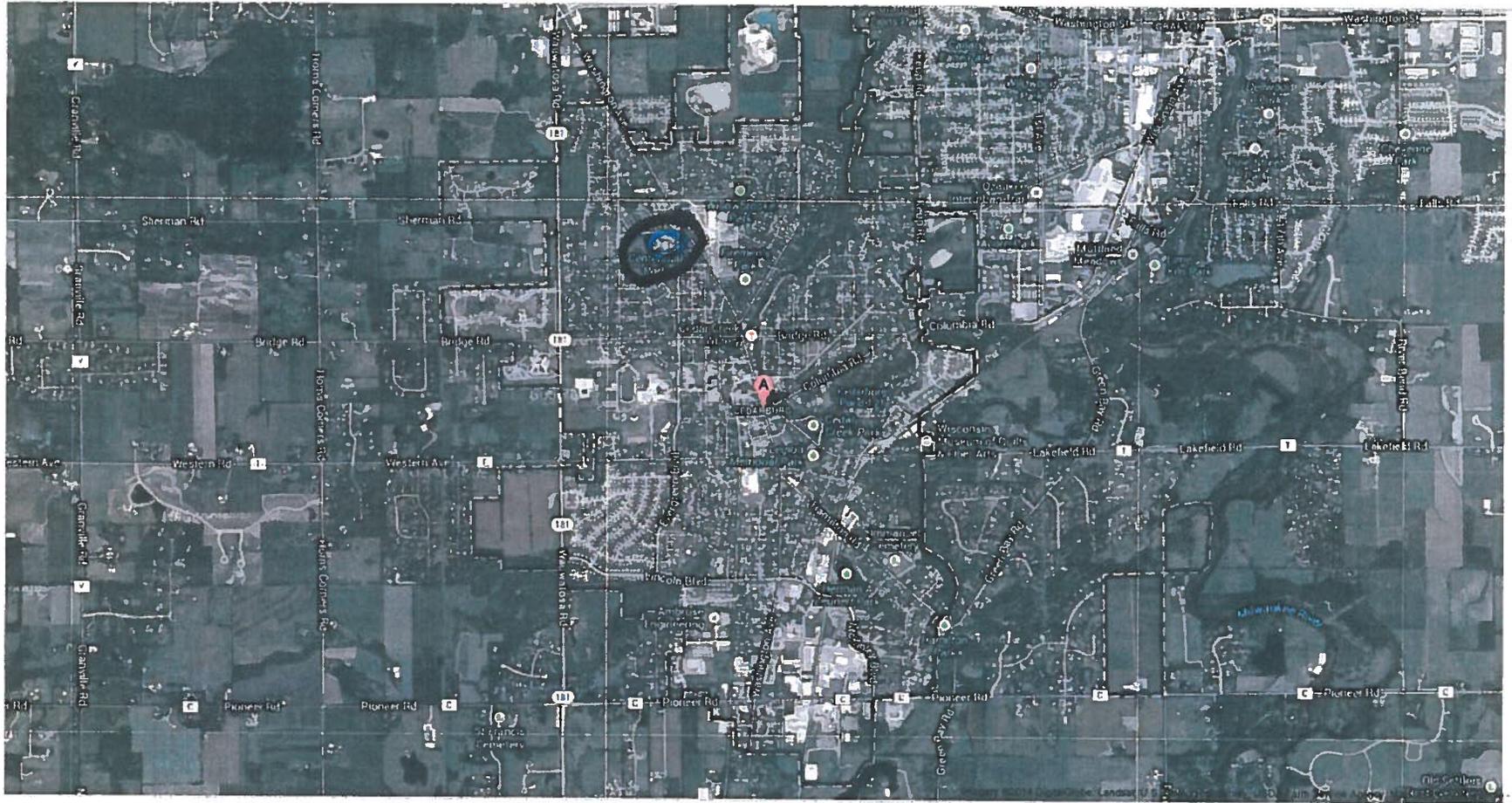


To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.



