

COMPREHENSIVE
PARKS
AND
RECREATION
PLAN

2008 - 2012



St. Croix River

Prepared By

Town of Somerset

PARKS AND RECREATION
COMMITTEE

September 2008



Twin Springs

Planning Assistance Provided By

 **Stevens**

ENGINEERS · PLANNERS · SURVEYORS



Bass Lake

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Town of Somerset

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE	4
PLANNING PROCESS	5
SUMMARY OF PAST COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS	6
TOWN OF SOMERSET ~ BACKGROUND	6
General Information	6
Population and Housing Projections	7
PARKS & RECREATION SERVICE STANDARDS	9
Service Standards	9
CLASSIFICATIONS OF PARK LANDS	9
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES	11
INVENTORY	14
Existing Facilities Inventory	14
Other Facilities Located in the Town.....	14
Water Resources in the Town of Somerset.....	17
EVALUATION	19
Evaluation of park and recreation facilities	19
NEEDS ASSESSMENT	20
Deficiencies.....	20
Future Needs	20
IMPLEMENTATION – GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS	21
General Park Design / Site Master Plan.....	21
Signage.....	22
Land Acquisition	22
Naming of Town Parks.....	23
Proposed Trail Corridors	23
Parks and Recreation Funding	24
Intergovernmental Cooperation	24
Historic Parks / Land Preservation.....	25
Ordinance Development	26
Preserve Diversity of Plant and Animal Species	26

Stream Bank Protection and Restoration27

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE 27

FUNDING ASSISTANCE 28

 Local Sources.....28

 State and Federal Sources28

 Private Sources.....29

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM 30

APPENDIX A ~ Parks and Recreation Map

APPENDIX B ~ Proposed Trail Corridor Map

APPENDIX C ~ Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Somerset values parks and recreation as an important local public service. The purpose of the Town of Somerset: Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2008 – 2012 is to suggest and promote ways and means of providing recreation for all the citizen groups in the Town. The Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan will provide an inventory and evaluation of existing parks, analyze demographic trends, develop criteria for potential future park locations, create goals, objectives, and policies, prioritize projects and identify funding resources. The public parks and recreational areas should express loudly and clearly the Town’s goals and values.

The Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2008 -2012 seeks to identify the needs of the present community and also research the needs of the Town over the next five years. The State of Wisconsin requires communities to prepare and adopt a five-year park and outdoor recreation plan to maintain eligibility for State and Federal grant and loan programs. This document is also intended to be used as a basis for local capital budgeting.

The recommendations herein are based on the following factors: population, the existing landscape, representative citizen attitudes and desires, existing recreational facilities, available funding assistance, and the Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE

The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to acquire, develop, and maintain a creative, efficient, and responsive park system available to all residents and non-residents. The Parks and Recreation Committee strives to provide a variety of park areas that contribute to the attractiveness of the

Town, the social and economic health of the community, and the well-being of individuals and families while protecting, conserving, and enhancing the Town's natural, historical, and cultural resources.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee meets the 1st Monday of every month at 7 PM. All meeting agendas are posted. The public is invited to attend. The Town of Somerset: Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2008 – 2012 was discussed and completed during these regular monthly meetings.

While the process may vary from community to community, developing a park plan will include the following steps:

Analyze Park Facility Needs - A community begins by analyzing its park facilities and the services it provides with an emphasis on its adequacy to serve the people and identify future park improvement needs.

Prepare Project Descriptions - After determining the need for park improvements, it is necessary to collect details on the project so that its implementation priority can be accurately and equitably assigned.

Set Project Priorities - Since a community will often identify more projects than can be funded, priorities must be established. By doing so, priorities can be established so that limited financial resources are allocated efficiently.

Develop and Adopt Park Plan - The final park plan combines the individual project descriptions and priorities into a recommended schedule of capital projects. Upon general consensus of local officials, the park plan should be adopted by resolution supporting the recommended program.

Implementation and Updating - It should be emphasized that the park plan is a flexible and dynamic document that is updated annually to reflect changing needs and new priorities. Each year the community will identify new projects, monitor fiscal capacity, and set new priorities for the upcoming year. Through annual review and updating, the park plan will reflect the most current goals and priorities of the community.

SUMMARY OF PAST COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLANS

The Town of Somerset: Comprehensive Park and Recreation Plan 2008 – 2012 is the first comprehensive outdoor parks and recreation plan completed by the Town of Somerset Park Committee. The Town conducted a survey using the Town of Somerset *Parks and Recreation Questionnaire (July 10, 2006)*. In preparation of this document, *Parks and Recreation Questionnaire (July 10, 2006)*, the St. Croix County Outdoor Recreation Plan (January 17, 2006) and the Village of Somerset Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007 - 2012 were reviewed. The Town of Somerset's plan does not conflict with these plans.

The Town of Somerset recognizes the importance of intergovernmental cooperation. It is the intention of the Town to share information and coordinate efforts with the Village and the County in coordinating plans, policies, and programs that address and resolve issues of mutual interest.

TOWN OF SOMERSET ~ BACKGROUND

General Information

The Town of Somerset, St. Croix County is located in scenic northwestern Wisconsin. Geographically, it is the largest town in the county. St. Croix County is one of the fastest growing counties in the state. The county and region have experienced rapid growth in the past decade.

Although the Town has a rural atmosphere, it is served by and well connected to larger urban areas by its transportation routes. It should be noted that the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge project is currently underway. This major bridge and highway facility will create a corridor directly linking the Town of Somerset to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area. Much of the growth in the Town can be attributed to it's proximity to the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area. Growth and expansion of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area is also influencing growth patterns of other nearby communities in Wisconsin.

The Town of Somerset now faces issues of a largely rural community on the fringe of a major metropolitan area. The community is dynamic and each new development is viewed as an opportunity for some and a threat to a rural lifestyle by others. As land is continuing to be developed and the demand for public facilities increase, the Town recognizes the need to effectively plan for and finance park and recreation facilities.

Population and Housing Projections

Population and housing projections are important in estimating future residential development in a community. When combined with the community's residential development standard (the average number dwellings per unit of land) the potential amount of land consumed in the future can be predicted. To develop the housing projections requires projecting the growth of the community's population and forecasting the number of persons in the average household in the future. This information will help determine the projected future park and recreation facilities needs for the Town.

TABLE I

POPULATION FORECAST • 2003 to 2028						
Town of Somerset						
2003	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2028
2,986	3,134	3,504	3,875	4,246	4,617	4,839

Source: Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan 2003 - 2028 (pg. 38)

TABLE 2

<i>HOUSEHOLD FORECAST • 2000 to 2028</i>							
<i>Town of Somerset</i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2028
Population	2,644	3,134	3,504	3,875	4,246	4,617	4,839
Persons per HH	2.85	2.70	2.56	2.42	2.28	2.14	2.05

Source: Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan 2003 - 2028 (pg. 38)

So, the housing forecast is a function of the population projection (TABLE 1) and the household projection (TABLE 2), as dividing population by the persons per household yields the number (adjusted for occupancy rates) of housing units necessary.

TABLE 3 shows a housing forecast using the trend in household size. It reveals that by the year 2025 the Town of Somerset will have a projected 2,271 housing units or an annual increase of about 79 dwelling units.

TABLE 3

<i>HOUSING FORECAST w/ HOUSEHOLD TREND 2000 to 2028</i>							
<i>Town of Somerset</i>							
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2028
Population	2,644	3,134	3,504	3,875	4,246	4,617	4,839
Persons per HH	2.85	2.70	2.56	2.42	2.28	2.14	2.05
Housing Units	963	1,222	1,441	1,686	1,960	2,271	2,485

Source: Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan 2003 - 2028 (pg. 38)

According to the population projections, the Town of Somerset is estimating a total population of 3,875 by 2015. The number of persons per household is forecasted to be 2.42. The number of total households is projected to be 1,686. This correlates to a total of 464 new households.