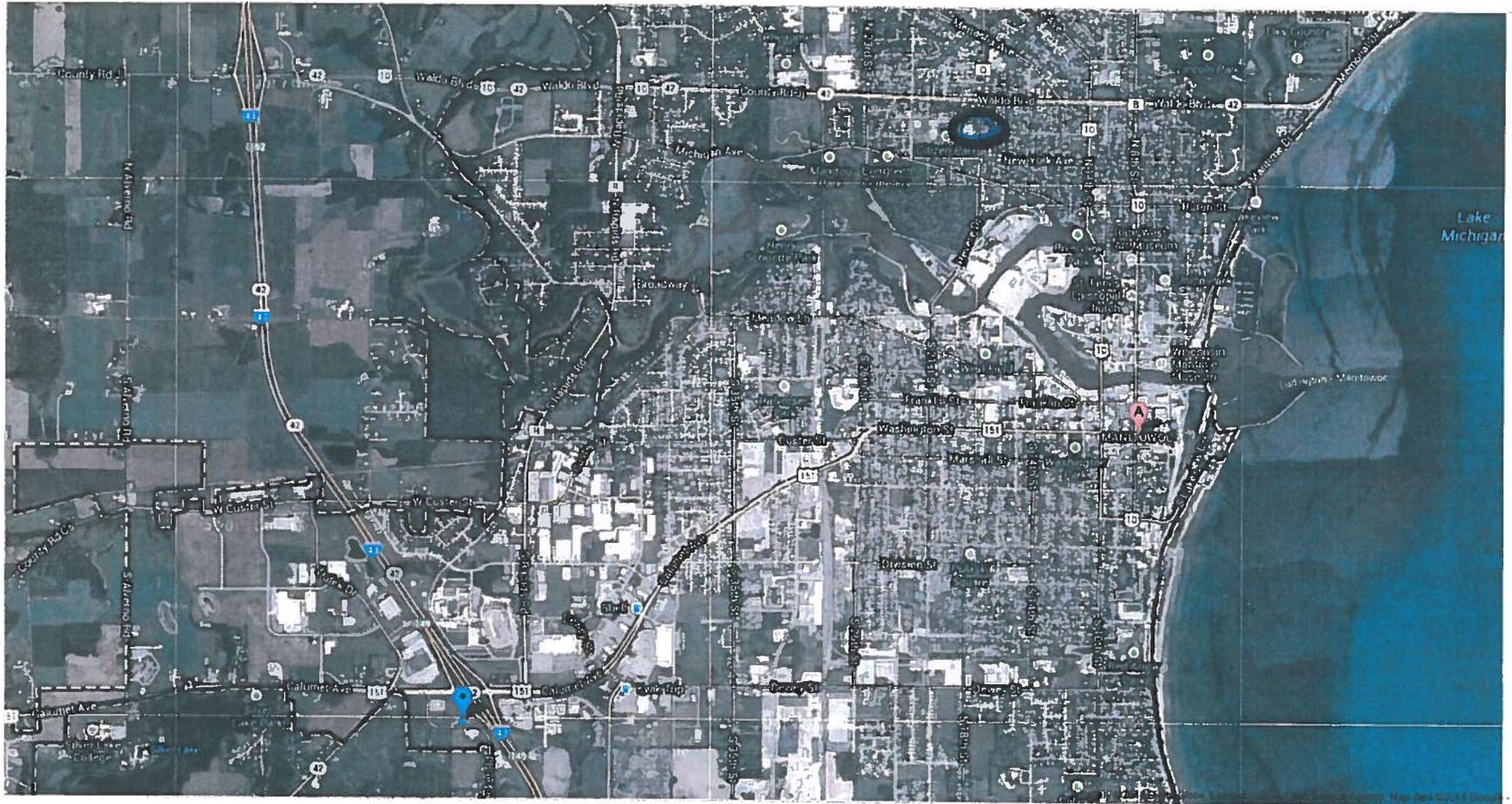


To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.