Other important demographic information for the Town of Somerset can be found in the Town of Somerset Comprehensive Plan 2003 – 2028.

PARKS & RECREATION SERVICE STANDARDS

Service Standards

The service standards for the Town of Somerset's park facilities have been identified by the Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee. The Town of Somerset proposes a minimum of twenty (20) acres of park lands and one and one-half (1.5) miles of trails for every 1,000 people.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF PARK LANDS

The following selected classifications are intended to be used as guidelines at the local level. Presently, the suggested classifications are considered most appropriate for the Town of Somerset:

Community Parks

These serve a broader purpose than a neighborhood park. Focus is on meeting community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces.

- Serve a larger area composed of many neighborhoods (within ½ to 3 mile distance).
- Size and location are determined by the quality and suitability of the site (usually between 30 to 50 acres).

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks serve as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. A neighborhood park provides open space for passive recreation for all ages within a neighborhood, with emphasis on youth and families. An ideal neighborhood park site is geographically centered and easily accessible to the neighborhood population. The park should be accessible by safe walking trails or bicycle access.

- Playgrounds, informal play areas, passive walkways and seating areas.
- Usually 5 to 10 acres in size.

Conservancy / Natural Resource Areas

Lands set aside for preservation of significant natural resources, remnant landscapes, open space, and visual aesthetics/buffering. Size and location vary. A conservancy protects and manages the natural and cultural environment. Recreation is secondary.

Greenways

Effectively tie park system components together to form a continuous park environment. Size and location vary.

Sports Complex

Consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities to larger and fewer sites strategically located throughout the community. These facilities are strategically located for community-wide access. Size is determined by projected demand, usually 25 acres minimum, with 40 to 80 acres optimal.

Special Use

Covers a broad range of parks and recreation facilities oriented toward single-purpose use, such as a boat landing.

Park Trails

Multipurpose trails located within greenways, parks, and natural resource areas. Focus is on recreation value and harmony with natural environment.

Connector Trails

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

On-Street Bikeways

Paved segments of roadways that serve as a means to safely separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic.

Specialty, Non-motorized Trails

- Multi-purpose trails located within greenways, parks, natural resource areas, or road right-of-ways for special uses such as cross-country skiing or horseback riding.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Goal #1

Provide quality park and recreation opportunities for current and future residents and non-residents.

Objectives:

- Be responsive to community needs.
- Promote safe and secure parks and recreational areas.
- Provide active and passive recreational opportunities to meet the needs of community residents of all age groups.
- Inform citizens of available park and recreation services.
- Encourage citizen participation in the decision-making process.
- Partner with neighboring municipalities, governmental agencies, private entities, athletic associations, etc. on park and trail planning, development, and maintenance.
- Be responsive to overall park planning.
- Conduct ongoing review of the comprehensive park and recreation plan.

Policies / Actions:

- Acquire land for future parks and recreation needs.
- Offer Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible parks and recreational areas when feasible.
- Implement the proposed bike and walking trail plan.
- Adopt a map of the total Town of Somerset park system.
- Provide access and adequate parking for parks and recreation areas.
- Protect land uses adjacent to existing parks and recreation areas.
- Create an informational brochure identifying existing park and trail locations. Make available at the Town Hall, Village of Somerset Chamber of Commerce, etc.
- Create a bulletin board at the Town Hall dedicated to park and recreation.
- Promote parks and recreation on the Town website.

Goal #2

Protect and enhance natural resources.

Objectives:

- Acquire land for the purposes of preservation and/or conservation.
- Preserve and protect surface waters, wetlands, shorelands, and floodplains to maintain wildlife habitat.
- Protect and conserve natural, historical, and cultural resources.
- Provide public access to area lakes, rivers, and natural areas.