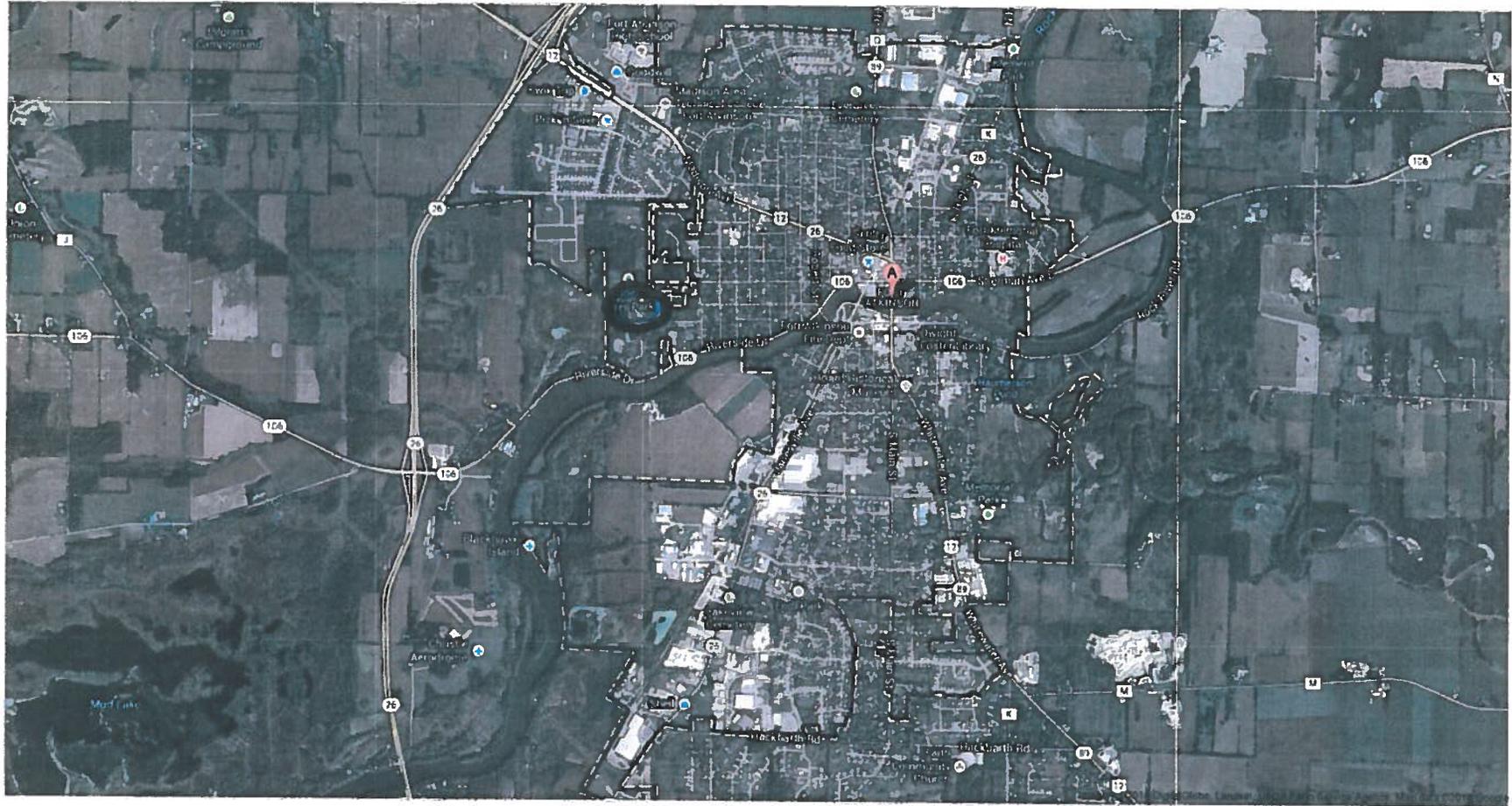


To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





# Marshfield



To see all the details that are visible on the screen, use the "Print" link next to the map.





**merrill**

Location. Nature. People.

**Smart Move**

## CITY OF MERRILL

Parks & Recreation Dept. - Smith Center

### March 2014 Parks & Recreation Directors Report

**Parks:** Weather has continued to be a factor in our day to day operations on the park end. Between snow and bitter cold weather the crew has had to deal with rink maintenance, roof raking, sink running, and other small things that add up. We have been keeping a very close eye on the snow loads on our park facilities as they are not constructed like a typical building or house. With the open air shelters and pavilions they cannot handle extremely heavy snow loads. Kitchenette is the one I worry most about and we have been keeping that free and clean of snow to preserve that shelter for the future. Even though we were running the water at Lions Park, those pipes froze leading to the building so we have placed a portable restroom outside to use while keeping the warming portion open. The cost to thaw the exterior lines is simply not worth it right now so we will wait until nature thaws it for us. There was no damage inside to the newly remodeled restrooms; it was simply a freeze somewhere on the connecting pipe between 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and the building. I have submitted the reimbursement for the River Bend Trail acquisition Stewardship Grant from the WDNR. I have been informed that reimbursement should arrive within a week for that. That grant is for acquisition only so the 50% funding can only go towards the purchase of the property. I have also received word that our Stewardship Grant for the City Forest has been officially approved and we are ready to start working on the trails when the weather permits. We do need to ensure we set aside ample funding for our 50% match for the City Forest Grant. I would like to set aside more funding from the Tornado Salvage Timber Sale funding for the City Forest itself. It was mentioned many times at our public hearings for our outdoor recreation plan last year that we need to do more with that property and we have a chance to do just that right now with funding that originated right there. We are responsible for \$12,097.56 as our 50% share of the City Forest Grant. I would like to see an additional \$25,000 minimum ear marked for City Forest Improvements for a total of \$37,097.56. This will allow for work to continue beyond the grant and could include: trail connectivity with Lincoln County Property and their trails, continued improvements on existing trails, trail signage, wetland work, reforestation efforts, wildlife habitat restoration, etc. I have been talking started talking with spring sports organizations on field usage and getting them all squared away before seasons begin. Spring seasons are slated to begin shortly and obviously nobody is going to be able to utilize any of our outdoor fields for quite some time again this year. Last year we were not able to host any games until May due to the weather, so hopefully we start to gradually warm up and slowly rid ourselves of this snow pack.