Policies / Actions:

- Rezone sensitive natural resource areas conservancy, when possible.
- Utilize conservation easements when appropriate.
- Create development standards that preserve high quality environmental features.
- Protect natural resources where feasible from sediment and other forms of pollution through the use of vegetation, erosion control measures during construction, settling ponds, and other structural and non-structural means.
- Protect drainage ways and areas that drain to the river and lakes from pollutants.
- Protect sites of historical significance from development.
- Adopt a historical preservation ordinance to provide a degree of protection for historic resources.
- Work with State and Federal agencies to provide better access to public lands.

Goal #3

Keep maintenance and future park costs to a minimum. Be fiscally responsible.

Objectives:

- Operate efficiently, effectively, and within available resources.
- Limit the tax burden of the existing property owners.
- Provide safe parks for residents and non-residents.
- Cooperate with surrounding communities, public agencies, private entities, community organizations, and groups.
- Develop parks that are sustainable.

Policies / Actions:

- Actively pursue financial assistance through federal, state, and local grant and loan programs.
- Identify local groups and organizations willing to volunteer labor and resources.
- Encourage citizen resource contributions.
- Encourage community organizations and residents to “adopt-a-park” and help with basic maintenance and cleanup.
- Approach land owners concerning land donations to include: conservation easements, trusts, and/or trail easements.
- Utilize park fees to pay for park improvements due to new development and growth.
- Develop a cost-effective maintenance plan that minimizes negative impacts on the environment.
- Design park facilities for minimal maintenance costs.
- Explore joint maintenance agreements and strategies with neighboring communities and public agencies.

INVENTORY

Existing Facilities Inventory

The Town of Somerset owns two boat landing facilities:

Turtle Lake Boat Landing

Inventory:

- ✓ Access to lake of 52 acres.
- ✓ Three (3) parking stalls.
- ✓ Gravel road access.
- ✓ Boat landing.

Access:

- ✓ *Public.*
- ✓ *No ADA facilities.*

Proposed Improvements:

- ✓ *Additional parking stalls.*
- ✓ *Land Acquisition.*
- ✓ *Fishing pier(s).*
- ✓ *Boat landing improvements.*
- ✓ *Trash receptacles.*
- ✓ *Signage.*

Pine Lake Boat Landing

Inventory:

- ✓ *Lake access – boat only.*
- ✓ *Off shoulder parking along road.*
- ✓ *Shoreline fishing.*

Access:

- ✓ *Public.*
- ✓ *No ADA facilities.*

Proposed Improvements:

- ✓ *Additional parking.*
- ✓ *Land Acquisition.*
- ✓ *Fishing pier(s) or dock.*
- ✓ *Boat landing improvements.*
- ✓ *Trash receptacles.*
- ✓ *Signage.*
- ✓ *Swimming area.*
- ✓ *Benches.*

Park Land ~ The Town co-owns with the Village of Somerset 49.5 acres of future park land. This park has not been named.

Inventory:

- ✓ No amenities offered.

Access:

- ✓ Public.
- ✓ No ADA facilities.

Proposed Improvements:

- ✓ Survey of the park land to determine boundaries.
- ✓ Signage.
- ✓ Parking area.
- ✓ Natural vegetation.
- ✓ Trash receptacles.
- ✓ Benches.
- ✓ Trails.
- ✓ Athletic fields.

Other Facilities Located in the Town

Somerset Landing

The National Park Service operates and supports a boat launch and parking area that provides access to the St. Croix River at the Town's northern boundary. The National Park Service owns the land and maintains the boat landing. The Town of Somerset owns the road. Amenities include: bathrooms, picnic tables, and a grill. No camping or camp fires.

Twin Springs Park

The Town has also developed a park and parking area in cooperation with the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway that allows public access to the St. Croix River at the southern Town boundary. The Town of Somerset owns the road.

Bass Lake Boat Landing

The Department of Natural Resources owns approximately 2-acres of land on Bass Lake. St. Croix County maintains the property. The site has a boat landing for two launches, two courtesy docks, signage, and a parking lot with 17 stalls, including one ADA accessible stall. The Town would like to consider a swimming area as a future improvement.

Andersen Scout Camp

The Camp owns over one mile of St. Croix River frontage and is available for hiking with prior notice to the Camp Ranger.

Other Facilities Utilized by the Town

Many residents in the Town of Somerset utilize park facilities located in the Village of Somerset. For a complete and up-to-date list of the facilities located in the Village, please refer to the Village of Somerset Outdoor Recreation Plan 2007-2012.

Water Resources in the Town of Somerset

Pine Lake

Pine Lake is a seepage lake. It is 89 acres of open water with a maximum depth of 19 feet. It has public roadside access.

Seepage Lakes

These lakes do not have an inlet or an outlet, and only occasionally overflow. As landlocked waterbodies, the principal source of water is precipitation or runoff, supplemented by groundwater from the immediate drainage area. Since seepage lakes commonly reflect groundwater levels and rainfall patterns, water levels may fluctuate seasonally. Seepage lakes are the most common lake type in Wisconsin.

Turtle Lake

Turtle Lake is a seepage lake. It is 27 acres in size and has a maximum depth of 12 feet.

Bass Lake

Bass Lake is a seepage lake with an area of 417 acres. Its maximum depth is 35 feet. This lake has public boat ramp accessibility.

Apple Falls Flowage

The Apple Falls Flowage is a drainage lake with an area of 39 acres. This body of water has a maximum depth of 12 feet. Public has access to this water resource by a walk-in trail.

St. Croix Lake

St. Croix Lake is a drainage lake. It is 4,668 acres in size with a maximum depth of 60 feet. This lake has public boat ramp access.

Drainage Lakes

These lakes have both an inlet and outlet where the main water source is stream drainage. Most major rivers in Wisconsin have drainage lakes along their course. Drainage lakes owing one-half of their maximum depth to a dam are considered to be artificial lakes or impoundments.

St. Croix River

The St. Croix River is a tributary of the Mississippi River, approximately 164 miles long. The lower 125 miles of the river forms the state line between Wisconsin and Minnesota. The river is a National Scenic Riverway under the protection of the National Park Service.

Apple River

The Apple River is a tributary of the St. Croix River, about 70 miles long.

Please see APPENDIX A for a map of the existing Parks and Recreation Facilities.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of park and recreation facilities

Evaluation of park and recreation needs should take the following into consideration:

- The Town's identified acre per thousand population standard is a minimum standard.
- A purely quantitative analysis does not consider the quality and extent of recreational facilities desired by area residents and non-residents.
- Quantitative analysis alone is not an adequate measure of a park's service capability.
- Park serviceability is of utmost importance to this plan and is the basis for any future recreational land acquisition.
- Adequacy of site size is dependent on the intended number of users and the types of activities to be offered.
- Parks and recreation facilities should serve all age groups in the area with a variety of recreational opportunities.
- Locations should be suitable in relation to standard walking distances or other customary modes of transportation.
- Potential site development should adequately serve the activities to be provided.
- Site location should be reviewed in relation to traffic hazards, means of access, and adjacent land uses.
- Recreation areas receive very heavy use during summer by non-residents.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Town of Somerset values parks and recreation as an important component to maintain a healthy lifestyle. As more and more people participate in outdoor activities, the increased pressures on existing parks and recreational facilities need to be addressed.

Deficiencies

The identified standard of 20 acres of park land and 1.5 miles of trail per 1,000 people would equate to approximately 68 acres of park land and 5 miles of trail needed for the 2006 population of 3,405 people. As of 2007, the Town of Somerset had 49.5 acres of park land (owned jointly with the Village of Somerset) and 0 miles of trail. **This equates to a current deficiency of at least 18 acres of park land and 5 miles of trails.**

Future Needs

With the projected population of 3,875 in 2015, the Town of Somerset will need a total of approximately 78 acres of park land and 6 miles of trail to satisfy the Town Standard.