**Forestry:** Like a broken record, the weather has not allowed me to perform full inspections yet as many boulevards are still 3+ feet deep with snow. I have started compiling my lists of pruning areas and removals by urgency. In order to be more thorough with the questionable trees I need to be able to test trunk live wood and rigidity, to go along with the canopy inspections I have been able to perform up to

1100 Marc Drive • Merrill, Wisconsin • 54452

Rec. Dept. Phone: 715.536.7313 • Smith Center Phone: 715.536.6187

Fax: 715.539.2790

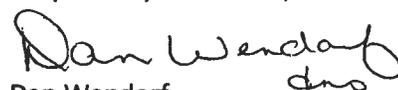
[www.merrillparkandrec.com](http://www.merrillparkandrec.com)

this point. I will be attending the Urban Foresters Networking Meeting on Thursday, 2/27 at the WDNR Station in Rib Mountain. I have also been exploring grants and alternative funding sources for more tree plantings around the community. I would also like to explore the possibilities of permaculture in one of our parks that can sustain and has ample room. The idea of permaculture or "fruit forests" has been around for many years but recently made famous in the Seattle area where they set aside a number of acres near within the city for fruiting trees that, when bearing fruit, citizens can walk through and harvest for their own use. I have some information in your packets if you care to learn more.

**Recreation:** Our Winter Recreation programs are gradually coming to an end. We are a few weeks behind on Little Dribblers Basketball due to three cancellations due to cold and snow. Little Dribblers has been going very good though this season and we are hoping to continue with increased registrations again in the years to come. Winterfest events that were cancelled in January were scheduled to be made up this past weekend on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Those two events were the cardboard sled races at Lions Park (hosted by Merrill Optimist Club and Merrill Octagon Club) and the Normal Park Snow Sculptures. Sled races had good attendance and the snow sculptures didn't go over as well as it would have if the weather was suitable in January. We originally had every hill spoken for on the weekend it was supposed to occur and the February 22<sup>nd</sup> date didn't work for everyone and the weather was once again unfavorable. We will continue to try each year until we grow our Winterfest into a big community wide festival! We have been diligently working on the spring and Summer Recreation programs. As I have mentioned before, there is so much more that goes into the planning than people realize. Dawn has done a fantastic job of working on these programs and details to help us build and grow our programs. As with every year, we need to constantly evolve what we have done, what we are doing currently, and what we would like to be in the future. That evaluation and responsiveness will keep us on the cutting edge of what others in the area are trying to do or replicate from our programs. Our goal again this year is to have our full programs ready for registration by the end of March to give people ample time to learn about what we are doing and get involved.

**Smith Center:** We are nearing the end of ice season once again this year. We had a very good ice season once again inside the Smith Center. With a very successful Hockey Season and another fantastic Ice Reflections season and show we have nothing but good things to look forward to next year. We will be removing the ice during the week of March 17<sup>th</sup> in preparation for the busy dry floor season. With the Children's Festival, Ladies Lifestyle Expo, Bridal Expo, etc. As you may have heard, we will be the host site for the Green Bay Packers Tailgate Tour on April 19<sup>th</sup>. The Merrill Rotary Club is the lead organization that brought the event here and we are thankful they chose the Smith Center. Proceeds from the event will go to the River Bend Trail. The event is a very big deal for our community as it attracts very large crowds from outside the area. I hope we can all roll out the welcome wagon for these visitors and make their time here memorable in hopes that they return. We have many other events lined up for the season and as usual, sad to see the ice go but excited for the dry floor events as well. As requested I have met twice with Merrill Youth Hockey Association and have had some great discussions with them. I will have updated information for you at the meeting on Wednesday.

Respectfully Submitted,



Dan Wendorf  
Parks & Recreation Director  
City of Merrill