Thus, the proposed impact of new residential development is for a total of 10.5 acres of park land (*78 acres minus the existing 49.5 acres minus the 18-acre deficiency*) and a total of one mile of trail (*6 miles of trail minus the existing deficiency of 5 miles*) as well as additional park improvements due to new growth.

Due to new growth, the Town proposes any of the following future park improvements:

- Land acquisition for athletic fields.
- Trail development.
- Playground equipment.
- Picnic tables.

- Trash receptacles.
- Restroom facilities.
- Boat Landing Improvements.
- Fishing piers.
- Parking areas.
- Signage.
- Soccer fields.
- Baseball / softball fields.
- Other ball fields or courts.
- Natural vegetation / landscaping.
- Access to rivers and other water resources.
- Swimming areas.
- Shelters and other site amenities.
- Natural areas such as forest preserve, prairie preserve, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION – GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations to implement the goals and policies expressed in this plan. The following actions are suggested in no particular order:

General Park Design / Site Master Plan

From both the standpoint of economic efficiency and of aesthetic and historical considerations, it would be beneficial to establish certain design standards for the Town parks. The Parks and Recreation Committee should make broad recommendations regarding styles of lighting, benches, and signage needed for the parks. This would be cost effective by making it possible to purchase such equipment in larger quantities. Identifying a design

style for the equipment, such as Contemporary, Rustic, Victorian, or another style, would also be helpful as a basis for designing landscape improvements.

Similarly, it is important to consider the balance between natural and formal landscaping. More formal landscaping, which may require intensified seasonal maintenance, can be appropriate for small areas in some of the Town parks. Town staff, Garden Clubs, and other various volunteer groups can be helpful in designing and maintaining small, more frequently landscaped areas.

Signage

- The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to develop sign design standards for all park signage.
- After sign standards are developed, it is suggested that all parks will be posted with signs.
- In addition, it is proposed to identify each park with addresses.

Land Acquisition

The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee will continue to evaluate the need for additional parks and open space. The need for future parkland acquisition or open space is a priority for the Parks and Recreation Committee in the effort to protect the natural resources in the Town. The Committee would also like to protect the natural resources along the rivers or lakes in the Town.

The Committee proposes to negotiate public land dedications, including both park and trail dedications, as part of the approval process for all residential developments and incorporate the conclusions of such negotiations into a Developer Agreement for each project.

Overall, the Committee would like to acquire sufficient lands to protect scenic and environmentally sensitive resources or native natural areas. The Committee propose:

- To identify areas of particular interest, unique plant or animal life, scenic views, environmentally sensitive areas, or native natural areas.
- To ensure the protection of wildlife and plant life, and the rivers and its habitat.
- Acquire lands through a combination of federal, state, and county grants, gifts, donations, and Town resources.
- Identify, sign, and protect endangered plant species on Town land or right of ways.
- Acquire land along Apple and St. Croix Rivers for preservation, conservation, or trail development.
- Acquire historical properties when available.

Naming of Town Parks

The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee needs to provide a plan for naming of Town Parks.

Proposed Trail Corridors

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to develop a trail system in and around the Town. Please see APPENDIX B for a map of the Proposed Trail Corridors. These proposed trails are only general corridor locations and would only be pursued if the property developed or was specifically sold to the Town for trail purposes. The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee would like to emphasize that no taking of land will be considered. Providing a Proposed Trail Corridor plan will serve as a guide to illustrate to developers the Town's desire to incorporate trail system improvements and key connecting linkages into new subdivision plats and other developments. This map also can be used as a guide for other communities in the area to understand the Town's future desires.

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes:

- To develop a comprehensive trail system connecting neighborhoods, bike paths, parks, etc.
- To develop specifications for trail composition, width, slope, use, and signage requirements.
- To create ADA compliant accessibility where economically and physically feasible.
- To design trails to be accessible by emergency vehicles.
- To create additional access to parks and recreation facilities through a comprehensive system of recreational trails.

Parks and Recreation Funding

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to utilize outside funding sources whenever possible, including but not limited to Wisconsin's "Stewardship Fund", the federal "LAWCON" program and any park funding programs available from St. Croix County.

Along with the future park planning, a prominent issue that will need to be addressed is the funding for the development of future parks and the maintenance and upkeep costs associated with the parks and recreation system. Future parks and recreation funding and maintenance may have to be addressed through user fees, grants, volunteerism, donations, fund raising, or taxes. Local expenditures and private contributions should be applied as the locally funded matching funds under cost-share programs.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to coordinate Town park planning with the planning efforts of St. Croix County, Village of Somerset, and the surrounding communities. The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to develop formal agreements or joint boards with other governing bodies when necessary for the implementation of specific projects.

Some cooperation ideas include:

- Invite participation from other jurisdictions.
- Provide plan drafts to neighboring communities and jurisdictions.
- Meet regularly with other governmental units.
- Share information and data.
- Conduct joint educational efforts.
- Develop a joint planning area.
- Promote multi-jurisdictional plans.

Historic Parks / Land Preservation

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to preserve, protect, rehabilitate, and/or reconstruct significant historic structures and properties located within the Town of Somerset.

The Parks and Recreation Committee will identify standards and guidelines on a variety of factors, such as historical significance, physical condition, proposed use, and intended interpretation.

A program to identify, study, record, and preserve sites and events of regional or local interest should be completed by the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Per Wisconsin State Statute 60.64 Historic Preservation

The Town Board, in the exercise of its zoning and police powers for the purpose of promoting the health, safety and general welfare of the community and of the state, may regulate any place, structure or object with a special character, historic interest, aesthetic interest of other significant value for the purpose of preserving the place, structure or object and its significant characteristics. The Town Board may create a landmarks commission to designate historic landmarks and establish historic districts. The Board may regulate all historic landmarks and all property within each historic district to preserve the historic landmarks and property within the district and the character of the district.

Ordinance Development

The Parks and Recreation Committee proposes to review any existing park and recreation ordinances and will consider developing the following ordinances:

- Park Regulations and General Rules Ordinance.
- Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- Conservancy Ordinance.
- Park Land Development.

Preserve Diversity of Plant and Animal Species

It is the intention of the Parks and Recreation Committee to help preserve diversity of native plants and animals in the Town to:

- Promote a natural mix of many different species which provides for a healthy environment.
- Preserve Wisconsin threatened and endangered species.
- Protect historic plants and habitats for future generations.
- Preserve plants important to butterflies and other insects.
- Preserve plants which may be future sources for medicines, treatments, etc.
- Help maintain a varied and attractive landscape.

Did you know?

With more acres of public land in roadsides than in all parks in the state, the chances are good of finding protected species there. In fact, a roadside sometimes provides a plant's preferred conditions.

The Town may mark park areas or right-of-ways once a species is identified. A no-mow area is often all it takes to keep these special plants safe. It is recommended that an ecologist make a plan for each identified site.

Stream Bank Protection and Restoration

The Town of Somerset Parks and Recreation Committee proposes stream bank protection and restoration practices along any waterways located in the Town of Somerset. These practices may include any of the best management practices identified by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

While adding new park land is important to serving residential areas, the Parks and Recreation Committee is committed to a program of maintaining existing parks in good condition and providing sufficient funds for operations. Operations and maintenance costs are often overlooked during the parks systems planning stages. Such maintenance and operations include providing sufficient budget for the following:

- Maintaining and replacing facilities equipment, as needed.
- Mowing and maintaining the grassed lawn areas and landscaped areas.
- Keeping the park lands litter-free.

These operations and maintenance need to be considered as part of the overall budgeting for park facilities. As new lands are added to the park system, sufficient additional funds need to be budgeted for maintenance and operations.

It is recommended that an operations and maintenance plan be developed for each park and recreation area in the Town.

FUNDING ASSISTANCE

Local Sources

Locally generated sources of revenue available to local units of government include the establishment of impact fees (as provided for in section 66.0617 of the Wisconsin Statutes), subdivision dedication requirements (as provided for under Chapter 236 of the Wisconsin Statutes), special fees, and use of general tax revenues. Local governments can also accept gifts and donations of land or rights to the land.

State and Federal Sources

The state and federal governments have several financial resources available to assist local communities in the acquisition of land for parks and open space.

Federal sources of funding include:

- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).
- Recreational Trails Act.

In addition, the WDNR administers a number of grant programs that focus on the acquisition of land or rights in land, restoration, or development of land for conservation and public outdoor recreation purposes.

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund includes several key local assistance programs. These programs provide aids for the acquisition and development of local parks, urban green space grants, urban rivers grants, and grants to fund the acquisition of development rights. Chapter NR 51 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code governs administration of the different grant programs under the Stewardship Fund. A Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is required if the community wishes to apply for certain funding under the Stewardship Program. Guidelines for these plans are available from WDNR.

WDNR Lake Management Protection Grants also include a land acquisition component. Federal funding programs include the Land and Water Conservation Fund and the Recreation Trails Program administered by WDNR. A key

component of these programs is cooperation and partnership between the WDNR, the federal government, local units of government, and nonprofit conservation organizations. To foster this partnership, the programs provide matching grants (usually 50%) to eligible sponsors, including local units of government and nonprofit conservation organizations.

Guidelines, application forms, and other information about these programs are available by contacting a WDNR regional office community services specialist or through the WDNR Bureau of Community Financial Assistance's website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/caer/cfa/.html>.

Private Sources

Community nonprofit conservation organizations (e.g., local land trust organizations) can play an important role in meeting the conservation and recreation needs of local communities and Wisconsin residents. Additional grants for acquisition of land and rights in land and habitat restoration are available to these organizations through the Stewardship Land Acquisition subprogram. These funds can be used for projects including natural areas, habitat areas, fisheries, streambank protection, wildlife areas, state riverways, bluff protection, preservation of endangered and threatened species, and habitat restoration.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

2008

- Approve Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Make Parks and Recreation Plan available on Town website.
- Upgrade Pine Lake Boat Landing.
- Update Subdivision Ordinance to include park and trail components.
- Create parks and trail brochure.
- Establish standards and procedures for naming parks, trails, fields, etc.
- Selection and acquisition of land for Community Park.
- Provide funding for parks within Town Budget.

2009

- Apply for Grants.
- Purchase land for Community park and ball fields.
- Develop site plan for Community Park.
- Create trail design standards.
- Develop strategies for Public Safety and maintenance at parks.
- Continue upgrades at Pine Lake Boat Landing.
- Develop one mile of trail.
- Expand reconstruction of 45th Street from 180th to 192nd Avenue to include bike lane and parking at jointly-owned land.

2010

- Construct Community Park.
- Apply for Grants.
- Develop plan for acquiring Apple River access.
- Develop one mile of trail.

2011

- Apply for grants for natural and conservancy areas.
- Acquire and purchase property devoted to natural and conservancy areas.
- Develop one mile of trail.

2012

- Investigate need for Community Center.
- Conduct an evaluation and community survey.

Items for Consideration:

- Pine Lake Boat Landing.
 - Additional parking.
 - Land acquisition.
 - Fishing pier(s) or dock.
 - Boat landing improvements.
 - Trash receptacles and signage.
 - Swimming area.
 - Benches.
- Turtle Lake Boat Landing.
 - Additional parking stalls.
 - Land acquisition.
 - Fishing pier(s).
 - Landing improvements.
 - Trash receptacles and signage.
- Park land co-owned with Village.
 - Develop a master site plan.
 - Provide driveway and parking area within Parkland.
 - Restoration of natural vegetation and plantings at Parkland.
 - Provide trash receptacles and benches at Parkland.
 - Plan for and construct trails within Parkland.
 - Develop athletic fields in Parkland.
 - Apply for grants to acquire parkland for athletic fields.
- Acquire river access.